



THE MAGAZINE OF THE EASTSIDE YOUNG LEADERS' ACADEMY

visage



Profiles
Inspirational young women setting high standards for the generations to come

Young Leaders' graduation

King Edward Hall, Bank of America, August 2023

The night is long

Is the hope of justice just wishful thinking?

EASTSIDE
YOUNG
LEADERS'
ACADEMY



YLAs in the UK

NOTTINGHAM
YOUNG LEADERS



NORTHSIDE
YOUNG LEADERS



FIRST WORDS



Welcome

from the team at **v**sage

As we enter a new year this edition is focussed on leadership, our *alma mater*.

At time of writing the world remains in a state of crisis and conflict (what’s new) – ‘wars and rumours of wars’ – environmental challenges, identity crises and ideologically our own domestic politics is driven by sleaze and self-interest.

As young people, we look to our political and religious leaders with disappointment. However, we know we could do more, and as young leaders we should not defer our responsibilities to others. As Mandela once said, “Be the change”.

These pages are written by young leaders who epitomise the change; ‘leadership reimagined’ to quote Mr Lewis, three of our young leaders (Mirabel, Louisa and Deborah) represent the first fruits of this possibility. All young leaders have the same mission, training and encouragement to be the change.

Enjoy!

Jeremy Aikins



#EYLALondon



eastsideyoung
leaders



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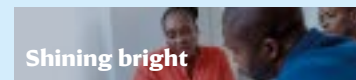
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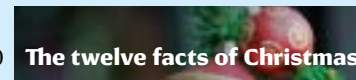


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PROFILE

ONCE, twice, three times a leader

In a world where leadership, resilience and responsibility are needed more than ever, it is inspiring to see young women setting high standards for the generations to come.

I owe a lot to the supportive communities of Eastside, Windlesham Prep and Oundle. They have prepared me for this moment, and I am determined to make them proud.

Mirabel Agyemang



Jeremy Aikins

EYLA has been nurturing these qualities in us for years, and this year, we have a triumvirate reason to celebrate. Three of our scholars, Mirabel Agyemang, Louisa Vershima and Deborah Adejori, have been appointed as head girls at their respective boarding schools. These remarkable young women have proven that hard work, determination and dedication can lead to success and inspire others to follow in their footsteps.

**MIRABEL AGYEMANG
LEADING THE WAY AT
OUNDLE SCHOOL**

Mirabel Agyemang, was appointed head girl at Oundle School. This prestigious institution, known for its academic excellence and rich history, chose Mirabel as the epitome of leadership and responsibility.

Mirabel's journey to becoming head girl is a testament to her exceptional qualities. She is an accomplished scholar, a talented athlete, actor and dedicated community volunteer with a passion for medicine. Her hard work and dedication in and out of the classroom have set her apart as a role model for her peers.

Upon receiving the news of her appointment, Mirabel expressed her gratitude to her mentors at Eastside Young Leaders' Academy and the staff at Oundle. "This is a dream come true for me," she said. "I owe a lot to the supportive communities of Eastside, Windlesham Prep and Oundle. They have prepared me for this moment, and I am determined to make them proud." Mirabel has two brothers who have both attended boarding schools.

Mirabel Agyemang

Louisa Vershima (left) and
Deborah Adejori



**LOUISA VERSHIMA
INSPIRING LEADERSHIP AT
LANCING COLLEGE**

Lancing College, a renowned independent school with a history dating back to 1848, has chosen Louisa Vershima as their head girl, recognising her outstanding leadership abilities. Louisa’s journey from London to Lancing showcases the transformational power of education and mentorship.

Louisa’s story is a testament to her unwavering dedication to her studies and community. She has consistently displayed exceptional leadership skills and a deep sense of responsibility. Her journey from a young scholar to head girl is marked by perseverance and resilience, traits she credits to the guidance and support she received from Eastside, further honed by Lancing.

Upon being appointed head girl, Louisa shared, “I am truly honoured to be chosen as head girl. It is a privilege and a responsibility that I take very seriously. I want to be an example for young women everywhere, showing them that with hard work and determination, they can achieve their dreams.”

**DEBORAH ADEJORI
LEADING WITH EXCELLENCE AT
THE WELLINGTON ACADEMY**

Deborah Adejori, another exceptional young woman, has been appointed as head girl at The Wellington Academy. Wellington has chosen Deborah as an example of leadership and responsibility.

Deborah’s involvement in various extra-curricular activities and her exemplary academic achievements have set her apart as a role model for her peers.

Deborah humbly reflects on her journey, saying, “This is a tremendous opportunity for me, and I am grateful for the support and guidance I received from EYLA. I aim to inspire others with my story and continue to work hard to set high standards for those who will come after me.”

These three remarkable young women, Mirabel, Louisa and Deborah, are living testimony of our mission to instil resilience, responsibility, and leadership skills in our young leaders and scholars. Their appointments as head girls are not only a testament to their own capabilities but also a source of inspiration for young women everywhere. As they take on their new roles, they are setting the bar high for those who will follow in their footsteps. We have every reason to be proud of these exceptional scholars who are now paving the way for future generations.

I want to be an example for young women everywhere, showing them that with hard work and determination, they can achieve their dreams.

Louisa Vershima

I aim to inspire others with my story and continue to work hard to set high standards for those who will come after me.

Deborah Adejori.

