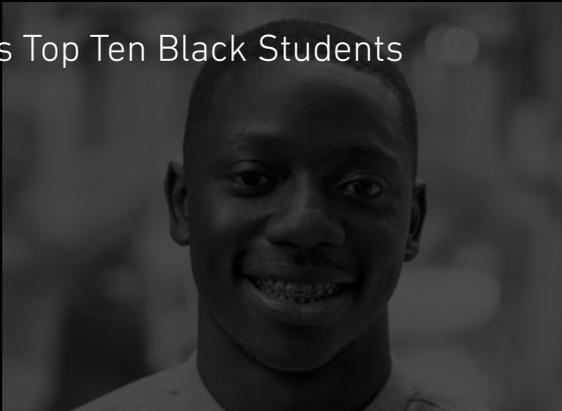


RARE RISING STARS 2022

The UK's Top Ten Black Students



In association with:



rare

About the Sponsors

University of Cambridge

Founded in 1209, the mission of the University of Cambridge is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence. To date, 90 affiliates of the University have won the Nobel Prize.

The University comprises 31 autonomous Colleges, which admit undergraduates and provide small-group tuition, and 150 departments, faculties and institutions. It is a global university: its 19,000 student body includes 3,700 international students from 120 countries. Cambridge researchers collaborate with colleagues worldwide, and the University has established larger-scale partnerships in Asia, Africa and America.

The University sits at the heart of one of the world's largest technology clusters. The 'Cambridge Phenomenon' has created 1,500 hi-tech companies, 14 of them valued at over US\$1 billion and two at over US\$10 billion. Cambridge promotes the interface between academia and business and has a global reputation for innovation.

University of Oxford

The University of Oxford is the oldest university in the English-speaking world. It is world-famous for research and teaching excellence and home to some of the most talented people from across the globe. The University's work helps the lives of millions, solving real-world problems through a huge network of partnerships and collaborations. The breadth and interdisciplinary nature of the research, alongside an unusually personalised approach to teaching, are catalysts for imaginative and inventive insights and solutions.

The University plays a significant part in the prosperity of Oxfordshire and the United Kingdom, contributing £15.7 billion to the UK economy in 2018/19, and supporting more than 28,000 full-time jobs. It has created more spinouts than any other university, with over a third of these companies launching in the past three years. In partnership with the pharmaceutical company, AstraZeneca, the University developed and administered one of the world's first Covid-19 vaccines.

Oxford has been placed number one in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings for the seventh year running and number two in the QS World Rankings 2022. At the heart of this success are ground-breaking research and innovation, and a distinctive education. A collegiate university, Oxford is made up of 39 colleges and five permanent private halls, giving students and academics the benefits of belonging both to a large, internationally renowned institution and to a small, interdisciplinary academic community. Students come from every background imaginable. There are currently around 24,000 students from over 140 countries here, studying as undergraduates or postgraduates. Their amazing range of stories and interests helps make Oxford one of the most exciting learning environments anywhere.

Oxford provides guidance and information to all those who are able to make a strong application to study here, but an extensive programme of outreach is offered to those from under-represented groups and those who do not have as much support. The University wants all talented students to feel confident and excited about applying to Oxford and works hard to improve equality of opportunity at each stage of the student journey.

The University remains committed to ensuring that any student who has the talent and commitment to succeed as a student at Oxford has the opportunity to do just that.

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Foreword



It is my great pleasure to welcome you to our fourteenth and final edition of Rare Rising Stars.

Rare Rising Stars was launched in 2009 at a time when positive coverage of Black students was... well, rare. As noted by Naomi Kellman, Rare's Senior Manager for Schools and Universities and Head of Research, this made the creation of Rare Rising Stars all the more meaningful and inspiring. It provided a way to gather stories of success and excellence, and to celebrate the achievements of talented, inspirational Black students giving back to their communities.

For over a decade, Rare Rising Stars has showcased the stories of brilliant Black students from across the UK; shining stars and trailblazers across youth politics, entrepreneurialism, educational access, public health, sport and so much more. But while the mission of the awards remains the same – to showcase the brilliant achievements of Black students – I am relieved to see that many things have changed for the better since the awards first started.

The educational landscape today has changed beyond recognition, as has the early talent pool in elite institutions. There are now five times more Black students at Oxbridge than there were when Rare first started, and the graduate programmes of many elite employers are now broadly representative in terms of race. That thing we used to hear – “places like that aren't for people like me” – we don't hear that anymore. And thank goodness!

Of course, it is absolutely not the case that inequality no longer exists. It does, and Rare as a business continues to fight it, most recently with our [Hemisphere Education](#) product for schools which is designed to help safeguard and improve outcomes for Black children. But as new challenges arise, and the educational landscape evolves, it felt like the right time for us to bring Rare Rising Stars to its close and to focus on fighting racial and social inequality in new ways. Rare Rising Stars was founded to show Black students the sky is the limit. That is a given now.

As we reflect on fourteen incredible years, it is entirely apt that the theme for this year's awards is legacy. Each of these individuals has left an indelible mark on their communities and their legacies will continue to inspire future generations of Black students for many years to come. In compiling their stories, I have been privileged to document their ingenuity, dedication and unwavering force for good. It is my hope that reading these accounts of Black excellence provides joy and empowers future generations of Black students to pursue their dreams.

Rare Rising Stars has come together thanks to the efforts of a brilliant team. I'd like to thank our judges, Kem Ihenacho, Sophie Chandauka MBE, Tia Counts and Jean Tomlin OBE, for giving up their time to select our Stars from an impressive shortlist. Secondly, I'd like to thank our Managing Director, Raph Mokades, without whom Rare Rising Stars would not be possible; for your tireless dedication to fighting inequality, thank you. I'd also like to thank Puneet Tahim and Kura Dione-Warren, for all the support provided throughout the entire process, and our wonderful graphic designer Sasha Djukicin, for bringing together such a stunning visual publication. Finally, I would like to thank our sponsors, the University of Cambridge, and the University of Oxford, for making these awards possible year on year. May the legacy of Rare Rising Stars continue for many years to come.

Mariel Orford-Hall
Marketing and Business Development Associate & Editor
of Rare Rising Stars 2022

The Stars



Toritseju Uwejamomere

University of Manchester | Biomedical Sciences

Born to Nigerian parents, Toritseju grew up in Lewisham in southeast London with his parents and two siblings. He enjoyed school, particularly the sciences, but was always drawn to business and commercial issues, which led him to a degree in Biomedical Sciences at Manchester.

