

# B'nai Mitzvah Individual Project Suggestion List

The b'nai mitzvah student will pick an individual mitzvah project that is aligned with their passions, connects to their parsha, and/or they find meaningful. One of the goals of the individual mitzvah project is to serve as a jumping off point for a lifelong commitment to tikkun olam. Therefore, it is more important that a student chooses a project that they are passionate about and wants to continue after their b'nai mitzvah rather than focusing on the project as merely a requirement of becoming a b'nai mitzvah. With that being said, the b'nai mitzvah student should put in a meaningful amount of time into their project.

Students can look at the project suggestion list for ideas. Students will provide their b'nai mitzvah tutor with updates as they work on their project, and the tutor will keep track of the project's process. Please use Jessica Herrmann as a resource throughout the project! She can brainstorm ideas with the b'nai mitzvah students, help troubleshoot during projects, and answer any questions. Jessica can be reached at [Jherrmann@templest.org](mailto:Jherrmann@templest.org) or 914-307-0476.

## **Bikur Cholim – ב'קור חולים**

### **Visiting the Sick**

#### **Klezkids**

This is an inter-synagogue youth Klezmer band under the direction of Kenny Green. Visit and entertain at nursing homes and synagogues. The group meets to practice every other Thursday evening at Shaaray Tefila and other area synagogues. Contact Person: Kenny Green

**Contact Person: Kenny Green (914) 276-0497 or Kenny Green - [kqklez@gmail.com](mailto:kqklez@gmail.com)**

#### **Friends of Karen**

Friends of Karen works to ensure the financial and emotional well-being of families coping with the extraordinary demands of their child's life-threatening illnesses. Students can organize a school supplies drive, create a Thanksgiving gift basket, adopt a family for the holidays or volunteer in the gift pantry.

**Contact Person: Denise Tredwell (914) 617-4052 - <http://www.friendsofkaren.org>**

## **Cibud Z'keinim – כבוד זקנים**

### **Honoring the Elderly**

#### **Somers Manor Nursing Home**

Help lead a short Shabbat Service with the residents. Smiles abound as you make new friends and share your Judaism with the elderly community. Visit on Fridays when the Temple is not there as a group. The service is from 4:00 - 4:30. **A minimum of five (5) visits required.**

**Contact Person: Richard Schaeffer - (914) 232-5101 x3810**

#### **Dorot**

Students and their families share the joy and warmth of the holidays with an elder in a meaningful way, by delivering a package of traditional holiday foods and visiting for about an hour. There are package delivery programs for Sukkot & 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance, Winter Package Delivery, Chanukah, Purim, and Passover. DOROT will provide you with the dates of this year's events when you call. Two- (2) visit minimum required.

**Contact Person: Susan Richter 212-769-2850 or [SRichter@dorotusa.org](mailto:SRichter@dorotusa.org)**

## **V'ahavta L'reyacha K'mocha – ואהבת לרעך כמוך**

### **Love Your Neighbor**

#### **The Katonah Community Center**

The Community Center distributes food and clothing to people in need throughout Northern Westchester. Projects include helping to put food on the pantry shelves or into grocery bags for families in need. You can also help weigh, sort, and hang the clothes that come in as donations and go out to the people who need them. **Minimum three shifts at 3 hours each.** Another option for community service is to organize a mini food drive with your friends or family in your neighborhood. *Open Tuesday - Friday 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM Saturday 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM*

**Contact Person: Claire Murray 914- 232-6572 ext. 105 or [cmurray@communitycenternw.org](mailto:cmurray@communitycenternw.org)**

#### **Special Olympics**

Opportunity to assist with single day sporting events: keeping score, basketball skills, floor hockey, and seasonal events such as volleyball. All students must have an adult chaperone.

**Contact person: Ellen Pikula 845-765-2497 Ext. 6204 - [epikula@nyso.org](mailto:epikula@nyso.org)**

### **Miracle League of Westchester**

The Miracle League of Westchester is a league for special needs children and adults that enables them to play baseball at a specially-designed adaptive field. Each Miracle League player is assigned a buddy for each game. The buddy is there to protect the player from balls, assist the player in batting and running the bases, and to be a friend on and off the field. **A minimum of three (3) games required. Contact: Rick Monzon (914) 522-1547 or [www.mlwny.org](http://www.mlwny.org)**

### **VIP Buddies Program**

The VIP (Very Important Player) program provides a safe, fun environment with trained coaches, VIP Buddies, and volunteers who facilitate an enriching experience that the players and their families will cherish forever. As a VIP buddy you are able to provide a quality soccer experience for individuals whose physical or mental disabilities.

