

HOLMES CAMP & RETREAT CENTER

Rev. Donald A. Hostetter Leadership Award



The Holmes board is pleased to honor **David Burpee** with The Rev. Donald A. Hostetter Leadership Award for his over 50 years of support to the Holmes Camp, stretching from his first years as a teen-age staff member to about 15 years as president of the board of directors, to generous financial contributions by David and his wife, Linda.

David came to Holmes as a counselor-in-training in 1970 at the invitation of long-time Holmes director Rev. Donald Hostetter whom he'd met at a meeting. Nine more summers as a staff member followed, with jobs including counselor with special needs kids, a canoe trip leader and support driver, and as lifeguard and head lifeguard. David met his future wife, Linda, in front of the Westminster Lodge in 1973 after she had participated in a Holmes Camp sponsored international trip to Taizé that year.

David began his service as a member of the Holmes board and its committees when he was in his early 20s. During the 1990s and early 2000s, when Bill Key and then Peter Surgenor were camp directors, he served numerous terms as the board's president. David's time serving on the Holmes board and its committees spanned many changes including the addition of the Vinik building and four executive directors.

In his professional life, David has been a police officer for almost 45 years, first in White Plains where he retired as a Captain six years ago after administering their training school for over 30 years, and then in Somers, NY, where he still works part-time. Prior to being a police officer David was a paramedic working both on an ambulance and as an EMS instructor at White Plains Hospital and EMS paramedic supervisor.

David and Linda are long-time members of Bedford Presbyterian Church where he is a ruling elder. In 2023 David earned his Masters of Divinity Degree (MDiv) from New York Theological Seminary and has since been serving as a pulpit supply preacher within Hudson River Presbytery and as a volunteer chaplain at Ghost Ranch in New Mexico. He has also continually served on various committees of the Hudson River Presbytery for over 30 years, including the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and the Committee on Ministry, and most recently on the Presbytery executive Council. David also served twice as a commissioner to the PC (USA) General Assembly.

David and Linda have three grown children. When the kids were younger, Linda directed a week-long family camp every summer at Holmes for over 20 years. Like David, Linda has served on the Holmes board and as a volunteer.

In addition to David's service at Holmes, he is currently serving on the board of the National Ghost Ranch Foundation which operates Ghost Ranch, an education and retreat center in New Mexico owned by the Presbyterian Church (USA).

David will tell you that Holmes has been transformative in his life, and that the blessings that Holmes has added to his life far outweigh any contributions that he and Linda have made to Holmes. He says that Holmes has saved him, given him all that is good in his life, and has provided him with purpose, faith, the love of his life, extraordinary friends who have supported and nurtured him – the people he loves and respects more than all others and knows love him in return. He says that Holmes has been for him, a gift from God. He is especially honored to receive this honor in Don Hostetter's name, someone who was a mentor and an incredibly important person in his life, and in the life of hundreds of others. With gratitude to Don for giving all of us "Camp," and Glory to God for such a wonderful life.