Mutually Beneficial Relationships

BCGA Arts Impact Story

Jacqui A.
Site Supervisor
Boys & Girls Club of Bisbee

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Jeff M. Poulin: BCGA Arts Impact is an audio series telling the stories from members of the Boys and Girls Club of America community about the power of arts, cultural, and creative programs around the world.

Hey there, Jeff here. Jaqui is the Site Supervisor for her Club and focuses her efforts on staff training, particularly to integrate mental health and wellness strategies into all aspects of the Club. She discusses the importance of **artistic instruction** in creating impactful programs. Jacqui's current priority is recruiting and onboarding new staff, particularly to grow their arts programming. She states that working with young people is mutually beneficial: "Youth ground staff and remind you who you are. Check it out.

Creative Generation: Can you introduce yourself where you're from and what you do in your club?

Jacqui A: Yes. So I am from this view, Arizona, I am the site supervisor at the Boys and Girls Club of Bisbee. I maintain all the programs, all the staffing, all the scheduling, all the meetings and all of that. And then in our youth development programs right now, all our ideals they are working on developing. They're working on and working in training on focusing on mental health and doing those mental health check ins. So that's our main purpose right now is driving into that mental health aspect and making sure our kids are okay.

CG: I do love that creative therapy is like where it's at, to be honest. The past? What kinds of arts programs do you lead or work in within your club?

JA: So what kinds of art programs do I lead and work within our program? So right now one of our high school seniors who is wanting to further her education at New Mexico State University, she's actually really interested in going for art therapy. So right now we're working with her we're doing just basic arts and crafts in art room, but working with her to get her that on, on hands experience where we can with her to show these kids how to express

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themselves through art, with clay with molding with painting, oil, pastels, everything and anything that they can be go so that way their creative minds don't have any limitations.

CG: Perfect. Any limitations. I love that one. Please tell me a story about your favorite memory in this work.

JA: My favorite story about my art, favorite memory and my line of work. So I have been in my line of work going on one year in June 2022. Thank you. My favorite story is definitely I don't have one, but I can talk about my summer experience because these kids reminded me who I am. And they reminded me that working with kids is my niche. And all of their support. Even though they're so little, they don't see how big of an impact that they had on my own personal life. So I think the impact that they made on my personal life, and then also going into my new position, that transition, that's my favorite memory with them. And then also seeing them grow.

CG: I always kind of say to myself that everyone can be both the student and the teacher.

JA: Yes, of course. Because you know, kids will teach you whatever they want to teach you. They don't, they don't hesitate.

CG: Which is good, authentic. Yes. And then our last question, what impact do you think your program has had on the youth?

JA: So what impact do I think my program had on the youth so I was teeter tottering with this one for a little bit. Because you know, whenever you're doing all the work, you don't fully see it. But I see the development and these kids are learning independence on their own, as they are learning how to control their emotions, how to develop social skills, I see them gaining their own independence, and they're becoming their own person. And that is the biggest accomplishment that I see throughout the club. Because for example, if one is like, one girl is super emotional, for example, I had a kid that was super emotional in the beginning, but she learned how to cope with her feelings. So now she's an outstanding star, always smiling. And that's the biggest impact that it has on them.

CG: Oh, thank you. Well, thank you for your time and it looks like you really care about the kids beyond yourself. Yes. Thank you so much for your time. Thank you. Thank you

Jeff M. Poulin: Thanks for listening to BCGA Arts Impact. This episode was produced by the team at Creative Generation: Katie Rainey, Valerie Killebrew, and Emma Lamberti. The series executive producer is me, Jeff M. Poulin. The cover art is by Bridget Woodbury. Music from Scott Waltz. A special thanks to the series contributors and the staff at Boys and Girls Club of America for their support.

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