

Dear Northwest,

My name is Rifka Krulewitch, and I am beyond excited to be running as your 5780-5781 NFTY-NW Social Action Vice President! I currently attend Northwest Yeshiva as a junior in high school, and have just returned from studying at AMHSI, a semester abroad program in Israel. Ever since I can remember, I have been passionately active in the social-justice department. I have always made it a personal priority to advocate for the issues I hold near and dear to my heart, including, but not limited to, climate change, gender equality, and racial justice. Last summer, I attended the former URJ Kutz Camp, where I had the amazing opportunity of embarking on a 4-week immersive called Action & Advocacy, sponsored by the Religious Action Center for Reformed Judaism, where I spent the summer being mentored by skilled Jewish activists and learning how to power my own voice. With these skills, **I now want to show you, NFTY-NW, how powerful each and every one of your own voices are, and how your voice can truly change the world.**

For those of you who I haven't had the chance of meeting yet, I have been a strong member of the NFTY community since the end of my eighth grade year, when I attended the first event I was eligible for, Spring Kallah 2017. From that event on, NFTY-NW has always been my home. I am so lucky to have had the amazing opportunity to spend three whole incredible years getting to know each and every one of you, and now, as my final year of NFTY is quickly approaching, I want to utilize all three years worth of skills I have gained and give them back to you, Northwest. Over these past three years, I have held several leadership positions that I believe have taught and enforced the necessary skills it takes to be your next SAVP. I have been working at my temple, Congregation Kol Ami, as a madricha (teacher's assistant) for the past four years. As a madricha, I have learned the important skills of communication, independence, and organization. Additionally, I have been honored to serve on my TYG Board, KATY, for the past three years, first as Communications Vice President (2017-2018), and as President for the past two years (2018-current). Serving on my TYG Board has taught me the important skills of teamwork, partnership, reliability, and execution. Currently, I serve as one of your NFTY-NW Regional Cabinet Social Justice Chairs, which has further cemented my skills in social action and advocacy.

The role of a NFTY-NW Regional Board member is to assist in cultivating a supportive Jewish environment within our community, one in which every participant can access a safe and inclusive space, where they feel that they can be their innermost unique selves. It is the duty of a Regional Board member to water the plant that represents our beautiful region, so that every participant, the seeds, will grow. It is the responsibility of a NFTY-NW Regional Board member to keep and uphold the Reform Jewish Values that we, as a *kehillah kedosha* - holy community, hold ourselves to. These values include *chesed* - kindness, *tzedek* - justice, *tikkun olam* - repairing the world, *kehillah* - community, *Am Yisrael* - the Jewish people, *Torah*, and *ahava* - love. Specifically, the role of a Regional Social Action Vice President is to ensure that NFTY-NW remains a place in which young Jewish activists can access valuable social-action related programming that reflects the values that we, as NFTY-NW, hold ourselves to. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of a Regional Social Action Vice President to be a reliable friend, mentor, listener, and ally to any and all members of NFTY-NW, and beyond the walls of the NFTY community. It is the responsibility of a Regional Social Action Vice President to act as a primary voice on justice, advocacy, social-action and teen-activism.

I strongly believe that I harbor these necessary skills in order to qualify as your future NFTY-NW Social Action Vice President. As I spoke about earlier, I had the amazing opportunity of attending URJ Kutz Camp, the former official NFTY/URJ Leadership camp, where I not only met my best friends, but studied the elements of social justice in my 4-week immersive, Action & Advocacy. During those four weeks, we engaged in meaningful discussions, arguments, and debates, worked to strengthen our own “inner activists”, and studied major historical social movements that have changed our world. Furthermore, having had the opportunity to attend NFTY Convention 2019, I have met and learned from countless other Jewish teens across the United States, and feel as though I have a clear understanding of the way NFTY functions and the beauty of our own region.

If elected, I promise to not only offer you the tools you desire to strengthen your own inner activist, but I promise to be an open ear; to be up for learning new things and ideas every day, and to endlessly support each and everyone of you in your own personal journeys through NFTY.

If I am to be elected as your NFTY-NW SAVP, I plan to immediately take on the important task of shifting NFTY-NW to a “Green Region”. This will mainly consist of severely limiting/eliminating all unnecessary waste that we produce collectively, including materials like disposable plastics and papers, food packaging/wrappings, paper, and overall garbage accumulation. Additionally, this plan would include focusing on reducing our carbon footprint by encouraging mass carpool/use of NFTY-NW transportation to any/all events. To fully commit to our universal goal of being a sustainable NFTY region, I plan to work closely with your future NW-PVP to ensure that all materials used for event programming will fit the above guidelines. While I am aware that achieving this goal will take effort and dedication, I am also confident that my personal commitment to environmental sustainability, combined with this region’s passion and allegiance for this cause, will create enough zeal to fully power this proposal into reality. Additionally, I will make it my priority to be fully attentive to your own requests regarding social-action programs. Further, I plan to promote an inclusive and loving environment by working with Jackie to ensure that every NFTY-NW participant feels safe and welcome, especially when it comes to the topic of gender inclusion. Specifically, I hope to implement improved housing options in order to ensure that every NFTY participant, regardless of gender identity, feels confident, safe, and comfortable in their sleeping situations. Although I do not have a concrete idea of how this would look yet, I am hoping to spend more time listening to the voices of you, NFTY-NW, in order to see what types of changes you all find fitting, as it is the serious priority of mine that NFTY-NW remain an LGBTQA+ safe and inclusive community, because if we choose to be neutral in times of oppression, we then have chosen the side of the oppressor.

No matter what, I can’t thank you enough for the amazing experiences we have fostered together, and I can’t wait to see what this next year brings!

With all my love,

Rifka Krulewitch
She/Her/Hers