AN answer to prayer

On the 25th of November 2022 we did a fundraising activity to help raise money for our local food bank. We raised £1,340 mainly through sponsored activities.

Emmanuelle Okoro

I was one of the lucky young leaders who got an opportunity to volunteer at the local food bank. This allowed me to talk to a number of homeless people who came in for food (to take away), warmth and lunch, which was helpful in the cold of November.

After the event, a middle-aged man came to me, and said “Are you the young woman who served me my dinner”. I replied, “Yes, I am”. He then said, “You, young lady are an answer to prayer, thank you very much.”

In my 15 years on the planet, no-one has ever said to me that I was an answer to prayer. The idea that I was driven by spiritual forces! I’m sure my mum would laugh but I’m going to accept it.

As I walked home, I thought a lot about what this man said. At East-side, leadership is defined as serving others; we are taught that ‘leadership is about service’ and in that moment I did feel like a leader. Helping others is very important to me; a lot of people have helped me and my family over the years: family and friends, teachers and other people.

Thinking back on my friend at the food bank, I really like the idea of being an ‘answer to prayer’. I liked it that someone’s needs were met by me. It made me think that as a human being I can do the work of angels. If my experience at the foodbank means anything, it means that somehow God is at work even through me. It also made me realise that when I don’t help, someone in need does not experience God; this is also a type of leading, it is leadership declined.

ONE family, two faiths

I haven’t met many other people in a family like mine.

Paul Adebayo

I live with both parents and have four siblings so there are seven of us altogether. My dad is Muslim and my mum is a Christian. I asked them if they would be comfortable about me writing this article about their faith and Dad said, “As long as you don’t embarrass me”. We live in Newham and have lived in this borough for 23 years (I was born 16 years ago). My parents have been together for 24 years. As far as I can see they seem quite happy.

I questioned my parents about their individual faith. Questioning African parents about anything required risk assessment!

My dad follows the Islamic religion and my mum is a Christian. I do not define myself by religion and I attend both mosque (once in a while) and church on a weekly basis. I attend a Catholic school.

Both my parents are committed believers and so far there is no conflict. I guess my mum determines

religious matters for me and my siblings; my eldest brother is a Muslim. I like to feel that I benefit from both religions.

All of us attend church, but my dad and my brother also go to Mosque.

My mum was raised in a Christian family. My dad was raised in a nominal Christian household but converted to Islam. He told me that he needed a bit more structure; rules and order. My dad prays several times a day and my mum a few times each week.

Both my parents say they experience a connection with God, although my mother uses what I call emotional language to describe her own religious practice. My mum goes to confession on a regular basis (this makes me squirm) and dad argues he has nothing to confess, certainly not to humans who like to gossip.

I asked my dad how he felt about mum sharing personal matters with her priest, and he replied “I knew this when we got married, I don’t like



THE world of work

Both my parents are committed believers and so far there is no conflict.

it, but I live with it, as long as I don't have to do it."

As for diet, my dad and mum share cooking duties (no pork) and I'm not aware of food that would be offensive to either (haram).

As a family we tend to argue about global issues, the Middle East or western economics. We attend Christian and Islamic funerals, weddings and other events.

I am unable to read the Quran but I have resolved this year to learn.



Across the summer our Young Leaders joined the London workforce to gain practical real life work experience.

Carol Murraine

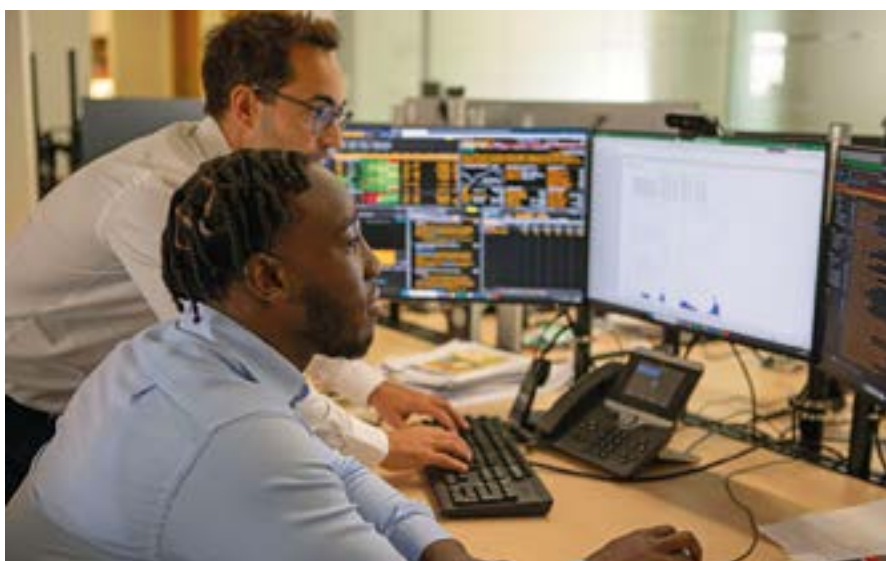
Portland communications provided a placement for Jeremy Aikins; Byrne Dean hosted Esther Ajayi-Akinsulire and Mubadala Investment Bank took three of our Young Leaders under their wing. The Cabinet Office provided experience in policy and politics for another three of our students.

Additionally we placed six students in teaching and youth worker roles.

Four others were given opportunities in the building trade eg carpentry and decorating, plus social media content creation, creative arts and community work.

