Impact of Art on Life and Community

BGCA Arts Impact Stories

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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. Avante is the Director of Workforce Development and describes the importance of meaningful and high quality **culminating experiences** and the power of integrating **youth voices**. Avante's Club provides arts programs integrated with self-designed entrepreneurship-based projects where they are able to build strategic business plans for creative ventures.

Some of the best part of his work is the love, engagement, and support received from the community. Running into Club members and their families in the community affirms the impact Avante's program has in providing a safe space for young people where they can be their full selves, and to grow and be prepared for the next phases of life. Check it out.

Creative Generation: Can you introduce yourself where you are from and what you do and your club?

AL: Yeah, I'm Avante London, 29 years old. I'm the Director of Workforce Development at Boys and Girls Club.

CG: What kinds of arts programs do you lead or work in within your club?

AL: Yeah, I'm at my club, the type of arts programs that I've led or that I have participated in, you do our entrepreneurship program where our members are allowed to go to mock business. And then they can also design like a logo, design T-shirts, to kind of build a whole business plan and also be creative at the same time. So that's something that I've learned. And I'm also going to be leading up to something.

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CG: Yeah, it's always good to create the next set of entrepreneurs, you know. Please tell me a story about your favorite memory in this work.

AL: A story about my favorite memory, in this work is just so whenever, whenever I'm out, and I see kids who, who've been at the club, or who have helped along the years, the love that they give me, I never gets old. It's the best feeling I've had to be at a grocery store. I can go to gym or anywhere walking down the street, and I get, you know, so much love from their friends and families and the members themselves. So that's kind of my best.

CG: I know, they talk a lot about how like when you get to see the people you work with in your community, it just feels more special.

AL: Oh, yes. Special. Absolutely.

CG: Thank you. And our last question, what impact do you think your program has had on the youth involved?

AL: The impact I think my program has had is given our members a safe space and a community, giving them somewhere to go to where they can feel like they can be there for self where they can grow and they can expand and hopefully we can set them up to be you know, set them up for their nice next place in life. So that's what I think we do.

CG: Awesome. Well, thank you for your time. We appreciate it. 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 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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