

Seth Rosenberg

Pittsburgh is hailed as a most livable city, but there are lots of people in our region who are under-resourced, under-served, being made vulnerable. I think it's a lot scarier for people in those marginalized communities.

At Dreams of Hope, we all work at respecting everybody for who they are. I don't know a better way to create a sense of "we." I'm not sure who said it first, but I agree there's a real difference between a place where someone is tolerated and a place where someone is celebrated.

In our programming, we are as inclusive, gentle and loving as we can be, and we make extremely good use of art in doing that. We teach young people to use art to tell their stories. We use art to facilitate challenging conversations around identity. We're doing programming in schools now. That was not a possibility five years ago.

I've come to appreciate you can't work for justice for a select group of people and disregard another group that's being oppressed. That's because systems of oppression—homophobia, transphobia, racism, etc.—don't work independently. They are deeply inter-related. So, if one group is oppressed, you really can't have justice for anyone.

— Interviewed by Eleanor Chute

Adil Mansoor

The people I'm surrounded by are trying to figure out how to heal, celebrate and be in community together.

Each year, our teens generate a 90-minute play that explores their lives and experiences. After the presidential election, I totally assumed the teens would want to re-write the play and make it about this political moment. Before then, we were going to focus on joy and healing. They said, "That's more important than ever." As a community in this moment of what feels like utter chaos and trauma, our job can be to remind people that we are powerful and joyful and deserve to be happy.

To build "a community of we," we need to figure out how to make our youngest talent want to stay here. How do we make it so they don't feel stuck here? The reason young folks want to leave is they feel invisible here, especially queer people of color.

We need to prioritize diversity among decision-makers across sectors in Pittsburgh. The folks in power who get to make choices, allocate funds and hire people are all far too homogeneous. We cannot become "a community of we" until the leadership represents all the different lived experiences in Pittsburgh.

— Interviewed by Eleanor Chute

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DREAMS OF HOPE

RESPECT EVERYBODY

> Adil Mansoor

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF DREAMS OF HOPE

PRIORITIZE DIVERSITY AMONG DECISION-MAKERS

