

Youth UPF-UK Young Achievers Award 2017

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The Young Achievers Award 2017: Celebrating Future Leaders ceremony was an outstanding occasion to hear a wide range of inspiring testimonies from young adults from overcoming being a refugee to caring for disabled or homeless. Hosted by Rt Hon Tom Brake MP, a number of parliamentarians warmly congratulated their constituents while presenting their awards.



Siobhain McDonagh MP is presenting a Young Achievers Award to her constituent, Zahra Latif

Zahra Latif has always been conscious of how fortunate she is to have the opportunities that she has, this is how she was raised by her parents who migrated to the UK from Bangladesh. Her ambition is to be of benefit to society and to have a positive social impact. She seeks to be an active citizen and to develop herself so that she can give back more to society.

At university as an undergraduate Zahra was involved in leading several student societies and through representing her peers as an academic representative, she won awards from the students' union. She was president of the English society, a faculty representative for the Arts and Humanities, vice-president of the Islamic society, volunteered with the elderly and was named as one of the top 50 students to shape the University.

Since starting her professional life, Zahra has been driven to make choices that maximise social impact. She worked for the Lokahi Foundation - a think and do tank working on social cohesion; coordinating a project that used a story telling based methodology to bring together groups with a history of conflict. She simultaneously volunteered with a national youth organisation putting on training conferences and visiting student groups around the country.

Zahra has also worked to advise universities and colleges on issues of interfaith, managing conflict on campus and bringing together different groups (e.g. LGBT groups with faith groups). She helped to build a national charity, the [Patchwork Foundation](#), which brings together young people from under-represented backgrounds with politicians and those in the political world including the Prime Minister's office, Sadiq Khan, Boris Johnson, and many others. She acted as chief of staff entirely voluntary for over two years and in this role initiated the successful Master Class programme.

After these experiences Zahra came to the conclusion that to maximise her impact on society she should be involved in government policy making. She was very fortunate to receive a full scholarship to study a Masters in Public Policy at Oxford University's Blavatnik School of Government. Once again a student, Zahra was actively involved in enhancing the School as a student representative and co-leader of a multi-faith initiative. She was also selected to be a Leading for Impact fellow with the Skoll Centre for Social Enterprise and a member of the Oxford Global Leadership Initiative. Zahra made the most of her time at Oxford to learn, contribute and develop herself to give as much back to society as she can.

Since her obtaining her Master degree, Zahra has been working as a Policy Advisor in the Cabinet Office. Initially she worked in the Youth Policy team where she led an innovative approach to consultation; recruiting young representatives to engage in peer to peer research. This was possibly a first for a central government department. Since then in the Open Innovation Team she works across government advising teams on policy development through collaboration with outside experts.

Ahmad al-Rashid



Steve Baker MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Exiting the EU) is presenting a Young Achievers Award to his constituent, Ahmad al-Rashid

Ahmad is a student at SOAS, University of London; taking a Master's degree in Violence, Conflict and Development.

As a Syrian citizen, the fields of peace, forced migration, human rights and post conflict reconstruction have been vital in Ahmad's personal, academic and professional development. The conflict in his home country today has resulted in one of the worst humanitarian crises since the end of the Second World War. Over half a million-people lost their lives. Over seven million people are internally displaced and over five million people took refuge in the neighbouring countries. Ahmad has been working closely with many initiatives to raise awareness about the plight of millions of Syrians and to mobilise public opinion to pressurise governments to bring an end to the Syrian crisis. He worked with United Nations agencies and other stakeholders and campaigned in the UK and across the EU to raise awareness and demand for a policy that would ensure an end to the Syrian conflict and peace for the country and the whole region. Ahmad campaigned with several UK based organisations like UNICEF, MSF, OXFAM, SAFE PASSAGE and other organisations to support Syrians and others within Syria and in exile. He has written for prominent UK newspapers to inform readers about the conflict in Syria. Articles he has written can be read online: www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/ahmad-alrashid/syria-refugee-crisis_b_10967290.html

www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2016/apr/07/my-arab-spring-aleppo-new-syria-never-materialised?CMP

Also a speech he gave about the plight of refugees and horrors of the crossings faced by many refugees can also be viewed online: player.vimeo.com/video/201923545