Football had always been an important part of Toritseju's life, from playing with his dad in the park to his mum telling him to stop playing FIFA. In 2018, during the long summer after GCSEs, Toritseju and a group of friends created their own football club, Blanco FC. They decided to enter the FA People's Cup that same year as the youngest team, making it to the final. Although they did not go on to win, they went on to gain a high level of support in the local community and have been asked to help organise many social football competitions since to give local youth events to partake in during the school holidays. The first of these was the 'Rod's Cup', which was an initiative organised by a local Black barber who wanted to give back to his community. With a budget of just under £1,000 from local grants and sponsorships, Toritseju organised a five-a-side competition with over 20 teams. The event even attracted talent scouts from professional clubs and 13 players were

selected to attend numerous trials, which was an opportunity many would not have been exposed to before. Due to the success of this event, it is now held annually and has grown to over 30 teams.

Supporting young people has been a theme throughout Toritseju's life to date. In 2020, he raised funds for a trip to Malawi to help build a school and well for a village. Sadly, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, this trip was cancelled, but funds raised were still able to be used for these projects.

Alongside his sister, he also organised a STEM Summer School in his family's hometown of Warri, Nigeria. This summer school taught local children between the ages of 13-17 the basics of coding, English, Mathematics and Science, as well as viable life skills. It also served as a networking opportunity with businesses who came to provide internship opportunities to keen students looking to shape Nigeria's future.

Toritseju has also established his own tutoring company, following his experience tutoring younger students during sixth form. He credits this as being his proudest achievement as, despite facing numerous challenges along the way, he has grown his team to include six tutors and 30 students and now runs a successful business.

More recently, Toritseju and his sister started a new venture, 'Cascade'. Cascade is a sustainable development company, with a team of over 60 university students from around the UK, which has designed an app to enable students to live a more sustainable life. For example, the app shows people how to shop more sustainably for groceries. They were awarded an impressive grant from Accelerate Cambridge to develop the app and the company.

In summer 2021, Cascade launched an internship for 10 people and future plans include making the app free for most users as well as developing a version for businesses wanting to become more sustainable. The latter will help to cover the cost of the free version for individuals looking to live a more sustainable lifestyle.



Zachary Elliott

Imperial College London | Mechanical Engineering

Born of Jamaican and British heritage, Zachary grew up in Shard End, Birmingham, with his mother and grandparents. He was raised in a single parent household, in one of the most deprived areas of the UK – the bottom 2% according to the last census. Aged 12, Zachary and his mother moved to Walsall to be closer to more academic schools. He was one of just three children in his primary school who gained admission to a grammar school that year.

The journey to Queen Mary's Grammar School was, however, far from smooth. Reflecting on this period, Zachary recalls how he was initially rejected from all the grammar schools he applied to. These circumstances were largely due to his primary school's failing OFSTED reputation and a lack of adequate teaching resources to support bright pupils. However, the arrival of a new headteacher in Year 6 turned things around, and recognizing Zachary's academic potential, this teacher encouraged him to pursue late application to a local grammar school. Zachary can recall his mother calling up Queen Mary's Grammar School to ask for a second chance, after which he successfully applied and secured a place. He later became Head Boy, attributing his work ethic and gratitude for educational opportunities to this episode.

Throughout school, Zachary excelled in his studies, but admits he was most known for his sporting talent. Alongside his academics, he juggled athletics training six days a week, often getting home as late as 9pm, after which he would start his homework. He was national long jump champion in 2016 (England National Indoor Championships) and also represented England at the International Schools Pentathlon.

In his final year of school, Zachary served as membership coordinator for the Black Head Students' Network. This was a student-led organisation founded by Stanford alumni Tamilore Awosile. The aim of the Black Head Students' Network was to connect Black head pupils across the country and provide role models for young Black students aged 13-16 who had an interest in leadership.

Currently, the organisation has 150 members. In his role as Head of Memberships, Zachary was responsible for inducting new members, managing outreach activities to source head students across the country, going to weekly meetings and acting as first point of contact for anyone interested in joining the organisation. They held an event in partnership with Goldman Sachs in 2020 discussing diversity in the workplace and have also held events with the New York Times and other established firms. These were typically seminar-style sessions where professionals from various industries would come and speak to members.



Zachary's involvement with the Black Head Student's Network has continued into university – he currently acts as Strategy Adviser.

Following Year 13, Zachary was awarded a full scholarship to study Mechanical Engineering at Imperial College London. He was the only Kingsbury Scholar chosen from across the Engineering course in 2021, out of approximately 1,000 students.

In his first year at university, he began volunteering as a mentor for the Caribbean Scholars Foundation, a charity that provides free mentorship and educational support to GCSE and A-Level students of Caribbean heritage. Alarmed by the fact that out of approximately 10,000 Imperial graduates in the 2019/2020 cohort, only 15 were of Caribbean heritage, Zachary was eager to do his part to address this imbalance. This involved a weekly call with his mentee and providing personal statement advice and A Level Mathematics support where necessary. His mentee successfully secured a place to read Medicine at the University of Cambridge the following year.

In his first year at university, Zachary was also Sponsorship Officer for Imperial College London African Caribbean Society (ACS), where he worked extensively with partners to connect them with Black students at the university. He also volunteered at Imperial ACS insight days, answering questions from prospective students about the university's engineering department.



In summer 2021, Zachary was invited to join the Imperial Black Student Advisory Board, which holds monthly meetings to discuss how the university can improve the representation of Black students and votes on seed funding for local community and educational projects (for example, women in STEM events and engineering insight days). He recently began work with Imperial College London to produce a series of video guides for sixth form students on how to navigate the interview process. If successful, this will transition into a fully-fledged programme for Black students applying to Imperial, providing support on personal statements, admissions tests and interviews.

Zachary is also actively involved in BLK Capital Management, a student-led hedge fund and financial literacy initiative designed to educate young Black students about investment. In April 2022, he was elected President of BLK - the first student in the fund's history to be elected from outside the United States. In this role, he planned and coordinated the BLK Spring Conference, which took place at Morgan Stanley's Head Office in New York. Here, Zachary led panel discussions on private equity, investment banking and asset management with over 20 sponsor firms, giving Black students the opportunity to learn from and connect with industry professionals.

Before being elected as President, Zachary was Chief Strategy Officer from April 2021 to April 2022. In this position, he redeveloped and coordinated the analyst recruitment process, automating interview allocation and refining the recruitment logistics process to handle a large number of candidates. This operation conducted over 500 interviews with applicants from four different continents in less than six months. These synergies enabled the organisation to support hundreds more Black students in receiving job offers and preparing them for internships. To date, since Zachary became President, BLK has raised over half a million US dollars to support financial literacy initiatives within the Black community. They have also expanded their operations to Europe and Western Africa, and developed a programme for Black, female students.

