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World-class projects delivered in 2023



What a fantastic year for Track Academy!

The board of trustees is proud of how the charity's support teams have consistently delivered to the students and parents throughout 2023.

We have all been inspired by the energy and optimism of our community, and have been amazed by the projects carried out at a world-class level, delivered well above expectations.

The athletic meets were a resounding success

and have ensured the charity has grown from strength to strength.

We can't thank everyone enough for ensuring services continued with Track Academy and look forward to 2024 with great optimism and confidence.

On behalf of the board of trustees, I would like to extend our appreciation for the amazing work done by all the coaches and support staff.

I look forward to seeing you again in 2024.

Claudia Wilmot Chair

Track Academy was back with a bang in 2023, says our founder Connie



2023 has been an exceptional year at Track Academy. This is mostly because it feels like the first year since Covid that we have been able to completely get back to delivering on all fronts.

This includes supporting external organisations with our Back to Movement programme thanks to funding from Sport England; through this we feel like we are contributing on a wider basis outside of our specific delivery.

In terms of our day-to-day operation, our excellent education and mentoring coordinator Erick Sanchez has brought a breath of fresh air to our life skills programme, and we are delivering on all fronts there.

Grace Veys has been fantastic when it comes to operational support at Track Academy, bringing in much-needed touches like new uniforms and a general feeling of modernising the organisation.

And of course our wonderful Yvonne Simpson has held everything together as the heart and soul of Track Academy, as only she can.

As well as this, 2023 saw us hold both indoor and outdoor competitions which are fantastic outlets for both our own student athletes and the wider community.

To move the indoor competition to the Lee Valley Athletics Centre was a genius touch by Yvonne and Tayla Brade, and everyone at Track Academy did a fantastic job. It was all hands on deck and was a magnificent event.

For me, 2023 will certainly go down as a pinnacle of what Track Academy can achieve after surviving the turmoil of Covid which led to a complete restructure of the organisation and required lots of patience to bring it back to where we are now.

I'd like to say a special thank you to the trustees for supporting Track Academy and also me in my personal journey in bringing the charity to where it is now. Now, I look forward to working with them to redevelop the charity into a format that can ensure its existence for another 15 years.

Thank you to everybody involved. It is always a team effort for us to keep delivering and supporting those young people who need us the most.

Connie Henry MBE Founder and director





We had a record-breaking 147 entries to our annual outdoor competition in July, a total that exceeded pre-Covid events.

Athletes took part in six events throughout the evening, namely 75m, 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m and one mile.

The competition began with three heats of the U11s 75 m race. Emery Aldridge dominated the field in the second heat clocking a time of 11.18s. Teni Onipinla took the second fastest time of the day running 12.25s, followed by Elektra Purchas who ran 12.42s. Overall, seven U11 athletes ran under 13s.

Next up was the women's 100m. Ayoola Babalola of Windsor Slough Eton & Hounslow Athletics Club (SEN) became the fastest female with a personal best (PB) of 11.58s, followed by Mia Grey of Thames Valley Harriers (TVH) (U20) with a PB of 12.39s.

Megan Omoya-Broad, also of TVH (U17), ran 0.03s short of her PB to take the third fastest time of 12.46s, followed by her TVH teammate Abigail Ejakita (U15) with a time of 12.97s.

Meanwhile, the men's 100m heats certainly didn't disappoint, with seven out of eight runners in round 2 heat 1 coming in at under 11 seconds. Ezekiel Lowe from Victoria Park Harriers (U20) stormed to victory in 10.43s, with Jimmy Thoronka of Shaftesbury Barnet Harriers (SM) hot on his heels with a time of 10.53s. Both were personal bests.

Winner of the women's 400m was Katie-Marie Sherlock of TVH (U20) with a time of 56.68s, followed by Laura Burke of Windsor Slough Eton & Hounslow (SW) in 57.32s. The men's 400m was won by Jaiden Rubie in 54.72s.

Eliska Freibergerova of Oxford University Athletics Club (SW) won the 800m in 2:26.22s. The mile was won by Ruben Carvajal of Queens Park Harriers (M40) in 5:18.85s.

