



Volunteering at Fulham Palace Gardens



This year's Make a Difference Day took place at Fulham Palace Gardens. Staff from Hammersmith and Fulham, Brent, Hillingdon, Harrow and Hounslow as well as volunteers all came together on the 29th October as our contribution to Make A Difference Day.

The teams were tasked with clearing the embankment of debris and overgrown weeds and bringing it back to its original glory. They were also responsible for transferring large amounts of garden debris to an allocated area in order to be incinerated.

To start off the day, everyone was introduced to the gardeners; big Chris, small Chris and Martin.

Paula Coffey (who helped plan the challenge) gave a short history about Fulham Palace Gardens before the team was split into three groups to begin their tasks.

The feedback received from staff and volunteers was very positive. One person said that they "really enjoyed it... the gardeners were really friendly and helpful". Another said "Well done to Doreen and Desha for organising the challenge".

A special thank you to Paula Coffey, big Chris and little Chris and Martin for being excellent hosts and team facilitators.



European Year of Volunteering 2011



Did you know that 2011 is the European Year of Volunteering?

2011 brings many exciting and interesting events for volunteers and volunteering.

The European Year of Volunteering will be launched in Budapest, Hungary in early January, where organisations across Europe come together to share good practice and innovative ideas for the benefit of volunteering for all of us.

The UK has a very sophisticated and long tradition in volunteering compared to the rest of Europe and our director Marion Schumann will be there to inform them about the impressive work the HFVC does in getting people into work following volunteering placements, letting them know about the kinds of development that some volunteers need to go that one step further from volunteering. She will also be showing how important volunteering is to social cohesion and how active citizenship works in practice, and particularly with communi-

ties that are from the lower income scale, and how HFVC's subsidiary Works4U, engages Business employees in communities in West London.

Who volunteers, and why?

One in five people volunteer in the UK. In Europe three out of 10 people get involved in volunteering. HFVC sees over 5000 people across West London in one year, many of those people looking to get back into work after being unemployed for many years. We know that society as a whole and the individual volunteers benefit as the local communities are strengthened through volunteering. We also know that volunteering builds up people's skills and confidence and it makes it much easier for people to get back into employment.

With the government's recommendations on everyone doing some form of volunteering in their Big Society programme, it is becoming more relevant to volunteer.

From 21-27 Feb students will be asked to undertake volunteering in some capacity during the Student Volunteering Week.

Volunteering events in 2011

Volunteering events are held every year that gets us all involved, such as Volunteers' Week (1-7 June 2011), Make a Difference Day (28/29 October 2011); Volunteering Europe Conference in October and all our local events. Thousands of activities and projects take place and last year up to 70,000 volunteers took part nationally.

There are many changes happening with the introduction of the Big Society, where the government is calling on people to become fully involved in the civil society through volunteering.

Business Volunteering

Corporate businesses get their staff involved through Employee Supported Volunteering, a very exciting venture where staff volunteer to undertake a variety of different challenges, such as painting a school room, or wrapping presents and delivering them to older people and schools at Christmas time, as well as utilising their skills to build the capacity of small voluntary and community organisations.

Get involved now – become part of the vibrant community that volunteers.



Gift Drive

The Hammersmith and Fulham Volunteer Centre have once again worked very closely with different organisations and businesses to secure presents for those much in need at the Christmas time period. Fantastic support came from Fulham Cross Girls School and Creative Arts Agency who helped wrap the presents. The presents received came from Disney, The Book Warehouse, Starwood Hotels (Sheraton), Creative Arts Agency (CAA), Marks & Spencers, United International Pictures, Innocent Drinks, Debenhams Westfield, Starbucks Hammersmith Broadway, The Entertainer Westfield, BBC, Coca Cola, Waitrose Westfield, EsGov, Poundland, Primark, Superdrug's, Tiger, Tesco, and Boots King Street.

All the presents donated were distributed to the elderly, disadvantaged children and young people, the homeless, refugees and asylum seekers, and disability organisations. Many of these people live on very low incomes, and some will be alone this Christmas. We want to make their Christmas special and this is where you come in. Last year we were able to make hundreds of people happy, and we want to do the same this year!

