



## **Special Elections packet – Applicants for NFTY North American Social Action Vice President or Communications Vice President**

**Nisan 5781 / March 2021**

This packet includes:

- General Expectations of NFTY North American Board Members
- Link to Applicant Contract and North American Board Counterpart and/or Alum Certification
- 2020-2021 NFTY Board Contact Information
- Links to Synagogue Professional Certification, NFTY Staff Certification and Parent/Guardian Certification
- Roles and Responsibilities

Dear NFTY leader,

Thank you for your interest in applying to the open positions on NFTY North American Board!

We are looking for partners to help navigate our path forward during this time of great change. Leaders who will find success on NFTY North American Board are those who are open to dreaming, brainstorming, and nurturing the dreams of others, and who will help gather information about what teens are looking for and what will be the next chapter of NFTY.

The decision to apply for NFTY North American Board is challenging. Before you commit to applying, read this packet fully, connect with past and current NAB members, be sure you understand the expectations of the position, and think through your ability and desire to accept this responsibility.

*“It is not the position that honors the person, but rather the person that honors the position.”*

Serving as a NFTY Board member requires a significant amount of time, dedication, flexibility, patience, and commitment – as well as a sense of vision and time-management. It is important that you fully understand the duties and obligations associated with the six North American Board positions and the elections process. Being on the NFTY Board is a team effort and partnership, both with your fellow board members as well as the professional staff of NFTY and the URJ. Please read through this packet of information with your parent/guardian, a synagogue professional, and your NFTY Staff.

**Open Minded** – This year has been a time of unprecedented change for NFTY. As we continue to navigate the changes brought on by COVID-19 NFTY NAB members must be open to change and unexpected situations. We will need your help as agents of change. Throughout the year priorities may change as you continue to learn about the structure of the URJ and adapt to any changes or transitions that may occur during the term. Board members will be most successful if they are open to the challenges that come their way and allow themselves to grow with challenges rather than be held back by them.

**Model Exemplary Leadership** - To inspire the leaders of our movement to pursue change and growth, NFTY NAB members must be ready to model positive leadership.

**Build Relationships and Partnership** - NFTY Board Members should be approachable and accessible to all NFTYites, adult partners, youth stakeholders as a resource and partner. They should be ready to reach out and establish connections, as partnership and relationship building is the key to productivity.

**[NFTY's 13 Principles](#)** - As a NFTY leader, NAB members must uphold the values NFTY stands for and educate others to ensure that these principles are the foundation of our programming.

**Communication** - NAB members are expected to be in regular contact with their board, their network, the NFTY Director, and any other partners in their work. This is a weekly, and sometimes daily, expectation. They must also be able to communicate when they need support.

**Initiative** - NFTY North American Board members must hold themselves accountable to ensure that their work, as well as any work they oversee, is completed. If a project is not progressing (whether they are working with teens or adults), they have a responsibility to communicate with their team and ensure that their priorities are moving forward.

**Prioritize** - By running for North American Board, you committing to NFTY as your primary extracurricular activity throughout the year. This may mean delaying participation in other experiences such as Greek life, performance groups, and other clubs if they prevent you from completing your NFTY responsibilities.

**Be Present** - NAB members are expected to attend all designated NFTY events, weekly board meetings, position specific meetings, and URJ related meetings (when applicable). Being present extends beyond meetings and events. It especially includes staying focused and involved in your work and the projects you take on throughout the year.

**Time Commitment** – To be successful, board members must be willing and able to put in, on average, two hours of work into your position each day. This includes weekly NAB meetings, advisor check-ins, network meetings, task force meetings, email, and any work that goes into furthering your priorities for the year.

**Dependability** - Much of the work board members do is as part of a team, therefore they be dependable and accountable to their partners in this work. When everyone's work is

connected, board members must uphold their end of the work and be transparent if they are unable to complete a task.

Serving as a North American Board member is a considerable responsibility. If you have hesitations about serving on the board while starting your first year of college, please consider the possibility of taking a gap year. While this also seems like an intense decision, there is great value in allowing yourself to focus fully on driving our movement forward. We recommend you read the letter on page 10 to further understand the commitment and merit of taking a year off.

**Your signatures and the submission of the online documents state that you understand the expectations for a North American Board member and are ready and able to fulfill the duties of the position.**

Again, thank you for your helping ensure the future of NFTY. This is an exciting decision, and we want to ensure you have the information to make the right choice for you, and to set yourself up for success. Please feel free to be in touch with any questions or concerns that you have regarding running for NFTY Board.

L'shalom,

Fletcher Block  
NFTY President | 2020-2021  
[NFTYPres@urj.org](mailto:NFTYPres@urj.org)

Lynne Butner  
Director of NFTY Engagement  
[Lbutner@urj.org](mailto:Lbutner@urj.org)

Online you will find:

[NFTY's Constitution](#) - Please be sure to read Articles 10 and 11 for information pertaining to the election process and job descriptions.

[NFTY's Brit Kehillah – Code of Conduct](#) - There is an expectation that all North American Board members will follow and uphold our NFTY Brit Kehillah.

