

Dear NFTY-NW,

I remember when I first heard about NFTY. In 2019, a few months after moving to Tacoma, I was invited to a UW Hillel event where I overheard people excitedly talk about Spring Kallah 2019, and their Temple Youth Groups (TYGs). Their passion inspired me to want to create a more vibrant youth group at my temple and become an active participant in NFTY NW. After that event, I got more involved with creating my TYG, spending numerous hours writing meaningful programs, and establishing a board. That Fall, I attended my first NFTY Event - Fall Kallah 2019. The stories and excitement that I heard were true, as I made countless memories and friends that will last a lifetime.

Through the past year, I served as my TYG's President where I worked with temple leadership to increase our group's involvement with the synagogue at large. Through my experience, I have developed a big appreciation for NFTY-NW's community, and **that is why I, Zoe Nemetz, enthusiastically declare my candidacy for NFTY Northwest Membership Vice President for the 5781-5782 term.**

I am running because of what I can give and what I get from NFTY. For me, the defining moment was when I sat down, wrote, and received my first mitzvah box notes. Through the simplicity of writing notes, I knew that I had made true lasting connections. Through the last year, I think we all have lost a bit of our community due to our lack of being in person together, and bringing back mitzvah box notes can help. As MVP, I will make a strong effort to reincorporate mitzvah box notes back into our kallah and NFTYx events to create opportunities for personal and community connections.

Similarly, after-event communication between NFTYites should not stop! We need to develop ways to continue to strengthen our relationships. When logging-off of a virtual event it is easy to feel isolated, especially if you are new to the region. I promise that if I am elected, I will reach out to new participants, thanking them for attending and asking them for their feedback. This will allow our regional board to discover new ways to flourish and will help create personal connections.

As a participant in youth group's 678 events at my old synagogue, I deeply understand the importance of these events. They exposed me to various youth groups and NFTY, which were some of the reasons I stayed involved in my Jewish Community. With the lack of 678 events over this past year, I am afraid that we are missing vital membership opportunities. Next year, I plan on revitalizing 678 events and plan to host multiple 678 pop-up events to allow for the middle schoolers to experience NFTY-NW's magical kehillah.

As your MVP, I plan to work alongside my fellow board members to ensure that we are focused on membership every chance we get. One example would be to incorporate grade-specific programs at various events that can range from mixers to breakout rooms. The programs will allow participants to further bond with their grade-level peers and with NFTY to help drive membership. Likewise, I want to work with the MVP network to help support their TYGs. Working in partnership is crucial to building larger TYG and regional success, while at the same time creating an all-inclusive community.

I am endlessly grateful for our incredible kehillah, and love each person who is a part of this region. I am so excited to grow and shape our community together over the next year!

B'ahavah (With Love),
Zoe Nemetz