In summer 2022, Zachary completed a Goldman Sachs internship in Global Markets and has since gone on to accept a graduate job at Goldman Sachs working in Asset Backed Securities. Looking to the future, he is eager to embark upon his MBA and perhaps start his own business. Ultimately, Zachary dreams of starting his own educational foundation to support low-income students.



Esther Akinlosotu

University of Manchester | Modern History with Economics

Born to Nigerian parents, Esther grew up in Dagenham, east London. She excelled throughout school, and aged 11 gained admission to a prestigious charity boarding school in West Sussex. There, she maintained a rich extracurricular life, participating in gospel choir for seven years and leading it in Years 12 and 13, serving as President of the Christian Union and African Caribbean Society (ACS), as well as participating in Combined Cadet Forces (CCF) and being appointed as a Prefect. As a Prefect, she founded the school's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee and led the Student Wellbeing Committee. Marking the start of Esther's diversity and inclusion journey, this involved tasks such as rewriting the school's EDI policy to prevent hair discrimination and inviting ACS Presidents from Oxford, Loughborough and UCL to speak to the student body.

Esther's commitment to diversity and inclusion was equally demonstrated when she took to social media to highlight the challenges faced by dyslexic students like herself in the UCAS university applications process. She also highlighted the potential for other Black and ethnic minority students to experience added anxiety during this period, because they were unable to assess how diverse universities were through in-person open days. Frustrated by the lack of support she received during the Covid-19 lockdowns, she decided to write an email to UCAS setting out these issues, as well as some practical recommendations for how they might improve things. Subsequently, the Chief Operating Officer of UCAS reached out to Esther, and she was invited to put together a survey on student experiences. Started in summer 2021, this involved evaluating survey responses from 448 participants and producing a report on past and present student experiences of the application process, predicted grades by ethnicity breakdown and suggestions for UCAS going forward. The report was well received, and Esther was pleased to see some of her recommendations implemented the next year, including student panels and reaching out to diversity-focused student organisations such as the Black Excellence Network.

Following the report, Esther was invited to speak to the Director-General of the Department for Education, alongside the Black Excellence Network, about how they could improve the schooling experience for Black students. She was also invited to speak to other sectors within the Department for Education (DfE) about how they could utilise policies, organisations and focus groups to understand better what Black students needed and adjust their approach accordingly. This was accompanied by an invitation to write a blog for the Higher Education Policy Institute following her report.

Since starting at the University of Manchester in September 2021, Esther has continued to champion equality and diversity in all

aspects of student life. This saw her co-found Black Girls Space, a society designed to provide targeted careers support to Black female undergraduates. Launched in March 2022, their first event sold out twice and was extremely well attended by 80 people. From the success of this event, the society was invited to partner with Black businesses in Manchester. They have also partnered with Young Diverse Changes and She Leads for Legacy, both professional networks dedicated to the empowerment of Black women. This is achieved through seminars, workshops and conferences, and Esther invited to speak at She Leads for Legacy's October 2022 conference. To date, the society has grown to 100 members across its mailing list. Alongside regular newsletters, the team are also working on a handbook for Black girls, highlighting useful things like Black therapists in Manchester and the nearest afro hair shops.

In her second year at university, Esther was also the current Outreach and Operations Lead for the Black Excellence Network. Founded by her friend George Obolo, this is a student-led organisation set up to increase the participation of Black students in higher education through accessible mentoring and consultancy services. As Outreach and Operations Lead, Esther's key responsibilities included checking in with nine student ambassadors, conducting virtual offer-holder days for incoming students and hosting speaker events. Most recently, this included an Introduction to the Civil Service session with nine speakers and 20-30 attendees.





George Obolo

University of Manchester | Medicine

George started life in Lewisham, southeast London, before the family relocated to Essex, Hertfordshire. It was in Essex that George completed his secondary schooling, attending St Mark's West Essex Catholic School and then Hertfordshire and Essex High School and Science College for sixth form. Reflecting on his school days, he recounts that school was a generally a positive experience and he enjoyed learning, although it was quite a change going from a predominantly Black school in southeast London to a majority white school in Hertfordshire. Sixth form was a further transition still, as George describes how he was one of just three Black boys in his year. Despite this, the school was academically strong and George excelled across his A Level studies, achieving all As. He particularly enjoyed Biology and Chemistry, cementing his decision to study Medicine at university. During this period, he also undertook an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) on healthcare disparities in dementia treatment across the UK.

In his third year at the University of Manchester, George co-founded the Black Excellence Network. Launched in August 2020, during the challenges of Covid-19, the Black Excellence Network is a non-profit organisation for sixth form and university students, designed to help tackle the racial disparities between Black students and other ethnicities within UK higher education. It does this through four pillars: Mentorship, Consultancy, Networking and Events and Opportunities. As well as its mentoring and consulting service, the Network also shares careers opportunities and useful articles via its online blog and monthly newsletter. This is accompanied by bespoke events, such as a Dragon's Den style session run in partnership with the Manchester 10/10 programme, a project run by University of Manchester to offer academic and careers support to Black students studying humanities subjects, and university insight days. The Dragon's Den event was attended by approximately 50 participants. Most recently, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) partnered with the Black Excellence Network to offer personal statement advice from September 2022.

As Head of Consultancy for the Black Excellence Network, George pioneered a service which connects professionals in competitive courses and industries with Network members looking to specialise in the same sector. Day-to-day, this involves making sure consultants are booking calls with their mentees as and when they are supposed to, promoting the consultancy service on social media, recruiting consultants using LinkedIn and personal networks, and assessing feedback from students and voluntary consultants. Recently, George managed the recruitment of 30 consultants from organisations including Deloitte, Morgan Stanley, BlackRock and Slaughter and May, alongside experienced medical students. George is also Head of Partnerships, which involves communicating with partner firms and



top universities to secure funding and plan events. Current partners include the University of Manchester, the Department for Education, Slaughter and May, Morgan Stanley and others.

Since launching, the Network has grown to over 1,500 subscribers and 900 website members. When asked what makes the Black Excellence Network different, George lists the following USPs: they are for Black students only (who can sometimes find themselves lumped together under generic social mobility discussions targeting 'disadvantaged groups'); they are student-led; they are for all industries, including the creative industries; and they are focused on policy change.

Elsewhere, George is the Community Lead for Our God Given Mission (OGGM), a Christian charity devoted to helping millennials to increase their knowledge of the Gospel. This involves organising regular social events and facilitating Bible studies and general discussions. He has also been a recipient of the Aspire Young Innovator Award and the Powerlist's Top 150 Future Leaders Award 2021/22, placing within the top five. He was a nominee for the Manchester Social Responsibility Award 2022 and a finalist for Venture Further Award, with the potential to win £10,000 for The Black Excellence Network.

