

PAR,

When I look back at my past, I find it deeply intertwined with NFTY and Judaism. My mother was a member of, and later directed NFTY-GER (then called GIFTY), as well as worked for NFTY and Kutz. My father attended, staffed, and was eventually Assistant Director of Camp Harlam. Honestly, I probably wouldn't exist without Camp Harlam, or NFTY, as they were what in the end got my parents together, as my mom needed to organize an event at Camp Harlam, and so she ended up working with my dad, and the rest is history.

Flash forward a few years, and I'm attending Camp Harlam, and NFTY. Camp Harlam had been a generational motivation to attend, and I'd honestly had an awesome time. But NFTY was something quite different. It all really started when Ethan Lane-Miller, the newly-minted advisor of TEFTY at the time, convinced me to attend. He explained it to me as "it's like Camp Harlam, but better." And so, going off his statement, I decided to attend. My first event was WINSTY, a few months before I could officially attend, since TEFTY was the host. I had a small idea of what to expect, but following the days after the event, I was already itching for the next one. And so, my attendance at PAR began.

Flash forward a few more years, and now we're going into a decision period, and a transition of leadership for this amazing organization. Three years from where I've started, it gives me joy and hope to declare that **I, Eli Weitzman, am running for NFTY-PAR's President for the 5779-5780 year.** My time at NFTY, and attending URJ programs in general, has been a blast. I feel that through my experiences and conversations around our wonderful, wacky Jewish world to try and help the region in all ways possible. From my experiences and discussions, I've learned a few things.

Firstly, NFTY-PAR is an amazing region, but could use some more strengthening on the TYG side. Within even my TYG, I've seen a monumental dip in numbers over the past three years. NFTY 678 is an important tool we must use, to build the PAR of tomorrow by engaging our incoming attendees early on. Recruitment in the TYGs is crucial to maintaining the continual growth in the region, so I want to work on expanding and replenishing our region's TYG numbers, since overall, the TYG's are the foundation of NFTY-PAR.

Secondly, NFTY-PAR's Constitution is a lesser-known tool that we can harness to make the change we want. PAR was founded upon it's constitution, and with every year as we evolve, so does the rules and orders of the constitution. Over the past year, I sat on and worked with the constitution committee, helping to write new pieces of legislation that in turn help us make NFTY-PAR a better place for all. So, if the constitution has the power to make a large change for the experience, why not let everyone in on the process? I hope to expand the outreach and gauge more suggestions from the general region to help guide the legislation created by the constitution committee, so everyone in the region has a say at what changes they want.

NFTY-PAR is made up of such a diverse group of people, who come from different places. This is a huge benefit, as we can learn from each other. And while I've learned a lot of things over my experiences in PAR, I'm extremely open to learning more from everyone. That is why I hope to harness our many perspectives to help in gaining feedback, as well as build leadership for the region. The board is a very important group, but they should at times step back, and facilitate the region, not just lead it. We need to help get everyone involved by letting everyone lead, not just the board.

My time in NFTY-PAR has been amazing so far. And now that I've seen a lot, and learned a lot, I hope to pay it forward, and give back to this amazing organization. As President, I hope to be the instrument of change, that helps to usher forward the beliefs and experiences of our region, to help lead us in the right direction.

Live long and prosper,

Eli Weitzman