Since Ahmad's arrival in the UK as an asylum-seeker in 2015, he has been working with various groups in the UK to raise awareness and support Syrians and other people fleeing wars, persecution and seeking safety. Recently he has worked with Cambridge University to produce an online course for refugees and asylum-seekers to access education here in the UK. Ahmad believes education has a vital role in rebuilding lives especially in conflict areas. He wanted to take part and be the lead educator in the course as sustainable peace and post conflict situations need well-educated and skilled people who will have a vital role in rebuilding their countries when peace is restored. Further information about the course can be found online: www.futurelearn.com/courses/aim-higher

Recently Ahmad was one of the keynote speakers at the UK student union national conference where he addressed over 1000 delegates from all over the country and spoke about the Syrian conflict and the role of education in the post conflict Syria and how students in the UK can help and support raising awareness and demand more education opportunities for refugees and asylum-seekers. His speech can be watched online: www.nusconnect.org.uk/articles/sally-hunt-and-ahmad-al-rashid-address-national-conference-2017

Furthermore, Ahmad filmed his journey from the Middle East to the UK and the footage was used by the BBC for its multi-award winning documentary titled Exodus, Our Journey to Europe. It can be accessed online: www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07ky6ft

He has also been interviewed on radio which can be listen to online: www.lbc.co.uk/radio/presenters/james-obrien/syrian-refugee-pays-tribute-to-british-welcome/

Amy Brown



Paul Scully MP is presenting a Young Achievers Award to his constituent, Amy Brown

Over the past few years Amy tried to experience and learns from lives different to her own. She has volunteered in Japan, with both university and nursery students. She took part in a peace project in Israel. She volunteered in Benin, West Africa, last year with the FFWPU and CARP, helping at events to promote family values, moral principles and health and sex education.

Due to language and cultural differences, Amy felt limited in what she could contribute, but discovered that having the willingness to learn about and take part in their culture proved a strong starting point for making friends, as well as an incredible learning experience.

In her first year of university Amy was on a committee to look after the youth in her church community. As a committee member she helped to organise social and educational events as well as run the Sunday school (religious based moral teachings for 5-10 year old children). One of her favourite events was a confidence building workshop, where the young people had some practise with public speaking, on topics and experiences important to them.

In her second year at university Amy was a committee member for CARP-UK, (Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles), a student society aiming to inspire and empower young people to become role models in society.

Recently Amy joined a charity programme called Future Frontiers; a careers coaching programme which works with disadvantaged students in secondary schools. As a careers coach, she supported two students to set academic goals and discover ambitions which would motivate them to bring out their academic potential. It was inspiring to slowly see their hope for their future growing, and over the eight weeks, they became students who didn't have much idea about what they want for their future, to young people who could see many exciting future opportunities to work towards.

Later on Amy hopes to use these experiences to build a career in education; to open more doors for the future generation, and help them build the confidence to walk through them.

Limudin (Limz) Ali

Limz is a 27-year-old Stand Up Comedian, Actor & Youth Leader. He has been a part of the entertainment industry for 12 years. Within the 12 years he has been involved in productions for TV, Film & Stage in the UK and internationally. He has worked with various broadcasting channels and charities. He has also performed Stand Up Comedy and acting for charities and other charitable activities including the Fusion Rally Charity Tour 2011 (London, Paris, Barcelona, Madrid, Granada) and Fusion Rally Charity Tour 2012 (Beaune, Granada, San Sebastian, Tangiers, Casablanca).

Limz has also worked with Charitable Organisations in UK and Internationally, The Charities include, Islamic Relief, Families Relief, Muslim Hands, Salam Project, Amirah Foundation, Walou, Ramadan TV charity appeal and various others.

In 2012, Limz received the Prince's Trust Community Award, which enabled him to run acting and comedy workshops in his community and He continues to run these within different boroughs in London. In 2013, Limz became a Prince's Trust Young Ambassador and in 2014 progressed into the position of a Job Ambassador; a role through which he works with organizations to help spread awareness and tackle the issues surrounding youth unemployment within the UK. He has worked with hard to reach Young People that are not in education, employment or training and help assign them to positive opportunities that will give them the relevant skills and qualifications to help secure employment. Limz has met with HRH Prince Charles on three occasions and was congratulated on his efforts within the community. Last year, in recognition of his community work, Limz was invited by HRH Prince Charles to attend a garden tea party at Buckingham Palace.