Emmanuelle Dankwa

University of Oxford | PhD Statistical Sciences

Emmanuelle grew up in Accra, Ghana, where she lived with both parents until she was eight years old. Her father's job as a land valuation officer and her mother's job as a travel ticketing agent meant the family travelled a lot, so after that Emmanuelle spent much of her childhood in state boarding schools. At age 12, having completed her junior high school exams, she started at Abuakwa State College, another government-assisted boarding school, in the eastern region of Ghana, where she consistently performed at the top of her class. She particularly enjoyed elected mathematics and chemistry, moving up through the years to join those two to three years her senior. Gravitating more towards the sciences and mathematics throughout school, she completed senior high school aged 16 and began university the same year. Throughout school she recalls a cycle of financial struggles, whereby Emmanuelle would often be instructed to 'sit out' lessons until her fees had been paid, however her passion for learning and resolve to study quantitative concepts at a higher level saw her secure her place to read Mathematics with Statistics at the University of Ghana.

She graduated in July 2017 with First Class honours, aged just 20 years old, and was named the Best Female Student in the School of Physical and Mathematical Sciences for two consecutive years. She was also awarded the Beige Capital Youth Excellence League (YEL) Award for her outstanding performance in statistics. Although Emmanuelle thoroughly enjoyed conceptual learning, it was the application of such concepts to real-world problems such as waste management that gave her real joy.

To this end, Emmanuelle started CIYZOE in her second year of university, a student advocacy group primarily involved in plastic waste recycling. It was around this time Emmanuelle noticed how her sister would exchange plastic waste with local traders in exchange for money when she returned home for the holidays, prompting her to do some research into the importance of recycling. This coincided with a flood and fire near home caused by plastic waste which had choked the gutters. The more she read, the more Emmanuelle felt called to action to do something to alleviate the waste problem, and in 2015 CIYZOE was born. Initially, Emmanuelle would start by convening student meetings to identify some of the most pressing waste issues on campus. She and her team would then go from one student hall to another, setting up workshops to educate the students on the importance of separating out their plastic waste, such as plastic sachets. CIYZOE would then come and collect the plastic waste at the end of the week and transport this to a nearby recycling company in Accra.

The organisation grew to a team of 30 volunteers and, whilst initially funded solely by students, was adopted by the wider

university in 2018 as the University of Ghana Plastic Recycling Project. This was as a result of Emmanuelle and her team's lobbying of various members of the university's senior administration, including meetings with the Green Committee and Vice Chancellor, as well as professors in the Institute of Environment and Sanitation.

Emmanuelle was also selected as a Rhodes Scholar at the University of Oxford in 2018, from over 3400 applications from across West Africa. This consisted of a grueling online application, followed by two interview rounds. Only one place was offered across 16 countries. Here, she successfully completed her PhD with the Department of Statistics. Her main area of specialisation was in statistical epidemiology, where she used statistical models to compare interventions to inform epidemic management. Her research was so impressive that Emmanuelle and her professor Chrisl Donnelly were invited to advise the government on Covid-19 policy, involving producing weekly reports on the clinical data from Covid-19 hospitalised cases and associated symptoms.

Outside research, Emmanuelle has served as Welfare Officer at St Peter's College and previously as the Treasurer of the Oxford University Africa Society. Most recently, she was selected as a finalist for the STEM for Britain competition, where she was invited to present her research to the Houses of Parliament.





Malone Mukwende

St George's, University of London | Medicine

Born in Bromford, Birmingham, to Zimbabwean parents, Malone is the co-author of *Mind the Gap*, a clinical handbook of signs and symptoms in Black and Brown skin.

Upon starting medical school in 2018, Malone identified a fundamental problem: almost all the images and data used in his clinical teaching were based on studies of white patients. However, medical conditions can present very differently on darker skin, leading to misdiagnosis and even death. Alarmed by this gap in his teaching, Malone began compiling pictures and descriptions of different conditions in melanated skin, together with two staff members from the university. The process was initially challenging, as they met with a lack of high-resolution images and photo license barriers, but Malone and the team persevered to eventually launch their *Mind the Gap* handbook in August 2020. They also managed to secure £200 in funding in the first instance, after bringing the project to the university's attention.

In a fortuitous turn of events, corresponding Black Lives Matter movements worldwide during the summer of 2020 saw the handbook gain mass traction on social media, following a retweet by BAFTA-winning actor John Boyega. After this, the handbook was propelled to mass media attention, and a series of interviews with Malone and BBC News, the Guardian, Elle, Time Magazine (where Malone was interviewed by none other than Angelina Jolie) and the Washington Post followed. To date, the e-book has been read over 400,000 times in more than 75% of countries globally. Malone's work has also influenced policy change in the NHS 111 service, which saw their calling systems updated to include questions specific to brown skin.

Malone has gone on to create his own health startup called Blackandbrownskin, which connects patients with a skin of colour specialist to advise on their condition. The website also provides a more extensive image database, so people can quickly and easily look up their symptoms. Founded in January 2021, Malone's vision is to see the impact of his educational platform result in earlier and more accurate diagnosis, increased patient satisfaction and greater confidence amongst healthcare professionals when treating people of colour. This is accompanied by a social media platform called Hutano, which Malone set up to address more community-related issues such as managing chronic skincare conditions, diet and skincare product tips and to connect patients with other users in online forums. Malone describes Hutano as "a safe space to discuss your skin health away from traditional social media." Currently, over 3,100 people have signed up to the Hutano website, and Malone is in the process of building an app. The app currently exists as a prototype, which Malone hopes to launch over the next two months. Despite little prior coding experience, he developed the app himself



using 'Bubble' software, after reaching out to LinkedIn mentors and watching YouTube videos. Going forwards, Malone envisages a community app where people can take a picture of their skin, have the picture reviewed by a healthcare professional and receive a review which provides access to a bank of relevant information.

In February 2022, Neutrogena partnered with Hutano as part of their Heroes of Skin Health Equity series. Malone has since been named in *Forbe's* 30 under 30 list for 2022, along with some of the world's brightest young entrepreneurs.

Prior to this, Malone served as President of St George's African Caribbean Society (June 2019 – 2020), where he pioneered events like 'Being Black in the NHS'. This event was attended by 40 audience members and 5 speakers. He also chaired forums to discuss the Black attainment gap at the medical school and volunteered as a Medical School Representative with charity Melanin Medics.