**Contact person:** [VIP@ChappaquaAYSO.org](mailto:VIP@ChappaquaAYSO.org)

### **Backyard Sports Cares**

Backyard Sports Cares programs are enhanced by the participation of energetic committed volunteers. We are looking for young athletes and student leaders to serve as peer mentors in our existing community outreach programs.

**Contact Person:** 914-304-4052

### **Neighbor's Link**

Neighbors Link was founded to meet the needs of 3,000 Latino immigrants who represent 26% of Mount Kisco's total population. It is a community learning center for low-income working people. Volunteers are needed to tutor English as a Second Language. Also, committed volunteers are needed for computer training and to help with our nightly Children's Program. Knowledge of Spanish is helpful but not necessary.

**Contact Person: Amy Werner, Volunteer Coordinator 914-666-3410 ext. 16. [awerner@neighborslink.org](mailto:awerner@neighborslink.org)**

### **Pass it On Kid's Kloset**

Pass It On Kid's Kloset is a not-for-profit, volunteer-driven program affiliated with WJCS that provides Westchester County children and families in need with donated clothing and related items free of charge. Children, newborn to 18 years of age, receive "bags of love." Each "bag of love" contains a week's worth of clothing prepared into outfits free of rips, stains, missing buttons, etc. Project should include a supply drive and then 2 visits to Kid's Kloset in White Plains to help sort and pack goods.

**Contact Stephanie Roth - 914-831-7616 - [kidskloset@wjcs.com](mailto:kidskloset@wjcs.com)**

### **Camp Clothesline**

Camp Clothesline is an online camp clothing consignment store where you can buy gently used logoed camp clothing at a significant discount. You can also sell your outgrown camp clothes and make a profit while cleaning out your closet. When the items sell, half of the selling price will be directly donated to SCOPE (Summer Camp Opportunities Promote Education).

SCOPE's mission is to provide children in need the edge to succeed in life through the summer camp experience. They accomplish this by funding summer camp scholarships at nonprofit, resident camps where children will benefit from a positive, safe and healthy environment led by excellent adult role models, who will help them develop their full potential.

<http://campclothesline.com>

### **Baby Bank**

Baby Bank provides basic necessities and essentials for babies. The mission is to help local families in need keep their babies clean, healthy, and happy. You can help organize a drive, sort items, and spread awareness.

**Contact Person:** [sandeelevinson@gmail.com](mailto:sandeelevinson@gmail.com) [www.914cares.org/baby-bank](http://www.914cares.org/baby-bank)

## **Lilmod U'ilamed – ללמוד וללמד**

### **Learning and Teaching**

#### **Mt. Kisco Day Care Center**

Very responsible and committed volunteers are needed to work with their choice of one of four age groups in Mt. Kisco. Volunteers are asked to give an hour-and-a-half for six consecutive weeks. Volunteers must be reliable, as continuity is very important when working with young children, ages range from infancy to school-aged.

**Contact Person:** Jennifer Bancroft - [jen@paynecentral.com](mailto:jen@paynecentral.com)

#### **Boys and Girls Club of Northern Westchester**

Very responsible and committed volunteers are needed to work with preschool or school age children during weekday afternoons. **Volunteers will work one afternoon a week for at least a six week period.** Activities include helping the older children with homework, assisting with arts and crafts, and supervision. The program ends at 6:00 PM, so a 3:30 arrival time is preferred. Monthly volunteer orientations are mandatory for students wishing to volunteer at the club. Call for dates and times of the orientations.

**Contact Person:** Barbara Cutri ~ (914) 666-8069 ext 107 - [bcutrie@bgcnw.com](mailto:bcutrie@bgcnw.com)

### **Pleasantville Cottage School and Edenwald Center**

The school houses children who have come from severely abused and neglected homes. The program involves a high level of commitment, including an interview and orientation. Therefore, we ask that volunteers and their parents make a commitment for the entire school year, October-May. The Junior Tutor program meets once a week for an hour on Thursday afternoon from 4:00-5:00. A junior tutor is paired with a student from the Edenwald School. The session is divided between having the tutor help the student with their homework followed by socializing with the student through games and activities. To further enhance the relationship between student and tutor, the family takes the student off grounds once a month for dinner or an activity.

**Contact Person: Bonnie Loewenstein ~ (914) 741-4558 - [Jogbon@aol.com](mailto:Jogbon@aol.com)**

### **Westhab**

The Coachman Family Center is one of the largest homeless shelters that cares for over 100 families. Volunteers can tutor once a week for a **required minimum of 6 weeks** from 3:30-5:30, which consists of helping the children with their homework when they return from school. You could also set up your own activity in the recreation room with arts & crafts or group activities children.