A big thank you to all that have given their time and effort to put on smiles for those less fortunate this Christmas. In addition, a big thank you too Marion Schumann, Desha Patel and Sara Benjamin for their help in organising the gift drive.

DWP Project

The Department for Work and Pensions launched a volunteering brokerage scheme across England aimed at providing 34,000 volunteering placements in the UK. The scheme, DWP Volunteering Project, aimed to help the long-term unemployed develop work-based skills through volunteering to gain valuable experience, enable them to be in a position to gain references, and possibly gain paid employment. The project ceased three months early.

During the life of the project over 647 clients were referred to us on this Project alone. Feedback from the Job Centre Plus (JCP) Advisors and our Clients was that they felt the Project assisted them in a number of ways. The JCP Advisors and clients found this avenue helpful as it enabled those who were unemployed for six months plus to up-skill, to build up confidence, to volunteer long enough to get references, to get out of routines, to undertake training, and to possibly lead

to employment, to name but a few advantages.

Project successes include the placing of over 300 volunteers with voluntary organisations, six volunteers found paid employment and a number more attended training and workshops organised by the HFVC such as pre-employment and fundraising training, challenges, flower arrangements, arts and craft sessions in different residential homes around the Borough.

The Hammersmith & Fulham Volunteer Centre would like to thank the Hammersmith, Shepherds Bush and Fulham JCPs for working so closely and efficiently with HFVC which enabled HFVC to always be top of the list in referring and placing volunteers with voluntary organisations. HFVC also wishes to thank both JCP staff and clients and wishes one and all a very prosperous New Year.

Cynthia Renee, DWP Volunteering Project

Generations Together

Over the past three months more than 90 people have been involved in the Generations Together project, enjoying a wide range of activities, such as challenges in residential homes around the Borough, but also exciting training opportunities. Volunteer Champions – Generations Together is a project that aims to bring together young volunteers aged 16-25 and older volunteers aged 50+ within meaningful activities across the borough.

We have continued organising flower arrangement and arts and craft workshops in residential homes within the borough, and worked together with the Disability Forum. Our volunteers also organised an MOT of Ravenscourt Park to check the disability accessibility of the park, undertook a tour of the White City Library and finally a Housing Repairs meeting.

As many of our younger and older volunteers are actively looking for work, Generations Together organized 10 pre-employment training sessions from September to December. Our clients' feedback was always brilliant, emphasising how inspirational and empowering the training is.

To encourage people to join this training, Barbara Strong our Trainer sent a message to our clients *"I was on benefits for over 10 years, trying to get work and to change my life, just like you. To do that I had to change myself, learn new skills and apply those new skills to my day to day life. My goal was to find a job and I couldn't understand why I wasn't achieving that goal because I thought I was doing everything I could to achieve*

my goal.

But then I learnt more about goal setting and action planning and discovered it is a specialised skill and that it was because I was making some very basic mistakes that I would probably never get to my goals if I kept doing what I was doing. Remember, if you keep doing the same thing, the same way, you can only get the same results."

Another brilliant event organised was a fundraising training day which helped organisations and residents of Hammersmith and Fulham to learn about how to attract funds for their projects, through funding applications, and also through creative fundraising events which can enhance the supporters' contribution. Due to the great feedback received from people and organisations that benefited from the four training sessions we held, we have decided to organise more sessions in January-March.

In November HFVC held an Intergenerational Forum to which Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIO's), volunteers, funding organisations and businesses were invited. The Forum was a great opportunity to share good practice, to network and to plan further projects in partnership.

As the New Year is going to bring more exciting opportunities such as pre-employment, fundraising, mentoring and Board of Trustees training, and Intergenerational Forum meetings, please get in touch with us and visit our website www.hfvc.org.uk.

By Irina Jarrett-Thorpe



Hammersmith and Fulham

by Libby Wingfield

After two action packed years of Personal Best in Hammersmith and Fulham, the project is sadly coming to an end. It has been a successful and exciting programme of training, volunteering and events and has made a huge difference to the lives of many local residents.

