

ORTHODOX UNION

New Jersey NCSY Sends Largest Student Leadership Delegation Ever For Disaster Relief, November 9-13

OU Staff

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Disaster Relief 101 has become a favorite unofficial elective course for **New Jersey** students in *yeshiva* and public high schools, under the auspices of New Jersey NCSY. **Rabbi Ethan Katz**, Associate Director of the Region, based in **Teaneck**, will be leading a delegation of **17 Jewish teen leaders** – the largest delegation yet — to **Nashville** from **Wednesday, November 9 – Sunday, November 13**. The purpose of the trip will be to provide physical support to help rebuilding efforts in the city and spiritual support to the local Jewish community.

Participating students from **Torah Academy of Bergen County (TABC)** in **Teaneck**, and **Fair Lawn Public High School** will be working with **Southeast Nashville Recovery**, an **Antioch, TN**-based community organization dedicated to improving communal needs post-disaster relief. Shabbat will be spent with OU member synagogue **Sherith Israel Congregation** in Nashville.

This is the fourth year Rabbi Katz has been leading leadership missions in humanitarian aid and Jewish values. The teenagers come together from across the state to exemplify that acts of kindness can bridge Jews of all backgrounds, while reaching out to help non-Jews as well.

NCSY is the international youth program of the Orthodox Union. Its New Jersey Region leads the way nationally in sending out these humanitarian missions to locations far from home.

Rabbi Yaakov Glasser, Regional Director of New Jersey NCSY, declared, “Our *chesed* (acts of loving kindness) missions and *tikkun olam* (making the world a better place) trips empower Jewish teens to make a meaningful and lasting impact on the world around them. We are providing the only program that brings together Jewish teens from across the spectrum of affiliation with the common experience of giving of themselves. For many of our parents, fighting for Soviet Jewry and activism for other causes was formative in the development of their Jewish identity. These trips afford Jewish teens the opportunity to make a real difference in the world around them.”

Explained Rabbi Katz, “We are taking the brightest and most determined Jewish teenagers and we are empowering them with the experiences of what it means to live our lives as Jews. We have a responsibility to help others in need — Jews and non-Jews alike — and to make this world better than the day before. These students are not afraid to get down-and-dirty to help strangers or to share their joy of Torah in distant Jewish communities.”

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