

In yet another paradigm shifting program, NCSY has created the Jerusalem Ambassador program for forty-seven student leaders from a myriad of public schools across North America. Using inspiration and vital program development tools from the innovative Project InCite team from the BJENY-SAGES, NCSY once again offers students the Israel trip of a lifetime. These students were chosen from a very large application pool for their leadership potential, demonstrated knowledge of Israel and its challenges and its opportunities as well as a commitment towards advancing the cause of the Jewish people and the Jewish state. "Israel's most important battles are currently being fought in the battlefield of public opinion, and today we are currently out manned and out armed." Says Rabbi Aryeh Lightstone, Director of NCSY New York speaking of the issues addressed by the program. Jerusalem Ambassadors is a program specifically designed to recruit and develop the top teens from North America who are leaders on their high school campus and will be leaders on their university campus as well. With the guidance and mentorship of Mr. Phil Rosen, founder of American Friends of Likud as well as being a power broker in Israeli business and politics, the Jerusalem Ambassadors have had a unique opportunity to understand the major issues facing Israel today from an insider's perspective. This past Monday morning the Jerusalem Ambassadors had the chance to hear a special presentation from Mr. Ari Harrow, former Chief of Staff for Prime Minister Netanyahu and Mr. Phil Rosen. The teens, many of whom this trip is their first time in Israel had the opportunity to hear about issues ranging from negotiating with terrorists to the current relationship between Israel and the USA. By listening to the riveting presentations and having the opportunity to follow up with any questions that the Ambassadors had these future leaders had the opportunity to understand these critical issues from the very people helping to influence policy and not from so called pundits. It is precisely because of this NCSY led program staffed by educator and tour guide par excellence Rabbi Ben Zion Goldfischer that current Jewish leaders both in America and in Israel feel that the next generation of university students will be better prepared to articulate the case for Israel than the current generation.

The Jerusalem Ambassadors will spend their summer touring Israel from North to South, East to West. They will not only be seeing the security fence, running a camp for kids from Sderot, visiting the borders, and meeting with parents of a navy commando who was on the flotilla, but they will be seeing these critical pieces of infrastructure with the engineers that designed them and Israeli Defense Force Generals that will explain their importance and why they were designed the way that they were. The Ambassadors will also have the privilege to participate in an immersion program at NCSY's own Kollel and Michlelet for a crash course in basic Judaism as well as hands on training in leadership by the world famous Dale Carnegie leadership trainers. When the Ambassadors return to America they will be tasked with monthly brain trust meetings as well as in developing active and effective Israel Advocacy programs on their high school and university campuses. In the war of words on campuses across the United States it looks as though reinforcements are indeed on their way.