Matthew Kosgei completed his first summer internship as part of his university scholarship which Acasta awarded him in 2022.

We are grateful to all our corporate supporters and trustees for opening doors to the future.



Above top: Adrian Deazle with Erune, Jeremy and Somto on work experience at Mubadala.
Below: Mike Kosgei interning at Acasta.

YOUNG Leaders' graduation

August 2023



BANK OF AMERICA

The King Edward Hall at Bank of America witnessed a remarkable event as 23 graduating scholars, under the guidance of Miss Carol, entered its prestigious great hall.

Anne Collard

In attendance were proud parents, teachers, bank staff, trustees and esteemed guests, all of whom showered the graduates with applause and appreciation. The venue itself exuded an atmosphere of importance and intimacy, setting the stage for a memorable occasion.

Alumnus Jeremy Aikins led the event, and the audience was moved by a heartfelt testimony from Rehema, Amir's mother. Mirabel Agyemang, a 2017 alumna, shared her inspirational journey from EYLA to boarding school, urging the graduating cohort to set ambitious goals while staying grounded. She referred to her visit to the city last Autumn when she had the opportunity to listen to the President of the Bank of America International and fellow Ghanaian, Bernie Mensah, speak about his own

journey. Mr Mensah was mentioned a few times throughout the evening, evidence that he has made a big impression on our young leaders!

Joseph, a recent graduate now attending Christ Hospital School, offered valuable insights into his first year of boarding such as how to settle in quickly. The highlight of the evening was Sasha Chege's recitation of an inspiring poem entitled "It Couldn't Be Done," adapted for a female voice, which beautifully captured the challenges and triumphs that epitomise the young leaders' journey to this point. In her closing remarks, Miss Carol charged each scholar to embrace hope while cherishing their history.

Our thanks goes to our Bank of America supporters and the dedicated catering team whose exquisite cuisine enhanced our celebration.

Gowned but not yet crowned!



Samuel Adebisi, Young Leader of the Year.



It couldn't be done

Edgar A Guest

Adapted by Sasha Chege



Somebody said that it couldn't be done,
 But she with a chuckle replied
 That "maybe it couldn't," yet she'd be the one
 Who wouldn't say so till she'd tried.
 So she buckled right in with a trace
 of a grin on her face.
 If she worried she hid it.
 She started to sing as she tackled
 the thing
 That couldn't be done, and she did it.

Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that;
 At least no one ever has done it";
 But she took off her coat and she took off her hat,
 And the first thing we knew she'd begun it.
 With a lift of her chin and a bit
 of a grin,
 Without any doubting or quiddit,
 She started to sing as she tackled
 the thing
 That couldn't be done, and she did it.

There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,
 There are thousands to prophesy failure;
 There are thousands to point out to you, one by one,
 The dangers that wait to assail you.
 But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,
 Take off your coat and go to it;
 Then start to sing as you tackle
 the thing
 That "cannot be done," and you'll do it.



Clockwise from above: Thanks to the wonderful Bank of America catering team; Amir-Tinashe and his proud mum, Rehema; Refreshments at the ready; Graduation diplomas awaiting.



Risk

Anon

To laugh is to risk appearing a fool,
 To weep is to risk appearing sentimental.
 To reach out to another is to risk involvement,
 To expose feelings is to risk exposing your true self.
 To place your ideas and dreams before a crowd is to risk their loss.
 To love is to risk not being loved in return,
 To hope is to risk despair,
 To try is to risk failure.
 But risks must be taken because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing.
 The person who risks nothing, does nothing, has nothing is nothing.
 They may avoid suffering and sorrow,
 But they cannot learn, feel, change, grow or live.
 Chained by their servitude they are slaves who have forfeited all freedom.
 Only a person who risks is free."

LEADERSHIP reimagined



SAMUEL

I believe that the fundamental thing about leadership is that it is intuitive and imaginative. Intuition and imagination sets you apart. To be intuitive is to be self-taught or taught from within.



PARIS

True leadership is about service, not command and control.



ATALYA , LULU AND LAKSHMI

We were brought up believing that leaders are male! But as we all know leaders can come in all shapes, genders and sizes. Some of our greatest leaders have been female; female warriors, politicians, medics and now me!



JOSHUA

I've learned that leadership is not the same as position or hierarchy



SEAN PAUL

|| One thing I have discovered about leadership is that “when the music stops ... it’s my job to make sure everyone in my team has a seat.

SASHA

|| The fundamental thing about leadership is that leaders make things happen. They realise that there is no cavalry coming, it depends on you. Obama once said, ‘Change will not happen if we wait for some other person, or some other time’. We are the change we’ve been waiting for – we are the change that we seek.



ALEXIS

|| I’ve been taught that leaders are unreasonable! Jesus was definitely unreasonable and so was Ghandi. Leaders challenge the norms, we push the boundaries.

GIDEON

|| Leadership is not about being in charge. It is about taking care of those in your charge.

DANIEL

|| Leaders aim to win not just look like they’re winning.



TOCHI AND CLARA

|| The most important thing we’ve learned as leaders is ‘the pilot’s code’. “In God we trust – everything else, **we check!**”

LUCIANO

|| I have learned that leaders own their lives; we are responsible for our families and communities, we are accountable and don’t seek to blame others.

