

Dear fellow PARTICIPANT,

When I attended my first event in eighth grade, I stayed in the comfort of my sister's shadow until an older PARTICIPANT thrust me out of it with what seemed at the time to be an outlandish question: said "Hi, what's your name?" Despite the initial shock, this simple act happily welcomed me into the community that I turned into my NFTY home. I write this letter today as a transformed human being. Over the last 3 years, PAR has given me a place to learn about my personal, Jewish, and leadership identities. I discovered my best qualities are reliability and perseverance. I have learned that Judaism is more than just services on Shabbat, but it is everyday interactions with the people who mean the most to me, and people who I have yet to meet. And most importantly, I have learned that in NFTY-PAR, our actions within and outside our communities are impactful, the relationships we build are long-lasting, our connection with Judaism is sacred, and we relay this to new people with each new day.

I cannot begin to express my gratitude for the opportunities NFTY-PAR has given me, including the honor to serve as your 2018-2019 Fundraising Vice President. Now, having experience as both a participant and board member, my perspective of PAR has grown. I now recognize what makes PAR special, and what can be changed to further PAR's growth. I strive to use this dual-perspective throughout my term as NFTY-PAR President to further enhance our region. **With this, I, Shaina Kramer, proudly proclaim my candidacy for the position of President of NFTY-PAR for the 5779-5780 year.**

I am committed to working as a participant of this movement to grow our region, our Temple Youth Groups (TYGs), and individuals, while also embodying the values of our Reform Jewish Movement in order to continue the same momentum, change, and inspiration NFTY has generated thus far. In order to accomplish this, we must emphasize engagement in all our endeavors. On both a local and regional scale, engagement can mean so much, but mostly, it can be understood best in four main areas: individual participation, TYG participation, programming, and North American involvement. To serve as a strong region in the Reform Jewish Movement, **we must emphasize engagement in all four of these areas** so that we can continue NFTY-PAR's great momentum for the future. During my term as NFTY-PAR President, I plan to:

1. emphasize **individual engagement and focus on special qualities each person brings to our region**. I hope to continue Senior Specialties at each event, in addition to encouraging General Board participation (committees) for all eligible participants. Additionally, spotlighting our participants more both during events and in between events may help increase retention, and this can be possible through new conversations or utilizing the PAR blog more often.
2. help increase **the participation of TYGs on the regional level and participation in our Congregations at a TYG level**. I would like to have check in calls or visits with the regional MVP and TYG presidents regarding their participation and activities for programs and events, and to be there to offer up any help or ideas they may request. Through these, I hope we can bridge the networking gap in our region with the regional board members and TYG board members.
3. make each event extraordinary. At each event, programming such as social time, spiritual experiences, and educational programming add a unique feel to the event. I hope **to keep a balance in the programming by making it both enjoyable and valuable** by working with the board to ensure each program is well thought and written out to be the best it can be. I will make an effort to include at least one program at every event that fits into at least one of NFTY's Initiatives or general leadership. Additionally, I hope to thoroughly use the participant feedback we receive following events to help improve our events in the future. As President, I would make sure this is a region led by the voices of our individuals and I would be there to listen to those voices.
4. **continue the connection of our region to the other 18 regions** around North America that make up our movement. Through the President's network, I hope to learn more about how other regions operate and look for concrete ideas I could share with you. Even more so, I want to involve our individuals more on the North American level. I would promote political advocacy of your individual opinions and involve our region on a wide scale during various awareness days and other social media, social action partnerships. Through this, I hope our participants become more aware of the work being done through the partnership of the URJ and NFTY, adults and teens, both big and small. Our North American movement is making real progress and showing real hope for the future... my real hope? For PAR to be apart of it all as well.

At NFTY Convention 2019, Miriam Chilton, the Vice President of Youth said, "NFTY, you summon the best of one another. And seeing your energy and excitement inspires me... And when you lead, the entire Reform Movement follows..." PAR, it has been an absolute joy and honor to see your energy and excitement at every event, and to be apart of the amazing work you do, it not only inspires the adult Jewish leaders in our movement, it inspires me. You have brought out the best in me, as I no longer hide in my sister's shadow, and I only hope, as your President, I can bring out the best in you, our TYGs, and most importantly our region that we cherish so deeply. Together, hand in hand, we can continue the strength of our community to make great change and inspiration for years to come.

B'Ahavah (With Love),  
Shaina Kramer