In two years, we have recruited over two hundred people and run twelve Personal Best courses, with one hundred and thirty five H&F residents successfully achieving their Level 1 qualifications in Volunteer Event Management.

As well as achieving their qualifications, our clients have been involved in a range of exciting events including visits to the Olympic Stadium, an award ceremony at the O2 Arena, a Jobs Bus event, a one off Business forum with Boris Johnson and a Q & A session with Lord Sebastian Coe.

As part of the Personal Best training, our clients were required to complete twenty volunteer hours and they secured a variety of diverse placements including volunteering at the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race, the London Marathon, local football tournaments and summer fun days as well as giving time to care homes, hospitals and local charities. The list goes on!

In addition to their fantastic training and volunteering achievements, a significant proportion of our clients have secured employment, a fantastic achievement for both our clients and the project itself. Our clients have found work in local nurseries, supermarkets, shops, schools, GP surgeries, offices and even H&F Council!

Although the Personal Best project is finishing, many of our clients have opted to volunteer at the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012. We will be following their journeys over the coming months to find out how they are progressing and to hear their Olympic stories!



Harrow

By Tsige Dejene

It has been a challenging 2 years for Harrow Personal Best programme but through the support of Harrow Job Centre, local community organisations and Harrow College, the programme has been a great success.

The Personal Best Project led by Hammersmith and Fulham Volunteer Centre in partnership with Harrow College has been running in the London Borough of Harrow since November 2008. Since then a number of clients completed the programme and benefited from this exciting project linked to the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics Games.

The Project helped most of the Harrow disadvantaged residents to improve their job prospects. It used the excitement of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games to promote training for an accredited volun-

teering qualification while also offering participants support into further volunteering, training or work.

Many participants have gone on to permanent jobs, volunteering, further training and registered for the 2012 Olympic Games and also for the London Ambassadors.

Most of candidates successfully applied for a volunteer role for the London 2012 Olympic Games and they will be offered an interview in the coming year.

Since we started the project we have seen over 640 people of whom 155 completed the 8 week programme, with 85 going into further volunteering, 20 people got jobs, and 25 went on to do further training.

On behalf of the Harrow Personal Best programme may I take this opportunity to wish all Personal Best clients and all partner organisations a Happy New Year.

Hillingdon

By Charmaine Goodridge

After 18 exciting, yet at times challenging months, we have sadly come to the end of the Hillingdon Personal Best Programme, and what an 18 months it has been.

Since the programme started delivery in October 2009 it has achieved some amazing results. 125 participants have joined the programme of which 106 have achieved their Level 1 qualification in Public Event Volunteering. 30 participants have undertaken long-term volunteering on completion of the programme and 40 participants have moved into sustainable paid employment and/or further learning.

Some of the comments made by the participants' help to sum up the impact this programme has had:

"The course has given me new skills and the retail experience I gained through volunteering has helped me gain my self-esteem"

"I've really enjoyed this course, I've learnt a lot and realised that I have the confidence to gain employment"

It has been a great privilege for me to work on this programme and see so many people achieve their goals. I would like to wish everyone who has participated on Personal Best every success in realising their long term goals and I would like to thank all our partner organisations for promoting this programme amongst their client group.



Special thanks to Daniel Thomas, Komal Tulcidas, Poonam Mittal, Andrew Wilson, Kemit Singh and Steven Wright for their amazing support and commitment!

Disney Serve Up Some Christmas Cheer!



On the 7th and 9th of December this year, two teams of employees from Disney worked in partnership with the H&F Volunteer Centre to put on festive Christmas parties for elderly service users at Bishop Creighton House.

The Disney teams worked hard to ensure the parties were memorable events for the elderly people attending. As well as serving up a delicious Christmas buffet, the Disney staff handed out presents and put on some festive entertainment, including a general knowledge quiz and Pass the Parcel. In addition, a group of children from a local primary school came along to sing some traditional Christmas Carols.

The feedback received from the elderly service users was excellent. They enjoyed the event and are looking forward to us coming back in December 2011! The Disney volunteers also enjoyed their time volunteering, with one staff member saying: "I generally had a fantastic day spent in the company of colleagues and wonderful elderly people who have many interesting stories to tell".

