



Teana Macdonald Wellington City Mission

Tell us a bit about yourself. When did you start at the Wellington City Mission?

My name is Teana and I got connected to the Wellington City Mission (WCM) in my gap year two years ago, when I wanted to explore social justice issues across different areas.

At the time I was exploring urban poverty and I managed to land myself at the WCM, chatting to them about volunteering. I felt that the WCM was a place that was helping people to rebuild and transform their lives by walking alongside people, rather than doing the walking for them.

I did a paid internship with WCM, then I headed into the volunteering space where I developed a youth programme. The programme provides a way for youth volunteers to get involved in a mana enhancing space, which is what volunteering is about.

How did your passion for the helping the community and volunteering start?

In my gap year, I felt the weight and reality of huge world issues - it's easy to feel like we are paralysed and there are no steps forward. As I felt this, I was compelled to take new steps into new spaces, like educating people in the community.

I've always been a part of community groups and volunteered. Developing the youth programme just made me feel so passionate, as it was also about having the opportunity to pass my passion onto other people.

How has being a volunteer contributed to your life?

Everyone seeks purpose through different ways. For me, being able to help others contributes to my life. It's great to see that moment when volunteers realise they are a part of something bigger than themselves.

Community thrives when we come together and work as one. Volunteering bridges community, and provides purpose and meaning in life.

What are some of the best parts about being a volunteer?

It's that mixing of communities that you wouldn't get in another place. Working towards a purpose and seeing change happen. For me, it's also about supporting youth volunteers to take that passion they have and showing them, here's a programme you can use to flourish.

Do you have any tips or advice for others thinking about volunteering?

Think about the things you're passionate about and what your heart aligns with. Think about the skills you have to offer, and find a role that will use those skills - it will ignite your passion for it! Also just DO IT! Find things in your local community, because the area you live in is your community.

Thank you Teana for taking part in this interview. For more information on the [Wellington City Mission](#), check out their [website](#).