

NFTY-MAR,

“Me, We.” Muhammad Ali, the great American boxer and civil rights advocate and someone I look up to, composed this poem at Harvard's graduation. “Me” is the drive in each individual to think only about their own betterment. “We” is our need to watch out for each other and establish a strong community. NFTY is made up of Me's seeking their best experience, and a strong region that everyone values, a big We. **I, Avi Holzman, am running for Membership Vice President for the 2019-2020 school year, because I believe the relationships we have in TYG's, sub regions, and between older and younger members are the glue connecting the Me to the We.**

My inspiration to run for this position came from a desire to connect the “Me,” and the “We,” in NFTY-MAR. This past summer at Mechina I learned about TYG engagement which encouraged me to help other TYG's. To recruit more members I plan to do specific and concentrated TYG Engagement workshops with TYG's that are struggling to get members at events. Examples of these workshops could be hosting zoom calls to work with TYG leaders on engagement skills, or doing programs in regards to TYG engagement at regional events. We will brainstorm ideas like a synagogue fantasy football league or a fall apple picking event. Instead of convincing teens who are not involved to go straight to NFTY regional events I plan to direct teens to TYG's so they can establish a community before going to NFTY Regional events. **These TYG Engagement workshops will help the region build up a connection between Me and We and will eventually create a tight knit region.**

The perfect middle ground between TYG events and Regional events is Day long Sub Regional events. The recent calendar change provides a huge opportunity for more of these types of events. **My goal is to have a total of three sub regional events in each subregion over the course of a year.** The MVP and MSACS will do recruitment and advertising for these events to help establish subregions. That way when The Vent happens, everyone is wearing their sub region's color and screaming and yelling for and each sub region is close with each other.

The third way I want to build membership is to retain members using Big/Little programming at each event. A Big is more experienced in NFTY while a Little is a new member that could need some help navigating the whole region. I remember someone who was like a Big to me, and how she included me in her friend group, checked in on me during my first few events and gave me a huge hug when I got off the bus, making NFTY my home. The creation of a Big/Little cabinet position will ensure that Bigs and Littles will bond during Big/Little programming, hang out after the program is over, and build a connection together. This connection encourages Littles to come back year after year.

Some of you know that I love doing magic tricks. I originally learned magic because I wanted to connect with people at NFTY events over a deck of cards. I love NFTY because it allows me both to lead and connect with friends. That is why, last year I became a Grade Chair, which helped me gain experience as a leader and learn how to write programs using the NFTY format. Currently, I am on URJ Heller High having the time of my life and learning how to properly balance school, Judaism, and fun while also helping lead the community. **My biggest source of inspiration for running is all of you, NFTY-MAR, and the impact you have had on me.** Even from thousands of miles away, I feel so connected to you, and want you to feel the same way about our vibrant region.

Membership is crucial to the growth of NFTY-MAR into a stronger region. NFTY-MAR has been a place for me to escape the hustle and bustle of my life at home, starting from my first time screaming the NFTY-MAR cheer while my friends and I were jumping up and down. NFTY-MAR you have been there for me everytime I needed to laugh, cry, or just have tons of fun. I am looking forward to the next two years I have left with all of you and making memories that will span a lifetime.

L'Shalom,
Avi Holzman