THE CLARION YOUNG LEADERS' ACADEMY

NOTTINGHAM partners join

Eastside are thrilled to welcome and adopt Nottingham Young Leaders into the family.

Nottingham YLA joins Clarion on Saturdays, meeting online and in person at the centre in Leicester.

Together they are forging a pathway for the YLA movement in the Midlands creating an environment that promotes academic excellence and rigour, developing leadership skills, citizenship, confidence and self-esteem.

Over the next few years our YLAs in the Midlands will be strengthening their infrastructure, increasing the number of beneficiaries and providing greater access to educational opportunities including boarding school bursaries.



This partnership represents an exciting chapter in the YLA story. Together, we will inspire and equip the next generation of leaders in the Midlands.

Nottingham Young Leaders join Clarion YLA in Leicester

A warm welcome to the Nottingham community into our YLA family!

SPONSORSHIP

MAKE an impact sponsor a young leader!



Established in 2002, EYLA is a youth leadership development organisation especially for Black and minority youth, empowering them to become the next generation of successful leaders.

We all know many paths in life are determined by the influence and inspiration of the learning environment. EYLA is such a place.

We have created a zone of magical realism, channelling energy and ambition into productive pursuits unlocking the true potential in each young person. We work with our partners and parents to motivate and encourage students to go beyond their personal best. We run workshops and classes utilising our own unique, bespoke leadership curriculum, built on seven building blocks: **Confidence and Capacity, Health and Well-being, Identity,**

History and family, Self-expression and Leadership, Self-management and Service. We also support parents through our Parent University and we benefit from the alumni who give back through volunteering.

The programme has resulted in increased academic attainment at school and greater civic involvement from the young leaders. EYLA achieves its fantastic results by building the academic and interpersonal skills of its young leaders, instilling in them self-confidence and unlocking their creativity. Visits to corporations and places of cultural

interest build the soft skills and cultural capital of the young leaders. Visits to universities such as Oxford and Cambridge are a key aspect of EYLA's extra-curricular programme and are having a huge impact on the attitude and aspirations of the young people. Since 2007 we have placed >250 students on full bursaries or scholarships in world renowned boarding schools. Over the last 20 years, EYLA's success has resulted in strong interest in replicating the model and there are now seven YLA's, five in London and two further afield in Milton Keynes and Leicester.

It costs £1,550 per annum to support a Young Leader

- **£500** will provide 300 hours of supplementary education including maths, English, science and study support plus a summer school.
- **£400** will provide 350 hours of life and leadership skills training towards a successful future.
- **£300** will provide at least 20 opportunities such as career insight, challenges, visits to universities and corporations, work experience etc.
- **£200** will provide 25 hours of one to one academic coaching and/or mentoring.
- **£3,500** will prepare and support a student towards a boarding school bursary placement.

To make a donation please go to <https://www.eyla.org.uk/donate>

Or make an online transfer to: **EYLA – Admin Account**
Sort code: **30-92-90**
Account number: **02044631**

Thank you for your support!

SPOTLIGHT ON

LULU NGAO

Breaking new ground

In 2023, Lulu, aged 10, our youngest ever boarder, was awarded a placement at a prestigious boarding school.

Carol Murraine

This highlights the immense potential within our youth.

Lulu's journey stands as a testament to her unwavering commitment and relentless pursuit of academic excellence. The esteemed Highfield School, renowned for its storied history and commitment to nurturing young minds, have warmly welcomed Lulu into their midst.

Lulu joined Eastside in 2021, and consistently stood out among her peers; punctual, enthusiastic, willing and bold.

In a remarkably short span of time, Lulu has reached the Highfield Year 6 academic expectations and is keeping up with her peers academically.

Lulu's mum, Janet, said "The significance of this opportunity for Lulu cannot be overstated. The kindness and generosity of Highfield has impacted our whole family and wider community. We don't often see such kindness, we are truly thankful. EYLA and Highfield have laid the foundation for her growth and opportunity to do great things."

We look forward to celebrating Lulu's forthcoming achievements with immense pride and joy. Her future at Highfield School is brimming with promise as she spends two years preparing for the next step into a senior school.



Lulu's first term at Highfield.

SHINING bright: The Diamond Club

Illuminating voices for change



In the heart of our vibrant Eastside community, a new grassroots organisation has emerged, aiming to shape the future with a vision and a symbol of enduring strength: The Diamond Club, founded on the principles of unity, social responsibility and dedication, seeks to wield influence in important aspects of public life, advocating for a more inclusive and equitable society.

Theodora Anozie

A beacon of community-led activism

At its core, The Diamond Club is a grassroots, community-led organisation with a social purpose. Our primary mission is to actively engage in public discourse and effect change. As members of society, we firmly uphold the social contract, acknowledging our obligation to cooperate with one another and respect society's laws. This contract, we believe, grants us the mandate for activism and empowers us with a collective voice in how we are governed.

The mission is clear: to rally, organise, and advocate on behalf of our members, with a special focus on those who are underrepresented in society. The Diamond Club endeavours to influence decision-making in aspects of public life, ensuring that the voices of the poor are heard.

The Diamond Club is inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement that arose during the pandemic, it evolved out of Eastside's 'Parent University': previously an in person workshop-based parent support group which became a weekly virtual gathering during lockdown. Now parents meet virtually and in person to learn with and from each other; to plan and organise towards social change.

