

## **Houston- December 2017**

### **Faith Hurvitz**

With my participation in the J-Teen service trip to Houston, Texas I truly grasped the destruction and tragedy that came from Hurricane Harvey. I heard statistics about those who died and those who lost their homes, but I was only able to understand and connect with it when I saw it in person. On my first day, I helped deconstruct a house that was damaged by the flood. I met the homeowner, and when I talked to her, I saw how thankful she was for our little contribution. Over the trip, I became sick, and my participation became increasingly more difficult for me, but I was determined to participate because I knew that my cold was so minimal when I was helping people who had maximum issues. From the physical actions of working with habitats to visiting the elderly to restocking a grocery store that was part of the food bank, the trip gave me a significant understanding of how others lived. I am so accustomed to people being able to purchase food for their families and always having a roof over their heads. We take schools, and our temples for granted as people in Houston probably did before but without warning their entire lives have changed. The most impressive thing to me that I have received from this trip is the bond of the Jewish community. On this trip, I saw and learned about how the Jewish community pulled together in the time of crisis after the flood, and even three months later they remain to.