A special thank you to Siobhan Gilroy, Tammy McFeggan and all the Disney Volunteers as well as Hazel Bloor and Joy Houghton-Brown from Bishop Creighton House for being excellent hosts on the day!

For more information contact Libby Wingfield / Desha Patel on 0208 741 9876 or email Libby@hfvc.org.uk / Desha@hfvc.org.uk.

HFVC attends European Conference in Athens

Delegates from all over Europe descended on Athens, Greece for the 19th European Workshop on Voluntary Action from the 21st – 24th October. This year's theme was 'Strengthening the Voice of Active European Citizenship' and took place at the beautiful Titania Hotel.

Marion Schumann (Director of HFVC) delivered a Master Class entitled 'Thinking Beyond Volunteer Retention', encouraging delegates to develop creative and varied volunteering opportunities. A Master Class was also delivered by Doreen Grant-Oppan (Head of Business Development) focussing on engaging with the corporate sector. Several other classes took place over 2 days with topics ranging from social media and the internet, youth engagement and environmental sustainability.

One of the highlights of the conference was the annual Active Citizens of Europe (ACE) awards ceremony, which was held at the residence of the British Ambassador to Greece. Awards were given out under various categories and this year HFVC's partnership with Starwood Hotels and Resorts was recognised, winning the award for Corporate Engagement. Marion Schumann accepted the award on behalf of Starwood Hotels with a memorable and touching speech.

The conference organisers also surprised Marion as she celebrated her birthday whilst in Greece. As well as being sung 'happy birthday' in Greek at a local tavern, she also received a delicious cake to celebrate her special day.

Overall the conference was a great success. 2011 is set to be another good year, with the launch of the European Year of Volunteering and the European Year for Youth. HFVC will definitely be there to continue to advocate for European Active Citizenship!



Befriending Project

The Befriending Project is a partnership with Hammersmith & Fulham Mind. The project has been established to recruit, train and manage volunteers to become mentors to socially isolated mental health service users living in the borough. The aims of the service are to support people to access social, educational and vocational activities; and to promote independence, through reducing dependency on local mental health services.

Since the project began in April, we have successfully recruited around 40 Volunteer Befrienders and 40 Mental Health Service Users (Befriendees). 32 Volunteers have so far received 'Mental Health Awareness' training (an introduction to different diagnoses, treatments & services) and 30 have received 'Befriending Support Sessions' training (the who, what, where, why & when of the weekly one hour befriending sessions).

After a longer than expected wait for the return of the necessary CRB checks, we have now reached the stage where 14 Befriending 'couples' have been matched and are meeting in the community on a weekly basis for one-hour support sessions. During the matching process we consider the aims and goals of the Befriendees (recorded

in their person-centred, & individual, personal development plans) and the interests, experience and expertise of the Befriendees – with the aim of finding the most suitable partnership.

As well as an encouragingly large amount of interest from Volunteers, we are also sourcing referrals from the many mental health services within the borough. This involves delivering presentations to Community Mental Health Teams, Day Centres, GPs, and Social Workers – just about anyone related to Mental Health in Hammersmith & Fulham.

Volunteering on our Befriending Project is a great way to gain experience for anyone studying, or hoping to work in, the Social Care Sector – or anyone that just wants to give something back. You will be provided with all the necessary training, resources and support to enable you to improve the life of a socially isolated mental health service user in the borough. NB Mental Health Service users are also welcome to volunteer as Befrienders.

For further information please call the Volunteer Centre or send an email to jonathan@hfvc.org.uk or jon.richmond@hfmind.org.uk

Relaunch of Breakfast Networking Meeting

"Engaging with the corporate sector" was the theme chosen to reignite the breakfast networking meetings, which took place at the Jury's Inn hotel, Imperial Wharf on 30th September 2010.

Nearly 20 delegates attended the meeting which included a speed networking session in the morning as an ice breaker and networking 'starter'. This proved to be very successful as

many people were enjoying it.

A short presentation was then delivered by Doreen Grant-Oppan on Employer Supported Volunteering, followed by a question and answer session. Once the questions and answers were over there was lots of time to network with one another.

