

 POSTED TO NorthbrookTowerDaily.com 6 DAYS AGO

'Z' Frank Apachi campus gets 'significant' improvements

MARTIN CARLINO, Editor

Campers headed to the JCC Chicago's popular 'Z' Frank Apachi campus are in for quite the summer.

JCC officials recently announced a series of "significant" updates to the nonprofit's popular 'Z' Frank Apachi campus in Northbrook.

The day camp, which has been serving local families for decades, is the JCC's largest of its 10 camps across the city and suburbs.

An expansive new all-season pavilion — which was just completed — is among the top new improvements to the campus.

The 4,500-square-foot covered pavilion is constructed to support all-camp programs, such as Shabbat, as well as year-round initiatives, according to JCC officials.

Elizabeth Abrams, the JCC's marketing and communications director, said the pavilion is something that will help bring the entire camp together.

"To have the opportunity for all campers, of all ages and abilities,



Local children enjoy the new pavilion.

be together for ... all the amazing things that really define camp, and to have one comfortable place to do that, is really important for us," Abrams said.

Additional improvements to the campus include new shower rooms, bathrooms and locker rooms that will be built in compliance with ADA standards with specific attention to the needs of campers with disabilities, new bathrooms in the early childhood wing and new flooring and painting in the early childhood classrooms.

All improvements are scheduled to be completed by the summer of 2020.

The JCC was able to

fund the projects through two sources: community support and a grant through the Foundation for Jewish Camp.

The 'Z' Frank Apachi Day Camp was one of just 16 Jewish day and overnight camps to receive the grant through the first of the foundation's Yashar Initiative, which is funded by the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation.

Funds provided through the grant enabled the JCC to make improvements to increase accessibility for campers and staff with disabilities.

Stacey Skolnick, director of 'Z' Frank Apachi, said these improvements have been on the JCC's



Stacey Skolnick, Director of 'Z' Frank Apachi Day Camp, welcomes guests Friday, Nov. 1 at event celebrating the opening of the JCC Chicago's new all-season pavilion at its 'Z' Frank Apachi campus in Northbrook. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE JCC CHICAGO

wishlist for some time. Skolnick also said the biggest motivator to go through with the improvements was inclusion for all campers.

Children who attended JCC camps do so with the support of Keshet, a Northbrook-based nonprofit organization that provides support for young adults with developmental disabilities. The JCC' long-standing partnership with Keshet allows it to offer camp experiences that

are "fully inclusive experiences for all campers, Abrams said.

Not only with campers experience an updated campus next summer, they'll also see changes to the programming they take part in.

"I think that some of the improvements that are happening on the campus are also happening with our programs," Skolnick said. "We're working really hard to freshen everything up, not just the grounds but the

programs and what we offer to our kids."

Skolnick added the JCC is in the process of adding "20 new things for 2020."

Local children and families had the chance to experience a special Shabbat and community event to celebrate the open of pavilion on Friday, Nov. 1, at the Northbrook campus.

More information about the 'Z' Frank Apachi campus can be found at daycamp.jccchicago.org/our-camps/z-frank-apachi/.

 POSTED TO NorthbrookTowerDaily.com 5 DAYS AGO

Noggin Builders to open escape room for kids

STAFF REPORT

Northbrook's Noggin Builders has long been at the forefront of innovative thinking.

The popular educational institution is at it again.

Noggin Builders announced last week that it

plans to open a Noggin Builders Kid Escape Room, the only escape room in the Chicago area designed exclusively for kids.

The escape room will open Nov. 23 inside Northbrook Court, according to a press release sent to *The Tower*. Reservations are

required to guarantee participation on the opening weekend.

Noggin Builders Kid Escape Room is for youngsters ages 5-10, who must be accompanied by an adult.

The children will form a team of 8-10 and will

be tasked with discovering clues and solving fun, brain-teasing puzzles and challenges, the release says.

"Creative problem solving and critical thinking are keys to the future success of our children and to the creation of a better world.

Our escape room is a fun, safe way to guide children in that important direction," Amy Torf, Northbrook resident and founder of Noggin Builders says in the release.

Noggin Builders is now in its sixth year of offering classes, camps and parties

in Northbrook. Its located at 3000 Dundee Road, Suite No. 201, and in Northbrook Court, which will house the escape room.

For more information, please visit www.noggin-builderskidescaperoom.com, or call (847) 770-0540.