Limz was a previous member of The Prince's Trust Youth Panel and in 2015 won the Service to Community Award at the African-Caribbean Muslim Alliance Awards. In 2016 Limz was awarded the BEFFTA Leadership Award for his consistent efforts within the community, and he also received a Haringey Young Hero (Volunteer) of the Year Award (2016). Furthermore Limz has been invited on numerous occasions to attend Humanitarian Conferences in Paris regarding to women's rights in Iran.

Web Links:

www.youtube.com/gagetz18

www.facebook.com/LimzComedian

www.facebook.com/Limz Ali Comedian

www.twitter.com/reallimzmania

www.imdb.com/name/nm6678847/

Hannah Marie Lynch

Hannah works with special needs students and by working with such people she has been inspired to do more for society as she has come to appreciate the abilities she and most of us have by default. One of her students has inspired her so much that it gave her the confidence to do much more for others because unlike her student she is not trapped in a wheelchair.

Hannah is passionate about helping people in need, especially the homeless. She has trained to be able to provide assistance to the homeless which she does on a weekly/fortnightly basis. She frequently volunteers to help those in need in any capacity that she can. Of particular note Hannah has volunteered at her local Crisis centre for two years on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Additionally Hannah has volunteered as a summer camp leader and has received glowing feedback; from young people and camp directors and parents alike, she also received praise for her positivity in that role.

Her passion for helping others is evident as she has been a recipient of Jack Petchey award.

Finally for the past year or so Hannah has volunteered in at UPF events particularly those where she is in contact with people from a diverse backgrounds like at UPF Syrian refugees GET TOGETHER at UPF HQ, at AFRICA DAY or Internal Women's Day and joining in Young Achievers group helping in almost any capacity cooking serving, organising and so on..

Her Dream job would be to help alleviate poverty in African countries, ideally working in education and health.

Luke Sagay

Luke has been active in the community volunteering with the aim of contributing towards making society a better place and has inspired people that he has come across along the way.

Since January 2017 Luke has been a weekly volunteer for the organisation Disability Sports Coach; donating a couple of hours to coach children within his community in a variety of sports such as football, basketball and table tennis.

Luke was drawn towards volunteerism by a need to contribute towards a good cause and after leaving a part time job he had a few hours free. Furthermore, when he was younger, Luke really enjoyed participating in sports and believes that every young person should have the opportunity to participate regardless of any disabilities they have. He has also been involved in larger sports day events that Disability Sports Coach organises.

Luke is also an active volunteer at the social mobility charity Generation Success that runs career insight events for all people in London with a focus on diversity. Initially he attended one of their events as a guest, but when they were looking for volunteers he put himself forward; taking on responsibilities such as welcoming and registering guests at the events and being an ambassador for the charity by promoting events and soliciting feedback from guests.

From his charitable efforts Luke has learnt to work hard to achieve his goals and to make the most of opportunities that have been presented to him.

Annet Nyatichi Ogega

Annet believes that as a young person she has a role to play in ameliorating the lives and situations of those within her sphere of influence. Responsibility to her means being a pathfinder and helping others to find and live their purpose. She exemplifies her beliefs through her volunteering activities with her church; particularly feeding the homeless.

Also Annet is a dedicated environmental advocate with a keen interest in management, conservation and sustainability practices. She volunteers for Kent Wildlife in collaboration with the University of Greenwich and is a blogger for Commonwealth Human Ecology Council Environment column.

Coming from a rural area in Kisii Kenya, Annet has witnessed young girls and boys deliberately drop out of school because of ignorance, lack of mentorship, peer influence and financial constraints. She believes every child has a right to education and subsequently a chance at a better future. As part of her commitment to promote the significance of education, Annet has been involved in one on one dialogue with village youngsters on the importance of education.

The education policy in Kenya provides for "Free Education" however there are some extra costs that must be met by students. Engaging with parent to solicit for more funds from CDF (Community Development Funds) has seen some young people go back to school.

Through her role as an Ambassador of Face of Kenya UK Platform, Annet is involved in fundraising to offset a feeding programme in North Kenya. She has seen and read about the high number of children especially in rural areas drop out of school because of lack of food and water scarcities of which are basic needs. She believes that by addressing the hunger and drought situations in Kenya, pragmatic solutions can be attained so that children can return to school and she was successful in raising £700 to help make it a reality.