The feedback received from delegates was

very positive. One delegate wrote that they were *'inspired to keep taking steps forward'* and another said the event was *'very enjoyable, will definitely come to the next one and recommend to colleagues.'*

A special thank you to Kristina Rizova from Jury's Inn Hotel, as well as Kay Mitchell-Munro, Irina Jarret-Thorpe, Doreen Grant-Oppan, and Ember Hibbert from HFVC.



For more information about the Breakfast Networking Meeting please contact Desha Patel on 0208 741 9876 or email desha@hfvc.org.uk.



The London Ambassadors

The Hammersmith & Fulham Volunteer Centre, along with several other VCs in London, took part in the London Ambassadors initiative by making its office facilities available for volunteers wishing to sign up for the 2012 Olympic/Paralympics Games. Those interested had to register by 31st December 2010 to be the face and ambassadors of our capital.

The Mayor of London's office was looking for 8,000 volunteers to guide people around London and make them aware of London's hidden treasures. The London Ambassadors volunteering programme was set up to give Londoners the once in a lifetime chance to volunteer for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.





TUNE-UP Diary of a Youth Exchange *By Peter Rodriguez (24)*

Day 1 On Monday 25th October we arrived in Florence; we were going to be there for a few days on a youth exchange programme. Didn't really know what to expect but I was happy to be representing the Youth Action Team as young Latino living in London. The Tune-Up programme is all about cultural diversity amongst young people in the UK, Italy and Romania. Our group from London was very mixed and diverse representing young people from all different cultures and backgrounds.

I don't really come across as a shy person but when I first met the other two youth groups I felt it was hard to integrate, mingle and just talk by being myself. However, I overcame these feelings as we all got involved in some fun icebreaker activities where we were asked to learn about each other and taste all types of different food. I noticed when interacting with the Italian and Romanian young people that their groups were not as diverse as ours. I was really fascinated by this and wanted to learn more and was hoping to address this issue later during the week through discussions and workshops. As the first evening progressed I eventually ended up making friends with some members of the Italian youth group; they came across very warm, welcoming and friendly.

Day 2 On Tuesday 26th October we were all invited to attend a meeting with representatives from the Tuscany Region, Florence Province and Florence City Council. I thought it was great to have a member of the municipality of Florence showing an interest in what we, as young Europeans, had to say. I felt that my comments, opinions, and actually every young person's voice were being heard through this project. Later that afternoon we were given the opportunity to choose from a series of workshops on youth policies, new media, integration, and active citizenship. We were split up into mixed groups and had the chance to discuss and learn from each other about youth policies and practices in the different countries.

We were then given the opportunity to explore Florence, experience the culture and do a bit of sightseeing. We visited one of the most well-known galleries in the heart of Florence (Galleria dell'Accademia), where the statue of Michelangelo's David is kept. That sculpture left me and the rest of the group without words.

Day 3 On Wednesday 27th October, the social theatre workshop was such an amazing experience. I learnt so much about different ways of communicating through the form of self expression. We spent the entire day working together with the young Italians and Romanians and got to know each other very well. I felt that on first and second day most young people stayed in their 'national' groups, even at dinner. But the social theatre workshop changed all this and by the end of it we had all formed really good connections and we started to hang out in mixed groups.

When walking around Florence city centre, I loved the Duomo; it was so elegant and the architecture was breathtaking at times. Inside it was so spacious with many relief art works, paintings and mosaics. The food at the restaurant nearby the hostel was so fresh and tasty. It really was refreshing to have food that didn't taste so processed and well fake! You could taste the natural flavours in the dishes; I found drinking a glass of Chianti with my pasta and chicken was really tasty and brought the flavour out.

I even managed to go and see the leaning tower of Pisa. It was cheaper than I thought to travel there by train, much cheaper compared to England. It was early evening and the scenery on the way to Pisa was so beautiful as I saw the sunset in the distance between the mountains along the horizon.

Day 4 On Thursday 28th October we were invited to a conference held in the Council Chamber of Prato's Province and also went for a site visit to the town's very own China Town.

