

Bringing L'Taken Home

Resources for “Enhancing the L'Taken Experience”

When students return home from the L'Taken Social Justice Seminar, they are excited about what they have learned and accomplished. Providing students with opportunities to share their enthusiasm with fellow students and congregants extends the experience for them and amplifies the impact on your entire congregation. Below is a list of suggestions for achieving this goal, drawn from the “best practices” of congregations across the country:

Find ways for Students to Publicly Share their Lobby Speeches and Reflect on their Experiences :

- Select a few participants to present their lobby speeches at Shabbat Services in place of or in connection with a sermon on social justice and/or civic engagement
- Encourage students to transform their speech into a formal, written letter, which they can mail to their Members of Congress
- Publish select speeches in a synagogue-wide bulletin and/or newsletter and/or congregational blog
- Bring participants to speak to other religious school classes—particularly those who will be attending L'Taken Seminars in the future
- Create a booklet of the students’ lobby speeches to give to them and their parents
- Bring copies of the students’ lobby speeches to a meeting of the synagogue’s Board of Directors or Trustees
- Host a luncheon or a class session with students and their parents, where students can deliver their speeches in front of the large group, emulating their lobby visits
- Remind students that their experience in Washington, D.C. can be inspiration for a strong college essay about civic engagement, personal responsibility, and/or Jewish identity

Incorporate the L'Taken Experience into a Confirmation or Commencement Ceremony:

- Present “Certificates of Completion”
 - The RAC provides chaperones with “Certificates of Completion” to give to every student who attends the L'Taken Seminar. Instead of presenting the certificates to the students immediately upon their return home, these certificates can be given in a more formal setting, as part of a ceremony at the end of the year.
- Provide Students with a memento of the trip
 - Present students with a token gift that memorializes their experience at the L'Taken Seminar, such as a framed photograph of their class in front of the Supreme Court, a printed booklet of all of the speeches delivered at L'Taken, a printed copy of the social action blessing, etc.
- Give students an opportunity to read their speeches
 - Incorporate readings of a few of the strongest lobby speeches into the program for your ceremony.
- Encourage students to publicly reflect on the program
 - If students are required to write speeches or essays for the ceremony, encourage them to reflect on the L'Taken seminar and social justice themes.

Encourage Students to Participate in Other URJ Social Justice Programs:

- **Nominate students for the RAC Teen Justice Fellowship**
 - The fellowship is a learning-intensive designed to train high schoolers to be organizers in their home communities.
 - Fellows will meet virtually for an hour once a week for six weeks to hone their leadership skills, learn about advocacy, and be involved in the RAC's work.