

Candidate for the 30th VAC BBG N'siah - Leah Charlotte Kaplan

What is your vision for Virginia Council? What are three concrete steps you will take to achieve this vision, and why is this the direction in which we should go?

In our 30th year as a council and our 76th year as a movement, the B'nai B'rith Girls of Virginia Council are now more than ever given a strong foundation to make a change. Through the unique programs we offer, every Jewish teen in Virginia, and beyond, has the ability to impact the Jewish future. No matter who you are or how you got here, we all have a purpose for joining this movement, and as the 30th Virginia Council N'siah, I want to make that purpose **come to life**.

As our first step, we must bring awareness to the larger network of opportunities that BBYO can give each of its members. Rather than overwhelming new members with endless acronyms and niche terms, we must use a more **conceptual** approach to presenting the opportunities that we offer. For example, rather than talking about CLTC by using its name and talking about mock chapters and shira, we can express this summer program as a learning opportunity for leadership in BBYO and beyond, and a chance to meet people from all over the world. We need to emphasize that the opportunity to carve your own path is tangible and doable in BBYO.

After discovering their passion for the movement, BBGs will often run for a board position. They will come up with extraordinary and powerful ideas to move us forward, but they will never move past the original conception on election day. Not only do these ideas get lost, but the voters do not necessarily get what they voted for. This takes power away from voters and puts the true influence in the hands of these ideas. I want to make the loss of these ideas a problem of the past. Soon after elections, presidents should follow up with those elected to make concrete plans to **put their ideas into action**. If we are given a platform as powerful as BBYO is, we must ensure that all we hope to do for our movement is given a fair shot at being acted upon.

Once these ideas are ready to be mobilized, we need to ensure that the necessary tools are in reach. By **using our resources** like staff, parents, the surrounding community, and our sister B'nai B'rith Girls, we can make dreams into reality. The completion of these ideas will not only benefit the community, but it will build confidence in the leader.

Each BBG has the opportunity and ability to change the world around them, and I want to do everything I can to make it happen. It's vital that all BBGs understand that BBYO is not just a place to have fun and make connections with other Jewish teens; that it is a place that they can make visible changes in the Jewish community. Being a B'nai B'rith Girl is all about knowing that you are making the Jewish future brighter and more powerful, so we should emphasize that opportunity.