

SUNY Stands with Puerto Rico: **NECHAMA Jewish Response to Disaster** **June 2nd 2019 – June 15th 2019**



A "toilet" on a farm in Arroyo, Puerto Rico.

Challenges: The scariest challenge I faced was having to use the bathroom outside when we volunteered on a farm in Arroyo (pictured to the left). Another obstacle I faced was adjusting to the climate. It was extremely hot, sunny, and buggy which made it difficult to work outside for hours at a time. I have sensitive skin so dealing with bug bites and sun exposure was very difficult. Luckily with plenty of water and bug spray I kept my stamina and successfully completed the project with my team.

Benefits: Volunteering with NECHAMA opened my eyes to the strength of human connection, especially when disaster strikes. Professionally, it helped me enhance my network by connecting me with fellow SUNY students with similar passions as mine. This experience gave me the opportunity to help my island, learn how to operate a rotary hammer drill, and most importantly learn how to be a more kind and compassionate human being.



Clearing debris from the ditches to allow rainwater to flow down the sides of the streets of El Yunque National Forest

Advice for:

- *Students:* Watch national news to be aware of what is going on outside of your state and reach out to community service initiatives on your campus to see if they are interested in helping.
- *Universities:* Reach out to leaders and political figures in the community to urge them to join or start a recovery effort where help is needed.
- *Disaster Response Programs:* Remind their volunteers to be mindful and stay healthy during the trip by providing nutritious food, water, and encourage them to use sunblock and bug spray.



My team and I with our homeowner in Loiza, Puerto Rico.

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NECHAMA
 JEWISH RESPONSE
 TO DISASTER



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My team and I at the beach after our last day of working on a home in Loiza, Puerto Rico.