The significance of a diamond

The name 'Diamond Club' holds significance; just as a precious stone is forged under pressure, the members of this club recognise the challenges and struggles

they face. We believe that adversity can be transformed into something precious and enduring, symbolising resilience and determination. Much like the multifaceted brilliance of a diamond, this club seeks to reflect the diversity and strength of the community. We saw this through our struggles in the pandemic especially across Newham which at one time was the Covid capital of Europe.

Educational roots and a broader vision

The roots of the club are deeply entwined with education, recognising it as the foundation for future success. However, members, mostly parents, understand that children who struggle to succeed in school often grapple with challenges at home, stemming from adults who struggle to make ends meet and a lack of resources in local communities. This perspective informs the approach of the club, aiming to address the interconnected issues that affect the community, from education to economic stability.



|| The mission is clear: to rally, organise, and advocate on behalf of our members, with a special focus on those who are underrepresented in society.

SCHOOL VISITS

ENRICHMENT days

From Dulwich to Stowe

EXPLORING THE MARVELS OF DULWICH COLLEGE

Debbie Olatunji (Alumnus-intern)

Stepping foot into Dulwich College, I was immediately struck by its breath-taking beauty. The historic buildings exuded an aura of grandeur, while the perfectly manicured gardens added a touch of tranquillity.

Upon arrival, we were warmly welcomed by the headmaster, Dr Spence, in his study. As we introduced ourselves, he graciously offered us refreshments as a prelude to the exciting activities that lay ahead.

One of the highlights of the day was an informative talk on the 'James Caird', the boat used by Ernest Shackleton and his crew during their daring Antarctic expedition. Mr Weaver, a passionate and inspiring speaker, shared his extensive knowledge and enthusiasm for the topic. Seeing the

"The only thing you absolutely have to know, is the location of the library!" – Albert Einstein.

actual boat that carried them through four gruelling months of treacherous waters brought the story to life, and examining the clothing they wore gave us a deeper appreciation for the hardships they endured. It brought their adventure to life in a way that no textbook or documentary ever could.

Next on our itinerary was an art lesson with Mrs Mulholland. We were encouraged to explore our creative expression by delving into our 'happy places.' The calm atmosphere and Mrs Mulholland's guidance allowed us to unleash our imagination and create art that truly reflected our

inner selves. The journey continued as we stepped into the biology lab. Under the direction of Ms Millward, we had the incredible opportunity to witness a heart and lung dissection. The intricate workings of these vital organs deepened our understanding of the human body. It was an amazing experience that left us in awe of the complexities of life.

With appetites whetted by our adventures, we were welcomed into the lunch hall by the friendly catering staff for a delicious spread.

In the Edward Allen Theatre, we engaged in a captivating mask workshop. Here, we learned the art of immersive acting, using body language and facial expressions to embody the characters hidden behind the masks. Stepping into the shoes of different characters allowed us to explore new facets of ourselves.

As the day drew to a close, we headed outdoors for cricket with Mr Brown. We learned the value of teamwork, cooperation, and healthy competition.

It was a full day and reluctantly we bid our farewells, grateful for the amazing experience and with a renewed excitement for learning.



A DAY TRIP TO STOWE

Leon Ward-Gough (Alumnus and parent)

In the summer term a coach load of Eastside Young Leaders visited [Stowe School](#). The school building is an awe-inspiring 18th Century mansion set in 880 acres of National Trust landscaped gardens.

On arrival we were welcomed by the Development Office team and invited into the Marble Hall surrounded by columns and statues where the enormous floodlit Gaia Globe was hanging from the ceiling. Gaia is a stunning replica of our planet, created using 120dpi detailed NASA imagery of the Earth's surface.

The Headmaster, Dr Anthony Wallersteiner, joined us and gave a talk about Gaia after which the Young Leaders asked some remarkably intelligent questions and then completed worksheets to test their knowledge.

We then had a tour of the school grounds and were taken to see some monuments where we discovered more interesting historical facts.

After a delicious lunch we went to the science labs for a chemistry lesson like I've never experienced before! The teacher exuded a contagious passion for the subject; we felt like we were watching a magic show – the flashes, bangs and explosions were highly entertaining and we left still wanting more. The Young Leaders enjoyed their journey back to Eastside – especially when we drove through a rainbow continuing the scientific conversation.

We arrived back at Eastside feeling grateful and privileged to have experienced such an enriching day.

*Right: "We've got the whole world, in our hands".
Top and bottom right: "Beauty and history are for everyone", Stowe's breath-taking National Trust views.*

Below: "A magical chemistry lesson at Stowe".



INSIGHT

THE night is long...

I am (only) 14 years old, and I want to start this article by talking about history, looking back even though (as the youngest in my family), my siblings and my mum would say that I don't have much to look back on.

I'm now thinking that all this positive stuff pumped into me is misleading and a bit silly, it's just wishful thinking and pretending ... David does not defeat Goliath...

Noah Amoah

This may be true and I may not have much of a past but I do have a good memory and I love reading and I love stories, especially fairy stories and Bible stories, and stories of mythical things. I travel back in time through books, oral stories and my imagination.

My favourite story of all is the story of David and Goliath. The way this small boy killed the mighty giant and became a hero and eventually became a king. These kind of stories shaped my life and helped me to believe that I can pretty much do anything. This belief is something that my grandad and my parents and my teachers are always telling me "Noah, you can do anything, anything that you put your mind to." This has been told to me since I could walk and I think I believed it, it gave me a type of confidence and helped me face difficult things especially when my parents got divorced.