Finally, Ayoola Babalola of Windsor Slough Eton & Hounslow AC (SEN) stormed to the finish in the 200m sprint in 24.72s, followed by Katie-Marie Sherlock of TVH (U20) in 25.46s. In the men's 200m, Ezekiel Lowe took the win in 21.80s, followed by Jason Hoyle (22.10s), and Myles Brown of TVH (SM) in 23.17s.

In December, we held our biggest-ever indoor competition at Lee Valley Athletics Centre in December. Entries, which were capped at 185, closed a month before the competition due to the overwhelming number of athletes wishing to compete.

A total of five events took place across the day, with 60m, 200m and 800m races on the track, with long jump and shot put on the field.

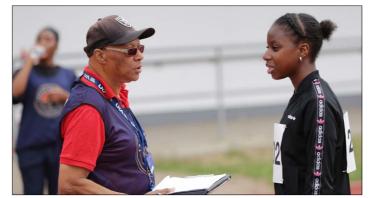
Under-20 Amelia Gittens of Herts Phoenix ran the fastest women's 60m of the day with a time of 7.58s. Her teammate Sophie Segun (SEN) ran the second fastest time of 7.76s, followed closely by Paris King of Shaftesbury Harriers.

Meanwhile, Jack Ennis of Croydon Harriers (SEN) was the fastest male 60m sprinter, racing to the finish line in a time of 6.90s, with Reece Earl of TVH (U20) close behind at 6.95s.

The fastest female in the 800m was Louise Grenfell of Herts AC (U20) who was close to her personal best with a time of 2:15.73s.

Rachel Donnison of Belgrave Harriers (SEN) secured a PB with 2:18.09s, and Beatrice Eminson of Hercules Wimbledon AC (U15) clocked a PB with 2:31.29s.





The men's 800m saw a fierce competition, with Harry Klein of Optima Racing Team (U17) storming away at 2:05.60s, followed by Ryan Stoddart of Hillingdon AC (U20) in 2:06.43, and Daniel Biddulph of Herts Phoenix AC (U20) at 2:07.13s.

The fastest female in the 200m was Sian Harry of Belgrave Harriers (SEN), who sprinted to the finish line in a time of 25.52s, while her male counterpart Reece Earl stormed home in 22.43s.

In the long jump, Jordanna Morrish of Basingstoke & Mid Hants AC (SW) jumped the furthest with 5.66m, and Florence Lee-Rubis of Chiltern Harriers AC (U17) secured 4.71m.

Three males jumped an impressive 6m, including Daniel Emegbor of Harrow AC (U17M) with 6.15m, Jack Jones of Kent AC (U17M) with 6.05m and Luke Sinnott of Bournemouth AC (M40) with 6.03m.

Six of 12 athletes threw over 10m in the shot put, with Matilda Hewitt of Chelmsford AC (U17) landing 11.60m. In second place with 11.45m was Buddy Reid of Epsom & Ewell Harriers (U17M), and 11.25m for third place by Charlie Broad of West Norfolk AC (U17M).





Track Academy and Thames Valley Harriers strengthen partnership



Thames Valley Harriers (TVH) had a great season in 2023, writes chairperson Andrea Broughton (pictured above). Overall, it was a year characterised by dedication, resilience and triumph, both on and off the track.

Throughout the year, our athletes gave exceptional performances in a wide range of competitions, from school meets to international performances on the world stage.

The club is very proud of its athletes, and their achievements are a testament to the spirit of sportsmanship and perseverance.

Track Academy reflects all the qualities that TVH holds dear, which is why the club has been so keen to support the collaboration between these two organisations.

We have been working hard to strengthen the links between TVH and Track Academy, based on the complementary nature of athletics and academic pursuits.

TVH is delighted to be able to contribute to Track Academy's end-of-year report, which is a testament to the growing links between Track Academy and TVH.

Over the coming year, through joint events, coaching programmes, and shared resources, we hope to witness the positive impact of this collaboration for the benefit of our athletes.