Sabrina Daniel

London School of Economics | Law

Sabrina was born and raised in Eritrea, where she lived with her mother and brother. She came to the UK as an asylum seeker in 2014, when the family relocated to Salford, Greater Manchester. Although Sabrina thought things would get easier, she remembers this as a particularly testing period as her mother was coping with the after-effects of having been detained and arrested as a political prisoner in Eritrea. The resultant psychological trauma led to frequent clashes at home, and Sabrina ran away from home aged five. After running away again, Sabrina was placed in care following various interviews, and she has lived with different foster families ever since.

As Sabrina started secondary school, things were generally going quite well, however she admits that as she got older and the idea of leaving care started to dawn on her, she started to panic and began misbehaving in school. "I just felt like I didn't have a future," she explains, "and because I didn't have a parent to come in and defend me, I feel it was a bit easier for the teachers to pick on me." Things took a turn for the worse in Year 9, where Sabrina found herself getting into regular fights and hanging out with a bad crowd. It was during this period that Sabrina moved down from set one to set three.

A more positive turning point came with the arrival of a new deputy head teacher in Year 11. Sabrina was sent to his office one day to discuss her misbehaviour, when she noticed a newspaper cutting on the wall discussing the tiny proportion of care-leavers that went on to higher education. Alarmed by these statistics, Sabrina struck up a conversation as to why he was interested in the topic, during which the teacher revealed he had adopted his children. This was around the same time Sabrina moved into this teacher's set, and from that moment on the two developed a positive relationship. Sabrina attributes much of her later success to this teacher, who encouraged her to see her potential when others did not. It was also this teacher who later nominated her for the Dunn Family Scholarship at Saint Bede's College, Manchester, a private sixth form. This was a decisive moment in Sabrina's academic trajectory as the offer was conditional upon her receiving all 7s, 8s and 9s. At this point she was predicted 5s and 6s. On results day, not only did Sabrina meet her offer, but she also finished All Hallows Royal Catholic School with the second highest GCSE results in the year.

Sabrina's work ethic was equally demonstrated during sixth form, where she waitressed part-time at Trafford shopping centre for 16 hours per week. Around the same time, her elderly carers had decided to retire to a new location, and this, together with increasing concerns about bringing home Covid-19, motivated her decision to move out semi-independently. Thereafter, Sabrina moved in with one other person, while continuing to support her rent payments with part-time work. She temporarily relied on Universal Credit when she



lost her job in December 2020 amidst the pandemic.

Despite these challenges, Sabrina persevered to complete her personal statement and LNAT examination between work and school, successfully securing A*A*A at A Level and clinching her offer to study Law at London School of Economics (LSE).

In her first year at LSE, Sabrina founded CES E-Mentoring.com, a website and e-mentorship programme for care-experienced leavers. The objective of the initiative is to connect care-experienced students to mentors, aiming to increase their participation in higher education and apprenticeships. Alongside the mentoring service, this is achieved through providing monthly newsletters on topics such as budgeting at university and what it is like to be a care-leaver in higher education.

Ideated in December 2021, Sabrina developed the Wix website in January before opening for applications in February 2022. At first it was difficult to source care-experienced students, as many of her peers were hesitant to discuss the topic, but eventually Sabrina joined forces with another care-experienced friend, who was able to reach out to other care leavers back home. Following the launch, Sabrina received 45 applications, 23 of which were from care-experienced students and 22 from undergraduates offering mentorship. The launch was so successful that Sabrina was contacted by organisations like Browne Jacobson, keen to offer paid work experience to mentees.

One of Sabrina's academic mentors recognised the work she was doing and recommended her to the LSE law magazine, LSE Ratio. She was invited to write an A4 piece on the work she is doing with CES, which will be published in September 2022. In March, she was also recognised by social mobility charity UpReach, who shortlisted Sabrina as one of over 150 applicants for the Outstanding Achievement Award.

After graduating, Sabrina looks forward to pursuing her legal career, having secured first year internships at Slaughter and May and Taylor Wessing. This accompanied interviews with Macfarlanes, Herbert Smith Freehills and Linklaters. She was recently awarded the Laidlaw scholarship at LSE, which includes a £6,000 grant, careers workshops and a six-week summer internship with an NGO. CES E-mentoring opened for its second cohort in August 2022.

RARE RISING STARS 2022



Aisha Janki Akinola

University of Edinburgh | Architecture

Aisha grew up in Wamakko village in Sokoto state, northern Nigeria. She grew up in a traditional Nigerian family setting, as the second daughter of a large, extended family. As one of the eldest, Aisha was used to looking after her younger siblings and developed a knack for leadership early on. This included tasks like preparing evening meals for the family of 11 when her businesswoman mother had to work late in her shop and her father was away on business for his engineering firm. During childhood, she would often go to school in the mornings and then work at her mother's shop in the afternoons and evenings, doing her homework in between attending to customers.

She attended the Federal Government College Staff School, Sokoto, where she took an interest in mathematics, science and the built environment. It was around this time she also picked up an interest in drawing and art, before resolving to become an architect aged ten. Yet, as Aisha's interest in architecture grew, it was not before long that she began to perceive a distinct lack of Black, female, Muslim architects in the media. Worse, she could only find one in the whole of Sokoto and surrounding areas! She remembers sharing her aspiration of studying architecture with her teacher, who immediately advised her against it, saying it was not meant for women, and that as a Muslim woman, she was 'better off studying something less demanding'.

Against all advice, she persevered, determined to achieve her architecture dream, and having completed secondary school as the best graduating student, was awarded a scholarship to study her A-Levels at the African Science Academy in Ghana. This was one of the best schools on the continent, offering her the chance to study advanced Mathematics and Physics, and Aisha (who, by this point, was Deputy Head Girl) was the only Nigerian to be awarded a place that year.

It was here that she received the holistic training that would serve as the foundation for the next chapter of Aisha's higher education journey. After securing all A*s and As in Mathematics, Further Mathematics and Physics, Aisha was awarded the fully funded Mastercard Foundation scholarship to study Architecture at Edinburgh University in 2018.

Here, she quickly realised there were few African-Caribbean students in her school and across the whole university, as was the case in the architecture industry more broadly. In a bid to address the lack of young Black students in the creative fields, she started a YouTube channel where she documented her experience as a Black, Muslim, female architecture student. The channel has reached over 10,000 people so far, with 18 videos to date and up to 5,300 views on a single video. She also has 451 YouTube followers and 15,000 followers on LinkedIn.

Aisha also volunteered with Access to Creative Education Scotland, a charity which supports students from low income widening participation backgrounds with applying to university. This involved working closely with ten architecture students over two years to provide advice on creating portfolios, giving feedback on students' portfolios and answering any questions on university life. She was also involved in bi-weekly workshops (about seven hours ad hoc per month whilst a student). In addition, she started the Nigerian society and was the discussions facilitator for the Islamic society.

