

Shalom NFTY-MAR,

This past year has been especially difficult, as COVID-19 has taken an enormous toll on us all. Even though these times have presented us with so much uncertainty and isolation, NFTY has continued to give me a source of togetherness and happiness even in the virtual world. Throughout my years of being involved in NFTY, I've been so grateful to have had many different leadership opportunities that have changed my life. As the past few years have gone by, I've been admiring the regional board and I've always wanted to make an impact on the region the same way that these people have for me. That being said, **My name is Ilana Farnsworth and I am beyond excited to be a candidate for NFTY-MAR Membership Vice President for the 5781-5782 year.**

In 2019, I was the Membership Vice President of OATY, and this year I was President. Even though these positions were on a local level of a small TYG, I believe that skills that I've obtained should be transferable to the regional level. As someone who has led a historically small TYG in the region, I recognize the struggles that small TYGs face regarding membership. With this experience, along with my experience at the URJ Kutz Camp NFTY Incubator immersive led by the NFTY National Board, **I will bring attention to small and usually overlooked TYGs because I believe that every TYG has great potential to thrive.**

My freshman year when a board member texted me to ask if I would lead my first program, I felt so included and special, and that one message made me want to take initiative and lead more programs and get more involved. If I had never gotten that outreach text, I don't think I ever would've come out of my shell in NFTY. Now, some of my favorite things at events are participating in services, reading Torah, and leading various programs. My goal is for MARites to gain the same confidence that I did, which is why I plan to rethink and revitalize outreach by providing incentives to recruit new members. During my year on cabinet as one of the Southern MSACs, I've observed that a vast majority of Cabinet treats outreach as if it's a chore, instead of something to look forward to. **As Membership Vice President, I will work to make outreach before and after events a more enjoyable experience for everyone involved.** I'll plan region-wide outreach competitions, which will increase incentives for recruiting new members, consequently improving both membership and enthusiasm for MAR virtual and hopefully in person events for the year to come.

NFTY-MAR, you never fail to amaze me. Even in the toughest times, the NFTY-MAR community is unbreakable. If you choose me to be your next MVP, I will work tirelessly to preserve and grow our kehila kedosha. I love you all.

B'simcha (with joy),

Ilana Farnsworth (she/her)