

Benjamin Kastrul

FCTYG

Hi MV, my name is Benjamin Samuel Kastrul and I am running to be your Western Membership Vice President for the 2017-2018 year. A few things you should know about me: I am a Sophomore at George Washington High school in Denver, I love to run and recently became a lax bro. My favorite TV shows are: How I met your mother (I am still angry about the ending), Parks and Rec, and Phineas and Ferb. I love almost all genres of music (including Country) and play guitar, saxophone, and piano. I love a lot of country western things including horses, Rodeos, and the National Western Stock show. I love eating and my favorite food is pretty much anything deep fried. I can't wait to see everybody so soon at Spring!



Why do you want to be on Regional Board?

NFTY has shaped me as I have grown up, and has given me the best experiences and friends of my life. As I continue on my path through NFTY, I am looking for new ways to make not only mine, but other people's time in NFTY better. My top priority in NFTY is to create new connections for everyone and ensure that all members of Missouri Valley has someone they can turn to. This concept has been one of the most impactful things to me regarding youth group; having NFTY "giants" (a person in NFTY who you aspire to be like) to turn to as well as a phenomenal group of people who I can always call on if I need. I want to be on Regional Board to instill my platform of ideas that will welcome new members in NFTY and generate connections between all of the MV-ites. I hope I am able to impact someone in NFTY, in the way that my "giants" impacted me.

What are your qualifications for the position of Western MVP?

I believe I am qualified to serve as Western Membership Vice President. Last year I served as the Frankel Club Representative (JYG Liaison) while this year I am the Membership Vice President (MVP) of my youth group, FCTYG. Both of these positions have taught me valuable skills in regards to increasing membership at events and being a welcoming face to everyone. These leadership positions have also helped me develop skills allowing me to connect with younger generations as they enter NFTY. Being in the Membership Vice President Network under Jade Groobman and Daniel Pomerantz, showed me how to best work as a Membership Vice President as they shared their experiences and knowledge with me. Last summer, I attended NFTY Mechina, where I met regional MVP's from all across the nation. I was able to develop my skills as an MVP and learn more about what it means to be a regional MVP. These experiences and positions of responsibility have helped me prepare myself for the event of my election as the next year's Western Membership Vice President.

What traits do you possess that would make you an effective regional board member?

There are several traits I possess that I think will go great with being a regional board member. I am an outgoing person and I try my hardest to be approachable and easy to talk to. This is one of the most important parts of being a regional board member in my mind, because it will provide me with the ability to make friends easily and allow everybody to feel comfortable around me. I have also played team sports since I was five and I have learned how to cooperate and work together smoothly through sports. My team working skills are another characteristic that will help me work on a regional board, as teamwork is essential to achieve our mutual and individual goals. I have been on my TYG board for two years, with my position revolving around talking to people, getting people to come to events, and making people feel welcome. These experiences have taught me what it is like to be on a board and how to work with my counterparts easily, along with possessing an understanding of the responsibilities of a board member.

What have you achieved in positions of leadership in NFTY you're proud of?

Over my time as an MVP in FCTYG, I have helped to increase the number of people that come to our events, and have seen multiple first timers at many of our events as well. At a social action program this year, we had 7 non board members, including two first timers. This is double our average from the last year as our small youth group has continued to grow. I have also helped plan and run exciting rush events for the 8th graders in our temple such as tubing and a summer party, inviting future NFTY-ites from across Denver to give them a small taste of what youth group has to offer. This later contributed to kids joining our youth group and being excited to join NFTY as a whole. FCTYG saw an increase in members registered for Spring Chavurah since last year and our regional attendance has continued to grow. I was also granted the opportunity to help group lead at regional events this year and have worked with other leaders in NFTY to make these events go smoothly and be as fun as possible.

What are you looking forward to accomplishing for MV? How do you plan to achieve these things?

As the Western Membership Vice President it is my goal to create new friendships and strengthen the friendships within the region. I intend to help enhance our comfortable environment for everybody to have a good time in, and help bring kids, who all have incredibly different backgrounds and stories, together. I am going to try to talk to every person at regional events and create new friends as I go. It is my goal to have a real conversation with each MV NFTY-ite throughout my term. Doing so will allow me to not only make new friends but gain an even greater appreciation for this region than I already have. I am also looking to mend the gap between NFTY 678 and the high schoolers. We lose large amounts of kids after they leave religious school, and I am planning to keep them involved in NFTY. I am going to help MVP's across the Region and each member within a youth group, plan fun NFTY 678 programs and attempt to create connections between the 678-ers and the high schoolers.