We are particularly eager to build upon the foundations that we have jointly created. The potential for further collaboration is huge and we are committed to exploring new avenues that will benefit both students and athletes in the realms of both sports and academia.

We look forward to the upcoming season and the continued partnership between TVH and Track Academy.

Together, we look forward to an even more impactful and collaborative year ahead.





When I joined Track Academy as the education and mentoring co-ordinator, I had to get to know the department from the inside out, writes Erick Sanchez.

I memorised the ten life skills and familiarised myself with the Tuesday homework club and Saturday school. I also met the mentors and gained an understanding of how their role works and how they schedule sessions.

This was one of the most important things because they are the eyes and ears of our track sessions and they know our studentathletes really well.

I spent time building relationships with the two tutors who lead the Saturday school, understanding how they structure sessions.

We set up a spreadsheet where they could log who attends the sessions and note the topics covered. This helped the tutors prepare for their future sessions.

We then set our sights on making sure we targeted the student athletes who need our academic support.

We created a questionnaire asking them about their current grades, their potential grades and the grades they'd like to achieve. We added these grades to their profiles so we can monitor their progress.

We also began to email parents with reminders

about Saturday school and homework club. These activities helped us double our student numbers at Saturday school and focus on the areas in which they need the most support in maths, English and science.

During the summer holiday, we also devised a new standard for our students and their grades. Anyone who has below a grade six must attend our Saturday school and homework club.

This is because our athletes must remind themselves that they are students first and then athletes. This is also to show that we take their education as seriously as and that there should be a perfect balance between the two.

On the mentoring side, we had nine mentees over the course of 2023, some of whom came to us personally asking for support.

With others, events at school or home came to our attention, and we ensured we guided them through these. We also built relationships with some of the parents during the process.

One thanked us for helping her daughter navigate a difficult situation that was happening at school.

We monitored our mentees' progress by recording data from each session using a colour coding system, keeping their coaches informed along the way. This was an effective way to communicate between departments.

"I love the dynamic at Track Academy...there's a unique spark"



Our education and mentoring co-ordinator Erick Sanchez found his passion for working with young people soon after leaving university.

Erick, who is originally from Ecuador, explains that he

attended Buckinghamshire New University to study visual effects and animation, but found it hard to break into the creative industry after graduating.

"I decided to take a volunteer role as a youth leader at my church, and then became a fulltime teaching assistant at a school for children with special needs," says the 28-year-old.

"That included a lot of mentoring, helping the children grow spiritually and mentally. After Covid, I needed a change, and I joined Track Academy in October 2022."

Erick is now in charge of our education and mentoring department, tasked with building relationships with mentors, coaches, students and their families. He oversees administration from our holiday programmes, homework clubs and Saturday school, and works closely with the rest of our team.

Erick, who attended a military school in Ecuador for three years, says: "I love the dynamic Track Academy has with its young people. There's a real spark.

"We want the best for our kids, and want them to have high standards. We teach them that on time is late, and early is on time!" Boxing and Crossfit fan Erick adds that the work of his department has a genuine impact on the young people at Track Academy.

On one occasion, he says, some students had found themselves in a physical altercation, and they were suspended from track activities for a number of weeks.

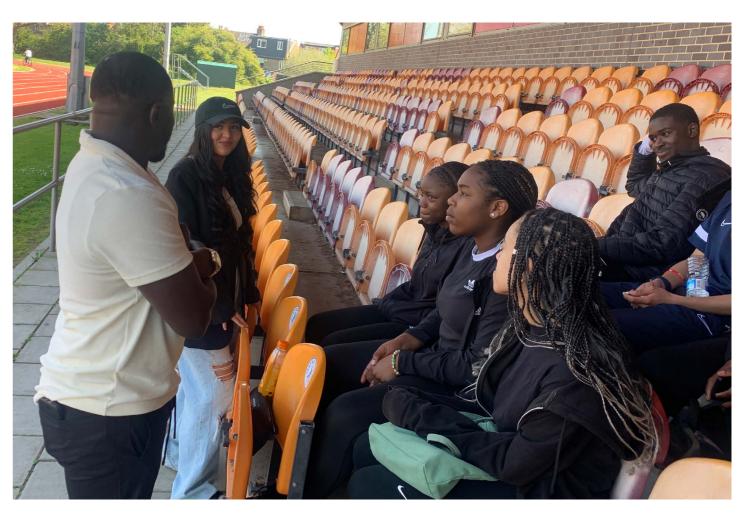
"Instead, they came to us three times a week and we watched videos about how to handle emotions, and talked through what had happened.