*Contact Person: John Parssinen (914) 345-2800 ext. 22 or [John.Parssinen@westhab.org](mailto:John.Parssinen@westhab.org)*

## **Pikuach Nefesh – פיקוח נפש**

### **Saving a Life**

#### **Afya Foundation**

Afya's mission is to improve global health by rescuing surplus medical supplies and delivering them to underserved health systems around the world. Afya rescues unused medical supplies and equipment from hospitals, nursing homes, corporations, and individuals in the greater NYC area to support ongoing health initiatives worldwide. Help collect, sort, and pack supplies for urgently needed shipments. You will work with the founder on crafting a personalized b'nai mitzvah project

**Contact person:** [erica.quiruz@afyafoundation.org](mailto:erica.quiruz@afyafoundation.org)

#### **My Sisters Place**

My Sisters Place a cutting-edge leader and resource in the field of anti-violence programming, advocacy, shelter and legal services for women and children in crisis. The needs of the My Sister's Place are always changing, but they are willing to work with volunteers to create meaningful mitzvah projects. (i.e. drive for duffle bags filled with new twin sheet sets and towels and/or diapers and baby wipes.) **Contact Person: Sylvia Lederman (914) 683-1333 ext. 125**

### **Nothing But Nets**

Every 30 seconds a child dies from malaria. Children who are able to survive the disease are faced with physical and mental challenges, such as poor growth and development. Every \$10 donation to Nothing But Nets goes directly toward the purchase, distribution and education about the proper use of an insecticide-treated bed net. Bed nets can prevent malaria transmission by up to 90 percent. Over 7 million nets have been purchased so far! One idea would be to host a basketball game for you and your friends (or against the rabbi!). [www.nothingbutnets.net](http://www.nothingbutnets.net)

### **Gilda's Club in White Plains**

Gilda's Club caters to all members of families touched by cancer. They offer cancer support, networking, lectures, family support groups, social events and children's programming. If students are unable to volunteer at the facility, you can help out by collecting various items.

**Contact Person: Essie Steckler (914) 644-8844** or [esteckler@gildasclubwestchester.org](mailto:esteckler@gildasclubwestchester.org)

*Click here to see volunteer opportunities - <http://gildasclubwestchester.org/support-us/volunteer/>*

### **Agahozo Shalom Youth Village**

Working along side Yemin Orde, ASYV involves children that have had a traumatic past that they need to repair in order for them to live in the present and fulfill their dreams, only they are located in Rwanda. You can help donate to these children and help them have a bright future.

*For more information: [www.agahozo-shalom.org](http://www.agahozo-shalom.org)*

### **Soles for Souls**

Soles for Souls collects shoes for people in Haiti and other countries in need. You can help us sponsor a shoe drive by collecting and packaging shoes. Additionally, it is recommend to collect \$1.00 per pair to help offset the fees of shipping the shoes to the warehouse, or you can drop the shoes off at one of their warehouses. Locations can be found on the website.

*For more information: [www.soles4souls.org/get\\_involved/shoe\\_drive.html](http://www.soles4souls.org/get_involved/shoe_drive.html)*

### **Westchester Pancreatic Cancer Research Walk**

Pancreatic cancer is often labeled a silent disease because many times the signs and symptoms can go unnoticed until the cancer is in the advanced stage. More than 38,000 people will die from the disease this year alone. Of those diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, just six percent survive five years and most with advanced cancer die within a year. You can join in the fight by raising money and walking for a cure. Walk is in late April.

<http://www.pancreaticcancerresearchevents.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=1128468>

## Ha' achalat Re'evim – האכלת רעבים

### Feeding the Hungry

#### Food Bank of Westchester

Volunteers will unpack and sort foods at the Food Bank warehouse in Elmsford. They will also repack bulk items into smaller boxes. This food is then distributed to needy persons throughout Westchester. **A minimum of four (4) visits required.** Call to set-up working times. All students must have an adult chaperone. **Contact Person: Nancy Lyons (914) 923-1100 ext. 207**  
<http://www.foodbankforwestchester.org>

#### The Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry

The Interfaith Pantry offers a wide variety of free food items weekly. Clients choose what they need in amounts customized to family size. Help to stock the shelves, organize donations, and pack food packages for clients.

**Contact Person:** [volunteer@mountkiscofoodpantry.org](mailto:volunteer@mountkiscofoodpantry.org)

#### Hebrew Union College Soup Kitchen

Every Monday evening, in every season, the student-run HUC Soup Kitchen welcomes over 200 homeless and hungry guests for a nutritious meal. Evenings start at 5:00 PM. **Minimum of two (2) visits required.**

Contact: [hucsoupkitchen@gmail.com](mailto:hucsoupkitchen@gmail.com)

## Klal Yisrael – כלל ישראל

### All of Israel is Responsible for One Another

#### Dror for the Wounded

The Dror for the Wounded Foundation helps severely wounded Israeli soldiers and provides these brave individuals with financial assistance for medical and psychological treatments, education and training, small construction projects, advocacy and general financial aid. You can choose a current soldier, and raise money to meet the soldier's specific needs. You will also have an opportunity to correspond with the soldier.

