

## **Young people's participation**

Hi Nina, I'm Rick. Great speech.

My background is actually youth work,  
so I'm just interested in how you've managed  
to engage young people in your programme  
or the museum, more likely.

Yeah. Thank you for asking that.

Actually, we have this amazing teen programme  
that started with a teenager who wrote  
a comment on the comment board  
saying that she wanted to do  
a 'by girls for girls' film festival at the museum.

And we worked with her and realised,  
gosh, there was so much  
more opportunity there.

So we have a teen programme  
called Subjects to Change.

It's youth leadership programme about using art  
to make social change in our community  
and so it works like a lot of these  
more intensive participatory projects.

There are 15 kids from across our county  
who meet here weekly on Thursday afternoons  
and they do a lot of different things  
around art and leadership training,  
but then they produce these teen nights  
that happen here and at other sites around the county,

and they do some partnership with lots  
of other youth development groups.

So we're blessed in our county, you know.

We have a youth group called FoodWhat  
that does farming and social justice with teens.

There's a group called Grind Out Hunger  
which is skateboarding kids  
working on hunger issues.

And so, we make sure that we are a part of that bigger context,  
so it's not just a museum youth programme,  
but really looking at what's happening  
across youth programmes in our community,  
how can we be a part of that?

And really, the thing that came out  
that we were surprised by  
was that there wasn't really a space  
where teens could go at night  
and have a cool experience.

So these teen nights have been totally fascinating to me  
because the teens are always picking  
themes related to social issues.

They did a teen night on public safety,  
they did a teen night on gender issues,  
and I'll always remember  
the first time the staff member  
who works with them came to me and said  
"So they want to do a teen night

on public safety," and I said,

"Who's going to want to come?"

That sounds like the most boring thing ever!"

And then, of course, there were 300 teenagers  
in the museum and it's crazy and terrific.

So, again, it's a teen-led programme  
where we are creating that facilitated space  
for them to thrive and working with them  
to create the avenues for that.

One of the things that's been interesting,  
it's now just been running for a year,  
so some of the teens are graduating out of it  
and we have to figure out  
where their next opportunity is.

And it's actually pushed us to build social justice  
into more programmes at the museum  
so that there are more internships and jobs  
we can lead teens to that really build  
on the work they've done for Subjects to Change.

And the next step for that is working with other  
youth development programmes in town,  
we're trying to really chart out  
who works with whom.

For example, there is one group  
that really does an amazing job,  
Barrios Unidos, in juvenile detention.

And so, when kids graduate out of juvenile detention

what programmes exist for them next?

And what programmes exist for them after that?

And thinking about how we can help teens

and how we can help youth build their skills

across these programmes instead of them having

to figure it all out by themselves.