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### *JTeen Philadelphia Trip Reflection*

When we arrived in Philadelphia, the first activity that we did was go to Friday night services at the Penn Hillel. There were different options for what kind of service we wanted to go to; we could attend a reform, conservative, or orthodox service. After services we ate at the Penn Hillel and got to know our peers who were on the trip with us; both the JTeen and the West Hab members. If anybody had a relative that lived nearby, they could see them. My friend has two siblings who go to Penn and he saw them, and I saw my cousin who also goes to Penn. Then, after dinner we went to a room and did some icebreakers and got to know everyone more. The trip started off fun and allowed us to get to know more people, setting the tone for the rest of the weekend.

On Saturday, we learned about the murals that Philadelphia is famous for and then walked around Chinatown and visited some murals. After going over our theme for the trip and discussing ways to impact society positively, a man came in and talked to us about some of the different murals that were in Philadelphia and their respective histories: how and why they came to be, who painted them, etc. After that session, we walked around the Reading Market and ate and then we toured Chinatown. While strolling through Chinatown, we encountered a Chinese man who explained a mural that we were looking at. He talked about Chinatown's history and how he helped his people as they were settling in and I learned quite a bit from him. Then, we briefly visited a small factory where they made fortune cookies, and although it was basically just a small room with two machines, it was very cool. The whole afternoon was very fun and impactful because I learned so much about the old and new culture of Philadelphia.

Saturday night we started our real community service. We went to a warehouse that was owned by Our Closet, a foundation that helps to provide clothes to people who cannot afford them, and helped to sort clothes for them. There was a lot of work to be done! All of the volunteers, JTeen as well as two other young adult groups, helped together. Each volunteer decided what he or she wanted to do and chose one of the three options. I helped go through donated clothes and put them in a pile that they belonged to; each pile was categorized by the gender and age of the person that would wear the piece of clothing, and the season that the clothes would be worn in. This simple but important task really meant a lot because it was so hands on and I knew that I was helping someone greatly, and there is no better feeling than that.