**Contact Person:** [dror4wounded@drorfoundation.org](mailto:dror4wounded@drorfoundation.org); (646) 710-3767

### **FIDF – Friends of the Israeli Defense Forces**

FIDF initiates and helps support educational, social, cultural, and recreational programs & facilities for the young men and women soldiers of Israel who defend the Jewish homeland. There are 4 programs you can support: College scholarships for soldiers, support for soldiers who are in financial distress, support for soldiers who have no family, and support to families who have lost a loved one in the line of duty. Visit [www.fidf.org](http://www.fidf.org) more info.

### **Yemin Orde Youth Village**

Yemin Orde, located in Israel, is dedicated to meeting the needs of Jewish adolescent survivors of trauma and displacement, many of whom have been separated from their family and are far away from their native land and culture. You can put your money to good use and send a variety of needed items to these children.

For more information: <http://www.yeminorde.org/doc/BnaiMitzvahProjects.pdf>

### **Pitch In**

Pitch In For Baseball & Softball allows you to give back to the community by sharing your love for baseball/softball with children around the globe. Each year, PIFBS makes a donation of baseball and softball equipment to Israel. We work with the Israel Association of Baseball (IAB) who communicates their equipment needs to us. If the equipment you collect meets the needs of IAB, we are happy to put some of your donation aside for IAB to choose from.

**Contact Person:** Meredith Kim at [meredith.kim@pifbs.org](mailto:meredith.kim@pifbs.org)

### **Israel Tennis & Education Center**

The Israel Tennis & Education Centers Foundation improves and enriches the lives of more than 20,000 Israeli children each year. An ITEC 'Children to Children' Mitzvah Project is a powerful way of giving back to those less fortunate. You and your family can "play it forward" and have a profound impact on underprivileged children throughout Israel.

**Contact person:** [jglodstein@israeltenniscenters.org](mailto:jglodstein@israeltenniscenters.org)

## **Tza'ar Ba'alei Chayim – צער בעלי חיים**

### **Being Kind to Animals**

#### **Pet Rescue**

Pet Rescue is a volunteer-based organization dedicated to saving dogs and cats and finding them safe and nurturing homes.

**Contact Person:** [nypetrescue@gmail.com](mailto:nypetrescue@gmail.com)



### **SPCA of Westchester (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals)**

Although because of insurance reasons, volunteers under 18 are not allowed to work directly with the animals. There still many ways to help. Find ways to raise money for "Wish List" items or get donations of pet supplies for dogs or cats. Call to find out other ways to help.

Contact Person: Alice Shanahan (914) 941-2894 x28 [www.spca914.org/volunteer.htm](http://www.spca914.org/volunteer.htm)

### **Adopt-A-Dog**

Adopt-A-Dog is a unique not-for-profit rescue and adoption service dedicated to finding good, permanent homes for many wonderful dogs and cats that are waiting either in shelters or private homes to be adopted. Volunteers are asked to do a "wish list" collection drive for the organization. Call or see website to find items that are needed. Contact Person: Becky McCulloh ~ (914) 273-1674

For more information: <http://adopt-a-dog.org/how-to-help/>

### **Safe Haven Farm Sanctuary**

Safe Haven focuses on rescuing abused and neglected farm animals. The Farm needs help with cleaning, socializing the animals, gardening, outreach, and various other projects going on around the farm. [www.safehavenfarmsanctuary.org](http://www.safehavenfarmsanctuary.org) - Call 845-724-5138  
[farmanimals.crain@gmail.com](mailto:farmanimals.crain@gmail.com)

## **Bal Tashchit – בל תשחית**

### **Do Not Waste**

#### **Marshlands Conservancy**

Volunteers are needed to help with maintenance of the grounds, where you will be using quiet hand tools, and wildlife habitat. Removal of tidal trash from the shorelines as well. A variety of projects are available including trail maintenance. **A minimum of five (5) visits required** for two-hour periods.

Contact Person: Scott Williamson (914) 835-4466

#### **InterGenerate**

Creating environmental and social sustainability around shared concerns for food security, InterGenerate reaches across traditional social boundaries to bring people together to grow our food locally, sharing the work while deepening ties to each other. InterGenerate has founded vegetable gardens, egg coops and is expanding to beehives. Every garden has a Giving Garden that sources local senior centers and food pantries. They have gardens in Millwood, Chappaqua, Katonah, and a very large giving garden in Mount Kisco adjacent to the Boys & Girls Club.  
<http://www.intergenerate.net>