At the height of the Black Lives Matter movement, she co-founded BlackED, an antiracist organisation designed to tackle structural racism at the university. This began life as a successful petition against various issues experienced by Black students, which garnered over 8,000 signatures. Overwhelmed by the support, Aisha decided





to make it into an official organisation. Following this, the team of 20 voluntary ambassadors and seven core directors put together a constitution, applied for funding and split it into four different branches: Black Arts Matter, Black Feminist, BlackED Outreach and BlackED Space. Aisha managed Black Arts Matter, which saw her collaborate with the Salisbury Centre in Edinburgh to host an exhibition around the Black Lives Matter project. It provided a platform for Black students and local Black artists to exhibit their work and get recognition. This event was called 'Black Lives Matter: One Year On'. Approximately 50 people attended the one-night exhibition.

After this, Aisha was invited to sit on the university's Race Equality and Antiracist Subcommittee, where she advocates for better holistic support for Black and minority ethnic students. Notable amongst their achievements is the renaming of David Hume Tower, a historic building at the central campus named after the famous philosopher who stated in his 1753 essays *Of National Characters* that 'negroes' are naturally inferior to whites. The petition was acknowledged by the university and the building has now been renamed to 50 George Square. Aisha also sat on the Decolonising the Curriculum working group for different colleges.

In March 2021, Aisha ran in the student elections for the role of Vice President of Welfare. In her campaign video she shared her personal experience with mental health (which was particularly bad in the wake of Nigeria's End Sars protests) and highlighted the changes she wanted to make to the system. It was a daunting process, but Aisha made history as the first ever Black VP for Welfare and the first ever sabbatical officer from the African continent in the university's 439-year history. Through that role she advocated for the university to host a cultural festival organised every year to tackle sense of belonging issues. Securing £20,000 of funding in its first year, the Edinburgh Cultural Festival is now a regular fixture in the university calendar.

In her final year, Aisha sat on the University Court Meeting Group, the Widening Participation Strategy Group, the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee and various other working groups focused on students' welfare. She acted as a voice for the 46,000 students and advocated for the voiceless, the underrepresented and unseen in the university community.



William Awomoyi

University of Cambridge | Human, Social and Political Sciences (HSPS)

William grew up in Croydon, south London, with his parents and three elder sisters. From a young age, he recalls a fiery passion for activism as well as an appetite for academia. At 11, he was awarded an academic scholarship to the Cedars School in Croydon. There, he founded the school's first ever debating society and reigned as chess champion until year 10. He was also awarded the school's academic prize from years 7-11 for consistently achieving the best marks in his year group.

Following GCSEs, William moved to St Olave's Grammar School, Orpington, where he studied History, Economics and Mathematics. He juggled this alongside Model United Nations, Political Economy Society, African-Caribbean Society and his positions as Vice Form Representative and Economics Ambassador. He completed sixth form with A*AA at A Level, successfully securing his place to read Human, Social and Political Sciences (HSPS) at St John's College, University of Cambridge.

Outside academia, William has devoted himself to youth politics. At age 14, he was elected first Young Mayor of Croydon (2018-2022), against 28 other candidates. In his capacity as Young Mayor, he represented over 93,000 young people in the borough and successfully contributed to reducing knife crime by 25% in his first year. This was through a multi-dimensional approach of securing £20,000 funding for youth activities such as the Music Relief Summer Club, facilitating careers fairs at Boxpark, Croydon, and setting up a youth independent advisory board with the borough's Chief Superintendent. He was also invited to turn on Croydon's Christmas Lights and open up local Grime stars Krept and Konan's restaurant in South Croydon in 2018. In January 2020, William was awarded the Bromley Rotary Award for outstanding contribution to the community.

As a Member of Youth Parliament for Croydon, William was also instrumental in the #Don'tZaptheZip campaign, where he lobbied to save free travel for young people in London amidst the TFL Bailout. One of his proudest achievements, this entailed frequent meetings with the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), a grassroots organisation founded in 1965 to address growing concerns about child poverty amongst social workers and social researchers in Britain. He also worked with a range of politicians from across the spectrum, including Siobhan Benita and Sadiq Khan. The decision to keep London transport free for under 18s was eventually announced on 16th November 2020. William's campaign won the Sheila McKechnie Award for Young Campaigner of the Year.





On April 30th 2020, during the national lockdown, William co-wrote a letter to Prime Minister Boris Johnson outlining some key practical responses for issues affecting young people. In this he called for free school meals to be extended for those that needed it until the summer, for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to be provided to all NHS staff working on the frontline and for clarity about the appeals process of cancelled examinations. Although the Prime Minister never directly responded, at least 200 people signed the letter and it gained mass traction on social media.

In September 2021, after year 13, William was elected as UK Youth Ambassador to the Commonwealth. This was a strenuous process that involved a 2,400-word application, an interview and an election. He stood on the priorities of obtaining international solidarity against racism, climate change and misogyny, as well as advocating for the 24 million young people he now represents. He was subsequently invited to Switzerland to attend their 30th Anniversary 'Jugend Session', a national youth event which brings together young people from across Switzerland to share their ideas on achieving sustainable development. William spoke on efforts to improve global supply chains in Switzerland's Federal Palace, by increasing their traceability and transparency in the extraction stage. He also gained attention for condemning the disparaging usage of the term "third world" when addressing countries in the global south.

William has been invited to many consultations over the years, including the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) consultation of Youth Services, the Mayor of London's Roundtable for Young People, the Met Police Youth Consultation on the state of policing and the Bank of England's Consultation on financial education. Due to his achievements, William was invited to 10 Downing Street for a personal tour in February 2019.

In May 2022, during his first year at university, William joined Global Shapers Cambridge. This is a programme run by the World Economic Forum which aims to bring together changemakers aged 18-30. They are currently working on a project called the General Data Assembly (GDA), which aims to educate the public on how their data is being used, how they can protect themselves and information security best practice. Prior to this, he was invited to speak at the first One Young World Cambridge Caucus Summit in March on the topic of helping young people to "become part of the change movement". There were around 50 to 100 people in attendance.

In June 2022, William delivered a speech on recycling on behalf of the British Youth Council at the Chartered Institute of Waste Management.

William has been awarded BP's Future Talent Scholarship (an award set up to recognise emerging talent among people interested in the energy sector) and a place on EY's Black Heritage Network, following internships at J.P. Morgan and Chase, Deloitte and PwC. In July 2022, he received the Diana Award, the most prestigious accolade a young person aged 9-25 can receive for their social action or humanitarian work.