**The following items must be completed no later than March 31, 2021**

Questions should be directed to [Lynne Butner](#), Director of NFTY Engagement or [Fletcher Block](#), NFTY President

**APPLICANT CHECKLIST:**

- [Applicant Information Form and Contract and NAB Certification](#)  
Before you begin this form, please have your essay ready to upload. Questions are below.
- [Parent/Guardian Certification](#) – email link to parent or guardian
- [Synagogue Professional Certification](#) – email link to synagogue professional
- [NFTY Staff Certification](#) – email link to your area manager

**Contact Information for 2020-2021 NFTY Board**

|                         |                    |                  |
|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| President               | Fletcher Block     | nftypres@urj.org |
| Programming VP          | Josh Rosenblum     | nftypvp@urj.org  |
| Social Action VP        | Liana Friedman     | nftysavp@urj.org |
| Religious & Cultural VP | Madison Rosenfield | nftyncvp@urj.org |
| Membership VP           | Cat Orange         | nftymvp@urj.org  |
| Communications VP       | Hannah Finkelstein | nftycvp@urj.org  |

**Application Letter & Essay**

- Each applicant will write an essay stating their intent to apply for NFTY Board.
- The applicant’s essay should include a basic summary of what you intend to do in the upcoming year, why it is important to NFTY, and any other relevant information. You are submitting a condensed version of your platform. We recommend that this letter focus on the values your term will encompass, not only ideas and projects you hope to accomplish. You should be thinking about the value you will add to the movement and the work you will do.
- In addition, we ask you to please answer the following question.
  - **Applicants for SAVP** - Why do you believe the role of NFTY Social Action Vice-President is important to the Reform Movement?
  - **Applicants for CVP** – What do you feel is important for good/effective communication?

# Events for all NFTY Board Members

As we continue to evaluate the safety of traveling due to COVID-19 these event dates are subject to change.

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| NFTY Mifgash Hafifah 2021                     | May 2021 TBD                  |
| <i>Old Board/New Board Transition Weekend</i> | <i>Will be held virtually</i> |

NFTY North American Board Summer

*As of March 1, 2021, we cannot plan for in-person travel for NFTY NAB this summer. We will continue to evaluate and make plans as we are able. In the meantime, if you are committing to a job at camp or an internship, please discuss with the NFTY Director of Engagement.*

|                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| NFTY Mid-Year Event | February 14-17, 2022 |
|---------------------|----------------------|

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| NFTY Mifgash Hafifah 2022 | TBD |
|---------------------------|-----|

|                    |               |
|--------------------|---------------|
| URJ May 2022 Event | May 1-3, 2022 |
|--------------------|---------------|

**Other meetings that you may be asked to attend (based on Board Position held):**

URJ North American Board of Trustees Meetings, Netzer Veida Olamit, Commission on Social Action Meetings, NFTY Convention Meetings, Task Force meetings and/or a NFTY Mid-year board meeting.

**Expenses**– If selected, and if we can travel, approved NFTY related expenses will be covered by NFTY. At times, you may need to front your own money to cover pre-approved expenses such as the cost of travel to and from the airport when traveling for NFTY. More information will be provided later.

March 2021

**Dear NFTY North American Board Applicants and Families,**

I am extremely grateful to serve as NFTY President on the NFTY North American Board. My term and service to NFTY would be nowhere near as fulfilling, however, if I had not deferred my college enrollment a year to commit myself to NFTY. I am thankful to dedicate my time and energy to NFTY and NFTYites.

When I first decided to defer, before we knew that this year would look so different than any year before, I was nervous and hesitant about making this decision. After some deep thought, research, and conversations with friends, family, and some of my now-predecessors who also decided to defer, I felt more comfortable. With a deferral, I will still be able to go to college next year, and in the meantime, I have had the opportunity to enjoy my passions, live and work through embodying Jewish values, spend more time with family, and of course, dedicate a substantial amount of time to NFTY. The time I have to dedicate to NFTY has enabled me to form important connections and partnerships, support NFTYites, and to empower NFTY with my vision and ideas.

The tangible benefits of taking a gap year far outweigh any of the worries I had. A study conducted by the [American Gap Year Association](#) found that 98% of students who chose to take a gap year said their year had helped them develop as a person, 96% found it increased their self-confidence, and 93% agreed that it had increased their communications skills. Gap years are not only becoming a more popular decision, they are also proven to be a more practical decision.

Deferring college enrollment to serve as a NFTY Board member is a very personal decision to make. It is undoubtedly a decision that should be made after serious thought and consideration. Taking a gap year involves careful planning, firm commitment, and immense self-discipline (things I'm still learning about). Considering a gap year is not a mandatory step to running for NFTY Board, but it and has recently become a norm for the NFTY President. Taking a gap year does not mean that NFTY can or will fill all your time for the whole year. Those who have decided to take a gap year have also looked for employment, taken classes, volunteered, and explored other passions to make their year fulfilling.

I encourage you to consider this option, and would be happy to share more specifics about my experience this year. There are many people who are happy to be resources for you as you think about this decision as well. Madison Rosenfield, Cat Orange, and I are all currently taking a gap year, and we each have used this year in different ways. NFTY's Director of Engagement, Lynne Butner, ([lbutner@nfty.org](mailto:lbutner@nfty.org)) can also provide more details on what this decision might look like for you and your family.

No matter which decision you make, it is important that your choice is fulfilling, exciting, meaningful, and the best decision for you. I am here to support you throughout this process, so please don't hesitate to reach out!

B'ahavah,  
Fletcher Block, NFTY President | 2020-2021  
[NFTYPres@URJ.org](mailto:NFTYPres@URJ.org)