



Dear USY,

We love International Convention. Each December, hundreds of teens bring their *ruach* together from across the continent and the feeling at that convention is indescribable. IC introduced us to our best friends, helped us explore incredible cities, and gave us memories that will last a lifetime. At IC, we learned how to be the best versions of ourselves.

Our theme for USY's 70th International Convention is *History in the Making*, *בכל דור ודור* (*B'chol Dor V'dor*, Within Every Generation). We intended to help USYers learn about our Jewish history, our present challenges, and how within our own generation we can effect change to create a more positive future. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing health concerns, and limits on large gatherings mandated by Washington, D.C., it is with heavy hearts that we will be unable to hold USY's 70th International Convention in person this winter.

Let us be clear: This stings. It hurts. It's painful. It's devastating. As the IC Co-Chairs, we are just as pained by this decision as you are, and we understand that this is another piece of heartbreaking news to add to the ever-growing list of cancelations, disappointments, and losses this pandemic has imposed upon us.

We are devastated that we will not get to see your smiling faces as you run into opening session. We will miss seeing you make an impact in the D.C. community for our day of service. We will feel empty without the singing and dancing, the *ruach* and hugs. We long for the security of knowing we are surrounded by a loving Jewish community. We yearn to sit in the convention ballroom, listen to USY talks and speakers, pray, eat, and simply have fun. One day, we will be able to congregare and greet each other with open arms and warm smiles. But for now, USY, you will always be on our minds.

We know that this is incredibly painful, but we do hope that you will join us for the new iteration of IC this year. We realize that one of the most meaningful aspects of IC is the interaction with other USYers. This will be a driving force as we shift IC into its new innovative format. We have heard your feedback about Zoom fatigue and are working to make sure the updated IC 2020 preserves and promotes meaningful interactions, even though we are apart. We know that as USYers, we are not content creators, we are experience creators -- and we are excited to announce these new experiences and opportunities to you all on August 13.

While this was not the type of history we were hoping to make this winter, we will still be able to hear from incredible speakers, engage in meaningful learning, take part in social action initiatives, and create special memories in December. Truly though, we too need some time before leaning into that excitement, and we imagine you all might as well. We miss you all more than we can explain in words, hope to see you at virtual events throughout the summer, and in person as soon as possible. Lean on your friends for support, and please reach out to us or your USY Staff with any questions, visions, and ideas for IC. As always, we are just a call or text away.

*B'chol Dor V'Dor*, within every generation, we face challenges which define our present and shape our future. For USY, this is our moment. Our moment to innovate. Our moment to collaborate. Our moment to connect. We are confident that our generation of USYers will meet this moment together.

B'ahava,  
Sam Bloch, Reena Bromberg Gaber, Jacob Ellenbogen  
2020 International Convention Co-Chairs

Austin Kaufman  
2020 International President