

What goals do you have as Programming VP for the 2020-2021 year?

As Programming Vice President of NFTY-STR, I plan to foster an environment that strengthens the community that we have already established. To ensure that this happens, I plan to bring back grade level programming, increase the leadership abilities and opportunities that we have within our region, as well as promote more program diversity to increase engagement. Bringing back grade level programming allows us to strengthen the bonds that we already have within the other NFTY members within our grades. As for increasing the leadership abilities that we have within our region, I plan to start monthly zoom calls, available to anyone who wishes to join, that teach valuable leadership skills, specifically within the field of programming. Each call will have a different topic such as group leading essentials, ins and outs of program writing, how to be an effective group leader, and more. To increase the leadership opportunities within the region, I plan to directly partner with the local PVPs to create regional programs written by the PVP network. Additionally, this goal goes hand in hand with bringing back grade level programming as I can build off of the event awards that have been implemented this year to give the grade level winners an opportunity to group lead the program for their grade level, as well as using the feedback from post event surveys to choose the program writers and other group leaders for the grade level programs. Finally, I plan to increase the engagement within our programs by promoting more program diversity. As most programs are formatted around the model of an activity followed by a discussion, through various programming formats such as more participatory activities, hands on programming, and different types of groups and program topics, I hope to encourage more engagement within regional programming. By increasing the engagement within programming, our community will ultimately strengthen by allowing our community to come together as a more cohesive unit while participating in these programs, considering how little time we spend as a region together all year, the programs at Kallot make every second worthwhile.

Why have you chosen to run for Programming VP?

Ever since I led my first program my freshman year, being a leader and writing programs has become a very big passion of mine. The most fulfilling feeling is seeing all of the hard work spent on programming come to life. As PVP of BiTTY I had the honor of writing and executing the programming for our annual Shul-in this past September. Watching the participants engage and dive into the programming was a feeling that I had never experienced before. At that moment, I wasn't stressed over whether or not the next program was properly set up, I was fully overcome with joy. Programming provides an outlet to make an impact on every participant no matter what their background is, and I would like nothing more than to be given the opportunity to make a positive impact on the members of the region that has already given me so much more than I could ever ask for.

How are you with time management?

I have had numerous experiences where I have had to carefully manage my time that have taught me the proper skills of time management. For example, during my sophomore year of high school, I had to manage my time to handle my marching band schedule, which consists of approximately 30 hours of practice a week, all of my school work, and working with my TYG board and the Regional Board to plan NFTY-STRs Hatikvah Kallah 2018. I am a very detail-oriented

Rachel Buksbaum - Programming Vice President Candidate

person. Due to this trait, I don't procrastinate and I set personal deadlines for myself to ensure that I have plenty of time to revise, as I am aware that first drafts are never perfect. Additionally, through working with my TYG board, I have learned the valuable skill of communication when it comes to time management. I learned that when a deadline is not realistic for me, I adjust and negotiate deadlines so that I am able to produce my very best work.

List what experiences make you qualified to be Programming VP.

I have had numerous opportunities to grow both as a leader and a Jewish teen that I believe make me qualified to successfully fulfill the role of NFTY-STR PVP. During middle school I held multiple leadership roles within student government, national honor society, and best buddies. These leadership opportunities have taught me time-management, organizational skills and teamwork skills. Since then, I have attended five life-changing summers at URJ Camp Coleman and one inspirational summer at URJ Kutz Camp. Additionally, I believe that my time on BiTTY board has provided me with the experience needed to be a successful NFTY-STR regional board member. As BiTTY RCVP 2017-2019, I was tasked with writing numerous religious and cultural programs for a variety of ages. Additionally, while serving as BiTTY's RCVP, my congregation hosted NFTY-STR's Hatikvah Kallah 2018, which while I was not PVP for this event, I still learned the ins and outs of planning a regional event and strengthened my skills as a board member. As the current PVP of BiTTY, I wrote and executed the programs for our overnight kick off event, including a social action program, as well as planned numerous other events for my youth group. Additionally, I have group led numerous times within NFTY STR, which helps me to understand all aspects of program writing, including the specificity needed to properly write a program. Within my synagogue, I have volunteered as a Madricha for the past three years, where I have written class lessons on a variety of occasions. Finally, for the past two summers I was honored to be asked by the NFTY-STR regional board to attend NFTY Mechina at URJ Kutz Camp. At this event, I was able to network with other board members and future leaders, to learn more about what it truly means to be a leader, and effective board member. Through all of this, I have learned the significance of communication and teamwork that is needed to effectively fulfill the role of a regional board member.

Come up with a hypothetical theme and program idea for next year's Winter Regional.

My idea for next year's winter is called "Where in STRnation?" and it's main focus is based on discovering yourself and where you fit into the community around you. Programs will be about self-reflection and self-identity as well as discovering one's identity within their community. Self-reflection and self-identity programs would focus on character building, leadership skills, self-concept, and work ethic. Programs on one's community identity would focus on applying one's self-identity to better their community. My program idea is everyone will be handed a one way mirror and a marker. On the side that is reflective, the participant will write what they see in themselves and what they wish other people would see in themselves. The participants will then walk around the room and on the other side that is see through, the other participants will have the opportunity to go around and write positive comments and traits, essentially how they see that person who's mirror it is. Then at the end of the activity, the participants will have the chance to look at how they see themselves and how others see them. They will then be able to answer the question of who they really are.