

YAM CASE STUDY

ONE SIZE DOESN'T FIT ALL.

HOW A PROGRAM HELPED A YOUTH REALIZE THEIR CAREER ASPIRATIONS

PROBLEM

Most days, Ben Burgeron felt like an outsider. He was different from his high school classmates and had trouble fitting in. Rather than playing sports, you would find Ben reading a comic book or playing with a video camera. His aspirations for the future were also quite different. He enjoyed storytelling and filmmaking but whenever he expressed interest in pursuing it as a career he was told that his dreams were unrealistic. As a bright student, Ben excelled in school but was never fully immersed in his school subjects, finding them uninteresting.

"I am so glad to have the opportunity to give back to the community by providing these youth with the opportunities that they wouldn't have otherwise."

- **Ben Bergeron**
Youth Active Media Facilitator

SOLUTION

During his last year of High school, Ben was introduced to Youth Ottawa's Youth Active Media program as an opt-in program at an Ottawa library. Immediately Ben was captivated because the program offered him an opportunity to use filmmaking equipment and learn alongside other people who had a passion for film. Ben excelled in the program. He was passionate and enthusiastic about learning the different elements of video production such as storyboarding, framing, lighting and sound. Once he completed the program, he was approached by Youth Ottawa and offered the opportunity to become a facilitator. This immediately sparked his interest, as it was his first real exposure to the idea that it was possible to find employment in the creative field. Suddenly this "unrealistic" dream didn't seem too far from reach. The completion of Youth Active Media and Ben's position as a facilitator, led him to film as a career path. After high school, Ben registered for a Film Production Program at Confederation College.

IMPACT

Youth Active Media helped Ben open up to different perspectives and possibilities provided by a career in film. It helped him expand his interests, offered skills development and allowed him to develop a deep passion for Youth Mentorship. As a part-time facilitator for Youth Ottawa, Ben has now become a mentor to new participants in the program. On a yearly basis, Ben works with students and teachers and inspires a pool of over 2,500 youth/year in filmmaking.