"It gave them a different perspective on how they could handle a similar situation in the future. They could have just stayed at home, but they came to every session.

"One of the mothers got in touch to thank you, and it made me realise that we are doing a really good thing here."



How our ten life skills are key to a successful future for our athletes



Life skills are essential abilities that allow people to navigate daily challenges, make informed decisions, and effectively manage different aspects of their lives.

Young people, especially those transitioning into adulthood, can greatly benefit from developing a range of life skills to thrive personally, academically and professionally.

For the last 12 months, we have been encouraging our young people to develop and practice ten life skills and helping them further navigate their lives through these skills.

We dedicate a monthly cycle to each life skill for all our multi-skills and mainstream student athletes. Through workshops, videos, conversations and other activities, our members have learned the following life skills:

- 1. Listening
- 2. Presenting
- 3. Networking/ social skills
- 4. Problem solving
- 5. Creativity
- 6. Staying positive
- 7. Aiming high
- 8. Discipline
- 9. Team working
- 10. Leadership

Workshops have included how to dress for job interviews, how to survive on a desert island, how to tell a story with little pre-knowledge, being coach for the day and many more.

Thank you to Laureus for a truly inspiring and motivational day

Stepping into the world of sports outside of the track, 12 student athletes were given the opportunity to explore a day at Laureus Sport for Good Foundation to gain work experience in a number of areas.

From the moment we walked through the doors, the students were immersed in a vibrant atmosphere that is dedicated to using the power of sport to create positive social change.

Visiting their headquarters in London, students were warmly greeted by the team and given a comprehensive tour of the office.

They were invited to actively take part in creating a gender positive campaign and





developing an strategy around the campaign.

Engaging with various members of the Laureus team, student athletes had the opportunity to learn more about the various departments in the headquarters, ranging from finance to communication and IT.

As the day drew to a close, groups were given the opportunity to pitch their ideas with the best pitch winning a Laureus prize.

We are grateful to Laureus for such an inspiring and motivating day which gave our students the opportunity to explore the real world, network and positively contribute to important work.





Congratulations to our 2023 Jack Petchey award winners



January Cassandra Salvi Mendonca, 15



Cassandra has been consistent in attending the Tuesday homework club, keeping up with her schoolwork while training.

She has taken the responsibility to attend one hour per week before training and has never had to be

reminded about the club.

Cassandra does her work independently and makes a conscious effort to tell others about the service provided. Her £300 grant was spent on hiring a 16 seater minibus service to attend the National Championships in Sheffield.

February Abigail Ejakita, 14

Abigail is a disciplined and talented athlete who has a passion for athletics and competes at every opportunity.

She is encouraged to compete at various championships, and this year she achieved gold, silver and bronze medals. Abigail recently

secured a place with the older training group, three to five years her senior, so she could train alongside athletes of a similar mindset.

Her £300 grant was spent on hiring a 16 seater minibus service to attend the National Championships in Sheffield.



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March Anaya Beckford-Cole, 16



Anaya joined Track Academy on a six-month scholarship programme in June 2022.

Since then, we have watched her balance studying for her GCSEs alongside her training.

She is dedicated to her training while embarking on what is arguably the most stressful time of a 16-year-old's life.

Anaya is a role model within the training group and definitely deserving of the Jack Petchey Award thanks to her focus and determination.

Her £300 grant was spent on a variety of activities for 50 student athletes during the April half term including rock climbing and Afrobeat dancing.

April Vivian Graziano, 13

Vivian shows a tremendous amount of dedication to her training at Track Academy.

She has had many obstacles in regard to injury but she continues to seek advice to better herself.