I was brought up among positive people especially at home and in my church family. As well as the positive things that I mentioned, I was encouraged to read newspapers and watch the news. "Watch and pray" said Rev'd Charles. This is something that we do each week at Eastside (news). According to Miss Brenda "you need to know what's going on in the world if you want to change things." Recently I have followed the news about the war in Ukraine and the war in Palestine and the stories about the post office people convicted of fraud. It seems to me that these are just little people all facing giants and 'impossible odds'.

I'm now thinking that all this positive stuff pumped into me is misleading and a bit silly, it's just wishful thinking and pretending. In real life, David does not defeat Goliath, the weak do not conquer the



strong and little people don't overthrow great powers. The bullies in my school get away with it.

I suppose I should end this article on a more positive note but it's hard. When my uncle was deported because of the Windrush I remember feeling so weak, and on top of that feeling of no help was a feeling of no hope.

Despite the facts I've written about above I want to believe that there is justice even though it takes long. My pastor said

"weeping endureth but for a night but Joy comes in the morning." I'm old enough to know that he can't mean tomorrow morning.

I want to finish with another quote, a verse from the Roman Horatius who we looked at in our history class last year, he wrote, "...And how can man die better than facing fearful odds, for the ashes of his fathers, and the temples of his gods." Goliath may win and justice is often late, the night is long. I pray for the morning.

PROFILE

CAMILA Batmanghelidjh

On January 1, 2024, I woke up to the news that Camila Batmanghelidjh passed away after a brief illness.



Above: Camila Batmanghelidjh giving a talk at Eastside in 2017.

Amos Joseph

I felt sad. I met Ms Camila in 2017 when she visited Eastside and spoke to all the young leaders and our parents about her work running Kids Company.

I got to know her personally and I really liked her even though I know other people didn't say anything nice about her. Camila was someone who all the kids in my school and our community had an opinion about. I'd seen clips about her on the TV news and back then I knew enough to know that she was controversial. But my mother taught me to "speak as you find," and I was able to ignore gossip and the media to make her seem like a bad person. I found her to be quite alright; in fact, I genuinely liked her, and she played a significant role in helping me.

A while after she visited Eastside in 2019 my mum reached out to get her to help me during a challenging period in my life and school journey. At the time I was struggling with learning as I am autistic and she knew straight away!

In the previous times across years I was sent to see many professionals all of whom closed my case without cure. Camila was different. She made me feel valued and special.

I will be forever grateful to her for her support.

Rest in peace Camila.

|| Camila was like an industrial size charitable vacuum - sucking up disproportionate amounts of currency for her cause. She had no sense of limitation and a Robin Hood belief that the rich should do much more. She sought to evangelise and hypnotise the great and the rich! Everyone it seemed wanted to help or at least to be seen helping - narcissistic giving she called it.

Carol Murraine



Above: Camila Batmanghelidjh with Carol Murraine at Eastside in 2017.

ATALYA's art



Atalya Idike and samples of her artwork.



POEMS by Luciano

DIDACTIC

You're born with stars in your eyes
 So that's why they twinkle at night?
 I close my eyes, blink twice
 Oh look! You're still my paradise
 So why don't we compromise
 And build a world so nice
 It doesn't have to be a dream
 We could build it up and make a
 team
 Team rocket, with the world in our
 pockets!
 Eating burgers and McNuggets
 We could call for hours
 Or play Jenga, build towers
 Then talk about us and the past
 As we blossom like flowers

As far as I remember
 It was sunny, I think December
 It was bright, you said a never
 You said yes, I said sure and we
 compromised
 From there I knew, for you I'd be
 better
 But real eyes realise that love isn't
 forever
 For we compromised, to our demise
 Lived in lies, too late to re-alise
 That we were never to be
 We were never the dream team
 Just a dreamy team
 In actuality, if we both faced harsh
 reality
 It wouldn't have been so hard on you
 and me
 But honestly in all honesty, you were
 once in love with me

ROMANCE

What a weird subject and what a
 weird genre.
 I know that I'm painful but, romance
 just hurts,
 It drives you so far and so crazy just
 for another,
 And I know, I know, I'm not the first.
 To point out its inconsistencies, the
 fact it pops up randomly
 And even more importantly, you're
 rarely rewarded handsomely.
 Romance brings a multitude of
 problems.
 One's more than the zeros behind a
 billion dollars.
 Just hear me out, my younger and
 older, sisters and brothers,
 I'm already a victim of this system
 which unwantedly blossoms
 It leads you to the wrong clue &
 drives away from what's true,
 But "what can we do?" but play the
 game of romance too.

Romance, is just so confusing, and
 so deluding
 It blinds eyes said to see 360° for all
 of our lives,
 People say "I could never die, for
 what I know a lie!"
 But romance finds those words
 nothing short of amusing,
 For who can say they've never died
 inside, then gone and felt fine
 When refused by the one they knew,
 was never ever "mine"

To my greatest enemy and dearest
 friend, Romance.
 If I could meet you in person at least
 physically,
 I'd slap your face a thousand times
 then clasp your hands.
 I guess that's not something people
 do typically,
 But I'm grateful for the dreams, of us
 dancing on golden sands.
 This is the last of my commands to
 my greatest friend romance
 Continue the play and fix the stage
 you let my love dance.
 Once again, too, romance.

