

Shalom MAR!

Empowered. Empowered was how I felt when I told my mom I wanted to sign up for TheVent despite being in seventh grade. “I’m in eighth grade in Hebrew School; that should be enough,” I argued, and so, she signed me up. Empowered was how I felt when I group-led for the first time as a tiny (well under five feet tall) ninth grader, leading a discussion for a group of peers all with years more of experience than me. Empowered was how I felt when I stood in front of my TYG in eighth grade and read a *very* out-of-the-box speech, hoping to be elected PVP. And, empowered is how I hope every MARite can feel through the future that I envision for MAR.

Every MARite should feel empowered to have an active role in planning programs at all levels in the region. With the new one-day subregional events, there are now more opportunities for participants to become program leaders. As PVP, I plan to work closely with the people running the events, ensuring that they have all the resources they need to be successful. This would include guiding them throughout the process by hosting Zoom workshops, helping them reach out to necessary people or organizations, and aiding them in organizing materials and crafting deadlines.

MARites should feel empowered to interact with topical issues, in nontraditional manners. Too often, our programs follow the same discussion-heavy format that can end up feeling monotonous and repetitive. As PVP, I’d vary MAR’s programming by implementing programs that appeal to all kinds of learners. For example, we can diversify how we conduct discussions and utilize fun activities to introduce serious topics. Instead of always having preassigned groups for discussions, we could make forming groups into a game, rotating who participants are with, and keeping them on their feet throughout a program. Moreover, programs intended to teach participants about an issue can also be fun and interactive through activities like simulations, debates, or competitions.

Finally, as PVP, I plan to **empower MARites to take programs back to their TYGs through an accessible program bank.** By creating a shared folder on Google Drive everyone could have easy access to a variety of materials. Documents could include mixer games, various program ideas, and a step-by-step guide for planning and implementing programs, all of which would enable MARites to successfully transfer programs they enjoyed on a regional level back to their TYGs.

Through diverse experiences including being on my TYG’s board and MAR’s Cabinet, I’ve learned how to keep an open-mind and balance being a listener and a learner. While holding these positions, I’ve never stopped acquiring new insight into being a leader, and as a regional board member, I know it would not stop there. With my organization and communication skills, I believe I’d be able to balance my work on board as PVP, a general board member, and a MARite.

Now NFTY-MAR, I hope you consider me, Mica Maltzman, to be your next Programming Vice President.

With love, Mica Maltzman