Through her commitment and ambassadorial roles, Annet has organised meetings with youth and fellow students from various nations to discuss on the roles and avenues that can be used to ameliorate the situations in developing countries. Currently they are running the "tell them" campaign where everyone involved shares their experiences and stories of how they intend to be proactive ambassadors for their country.

Annet acknowledges that she has been granted opportunities and feels obligated to create opportunities for others. She gained an appreciation for networking and volunteerism. However, most young people do not consider volunteering and networking as part of growth and career enhancement programs. During youth meetings, Annet has been able to share some of her experiences with young people on the need to volunteer in their communities and network as a way of growing their social circle and enhancing their careers.

Through blogging Annet has been able to share some insights and experiences that have motivated others to start initiatives of their own. Blogging is one of the ways she uses to express herself, share her experiences, expand her network and sphere of influence, and inspire others. She is currently collaborating on a project starting a social network channel that is geared to reach out other youths to share their experiences and brainstorm on how new ideologies can be inculcated to further ameliorate on their activities and attract others.

Christopher Sharp

Christopher Sharp is 20 years old and amazing. He has been a journalist with ShoutOut UK for some time and has demonstrated commitment and dedication during all of his time with them.

Christopher is a hardworking and dedicated individual who has proved time and again his dedication to his work. On many occasions he has gone above and beyond the call of duty. During the tragic Westminster attack this year, he found himself near the London eye and took it upon himself to engage in journalistic activities for ShoutOut UK, without having to be asked. This led to ShoutOut UK being contacted by the Evening Standard newspaper and for some of his work to be used in their coverage of the situation.

During the EU referendum and the US presidential elections, Christopher was always willing to put himself up for any task, even if it meant running coverage of both events during the early hours of the morning; close to when both results were called.

Christopher is incredibly well organised and dedicated to his passion for journalism; all articles he writes are always full of passion and dedication. This can be seen by the sheer volume of views all his articles receive, often being top read of the month almost every time.

Over and above that, Christopher is extremely helpful in volunteering his services to enable other journalists and younger people to excel in their work.

He was recently published in the Metro, which can be viewed online:

metro.co.uk/2017/04/30/what-policies-matter-most-to-young-people-this-election-6606693/

Fatima Javed

At just 16 years old Fatima has travelled to Morocco on her own to improve her life skills by successfully completed various volunteering projects including helping baby orphans, children with Down syndrome, homeless children, hearing impaired children, assisting in an orphanage/children's centre and also various painting projects to signify world peace. Additionally she has received a letter from the Prince of Wales whom has expressed a keen interest in her journey. Aiming to succeed in this path, she will be taking further projects around the world in conservation and visiting countries such as Peru, Ghana, China, India, Malaysia, Tibet and so on, to help expand on her knowledge and become a role model for those who fear the outside world.

Fatima has recently returned from a volunteer project to Thailand to which she also travelled solo. There she participated in teaching English in various schools suffering from extreme poverty, orphanages and helping to educate the children who had lost their homes and parents unfortunately in the tsunami in 2004. She was also lucky enough to hear some incredible stories of survival and had the opportunity to teach at the orphanage where a girl named "Pink" was about to be adopted by Kim Kardashian but decided to stay in Thailand.

Fatima aspires to become a marine biologist and her main purpose for travelling and volunteering is to become a role model; to open up the restrictions and barriers set down by many communities in which they do not allow their children to travel and explore our big world.

Ehsan Dario Rahmati

Ehsan is currently studying his second Master's degree in Management: Finance and Accounting (specialism) at the London School of Economics. Previously he studied University College London (UCL) from which he earned a Master's degree in pharmacy (MPharm).

Ehsan was elected as the alumni relations officer for the graduate management society at the London School of Economics during the past two years. During this time he helped pioneer a mentorship platform that allows alumni to provide support to current students with both academic and professional challenges and in many cases forging long lasting friendships. Following that, he provided further support by inviting alumni and organising them into panels to share their journey and experiences and partner with start-ups for fundraising activities. Prior to this, Ehsan co-founded the UCL Pharmacy Careers Society with the aim of creating a support network for students to learn about opportunities and latest trends in the pharma industry through seminars and field trip to pharma companies and helping them to find and secure internships and gain work experience.

Being an international student and through personal experience Ehsan faced many challenges that he has realised is shared by many others, which prompted him in deciding to provide support these students with issues ranging from visa and immigration to adapting and integrating into university life in the UK.