When asked what his proudest achievement is, William responds: "I think reducing knife crime in my borough, because that's a tangible thing. I think a lot of people try to euphemise youth politics and make out that it's not that substantial but knowing that we were able to make a tangible change, where my peers could actually see some of the work that I did... that makes me really happy."



Gideon Olanrewaju

University of Cambridge | MPhil in Education, Globalisation and International Development

Gideon is a social entrepreneur, using SMS-based technology to drive equal educational opportunities across Nigeria.

The oldest of six children, Gideon grew up across various states in northern and southwestern Nigeria. Due to his parents' jobs as missionaries, the family were constantly on the move, and Gideon recalls a rather nomadic childhood. Travel obligations meant Gideon's parents were often absent during his younger years, so Gideon spent much of his early life at various boarding houses at different secondary schools. Violent extremism in northern Nigeria around this time also contributed to the turbulence of day-to-day life, disrupting Gideon's schooling experience.



Despite the challenges of his fragmented schooling, Gideon excelled academically and was particularly good at English and Science. Aged nine, an inspirational teacher was so impressed with Gideon that he encouraged him to apply to a high-achieving school in the neighboring city of Osogbo, after which Gideon was awarded a scholarship to Henry Alex Duduyemi Memorial College. Unfortunately, Gideon could only remain at the boarding school for one year due to the death of his sponsor shortly afterwards, however as one of the best schools in the area, attending Alex Duduyemi was a formative experience for him and he remembers his time there fondly. Thereafter, Gideon studied at Unity School in Osun state until university, where he did so well in his entrance test he was placed directly into the year above.

Upon completion of the UTME and West African Senior School Leaving Certificate Examination (WASSCE), Gideon secured eight out of nine distinctions and graduated from secondary school as the best student, best in his local government area and best in the entire state of Osun. He later started at Ladoko Akintola University of Technology, Ogmoboso, where he studied Biochemistry. Gideon was the second youngest in a class of 318. He was awarded four scholarships over the duration of his course. Following graduation, in 2017 Gideon began his MA in International Education and Development at the University of Sussex. He was the youngest student ever to be awarded the fully funded Chevening Scholarship.

Gideon is also the founder and Chief Executive Director of Digilearns (www.digilearns.ng), an educational initiative that delivers the Nigerian curriculum via phone technology without requiring internet access. Inspired by the onset of global school closures in the wake of Covid-19, as education moved online, Gideon recognised that there was little to meet the educational needs of rural children without internet access. Radio and TV-based programmes were equally difficult to access in these remote areas, so Gideon set out to develop a solution that was easily affordable and accessible to all. Noting that most Nigerian households had at least one basic feature phone, Gideon developed a system whereby students without internet could access educational content through their family phone via SMS and USSD technology. In dialling various SMS codes, students have the option to be sent assessment questions, get written reports back or directly contact a teacher for support. The technology also enables students to do offline Google searches, as this is connected to AI in the back end of the system.



In March 2020, the Digilearns project attracted a total of 150,000 USD from the Queens Commonwealth Trust, One Young World, Zurich Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to support over 500,000 beneficiaries to access offline learning opportunities. Gideon was subsequently awarded the African Union Top 50 Education Innovations in Africa award for DigiLearns, praising it as a COVID19 intervention that reached thousands of disadvantaged children across Nigeria.

In addition, Gideon is the Chief Executive Director of Aid for Rural Education Access Initiative (AREAi). This is a non-profit organisation that leverages digital-based initiatives to enhance educational access for disadvantaged children across Nigeria. The team also undertake outreach visits to secondary schools in Ogmoboso (up to 45 across 6 months), delivering digital skills workshops, teacher training and practical examination advice. Over the last seven years, Gideon and his team have facilitated access to quality education for 24,000 disadvantaged learners in low-income communities and marginalized settings across Nigeria, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. In January 2022, AREAi received funding from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to design and execute regional digital access intervention for over 48,000 school students in 6 Nigerian states. Gideon was later recognised as a Malala Education Champion in Nigeria in April 2022, winning a grant of over 307,000 USD

from the Malala Fund in recognition of his transformative work on leveraging digital innovations to foster access to quality educational opportunities for 10,000 girls across Nigeria.

Currently, Gideon is studying for a Masters of Philosophy in Education at the University of Cambridge. He was awarded the Standard Bank Chairman Scholarship in July 2021. He aspires to become Nigeria's Minister of Education, ensuring access to quality educational opportunities for children nationwide.

Amongst other accolades, Gideon is a 2019 One Young World Ambassador, 2019 Deloitte Scholar, 2018 UNESCO Young Leader in Africa, a Teaching Fellow/Certified Entrepreneurial Leadership Educator at the African Leadership Academy in Johannesburg, South Africa, and a Global Youth Ambassador with the Global World at School International Campaign on Education. He is also a 2018 nominee of the Future Award Africa Prize for Education, a 2019 nominee of the SMS 100 25 under 25 Award, Education Category, a 2019 recipient of the 100 most Influential Young Nigerians Award, and a 2020 recipient of the Ooni of Ife's Royal African Youth Leadership Awards. In October 2019, as a Deloitte sponsored delegate to the One Young World Summit in London, Gideon was invited to Windsor Castle as part of a group of ten young leaders from across the world for a roundtable discussion with the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, Prince Harry and Meghan Markle.

Contributions

What Exactly is History?

As we share the stories of today's change-makers, Leroy Levy reflects on the theme of legacy.

Some forms of history have attracted suspicion for the way in which the past is enfolded into the history of the modern West. According to this position, history is an instrument of nation states manoeuvring to project power through the imposition of cultural values. This, of course, has been a criticism levelled at some of the most respected British imperial historians from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The fierce disagreements that have ensued represent a struggle over the meaning and purpose of history. Some historians have gone as far as suggesting that there can be no objective truth in history. Others have focussed on methodological means as an attempt to counter what might be seen as an integrity issue for the field.

Methodology might work well, but what if archival material is limited? The point is illustrated in the case of the fifteenth century genocide of the Taino people. Much of the writing is limited to a discourse over the number of casualties arising from infection and disease rather than an analysis of connections and integration between the Taino and their Western adversaries.

As each form of history seeks to establish itself as the dominant paradigm for narrating the history of the World, the stakes continue to remain high. With the latest round of Rare rising stars impressively parading their talents and achievements, there is clearly space for new historians to enter the field and shape the outcome of these critical debates.

Leroy Asafou-Levy

Leroy Asafou-Levy is studying a PhD in History at the University of Cambridge.

