

Hannah Hirsch
Long Island Director

To my NFTY family,

What connects you to this community does not have to be the same reason for another's connection. While some find their spirituality through prayer and song, others may feel the same through their connections with friends. Furthermore, your value within the community is not based upon the positions you hold, or even the amount of events you have been to. It is the privilege of all NARites to be listened to and appreciated for the unique spot each holds. We forget, especially as election season emerges, that NFTY gives us this unique opportunity as teens to express ourselves, which we must not take for granted. **Thus, we remember that NFTY is a space where we learn to empower ourselves and each other, while preparing the next generation of Jewish leaders.**

Whether you lead through your inspiring words and ideas or by behind-the-scenes facilitation of events, you matter. It is important to me as an individual deeply touched by our community that we stand behind this idea and encourage the success of new members as well as existing ones. **Therefore, it is with immense pleasure that I, Hannah Hirsch, declare my candidacy for the position of Long Island Director as a part of NFTY New York Area's 5777-5778 Regional Board.**

Although I am a sophomore, I feel I am prepared to engage teens, focusing in the Long Island area. I am determined to reach out to temples, advisors, and other prospective members throughout the year. It is important that we open our doors to as many members as possible; every person deserves to experience the wholesomeness of our *kehillah kedoshah*. With a strong network between TYG advisors and myself, we can ensure the encouragement of teens all over Long Island to broaden their horizons, even if it means just trying one event. I will also enforce this notion with constant temple visits, often planning them strategically as to reach out to congregations historically less involved in NAR.

I also value the quality of events planned within the region. As I will be facilitating subregional events across Long Island, I will be sure to uphold the tradition of Long Island Shabbat. This is an amazing opportunity for prospective members to try out an event with substantially less commitment than a kallah, for example. While our Long Island events are an opportunity to form community amongst the subregion, it is also crucial to create engaging programs. I plan to, along with services and dinner, hold a *tzedekah* project in coordination with the time and location of the event. I hope to host at least two shabbats throughout the course of the year. Additionally, I will work with the Long Island subregional committee as well as the Board of Directors to generate ideas for further subregional events, with focuses in specific areas that may interest new members.

Thank you for the opportunity to enrich our holy community. Let us continue the communication, passion, and culture that makes NFTY NAR so strong!

L'shalom,
Hannah Hirsch