

YSC Staff Spotlight

Name: Jashua Christopher Ortiz

Title: Youth Organizer

Education: Los Angeles Valley College, pursuing a B.A. in Sociology

Hometown: Born in Los Angeles, grew up in North Hollywood



Family: Mom, Dad, I am the older of two beautiful sisters, 16 year old Jasmin and 2 year old baby Milly

Hobbies: I enjoy painting and have been at it since Kindergarten. I enjoy listening to positive energy music anything from Common to Celia Cruz. I played baseball for seven years and wanted to play for the Los Angeles Dodgers growing up but I fell in love with Sociology. I like meeting new people and surrounding myself with positive energy. I find joy in the simple things in life like breathing and being a service to others!

How did you come to Youth Speak Collective?

I was first introduced by Kimberly Gomez and Ivan Ramirez, co-facilitators of the Youth Speak Mentoring program at Discovery Prep Charter High School. My first experience at Youth Speak was as a mentor to High School students. Kimberly and Ivan invited me to join and I did not hesitate to volunteer. I learned about the incredible work Youth Speak was doing out in the community.

What is your role at Youth Speak Collective?

It has been a blessing and privilege to be a Youth Organizer at San Fernando High School and Discovery Prep Charter High School. I facilitate the Youth Council at each school which is called "Speak Up". It is a space where students can come together to discuss issues such as: Discrimination, Sexual Orientation, Leadership and Cultural Awareness. Sparking creative and critical thinking and learning what the students want to achieve makes every meeting an experience. Connecting the youth with partnering schools, volunteer opportunities and exposure to the real world is a continuous goal of mine.

What is the best part of your role?

When students with different personalities and backgrounds work together for a common goal and reach a level of understanding with one another; that is the best part of my role. When students no longer see me as a teacher but rather a mentor or friend that also is the best part of my job!

What is your favorite TV Channel?

I don't have a TV. Haven't had one for four years.

Favorite place you have been and why?

Never looking back or too far in front of me, the present is a gift and I just want to be...This is my favorite place.

Where is the next place you would like to go?

I would like to see the aurora borealis. I WILL graduate on stage for the first time for my parents and family.

What makes you laugh/cry?

What makes me laugh is when my baby sister has a full conversation with me in whatever language it is she speaks nowadays. What makes me cry is seeing loved ones cry.