



Reach Society

Building Connections



Patrons: Prof. Sir G. Palmer, Sir K. Olisa, Ms M. Rollins OBE, Prof. T. Williams, J. Budu-Aggrey, & Dr N. Frater

The 2025 Careers Conference Report

On Tuesday, 8th April in its milestone year, Reach Society once again showcased talent in the Black community at the 13th annual Careers Conference. The registration for the day was roughly 700 young people, aged 13 to 24, and some parents. Despite the registration, turnout was down by roughly 10 percent on the previous year.

For the second year Durham University hosted its STEP awareness session in the Ellis room, for Black year 12 students at the same time as the Careers Conference, which attracted many young people and their parents/ carers. This pilot is continuing to drive up awareness of this innovative summer school at Durham University. It also featured in the workshops by presenting 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 Panel of four highly experienced and successful men and women shared their thoughts in response to the question: do experts matter? Then they took roughly two dozen questions from the young people.

This year the YWC interlude guests were: **Professor Kevin Fenton CBE**, Regional Director for London, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, OHID; **Kimberley Campbell-Lamb**, Strategic Service Director, Bedfordshire Police Service, BPS; **David Regis**, Regional Manager, Football League, Youth Development Department; and **Rosalind Yarde**, Ex Newspaper, Radio and Television Journalist, with the BBC and the United Nation’s International Labour Organisation. The proactive young people who asked questions of the Panellists were rewarded with books chosen from the Society’s collection.

Once again the event was fully subscribed with 26 exhibitors all of whom were eager to be involved in face to face engagement with the attendees. This year, as in the previous years, there were 9 new or first time exhibitors namely: Allianz Commercial (insurance market); Manhood Academy Global (a mentoring group); Pastor Lenore Greenaway (educator and author); the African Caribbean Society at Imperial College; Keys Consulting (buildings maintenance); the Independent Medical Faculty (a new medical and healthcare body for networking); Activate Community Engagement (founded by Metropolitan Police officers); The Boss Partner (back office services provider); and Kenny Sykes (a small firm of architects).

The other 17 exhibitors had been before; they included: 42 London; Alpha BSE; Amos Bursary; British Army; Chartered Trading Standards Institute, CTSI; Deloitte LLP; Durham University; Enfield Caribbean Association; HS2; Imperial College

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London; KAD Consultancy; King's College London, KCL; London Black Educators Network, LBEN; Lloyd's of London; RAFFA; Reach Society (including the STEMM team); and the Royal Air Force.

This year the STEMM (science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine) team were once again very busy; they were surrounded by attendees from the moment the event started through to the end of the day. It was also given a boost when Professor Kevin Fenton CBE arrived in the afternoon and spend some time on the stand.

The Perfect 10 Workshops were also rolled out on the day; and once again they proved to be very popular. The featured essential messages and themes came from a diverse range of facilitators such as:

- **Delwes Consultancy** who spoke about maintaining good mental health;
- **Imperial College** showcased their opportunities for young people;
- **Durham University** took attendees through the UCAS process;
- **42 London** showcased the Tech Discovery Week programme;
- **RAF and British Army** showcased the careers, streams and pathways on offer;
- **A Goldsmith College staff member** demonstrated how to confidently build public speaking;
- **Amos Bursary** young people once again showcased their qualifications, talents and skills to the delight of attendees;
- **The Michelle Obama Qualities** session reminded attendees that girls and young women must fully develop their potential; and
- **The Chartered Trading Standards Institute**, CTSI, showcased a range of hidden heroes of the regulatory services.

Lastly, several oral and written testimonials were again received from participants - such as attendees, exhibitors, volunteer role models, workshop facilitators and the Panellists. In summary, this was another inspirational day that impacted a great many young people and their family members.

Dr Dwain A Neil OBE, Reach Society, Chairman (April 2025)