The morning session focussed on the overview and findings of an international youth project delivered in Bosnia. After a really tasty lunch in the beautiful 12th-13th century rooms of the Province buildings adorned with frescos and mosaics we met two young Chinese who talked to us about the Chinese community in Prato and the issues concerning integration. After a quite intense debate we were taken for a walk to the Chinese area of the town where Chinese people live, work and trade.

The day ended with a final evaluation meeting followed by a pizza fiesta at a restaurant in Prato's main square and by an exchange of small gifts young people had brought with them from their countries, things that would somehow represent themselves.

We all left on the Friday morning excited about what we experienced and even more excited about the next stage of this amazing project: the London exchange at the end of January 2011 when the two groups from Italy and Romania will be coming to visit us.



Tune-up is a Youth in Action funded programme led by the Tuscany Region (Italy). For more information contact Luisa Messina, Head of Youth on 020 8741 9876 or email luisa@hfvc.org.uk



Future Jobs Fund Ends Successfully



The Future Jobs Fund, a fund of around £1 billion, was set up to support the creation of jobs for long term unemployed young people and others who faced significant disadvantages in the

labour market. The Fund aimed to create 150,000 jobs. 100,000 were aimed at 18-24 year olds who have been out of work for six months or more.

In partnership with H&F Council, Hammersmith and Fulham Volunteer Centre formed a consortium with Urban Partnership Group, Renaissance Skills and Nichols Training to deliver the programme to the voluntary sector in Hammersmith & Fulham. The programme's target was set at getting 65 people in employment in the voluntary sector by June 2010.

The aims and objectives were to recruit the 65 staff, collect, manage, and provide all the HR and Finance information for those to the Hammersmith and Fulham Council, with the financial information being set out in CMCF reports.

I joined HFVC in 25th June 2010, under the Future Jobs Fund Programme as a HR As-

sistant. In the past six months my day to day role related to a variety of HR issues, liaising with organisations and stake holders in order to provide HR and Finance information and documentation, provide support and training in order to develop their confidence, skills and experience, and producing weekly HR and Finance related reports to H&F Council in order to deal with employment, and finance related issues for each individual FJF employee in the borough. This helped me to build up my skills and confidence in working in human resources, ensuring that all confidential information was correct and delivered on time. In addition, the training that was made available for the FJF staff included NVQs for some of them, which meant that my skills base became highly developed.

As the FJF project was coming to an end in December 2010, the H&F Council and DWP audited the project in November and both were pleased that the programme had been successful in keeping and supporting almost all the 65 people into further employment, and supporting them to build their skills and confidence in the current job market. The project end is heart-warming: well over 70% of project beneficiaries were successful in finding further work as a result of working on the project or went on to further education.

By Pooyan Behbehani, HR Assistant

The Future Jobs Fund programme was an outstanding success – the consortium, made up of HFVC, UPG, RSC and Nichols Training working in partnership with H&F Council, had four months to get 65 people into employment. This meant first getting local voluntary organisations ready to employ staff, writing the job descriptions and ensuring they matched with the job profiles that went to Job Centre Plus, and liaising with the local job centres to ensure that applicants met the FJF criteria (being 18-24 years old, or in a hot spot area and unemployed for six months or more).

The recruitment process followed where applicants had applied for jobs within different parts of the sector, for example, there were IT jobs, administrative jobs, jobs working with training providers, and with housing associations.

These were real jobs and the overall feedback from those involved was that it gave them valuable experience to go on and get other work at the end of their six month contracts. Most young people had not been able to get work before because they had "no previous experience". Such a waste. Most had really good communication and IT skills. These people put 110% into their new jobs and developed even more skills.

By Jenny Melrose, HR/Deputy Director

Core Volunteering

Last Autumn the Hammersmith and Fulham Volunteer Centre was very busy placing people interested in volunteering in different opportunities across the Borough. Due to the economic and employment situation, the HFVC has seen a major increase in the number of people willing to volunteer as a route to paid employment. Most of our clients are now looking for volunteering opportunities that can help them build up a range of skills.

As a consequence in November an intensive pre-employment training programme was available for clients interested in finding paid work. We were very happy to see that all the sessions were supported and appreciated by the residents of Hammersmith and Fulham.

