

BME Officer Manifesto

Tolu Mustapha (tomm2) – First Year – Law
Leona Renard Kouame (lr503) – First Year – HSPS

Our aim as BME officers is to ensure that further work continues to tackle inequalities and embed inclusivity at Fitzwilliam College, by paying attention to the intersectional identities of BME students. We hope that positive student testimonies will also send out a message to prospective students that Fitz is a welcoming environment to thrive in!

Experience - Tolu

Fitz Outreach Delegation

- completed training to help the Schools Liaisons with interviews, open days, residentials, tours and school visits

College Representative for Cambridge Women in Business

- promoting society events to Fitz students
- encouraging intersectionality and discussing barriers facing BME women in business

External Speakers Officer for Fitzwilliam College Debating Society

- helping to source and manage guest speakers to attend debates
- general publicity of debates on Facebook pages

Active member of the CUSU BME Campaign and Cambridge African-Caribbean Society

- regularly meeting other students from BME backgrounds at different colleges
- discussing BME concerns and solutions with the current committee

Founder and President of my sixth form's African-Caribbean Society

- communicating with external speakers and senior management to organise conferences, an academic mentoring scheme and debates on mental health, gender equality and current affairs
- collaborated with other sixth form societies such as the Christian Society, Islamic Society and Feminist Society

Experience - Leona

Fitz Outreach Delegation

- completed training to help the Schools Liaison with interviews, open days, residentials, tours and school visits

Active member of FUSE

- weekly contact with other BME LGBTQ+ people across all colleges to discuss issues important to us
- developing solutions to make Cambridge's queer scene more inclusive

Active member of the CUSU BME Campaign and Cambridge African-Caribbean Society

- mentoring by students in the past by members of these societies has led me to develop an increased awareness of the most effective ways of engaging with BME students
- extensive network of BME students across all colleges to facilitate future collaborative events

Vice President of my sixth form

- contributing to the school's TIRAH society for BME students to ensure that discussions were well attended and inclusive
- representing BME students' voices within the school by attending weekly meeting with the Headteacher and raising overlooked issues
- collaboration with Westminster school's ACS society by hosting events

Main ideas

BME taster day

- We have already had a meeting with the college's school liaisons officer to plan a BME taster day for year 12 students which will take place next year
- This will involve inspirational talks by current pupils, alumnus, admissions staff and BME lecturers to encourage BME students to apply to Cambridge and continue growing diversity at Fitzwilliam.

Pastoral and academic support

- Work with Target and Access to ensure that access work doesn't end at admission
- Regular drop-in sessions for BME students to discuss issues which disproportionately affect us (the BME attainment gap, imposter syndrome, microaggressions)
- Make the BME Academic mentoring scheme more centralised and accessible

Religious provisions

- Put pressure on the College and work with the Services officer to ensure halal meat is available
- Continue Iona's work towards opening a prayer room
- Ensure provisions are made during Ramadan, such as a specific room open late/early enough for iftar

Anti-racism training for staff

- Work with the President to make sure that Fitz isn't 1 of the 5 colleges without anti-racism training, a fact referred to as 'disgusting', 'embarrassing' and 'disrespectful'

Intersectionality

- Work with other liberation groups to ensure that their events are inclusive
- BME x LGBTQ+/Women's/Disabilities/International/etc

Black History Month

- Invite BME guest speakers to come in and give inspirational talks
- BME student art exhibition
- Social events...

Social events

- BME 'chills' and discussions open to all Hill Colleges to create strong BME community (ACS, PakSoc, BME Campaign, iSoc, International Soc, FLY, etc events are often in the city centre so it would be nice to all walk up together)
- BME swaps (college swaps, hill college swaps, etc) – once a term
- BME bop (open to all)

Racism workshops

- Continue working with the CUSU BME Campaign and other societies to keep students well informed

Why both of us?

- The role of BME officer involves lots of different aspects (events, welfare, access etc) so will be best served by two individuals to ensure enough time is spent on each important issue.
- BME is a broad term which many different people may identify with, having two people in the role maximises representation.
- Our combined understanding of intersectionality = working with all officers to ensure that **ALL** BME students have a voice.
- Our willingness to understand our limitations = working with other societies to ensure we are truly catering for **ALL** BME students.
- Our longstanding relationship together from both being part of Target Oxbridge = working together efficiently and effectively.