THE 12 ~~days~~ facts of Christmas

Christmas is my favourite time of year. I love the season, sentiment and celebrations. Two years ago I was part of the Eastside team seeking to raise funds for those in need locally and internationally.

Angela Sanchez

We ran a successful campaign called 'Let's Boycott Christmas' following in the footsteps of Dr Martin Luther King Jr. The title of our campaign caused some controversy but it also enabled us to get attention and support.

A few months later I used the opportunity to look in more detail at the so called facts of Christmas. Traditionally, in western culture, there are twelve days of Christmas, beginning with the birth of Christ and ending with the appearance of the wise men. Over the years facts, traditions and myths have merged into a potpourri of ideas, beliefs and activities.

So, what are the facts of Christmas? Here's what I found!

1 THE THREE WISE MEN

We don't know how many so-called 'wise men' attended the birth of Christ nor indeed when they turned up. Historically we say there were three because there were three gifts.

2 CHRISTMAS DAY

December 25th has long been celebrated as the birthday of the Christ child, however we have no idea when he was born. Some scholars believe it was around September.

3 PAGAN ORIGINS

In the 4th century an African man called St Augustine came to Britain to preach the gospel and although people listened they were not prepared to give up the annual pagan activity. Augustine was advised by the pope to merge the birth of Jesus (date unknown) with the winter solstice aka 'celebration of the sun', a festivity that lasted two or three days with much eating and drinking. That is how we came to celebrate his birth on December 25th.

4 BOXING DAY

This was the day after Christmas when traditionally, those who were better off, gave gifts to the poor; money or gifts were placed in boxes and distributed.

5 CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Even before Christianity, it is thought that midwinter songs existed to keep up people's spirits, along with dances, plays and feasts. As Christianity spread across Europe from the 4th to the 14th centuries, the first carols were produced by Franciscan friars who were followers of Saint Francis of Assisi.

6 THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

Everybody loves the Christmas tree; it is almost the starting gun of the season. The origin is essentially rooted in Paganism. Pagans would bring fir trees into their homes at Yuletide representing everlasting life and fertility. The Yule tree is decorated with lights, candles, and other festive ornaments to celebrate the return of light after dark days.

7 THE CHRISTMAS TURKEY

Turkeys in Britain were popularised by King Henry VIII although they didn't originate in the UK. If they were good enough for the king they were good for the pauper! Turkeys are a big bird and therefore able to feed a whole household. They were first discovered in the USA and eaten at Thanksgiving.

8 THE CHRISTMAS ANNUAL CELEBRATION

Whilst Christmas is celebrated around the world, not all countries recognise it as a public holiday nor celebrate it. Some even ban it such as Brunei, Somalia and North Korea.

9 CHRISTMAS COLOURS

Red and white – these begin with Santa Clause who is a depiction of a third century monk named Saint Nicholas. St Nicholas was born in Turkey, and was known to be a kind man who liked to give gifts anonymously, especially to children. As Santa, his outfit and colours were a direct result of a marketing makeover by Coca-Cola. In 1931, the company commissioned illustrator Haddon Sundblom to paint Santa for Christmas advertisements. Those paintings established Santa as a warm, jolly character with rosy cheeks, a white beard in keeping with the Coca-Cola colours.

10 MINCE PIES

Like Christmas pudding, mince pies originate from the middle ages when they were made of meat, usually mutton with chopped up fruit and preserving liquid. Over the years they have evolved into sweet treats along with an array of superstitions e.g. stirring the mixture clockwise to avoid bad luck, getting each family member to stir while making a wish and eating a pie each day for the twelve days of Christmas to ensure good health and happiness throughout the year.

11 PRINCE OF PEACE

The commemoration of the birth of Jesus was the entrance of the Prince of Peace. Although countless wars have taken place in the name of religion, the message of peace has sometimes shone through the darkness of war. During the First World War soldiers stopped fighting at Christmas, came out of the trenches and sang carols, such as 'Silent Night', in their own languages, sadly the next day they went back to war.

Since the 4th century AD each December – we have a choice between the Coca-Cola, pagan orgy or a Christ centred observation and remembrance of arguably the most powerful divine intervention in human history. But it is a choice and now you know the facts – you really do have a choice

12 ADVENT CALENDAR

Advent calendars have their roots in the 19th century, when German Protestants started taking creative steps to mark the days leading up to Christmas, like ticking off chalk marks on walls or doors, lighting candles and placing straws in a nativity crib. The first advent calendars in the UK were gifts from Germany or Scandinavia or brought in by immigrants. By 1956, there were being commercially produced and advertised here.

In light of these facts, we have a choice as to how we celebrate the season – a focus on the real meaning of Christmas or consumerism; peace or pudding; rest or revelry!

PUZZLES

BRITISH Black history

Test *your* knowledge

1 Who was the first Black British Member of Parliament, elected in 1987?

.....

2 What was the name of the ship that brought West African slaves to the English colony of Jamestown in 1619?

.....

3 Which Jamaican born, Black British nurse is known for her pioneering work during the Crimean War?

.....

4 Which Black British sprinter won three gold medals at the 1980 Moscow Olympics and set world records in the 100m and 200m?

.....

5 What was the name of the community in Liverpool where a significant portion of the African slave trade was organized in the 18th century?