She is a stellar example of someone who knows how to work hard for what they want. She is a great teammate, student and person, and is a brilliant example of what we stand for.

Her £300 grant was spent on May and June half term activities, including paddleboarding and sailing excursions for 11 to 21-year-olds.

May Jaiden Rubie, 14



Jaiden is an exceptional 400m runner. He has shown immense dedication and enthusiasm towards improving his ability.

He takes feedback constructively, which has allowed him to make significant progress in his technique and speed.

He is also a supportive and encouraging teammate, pushing his peers to do their best.

Jaiden recently volunteered to take part in long jump taster sessions and has been identified by Thames Valley Harriers' long jump coach to have the ability to register as a multi event student athlete.

His £300 grant went towards an electronic timer service and activities in the summer holiday including a theatre visit.

June Danica Opoku, 13

Since joining in January, Danica has slowly but surely changed her disruptive behaviour and attitude towards her training and is putting more effort into her sessions at track.



We are happy to say she is steadily working towards her athletics goals.

His £300 grant went towards an electronic timer service and activities in the summer holiday which included a kayaking session, a visit to the Lexi Theatre and the hiring of a boxercise professional.

September Rio Louca, 16



Rio has been consistently training throughout the summer months and into the winter season.

He is punctual, polite and helpful to others. He works hard in training and will ask questions if he is unsure about something.

Rio also tries to apply techniques shown to him during training sessions. Rio is a conscientious athlete who is aware of the importance of working hard at school as well as on track.

His £300 grant was spent on competition officials and entertainment at our first annual competition at Lee Valley Athletics Stadium.

October Anya Taylor-Montgomery, 12

Anya has shown great improvement over the last few months, both on the track and off.

She has been attending Saturday school consistently of her own accord.

She has tapped into her life skills and has



shown great discipline, dedicated to getting faster on the track.

We have recently moved her to a new coach thanks to her improvement. Anya is one to watch as she has been a great role model and is very respectful to all members of staff and fellow students.

Her £300 grant was spent on competition officials and entertainment at our first annual competition at Lee Valley Athletics Stadium.

November Kaydian Thompson, 16



Kaydian used to be very shy but has really come out of her shell. She showed great leadership skills at our workshop and extra activities such as work experience.

She consistently attends homework sessions and Saturday school to improve her grades.

After disappearing for a little while, she decided to come back and further work on her confidence.

Kaydian has shown real determination to work on being more confident.

Her £300 grant was spent on December's half term holiday programme which included an escape room, ice skating and end of term treats for the student athletes.





The Kingswood residential trip was a fun and exciting experience filled with mental and physical challenges that re-enforced the life skills taught at Track Academy.

The trip was three days and two nights long in quite a remote area. All activities took place away from the dorms and mostly outdoors, involving physical and thought-provoking tasks.

With early starts and late finishes, the kids did not have a lot of time to sit about in their dorms and binge-watch shows like they might have done for the rest of the half-term.

It also gave them a more structured day and sleep pattern similar to the school term. Therefore, they didn't find it too difficult to follow the schedule, but it did take them a few hours to adjust to no phones during the day.

The first day we arrived was a good introduction to the days we had ahead; the fire lighting and mini-Olympics showed us the fun aspect and skills behind survival as well as healthy competition.

All the groups were able to build small campfires, and everyone including the coaches

were able to compete and enjoy the mini-Olympic games.

It gave the kids the opportunity to enjoy sports without the challenge of training that they usually experience at Track Academy. It was a relaxing and entertaining start that encouraged the kids to embody leadership and creativity to accomplish amazing results.

The kids had an early start the next day with rock climbing and abseiling as the first tasks for the day. This meant they had to tap into their life skills of aiming high and staying positive to push past comfort zones and fears.

Throughout the day, it was clear that the morning activities had a positive effect on the way that the children approached the rest of the tasks, as they were keen to listen and participate in the reflection workshops and abseiling. The day progressed with joy and positive engagement.

Teamwork continued amongst the group as the student athletes were increasingly encouraging and supportive of one another. A campfire and sports games concluded the day with light-hearted fun and relaxation for all.

