



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

SUCCESS STORY: YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Profile: Rey Martinez Metrocenter YMCA

Rey Martinez best expresses himself through pen and paper. More interested in filling his notebooks with elaborate graffiti designs than he was focusing on his schoolwork, Rey's grades suffered and he wasn't sure he'd walk across the commencement stage with his classmates.

"Puget SoundOff helped, motivated and pushed me into a different direction," Rey said. He joined YTech through Metrocenter's community partnership with Seattle Youth Employment Program during the spring of his senior year. "The internship helped me realize that I can actually use my skills and use my art in the graphic design field."

YTech programs offer young people the support and training needed to develop digital media skills. The local site Puget SoundOff allow youth like Rey a forum in which to publish content, learn from and collaborate with their peers.

A chance to experience success was exactly what Rey needed. As a part of his internship, he learned to combine his drawing skills with graphics software in order to enter a local design contest.

"I've been drawing all my life. I want everyone to know if you have a talent, or a skill, use it."

Rey won the design contest but also found the spark he needed to propel him further. He's in college now and finishing an advanced

graphics internship with Puget SoundOff. Rey says he loves being able to come back and help out the site and appreciates the skills he's learned and the support he's received



from the Metrocenter YMCA.



During a YTech internship program, Rey realized his talent for art could extend beyond pen and paper. The confidence and support he gained from the program propelled him to pursue studies in graphic design.

"It's been a great opportunity for me. This program actually helped me. I'm not going to leave here and forget about it, I'm going to come back here and help out as much as possible. It's a great chance and a great opportunity that I've been given."

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact Roni Ayalla, YTech instructor
email rayalla@seattleyymca.org
206.587.6113

Everyone is welcome. Financial assistance is available. The **YMCA of Greater Seattle** strengthens communities in King and south Snohomish counties through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.