

Samantha Lessa

Rivka Fox Youth Award

Samantha Lessa is seventeen years old and a senior at St. Francis Preparatory High School in Fresh Meadows. She is a member of the National Honor Society and is a peer tutor, peer counselor, member of the math team, and volunteer for children with autism at P.S.4, a nearby elementary school.

She was first introduced to the B'nai B'rith Youth Organization in 2001 as a member of teen connection, and joined the chapter Kallah BBG at the Bay Terrace Jewish Center in the 8th grade. She has served on Kallah's board for the past three years as chapter Mazkirah and Shlichah, in charge of communication, community service, social action, and Judaism. Her leadership and dedication have helped Kallah grow into one of the strongest chapter's in the Big Apple Region.

She is recognized for developing and organizing outstanding Jewish programs including B'nai Brith Girls inter-chapter Shabbat, and has lead her chapter in many local and city community events that include the American Cancer Societies' Relay for Life event, and NYC winter wishes holiday gift service for underprivileged families. She has participated in Project Hope food delivery to the elderly and has marched in the Israeli Day Parade since 2007.

Outside of school and BBYO, she has participated in the C.L.A.S.S.P program (Consortia for Learning and Service to Special Populations) and works as an after-school program counselor at P.S. 169 in Bay Terrace. She has spent the last 8 summers at Camp Lohikan as a camper, Counselor in Training, and Junior Counselor. At camp, she is an instructor of the circus arts program, specializing in the flying trapeze. Samantha is currently applying for fall 2010 college admissions and plans to continue making a difference in her community and inspiring others around her to do the same.