With the help of our great volunteers, Core organised a large number of outreach and training events which saw local organisations working together, creating a vibrant and well informed community. We organized Trustee Training, re-launched the Breakfast Networking Meeting which was attended by over 11 organisations, launched the Volunteers Organisers' Forum (VoF) ensuring that all future meetings have disability and funding as standing items on the Agenda.

For those Volunteer Organisations who are interested in attending the Volunteer Organisers' Forum, and particularly interested in these matters do put the date of the next meeting - 14th January 2011- in your calendar – the agenda and invitation will be sent

out shortly.

December was a busy month with many events being organized such as the Christmas Fair in the Lyric Square and the Christmas Gift Drive. In order to raise money for our projects, we sold Christmas cards designed by Fulham Cross Girls School and sponsored by Harper Collins. The event involved older and younger volunteers, clients of Generations Together and also children from Fulham Cross Girls School.

This was a fantastic opportunity for the Hammersmith and Fulham Volunteer Centre and the local community to come together on such as festive period to outreach and fundraise.

By Irina Jarrett-Thorpe





Friday 26th November saw the West London V-Involved Team pay tribute to a group of tireless young volunteers who were honoured at a VIP Awards Ceremony at the Hammersmith Town Hall.

The Glitzy Oscars themed Ceremony complete with Red Carpet featured almost 70 volunteers from across West London aged between 16-25 years receiving awards for the voluntary work they had done.

The First Award was the V50 for those that had completed 50 hours of volunteering, and then the V-impact for those with more than 150 hours of volunteering under their belts. Presenting the awards throughout the evening were all six West London Mayors including H&F Councillor Mayor Adronie Alford.

There was also entertainment throughout the evening with guest of honour comedian Richard Blackwood leading the tributes. He provided a stand up comedy set and a photo shoot session with the Awards winners.

Additional performances in a range of genres included expressive dance, singing, rapping and performance poetry showcasing the real young talent West London has to offer. Ember Hibbert the V-Involved Youth Development Manager said,

"Many organisations would struggle without the contribution of volunteers. The work they do cannot be underestimated, in many cases it is vital and several projects couldn't survive without them."

"There's often a lot of negativity in the media around young people, but this just goes to show that there is also a lot of good happening in West London."



"This ceremony is a great way of showing our appreciation of their work and letting them know just what a fantastic job they do. We are very proud of them!"

The VIP Awards was a truly inspiring evening,



filled with hope, admiration, gratitude and a genuine appreciation for local young volunteers.

The West London V-Involved Volunteering Project for 16-25 year olds works across the boroughs of Hammersmith & Fulham, Hounslow, Brent, Ealing, Harrow and Hillingdon promoting volunteering, recruiting young volunteers, and developing volunteering opportunities for young people in their areas of interest.

If you would like to get involved in volunteering, involve young people in your organisation or for more information please contact; Ember Hibbert on 02087419876 or email ember@hfvc.org.uk.



EVENTS 4 YOUTH 'Expressions of Faith'

On Saturday 20th November Events 4 Youth took part in the 'Expressions of Faith Event' in Hounslow.

In preparation for the event, the team met with representatives from Hounslow Friends of Faith to plan a number of activities at this year's celebration of faith and culture. Events 4 Youth ran jewellery workshops leading up to the event and created jewellery which was displayed as part of a catwalk show. The show also promoted a member of the team,

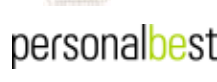
Lee Francis (AKA Mr Gamz), an upcoming jewellery designer currently launching his new business and website.

Throughout the day the team also created an instant photo diary, took part in activities and promoted the project to members of the many faith communities present.

For more information on the Events 4 Youth, contact Caroline Ludden on 020 8600 2273 or email caroline@hfvc.org.uk

"I would like to thank the 'Events 4 Youth' team for giving me this opportunity. Being an Events Coordinator and organising the Jewellery Fashion Show was one of the most invaluable experiences of my life. Through liaising with senior Council members and coordinating activities with other volunteers, I made an everlasting network of friends. My involvement endowed me with transferable skills, especially public speaking and interpersonal skills which will help me to shine in my future assignments."

Ajay Sharma



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