The last day was a real test of hand-eye coordination skills, when the athletes took part in archery. They again had to stay positive and aim high when participating.

It proved to be a harder task than first thought, but the kids enjoyed the experience nonetheless. On returning home, the kids were sad to be ending their adventure with Kingswood as they enjoyed their activities as well as the company of the instructors.

All these activities involved multiple life skills that the student athletes can use in everyday life and actively integrate into their training along with consistency and perseverance.



Due to the nature of the activities and the length of time we would be outside,

it gave the opportunity for the children to be away from their phones and other electronic devices. Overall, it allowed them to get in touch with nature more and be more present in the moments around them.

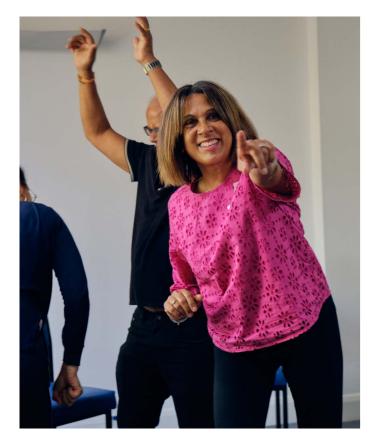
We also received some lovely feedback from parents, including: "Best thing in life for the kids is this wonderful trip. Thank you so much."

"Thank you Track Academy for making the experience so enjoyable, and for everything you have done for them."





Back to Movement supports thousands in Brent and beyond



Our Back to Movement programme, in collaboration with Sport England and the National Lottery, has seen another year of success in 2023.

We have worked alongside 18 different organisations, delivering 20 projects for a minimum period of six months each.

2,200 people have been directly supported with a further 2,500 indirectly benefitting from this work.

The origins of Back to Movement

For the past two years, we have been working to help rebuild, reconnect and recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Not only have we worked in Brent, but we have extended to the surrounding boroughs, including Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham, and Kensington and Chelsea.

In our 2023 programme, the focus on community building has been one of our prime objectives. Using physical activity and exercise as a hook to bring people together, we have seen an increase in social interaction and reconnection.

The programme continues to be helpful in encouraging the community to come and work together, to get active again by rebuilding hope and looking forward to the future.

Back to Movement's five principles of accessibility, relevance, support, engagement and outreach have boosted the participation in sports, exercise and physical activity throughout the communities of Brent and the surrounding boroughs.

Having conducted the programme for two years, it became evident that there was still a significant deterioration of both mental and physical health throughout our communities.

Therefore, in our expansion this year, we made a progressive effort to focus our attention more on inclusivity through physical movement or outside activity.

This helped the community engagement develop beyond the focus on sport, helping participants to develop a healthier lifestyle that is fun, accessible and engaging.

This is how we were able to continue influencing the community through physical activity, as the impact extended past those who have lost loved ones.

It impacted all age groups and abilities which faced a crisis in respect to health, wellbeing, and social and economic futures.

Through our outreach expansion, we were able to offer a conduit to other outcomes including improved mental and physical health, reduction of isolation, and raising motivation,

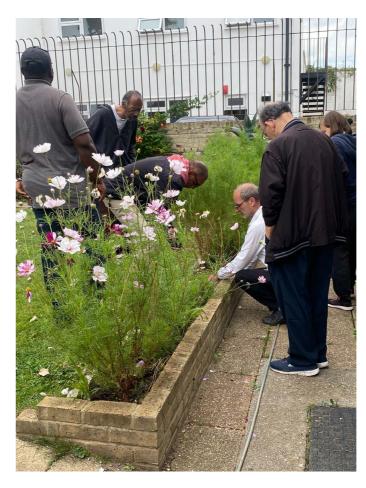
purpose and hope. We aspired to get more people active, keep them active, and help them lead a more prosperous future, as we had done in Brent previously.

Participants have shared their experiences and thoughts about the work that Back to Movement has done and the influence it has had on their lives.

Some have expressed gratitude and others have shared their positive experiences. One participant of a yoga class at Elders Voice said: "I enjoy it, it's good for my well-being. The teacher is very good on all aspects of our movement."

