

# CULTURE JAM!

## *Exciting Transition News for Culture Jam!*

*A Note from Robin Bernardi, Culture Jam Program Director*

Dear FFN Fair Family,

I am excited to announce that there are transitional changes afoot for Culture Jam throughout the coming year. I will be stepping back from my Culture Jam Director position after 21 years of playing a key role in the program. I will slip into a mentorship position that will support a new Culture Jam Director through 2023. The hiring process for the new director will begin on November 28, with a job posting on the Fair website, deadlining in late December. Do you know anyone who might fit the bill? Send them to the Fair website on November 28!

Though this is a big internal shift for the organization, I intend on supporting the transition every step of the way by closely mentoring the new Culture Jam Director through each-and-every turn of the cycle. In these 21 years, Culture Jam became one of my life's purposes: I want to see it thrive into the future in the way I know it can. I considered making this transition in Fall of 2019, but without an Executive Director in place for more than a few months at the time, I did not see us as stable enough to do it, then the pandemic hit. I believe that now, with Kirsten's solid professional support and stability, this transition can finally be carried out successfully—and I cannot be more grateful.

I was assigned to help Culture Jam launch its first weeklong event in 2002. This began my fruitful partnership with Leslie Scott, who was in her 11th successful year as General Manager of the Fair at the time. It was her vision to have the Fair adopt this heart-healing and revolutionary youth camp model as an active philanthropic program of its own. It took time and tenacity, and the support of many dedicated youth and adults,



to convince the Board to allow her to implement it. I want to thank her for trusting in me to help her manifest her dream, take it forward and sustain it.

My need to transition is deeply personal, driven by a calling to discover what new creative paths can spring up for me as I enter my 60th year. That said, my highest intention for 2023 is to carefully pass my knowledge of Culture Jam to someone wise and wonderful who can take the event into its next decade or more of good work in honor of the Fair and into the world.

As I reported at our last Board meeting, Culture Jam is still very much alive. It has a vibrant community of highly dedicated and enthusiastic mentor, kitchen and site staff, new youth, hundreds of alumni, parents, dedicated donors and community partners still fired-up by it and its dynamic and innovative programming. Everyone is just waiting for Culture Jam to get off the ground once again to continue its legacy of making significant, long-lasting positive change in the lives of teenagers and their families.

I thoroughly trust that we will find just the right person to carry on—and I look forward to being right by their side to help in their success.

Lastly, I want to thank everyone who has worked, volunteered, supported or otherwise taken part in Culture Jam through these many years. Without you it would not have been possible.

With love and confidence,

*Robin Bernardi*

*Culture Jam Youth Gathering*

*A proud philanthropic program of the Oregon Country Fair*