

## **RuckusRoots Statement of Cultural Equity and Inclusion**

RuckusRoots was founded on the principal that the arts can create positive change in the world. In early 2008, founder Christine Spehar at first envisioned a cross-country tour in a biodiesel van; a mobile art installation to amplify environmental awareness and direct action for the planet.

However, that vision quickly changed thanks to the 2008 financial crisis. Spehar, a native of Los Angeles, saw the impacts of economic devastation in her local communities and decided RuckusRoots was needed most vitally at home.

Spehar officially founded RuckusRoots as a 501c3 nonprofit organization in 2010 to tackle two problems facing Los Angeles: a lack of arts education and a lack of awareness and action around sustainability issues including litter, wildlife conservation, homelessness, pollution and more. Low income neighborhoods experience these issues most directly because they receive less educational and infrastructural resources. These communities are home to marginalized groups who often encounter systemic exclusion from collective conversations around both sustainability and creative artistic expression.

At its core, RuckusRoots is committed to discovering solutions to these systemic exclusions. We are committed to including marginalized groups in our programming and in the resulting dialogue centered around sustainable art-making, community-building and connection. Our current blend of both educational and public programs enables us to provide solutions as well as opportunities for expression to people of all creeds, colors and backgrounds, and we are committed to continuing these efforts indefinitely.

All of our programs have been conducted in areas that are culturally, socially and economically diverse and traditionally underserved. We are committed to working with and including people of diverse racial, cultural and gender identities as program participants, board members and staff.