

Hello NFTY-NW!

My name is Jaclyn Maurice and I am going to be running for Membership Vice President in the year 5782.

From my very first day here at Spring Kallah in 2019 things just sort of clicked. The people I met that weekend made me feel as though I'd known them all my life. And even though I was only there for a few days, I felt the whole time like I was where I was supposed to be. The reason I felt so welcomed as a brand new member was because of the incredible culture of friendliness and inclusion here at NFTY-NW. Not just the regional board, but the members both new and old were all committed to creating the community of a lifetime. As someone who loves to meet new people, and engage in my Jewish community, I want to keep that same community going in the year to come by working on the membership of this region. These last few years have been a struggle when it has come to getting new members to join NFTY, but I think by using the Jewish value of community support through difficult times, we can continue to grow in numbers. We have managed to keep the *ruach* alive through two difficult years of virtual events, even though it felt as though we were fractured by the physical distance between us. NFTY is back in person now, though, and our spirit is only coming back stronger than ever. Now is the perfect opportunity to introduce new members to what NFTY is all about, and I have a plan for how I'd like to do that.

Mainly, I plan to continue organizing presentations to individual temple youth groups on what NFTY is, because maintaining close relationships with youth groups is how members are motivated to return year after year. I was inspired to join by my older brother, who found an incredible family here, but not everyone has that kind of a connection when they initially start coming to events. For this reason, I think that making ourselves known at the individual synagogue level first can make a big difference in prompting interest among prospective members. I also think that frequently hosting smaller NFTY-X events can help encourage kids to get involved with NFTY if they are apprehensive about jumping into a weekend long event. Most importantly though, keeping the NFTY atmosphere at Kallahs open to new people is essential, because I want people to feel welcomed like I did, and to know that the connections made here can be lifelong. I want this organization to be a *kehillah kedoshah* (a sacred community) for everyone involved, and I want to lead by example with my passion for Judaism, my willingness to make new friends, and my commitment to collaborate with the other members of board and leaders in our region.

The spirit of NFTY is what stood out to me the most when I first came here, so I can't wait to represent that for future NFTY members. I promise that I will put a lot of love and energy into my position on board, as I want to make this space as meaningful for others as it has been for me. It would be an honor to tackle both the challenges and joys of helping to lead the region into next year.

Thank you NFTY-NW, much love,  
Jackie