.....

6 Which Black British musician is often called the ‘Queen of Reggae’ and is famous for songs like *Pull Up to the Bumper*?

.....

7 Who was the founder of the West Indian Gazette and Afro-Asian Caribbean News, an influential publication in the 20th century?

.....

8 What was the name of the Black British boxer who famously defeated Muhammad Ali in 1978?

.....

9 In 1948, what ship famously carried hundreds of Caribbean immigrants to Britain, marking the start of the Windrush generation?

.....

10 Which British writer is best known for her novel *Small Island*, which explores the experiences of Jamaican immigrants in post-World War II Britain?

.....

11 Who is the British actor known for his roles in movies like *Twelve Years a Slave* and *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*?

.....

12 Which Black British author wrote the acclaimed novel *The Long Song* and was awarded the OBE in 2020?

.....

13 What is the title of the first Black British sitcom, which aired in the 1970s and centred around a West Indian immigrant family?

.....

14 Who was the first Black British woman to win a gold medal at the Olympics, achieving this in the 2004 Athens Games?

.....

15 In 1965, the Race Relations Act was passed in the UK, making it illegal to discriminate on the grounds of what?

.....

16 Who is the prominent British historian and broadcaster known for his work on African and Caribbean history, including the TV series *Black and British: A Forgotten History*?

.....

17 What organisation, founded in 1967, campaigns against racial discrimination and for the rights of Black and minority people in the UK?

.....

18 Who was Olaudah Equiano and why is he important?

.....

19 Who is the British rapper and musician known for hits like *Shutdown* and *Vossi Bop*?

.....

20 Which Black British architect designed the London Olympic Stadium for the 2012 Summer Olympics?

.....

WACKY wordy puzzle

Thinking outside the box!

Look at the boxes below to see if you can work out what each one means.

1 Stky	2 PAINS	3 T R A F A L G A R	4 A W A K E	5 BRIDGE Water
6 tpmerhao	7 school	8 injury + insult	9 DO FOOTOR	10 GREEN NV
11 HO USE	12 W I R E S W I R E S	13 M I N D	14 -attitude	15 HE NOW RE
16 SBRICS	17 wh ey we igh	18 1 the other 1 the other 1 the other 1 the other 1 the other 1 the other	19 G R A N D	20 PRICE
21 SWEAR BIBLE	22 L Y I N G JOB	23 R O R A I L D	24 THE MARKET	25 OHOLENE

Answers on page 24

TRUSTEES of EYLA



David Ejim-McCubbin
Chair of EYLA Trustees
Head of Policy and Advocacy, Social Mobility Commission; (Alumnus)



Pelumi Agbedejobi
Finance Analyst, TD Securities; (Alumnus)



Tom Carroll
Principal, Freshstream



Manon Dave
Chief Product & Design Officer at Mind Valley; Songwriter and producer, 7Wallace/Universal Music



Adrian Deazle
Senior Vice President, Enterprise Risk Management



Marcus Kerr
Software developer; (Alumnus)



Giles Marshall
Managing Director, Searchlight Capital Partners



Keza Nganga
Medicine Undergraduate, Cardiff University; (Alumnus)



Thomas Tharakan
Associate General Counsel, Global Infrastructure Partners



Misa von Tunzelman
Head of Corporate Affairs & Marketing - Europe, Lendlease

EYLA 2024 calendar

APRIL

2nd – 12th Easter holidays

MAY

28th – 31st Summer half-term

JULY

23rd Start of summer holidays

AUGUST

15th A-Level results

22nd GCSE results and Eastside graduation

SEPTEMBER

7th Start of Autumn term Leadership Programme

PUZZLE ANSWERS

BRITISH BLACK HISTORY

- 1 Diane Abbott
- 2 The White Lion
- 3 Mary Seacole
- 4 Linford Christie
- 5 Liverpool's Penny Lane
- 6 Grace Jones
- 7 Claudia Jones
- 8 Leon Spinks
- 9 HMT Empire Windrush
- 10 Andrea Levy
- 11 John Boyega
- 12 Andrea Levy
- 13 "Desmond's"
- 14 Dame Kelly Holmes
- 15 Race or ethnic origin
- 16 David Olusoga
- 17 The Runnymede Trust
- 18 A slave who bought his freedom and campaigned for the abolition of slavery
- 19 Stormzy
- 20 Zaha Hadid

WACKY WORDY PUZZLE

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Pie in the sky 2 Growing pains 3 Trafalgar Square 4 Wide awake 5 Bridge over Troubled Water 6 Mixed metaphor 7 High School 8 Add insult to injury 9 Foot in the door 10 Green with envy 11 A house divided 12 Crossed wires 13 The mind's eye | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14 Negative attitude 15 He came out of nowhere 16 Back to basics 17 Parting of the ways 18 6 of 1 and half a dozen of the other 19 Grandstanding 20 The price is right 21 Swear on the Bible 22 Lying down on the job 23 Railroad crossing 24 Corner the market 25 Hole in one |
|---|---|

IMAGE CREDITS

Eastside Young Leaders' Academy: all images unless otherwise specified.

Fitzroy Andrew: Pages 6-7

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*Alumni Trustees, David and Marcus at
the 2023 Graduation*





Bignold Hall Bignold Road London E7 0EX

020 8522 1000

info@eyla.org.uk

Charity number:1093977