

21 MAY 2015

52° Overcast

# Students Help Minnesota Flood Victims

*Molly Brodsky, 10th grader from Fair Lawn, among the volunteers*

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🕒 May 19, 2011

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Twelve students from Ma'ayanot Yeshiva High School for Girls (<http://www.maayanot.org/>) recently participated in a disaster-relief mission to aid Red River flood victims near Hammond, Minn.

The sophomore and junior girls, including 10th grader Molly Brodsky of Fair Lawn, all said the trip taught them the power of the human spirit and put into perspective what's truly valuable in a person's life. The mission was coordinated between the high school and New Jersey NCSY (<http://www.njnscy.org/index.html>), which is an international youth movement of the Orthodox Union.

"I remember while we were walking around Hammond an older lady walked up to us and asked us to help her clean," said Brodsky. "We were just going with the flow and helping anyone who needed us."

The disaster-relief team included the students, New Jersey NCSY Assistant Regional Director Rabbi Ethan Katz, NCSY Fair Lawn Chapter adviser Miriam Apter and Ma'ayanot faculty members Rabbi Zev Prince and Eileen Schwartz. The team worked with Nechama: The Jewish Response to Disaster (<http://www.nechama.org/>), which is a Minnesota-based organization that assists communities in need.

About 60 students expressed interest in the trip, and that number got reduced to 12 throughout the application process, said Ariella Steinreich, Ma'ayanot's community service coordinator and older sister to mission participant Daniella Steinreich.

The teens who volunteered for were Brodsky; Chani Dubin, 10th grade, Teaneck; Gali Sadek, 10th grade, Teaneck; Julie Schwartz, 10th grade, Clifton; Daniella Steinreich, 10th grade, Teaneck; Rachel Weil, 10th grade, Teaneck; Ilana

Weinberger, 10th grade, Highland Park; Emily Blumenfeld, 11th grade, Teaneck; Rebecca Lipschitz, 11th grade, Monsey, N.Y.; Daniella Meyer, 11th grade, Teaneck; and Natali Moyal, 11th grade, Englewood.

Once the girls arrived in Minnesota, they got to work clearing debris, painting homes and assisting town residents in any way that they could. They started working each day by 9 a.m. and ended at about 5:30 p.m.

Four days after returning to New Jersey, nine of the girls shared their thoughts on the trip. They remembered one resident in particular, an older lady named Doris, who lost her house and most of her possessions in the April flood. The girls said a relative built Doris another home before they arrived.

“You could see the line on her barn where the top of the water went up to, and it was a foot from the roof,” said Chani Colton, an 11th grade student from Teaneck. “I can’t imagine that much water. Most of the stuff went to the dumpster, but there was too much stuff, so we had to burn it. It was mostly insulation, floor boards, her possessions.”

The girls said they threw out a lot of insulation that was so water-logged and heavy that they needed wheelbarrows to transport it. In all, the girls were able to assist three homeowners during the bulk of their trip.

On Sunday, the girls spent time with children at a local homeless shelter. Ariella Steinreich said the various activities during the trip were meant to extend the borders of the school’s community service program.

“By doing this we wanted the girls to learn other ways they could volunteer,” she said. “Later that day, before returning home to New Jersey, the girls participated in the Susan G. Komen for the Cure 5K Walk.”

The girls walked on behalf of Sharsheret (<http://www.sharsheret.org/>), a national organization based out of Teaneck that assists Jewish women affected by breast cancer.

“What was so inspirational about the walk was that survivors wore bright pink shirts so they stood out from the group,” said Daniella Steinreich. “There were so many of them.”

Dubin said it was inspiring how despite losing all their material possessions, the flood victims remained optimistic about the future and always managed to smile.

“Everyone was so friendly and always had a smile on their face,” said Sadek. “It really brightened our mood. You could see how far a smile goes and brightens someone’s day.”

Blumenfeld said toward the end of the mission, the girls asked among themselves about what would they save if they only had a few seconds.

“Everyone chose something that had to do with their family or something sentimental,” she said. “That made me think about what I have. At the end of the day, things are just things. But family is family; you would never want to lose your family. It makes you very thankful that you have everything you have.”



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## TOP NEWS NEW JERSEY

### Self-Serve Fueling In New Jersey Already Runs Out of Gas (/new-jersey/chatham/self-serve-fueling-new-jersey-runs-out-gas-0)



Senate president says he won't allow bill to reach floor for a vote.

### Largest Heroin Bust in N.Y. History Traced to New Jersey (/new-jersey/montville/largest-heroin-bust-ny-history-traced-north-jersey-0)



Alleged members of Mexican drug cartel may have picked up 154 pounds of heroin in Montville, report says.

### Cops: South Jersey Man Found Dead Under Mattress In N.Y. Hotel Room (/new-jersey/westdeptford/new-jersey-man-found-dead-under-mattress-ny-hotel-room)



Roderick Goodwin, described by police as a "pimp," was found dead in a case that authorities have classified as a homicide.

### Near-Record Haul: 820-Pound Shark Caught off New Jersey Coast (/new-jersey/oceancity/near-record-haul-820-pound-mako-shark-caught-cape-may-coast)



The crew of the Missfit caught the shark after a battle that lasted over an hour.

### VIDEO: How Will The Jersey Shore Beaches Fare On Memorial Day Weekend? (/new-jersey/manasquan/video-how-are-the-jersey-shore-beaches-faring-

today)



New Jersey Beach Cams provides a steady stream of video of the beach areas. Just refresh each video page to keep them running.

## TOP NEWS USA

### 'Father' To Marry 'Son' In Bucks County -- With Court's Blessing (/pennsylvania/doylestown/father-and-son-married-one-same-sex-couples-story)



A same-sex couple in their 70s used adoption as a path to legal rights. Now, they say they feel 'enormous' relief they can actually marry.

### Allegedly Bony McNugget at Center of McDonald's Injury Lawsuit (/illinois/lakeview/allegedly-bony-mcnugget-center-mcdonalds-lawsuit)



Chicago-area man claims a "defective" nugget put him into an emergency room with mouth wounds.

### Pacifica Whale Marred with Graffiti One of Two to be Buried at Beach (/california/pacifica/two-beached-whales-be-buried-beach-0)



Two whales that turned up dead on a Pacifica beach in recent weeks will be buried there at the request of the city, according to police.

### Over \$75,000 in Grateful Dead Memorabilia Stolen From McHenry Co. Auction (/illinois/crystallake/over-75000-grateful-dead-memorabilia-stolen-mchenry-co-auction)



Police are hopeful the valuable items will be returned without damage.

## UPDATED: Massive Recall Aims to Fix Airbag Flaw Linked to Traffic Deaths (/michigan/grossepointe/takata-makes-major-announcement-airbag-recall)



More than 33.8 million vehicles will be recalled to correct a flaw in air bags linked to a half dozen deaths and more than 100 injuries.

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