



**Read what our
coaches are saying
about ICA's 2021
Summer Camp!**



"On top of the fun moments, I also got to help campers improve their chess games significantly! Between multiple analysis opportunities, daily tournament matches, and tactical practice, I was able to watch the campers grow day by day and try to implement the coaches' advice in their games.

Also, despite having a lot of serious chess being played, I was happy that our camp was able to provide a good social outlet for the attendees as well. When all the chess was done, the players still made a lot of new friends throughout the summer and built relationships that will carry over to the future. I saw plenty of campers who were very shy coming into the week that appeared to be completely different people by the end. I think that campers were not only able to build on their chess but also themselves in general!

Overall, I was most happy to see that our camp ran without any problems throughout the entirety of the summer. Even campers who had been participating in 6+ hours of chess per day were eager to come back each morning and continue learning! With kids so driven, I was thrilled to be a part of ICA's camp in order to provide a safe place for expression and growth. Chess is one of the few games that anyone can start, regardless of their differences. Being able to bridge that gap and bring players together that ordinarily never would have met was fun to be a part of.

I think the campers will be able to look back on this summer fondly and remember plenty of laughs, moments, and people that made the camp what it was. I also expect they'll pick up a few extra rating points in the near future :)"

- Nicholas Katz





"After more than a year stuck at home, working at ICA Summer Camp once again was a cathartic experience. I am always amazed by the kids' excitement about chess. Every camper, from the complete beginners who are ecstatic when they manage their first victory to the wunderkinds who will surely be stronger than me within a couple of years, has made this a terrific summer. We got to throw around dodgeballs and hit chess clocks once again, and the relief of getting back to the way things used to be was pervasive all summer! I still remember, some 11 years later, telling Slava after my first week as a chess camper that I was sad the week was over because of how much fun I had. I feel very privileged that I now get to bring that same joy to so many others. I also understand why Slava was so tired when I said that. This is no ordinary camp; each and every coach wants to see their students have fun and succeed, and we put in a lot of work to make it a unique and enjoyable experience for everyone who walks through our door. COVID was one of our biggest challenges yet, and despite that, we ran a full ten-week camp that helped everyone start to get back to normal without any virus-related issues. That is a testament to the dedication of both our ICA families and our staff. I am very proud that I was able to be part of this wonderful summer at ICA!" - Alessandro De Marchi-Blumstein

"Working this past summer in the ICA Summer Camp as an art instructor has been full of laughs, meaningful discussions, creative projects, and, the most rewarding part of all, visible growth. It is no secret that art can make many uneasy, depending on how self-critical the camper is. Whether it be from negative past experiences in other art classes or from their own perfectionism, sometimes coming out of their shells was a struggle. Therefore, it was my goal these past few weeks to make the ICA art class as safe and supportive of an environment as possible for campers to learn about the "greats" and embark on projects of their own with open minds. There is nothing more rewarding than helping a visibly shy or reserved child open up a little more into exploring and sharing their own imagination that inspires them (in art and beyond). Through practices such as presenting their artwork among their fellow peers, playing pictionary, and having thoughtful class discussions about famous paintings, campers were able to become more in tune with what motivates them in art as well as certain artistic skills (such as identifying shapes, colors, styles).

Some styles we covered this year include Surrealism, Impressionism, Pop-Art, Contemporary, Realism, Cubism, Expressionism, Abstract, Op Art, and more. In addition, we talked about Still-life, Constellations (and made stories of our own), Acrostic Poetry, Illustrations, Moving-pictures, and more! We worked with a variety of different art mediums to be as flexible as possible to our virtual learners, where every camper was given the option to either use paper and drawing mediums of their choice or a digital program that allowed them to draw online (Tate Paint).

Overall, it was a pleasure to see all the smiling and excited faces every day, waiting to learn something new! By treating every art class as an adventure instead of a trial, our campers were always open to try new styles and infuse their own twist on projects. It was also reassuring to hear how some campers were continuing or making projects of their own after class as well, meaning that the lessons that they were taught resonated! With our no camper-left-behind mentality, I worked with every camper to make sure their own personal skills in art developed, no matter their "level" coming into class. It was a pleasure coaching this

Summer! :)
- Erica Linnik





The Summer of 2021 is one for the history books! As in-person classes and other aspects of life have started to resume, the need for online offerings has far from disappeared and ICA delivered on all fronts with a hybrid of online and in-person camp options. Although zoom-fatigue of course exists, the online camp continued to deliver engaging and informative lessons filled with laughter, camaraderie, and competition. Puzzles were solved, battles fought, and prizes won, with even many coaches finding themselves casualties of the simuls. Well done to the campers!

While there is of course a trade-off between online and in-person, it was interesting to hear from multiple parents that the positives of the online offerings were not limited to safety assurances, but included the pleasant surprise of seeing their often shy child happily contributing to discussions from the comfort of their home. The coaches too expressed a similar sentiment, listing some of the advantages to the online tools offered by the ICA chess platform. We are of course all excited to play more over-the-board chess, but the coaches had a great time teaching this summer and are looking forward to seeing the campers back – whether in online classes or in person!

-Sean Finn