The Judges



Kem Ihenacho

Kem Ihenacho is a partner at global law firm Latham & Watkins. He is the Global Vice Chair of the Private Equity Practice and Co-Chair of the firm's Africa Practice Group. He is an M&A lawyer with more than 20 years of experience, focusing on complex cross border private equity, infrastructure, and M&A transactions. Prior to joining Latham he was a partner at a Magic Circle law firm.

Kem has been actively involved in recruitment and diversity initiatives in the law for many years and mentors many young lawyers and professionals. He was one of the chairs of the Latham global recruitment committee and for many years has sat on the advisory board at Rare. He is also a director of the not-for-profit enterprise International Lawyers for Africa.

Kem studied law at Cardiff University. He trained with a regional law firm before joining a Magic Circle firm as a junior associate. Kem is a keen sportsman and spends most weekends trying to keep up with his three young sons.



Sophie Chandauka MBE

Sophie is Global COO of Shared Services and Banking Operations at Morgan Stanley. Prior to that, she was EMEA COO of Morgan Stanley's Legal and Compliance Division. This followed four years as Head of Group Treasury (Legal) at Virgin Money leading execution of corporate finance activity in excess of £13 billion. Before that, Sophie was a Senior Associate at global firm Baker McKenzie, advising clients such as Nike, The Body Shop and Alliance Boots.

As a campaigner for inclusion and diversity, Sophie is a Strategic Advisor to Morgan Stanley's African and Caribbean Business Alliance, Head of Race Equity Strategy for the 30% Club and a member of The Executive Leadership Council (ELC). As an entrepreneur, she is Chair and Executive Founder of the Black British Business Awards and Chair and Chief Strategist of The Network of Networks. Sophie is a recipient of many industry awards and has been featured in the *Financial Times*, *Sunday Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Management Today*, *HR Director* and *Brummell*. She is a Rotary International Paul Harris Fellow and has served on several philanthropic boards, including Sentebale, which was founded by Prince Harry, the Duke of Sussex, to support children affected by HIV/ AIDS in Africa. In June 2021, Sophie was appointed by Her Majesty The Queen as a Member of the British Empire (MBE) for services to diversity in business.



Tia Angela Counts

As Chief Diversity Officer for MSCI Inc., Tia combines her financial acumen with expert knowledge of government regulations to align DEI goals across the firm with business outcomes.

Prior to her current role, Tia worked for J.P. Morgan in London for nine years, leading DEI efforts for the Asset & Wealth Management business; and developing and driving a strategy for Black talent as Head of Advancing Black Pathways for the Corporate and Investment bank business globally. Formerly, Tia was a senior lawyer in JP Morgan's Legal Department, providing strategic legal counsel to the Corporate & Investment Bank. She held a variety of senior roles as a lawyer and revenue producer specializing in derivatives and has over 20 years' experience in domestic and cross border investment banking, having worked as a cross asset-class structurer of financial products.

Tia joined JP Morgan in 2012 from Morgan Stanley, where she held a variety of senior roles in London and New York. She began her legal career in 1997 as a corporate finance attorney in Clifford Chance's New York office, where she worked in the Derivatives and Debt Capital Markets team, with a focus on Latin America.

Tia received her J.D. from Columbia University Law School and her BA in Sociology and Spanish from the University of California at Berkeley. Originally from Los Angeles, she resides in Clapham, South London.



Jean Tomlin OBE

Jean has had a distinguished Human Resources career and is probably most widely known for the extraordinary success of the 'people' aspect of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. As Director of HR, Workforce and Accreditation, Jean was responsible for the mobilisation of 200,000 people, the UK's largest peace-time workforce. She was awarded an OBE from the International Olympic and Paralympic Committees for her outstanding contribution to the Olympic and Paralympic Movements.

Born and raised in southeast London, Jean began her career at Ford, Dagenham working in labour relations. She has worked for a number of Heritage brands, including Prudential and Marks and Spencer as Group HR Director, and is a founding member of the first online Bank, Egg PLC.

Since founding and becoming CEO of Chanzo, a Human Resources consultancy firm, Jean has continued to work alongside CEOs and stakeholders worldwide in the public, private and voluntary sector. Most recent assignments have included providing HR advisory services to the Department of Health and Social Care and advising McLaren Racing on their Diversity and Inclusion journey.

Jean was listed in the Powerlist 2015-2016 and the Green Park Top 100 BAME Business Leaders 2018. She continues to develop an extensive and diverse Board portfolio, including Non-Executive Director at J Sainsbury's PLC, with current positions held at Capri Holdings Ltd (Michael Kors, Jimmy Choo & Versace) and Hakluyt & Co Ltd.

She has been a judge with Rare Rising Stars since 2012 and views her participation as one of her major achievements.

Closing Statements

Words from Our Sponsors



University of Oxford

“Congratulations to this year’s Rising Stars, on all your remarkable achievements. It is wonderful to see your strengths and excellence being celebrated by Rare Recruitment. We hope that this success encourages you to explore your potential even further and to continue to share your talents with those lucky enough to be part of your world.

As always, the University of Oxford is proud to support Rare as it shines a spotlight on those who are going to lead and inspire us into the future.”

Dr Samina Khan, Director of Undergraduate Admissions and Outreach



University of Cambridge

“One of the most powerful ways of encouraging students to fulfil their potential is to show them the extraordinary things that others like them have achieved. Rare’s Rising Stars is not just a celebration of talented individuals, it is a call to action for the next generation of students to challenge themselves and succeed. The University of Cambridge is delighted to be a sponsor and wishes this year’s Rising Stars the very best as they pursue their ambitions.”

Tom Levinson, Head of Widening Participation and Regional Collaboration, Cambridge Admissions Office

About Rare Rising Stars

Rare Rising Stars allows us to recognise and celebrate extraordinary candidates. Each year we showcase the achievements of the best Black students in the UK. Since the development of our Contextual Recruitment System, we have been fortunate enough to be able to shine a light on all overachievers, by setting each candidate's achievements in context. We are delighted to now be recognising the achievements of more candidates, on a wider scale.

We are privileged to encounter incredibly high achievers on a day-to-day basis and work with clients who really care about changing the face of the City. Now in its fourteenth and final year, we are once again pleased to be able to share the stories of our ten Stars - stories of ambition, resilience and passion. We hope that this celebration of excellence continues to inspire future generations of Black students to contribute to their communities and pursue their dreams.

Our nationwide search made it clear that there are many more high achievers to be discovered. Our judges Kem Ihenacho, Sophie Chandauka, Tia Counts and Jean Tomlin had the unenviable task of selecting ten finalists from yet another remarkable list of Black students.

We aim to continue developing a community of excellence by sharing the stories of our ten Stars, role models for their generation.

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