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David Kietzman

Executive Director
Youth Speak Collective
Pacoima, CA

E-MAIL PRINT FAVORITE

David, Co-founder and Executive Director of Youth Speak Collective, runs one of California's greatest nonprofits serving low-income and at-risk youth.

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YOUTH SPEAK! COLLECTIVE

BUILDING A FUTURE FOR YOUTH BY YOUTH



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David Kietzman is the Executive Director of Youth Speak Collective (YSC) a non-profit organization based in Pacoima, founded on the idea that all young people can succeed if provided with the right opportunities. Trusted and valued by the youth they empower, YSC has become a go-to organization for community leaders, students and local elected officials. David's work has focused on education reform efforts, collaborative organizing, violence prevention and social media marketing for emerging businesses.

In 2005 David decided to focus his work and passion on the underserved neighborhood of Pacoima, California. Located only 20 miles north of Downtown Los Angeles, Pacoima has high levels of gang violence, a large youth population and is historically one of the most economically disadvantaged and violent districts in the City of Los Angeles. With one of every two students dropping out of school, many of Pacoima's youth have limited opportunities to graduate from high school. According to the last Census, 69% of households in Pacoima are home to children living below the federal poverty threshold.

David formed YSC to directly serve the hardest to reach and most disconnected youth of Pacoima. He is slowly but surely making a difference by focusing on basic academic skills and having youth play a decisive role in shaping YSC's work. David's vision is to grow YSC and continue to outreach to hundreds of youth ages 11 to 19, who are at-risk of joining gangs, have special academic or behavioral needs or attend low-performing schools. In the span of only five years, David has led his nonprofit to now serve over 3,000 youth each year.

David grew up in the City of Pasadena where he attended Pasadena City College and then Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego where he graduated with his B.A in Graphic Design and his secondary arts teaching credential. Out of college David received a job offer to teach art and coach soccer in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. After his time abroad David moved back to Los Angeles and started working with youth from Pacoima. While working closely with youth from local schools, the youth through organizing volunteer opportunities and projects, felt a need to start their own nonprofit and create something new in their community.