A participant with The Running Charity said: "In every step, we not only run for change but also build friendships that last miles beyond the finish line."

One 63-year-old joined three groups with Brent Mencap after his 93-year-old mother was concerned that he didn't go out very often. He said: "I like this very much, being with people and gardening. It's a good thing, a good place."

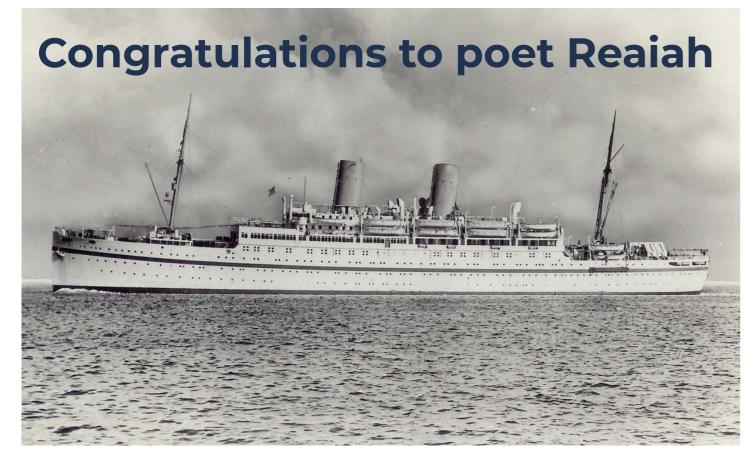














Our student Reaiah Barnett has been recognised for her evocative poetry about her family's experience as part of the Windrush generation.

She was a runner-up in Action for Race Equality's Windrush Voices

competition, which invited young people to connect to the experiences, struggles and triumphs of the Windrush generation and their descendants.

They could choose to do this through oral storytelling, written narratives, poetry, artwork, or digital media. Reaiah, 16, who goes to William Perkin CofE High School, won a class-set of Brilliant Black British History by Atinuke and Kingsley Nebechi and a £75 voucher.

She said: "I entered the competition to share my history and the pride that I have when talking about the Windrush generation, but also exploring the reality that my family had to face coming to Britain.

"I wanted to be able to express my thoughts and feelings surrounding everything about the Windrush generation as my family are from Jamaica and Barbados and I put those feelings into my poem.

"The Windrush history is incredibly important to me because my grandparents were Windrush generation and came to Britain to work and start a family in an entirely new place.

"I am grateful that my parents taught me about my family history and what they did to have a new beginning.

"My parents explained to me the incredibly long time they spent on ship and arriving at Southampton Port as well as every aspect of their journey, which made me even more proud to be Caribbean and have the chance to share the history of my family and all of the Windrush generation."

Windrush Poem by Reaiah Barnett

This is the Windrush generation. Change. Growth. Adaption.

Sailing away, don't look back Palm trees wave goodbye Start clouds appear above An unknown land beyond

A time for new beginnings New memories to be made Old memories to be cherished All they had knew

I had stories by my parents' parents
They seemed like a fantasy
A fairytale world far away
Wondering why they would have ever left

"Little one, the land mi love, the place mi call home That land far away was all mi know Mountains and valleys Fruit for every root The beauty of our Blue Mountain peak

"Tall and strong
That's all we learned to be
Strong to venture into the unknown
Strong in a new reality
Strong in dis new home"

Restless days and nights
Waiting for a New Hope
I hope of prosperity
One by one
Two by two
They rode the waves of challenges ahead
Waves of fear and anticipation
No longer the waves of serenity they once
known

I look up to them

Remember them
The Windrush Generation
Shut out with harsh words
Signs on the windows all around
Where was the peace?
Where was the land they were meant to love?
Hate spread like fire
The sparks grew and reached out



Engulfing them in their flames But hope stood strong

Admiration Honour Respect

For this generation made me who I am

Bravery
Kindness
Ambition
I know who I am
I am a black girl

I love my history

My family travelled across the Atlantic Ocean

I am proud Because they made me who I am

They are the Windrush Generation Changed. Grew. Adapted.



Thank you to our sponsors























