



Zachariah Sippy

ZACHARIAH WIRTSCHAFTER SIPPY was born in 2000 in Huntington, New York. He is the son of Shana Sippy and Rabbi David Wirschafter of Temple Adath Israel, Lexington. Zachariah grew up with a father who is a Reform Rabbi; his father's public role impacted Zachariah's life as the family moved from city to city across the U.S. Sippy has lived in Long Island, New York; Anaheim, California; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Lexington, Kentucky. Zachariah experienced an increasingly smaller Jewish student population as he moved from a Jewish day school in St. Louis Park, to a public high school first in Minneapolis, and finally to one in Lexington, Kentucky in 2014.

Shortly after the 2016 presidential election, Zachariah encountered anti-Semitism when he found swastikas drawn on a bathroom wall at Henry Clay High School. However, even before discovering the swastikas at his high school, he was politically active in the Prichard Student Voice Team, Students as Partners Initiative, and the Kentucky High School Democrats, where he serves as State Chairman. Zachariah voices his commitment to developing a more inclusive environment by emphasizing the importance of building community coalitions. Alongside his activism in the community, Zachariah has demonstrated his passion for issues such as tolerance by authoring op-eds for news organizations including the *Lexington Herald Leader*, *The Hechinger Newsletter*, and *Medium*.

"My hope is to spend the rest of my life... building a coalition to tackle the issues that we face, whether it's about... health-care policy or about... anti-semitism or Islamophobia... the answer is to build coalitions."

According to Zachariah, each of his family members plays a role in helping to educate the citizens of Kentucky about what Judaism is, why it's important, and how to be more accepting and welcoming of the Jewish community in the Commonwealth. As a Rabbi, his father collaborates with other religious leaders; as a professor of religious studies, his mother teaches university students at Centre College; and while his sister Emmanuelle is still growing up, she also is passionate about educating the community about Judaism.



Zachariah protesting Trump's Immigration Ban on February 5, 2017.

While Judaism is important to Zachariah's life, he is quick to point out that it does not wholly define him. For example, while he traveled to Israel with United Synagogue Youth in 2017 and hopes to return in the future, he did not experience an immediate, deep emotional connection upon arrival. Moreover, while Zachariah is open to inter-faith marriage, he does hope that his children will at least be exposed to Judaism.

As a high school senior preparing to graduate in Spring 2018, Zachariah is about to choose his college, still open to different career paths. However, ten years from now, he hopes to be a college graduate and happy in whatever he is doing.