



Reach Society



Building Connections

Patrons: Lord H. Ouseley, Ms Marva Rollins OBE, Prof. Sir G. Palmer, Prof. T. Williams & John Budu-Aggrey

The 2024 Careers Conference Report

On Tuesday, 2nd April, Reach Society once again showcased talent in the Black community at its 12th Careers Conference. The registration for the day was slightly lower than 980 young people, aged 13 to 24, and some parents. The turnout was again higher, up roughly 10 percent on the previous year.

This year, for the first time, Durham University hosted its STEP awareness session, for Black year 12 students in London, at the same time as the Careers Conference in the adjacent room, which attracted large groups of young people and their parents/carers. This pilot or experiment proved to be most successful as all 6 sessions hosted by Durham were well attended. The University also presented the UCAS process for young people seeking access to higher education.

Another high point of the Careers Conference was the “Yes We Can” (or YWC) interlude in which a diverse Panel of seven highly successful men and women shared their working definition of employability skills. Then they took questions from the attendees (young people and some adults).

This year the YWC interlude guests were: **Dr Koye Balogun**, Clinical Scientist, Public Health England; **Jennifer Dyer**, Founder and Director, E100 Club; **Nathalie Richards**, CEO, Sponsors for Educational Opportunity, SEO; **Mark Lomas**, Head of Culture HR, Lloyd’s of London; **Ritchie Neil**, Senior Account Executive, Salesforce; **Lillian Pontes**, Country Director, 42 London; and **Daniel Yamoah**, Account Director, Salesforce. Roughly eight lucky young people who asked questions of the Panellists were rewarded with a book chosen from the Society’s book collection.

Once again the Careers Conference was fully subscribed with 30 exhibitors all of whom were eager to be involved in face to face engagement with the attendees. There were 8 new, or first time, exhibitors namely: African Caribbean Leukaemia Trust, ACLT; Christ The Redeemer College; E100 Club; Equality Partnership; Howden Group; Sponsor for Educational Opportunity, SEO; Windrush Foundation; and Westminster University.

The other 22 were repeat exhibitors who included: 42 London; Alpha BSE; Amos Bursary; British Army; Chartered Trading Standards Institute, CTSI; Deloitte LLP; Durham University; Enfield Caribbean Association; Equity City; HS2; Imperial College London; KAD Consultancy; King's College London, KCL; Life Radio UK; London Black Educators Network, LBEN; Lloyd's of London; RAFFA; Reach Society (including the STEMM and Smart Health Project teams); and the Royal Air Force.

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This year the STEMM (science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine) team was once again very successful; the team was popular with attendees from the moment the event started through to the end of the day.

The Perfect 10 Workshops were also offered on the day; and once again they proved to be very popular. They featured essential messages and themes were from a diverse range of facilitators such as the Sponsors for Educational Opportunity, SEO; Deloitte LLP; a Salesforce Account Director; a pair of entrepreneurs; a cohort of Amos Bursary alumni; a patron of Reach Society on the Michelle Obama Qualities; Cancer Black Care; and a joint session of the RAF and the British Army.

Lastly, several testimonials were received from exhibitors, volunteer role models and workshop facilitators; some of which are featured on the Society's News page.

Dr Dwain A Neil OBE, Reach Society, Chairman (April 2024)