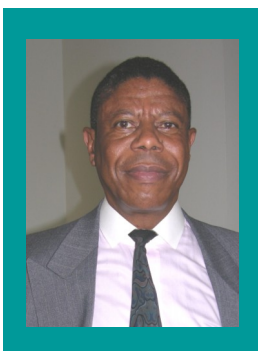


THE SYLA SCOOP

ISSUE 1

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Francis Evans, QC
— Chair of Trustees

The Foundations of Leadership

Great strength lies behind this thing 'leadership', and managed properly it can serve many people. Describing leadership is difficult and much easier to recognise when you see it. In some, especially young people, this leadership quality is latent; but when the potential is recognised and then nurtured, it can deliver wonderful results for all involved.

This edition of **The SYLA Scoop** focuses on 'Setting Foundations for Leadership'. For many young people, leadership comes naturally as the foundations have been laid and cultivated from an early age, allowing them to make a positive contribution to their community and succeed in their endeavours.

For others, leadership comes at a cost; although they display strength of character, aptitude and the potential for excellence, these natural leaders without realising, are wasting that energy and creativity to lead themselves and others astray. As an organisation we aim to empower *these* boys by providing them with the building blocks to re-channel this energy and encourage their latent leadership.

Throughout this newsletter you will see examples of how SYLA's programme works to set foundations for leadership and to challenge our Young Leaders to rise to the occasion for their own personal development. We remain energetically focused on this exercise.

These are still comparatively early days of the project, there still remains much to be achieved in our quest to bestow on our community future Young Leaders.



Leading by example

SJ Berwin shows future managing partner the ropes

Earlier this summer, Joshua Francis-Cross was announced as the first winner of our Future Managing Partner Leadership Award, which was launched last year as part of a three year education project in partnership with London law firm SJ Berwin.

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Leader's experience

Leadership Award winner continued

Joshua won the award for his excellent project on music piracy, which was designed by associate Sophie Davies to introduce SYLA members to an accessible and exciting area of the law. The prize was a family day out to Longleat Wildlife Park and the opportunity to find out about life in a law firm and shadow Managing Partner Ralph Cohen (pictured overleaf)

SJ Berwin is proud of its links with Southside Young Leaders' Academy (SYLA). There is definite synergy between the objectives of the programme and the underlying theme of SJ Berwin's statement of values - *"unlocking people's potential."*

Joshua, who wants to be a lawyer when he finishes his studies, joined the office for a day to gain insight into the workings of a city law firm. He spent the day visiting various departments, meeting partners, associates and support staff. During the course of the day Joshua met Ralph Cohen, the firm's Managing Partner with whom he left a lasting impression. Following this meeting Ralph said,

"I was struck by Joshua's extraordinary confidence and enthusiasm to understand the running of the business. At the partner's lunch Joshua demonstrated an ability to engage in conversation with senior professionals without awkwardness, which is particularly impressive as Joshua was the youngest person ever to attend the lunch. Joshua's vibrant personality inspired me to agree to become his mentor and moreover I have agreed to take this keen Arsenal fan to the Emirates Stadium to watch at least one game. I wish him every success and I am confident he will go far. "

"I was struck by Joshua's extraordinary confidence and enthusiasm to understand the running of the business"

Educating Leaders is a two way process...

Introducing Stephney Bent, SYLA Volunteer tutor



As part of the Education team at Southside, volunteer tutor Stephney Bent, has been working with boys during Saturday sessions since February 2010. When I met her in a busy café, Stephney recalled meeting the boys on her first day.

"I was nervous, I didn't know what to expect, how would the boys react? Would they welcome and accept me as a leader? They may be young boys but they're still people and anyone who wants another person to listen to them and be taken seriously must first earn the listener's trust, it's the same principle in the classroom."

This is a view that underpins how she works with our young leaders. For Stephney, learning and leadership training at SYLA is a two way process and her role in particular is very much a partnership between herself and the boys. "There's a misconception that adults always bring up children, but at some point the roles reverse and children, can regularly teach their elders a thing or two about shifts in society and maybe even life in general".

Nine months on, Southside's newest leader has witnessed how the boys have evolved mentally, physically and academically. "With our young leaders, if the sessions aren't authentically spontaneous and delivered with genuine energy and passion we will lose them and the effort to re-engage their interest will be twice as hard and double the trouble. At the heart of everything is the fact that these are boys with masses of untapped potential waiting to be discovered and nurtured."

"Children, can teach their elders a thing or two "

A sailor's life for me

“... [the] chances of their feet landing firmly on the ground are better now because they've already walked on water first.”



A crew of Southside Young Leaders committed to a journey that would lead to an adventure of dinghy sailing across the choppy waters of the Solent.

For the second year running a group of SYLA boys would be spending time on the water, this time for five days at the UK Sailing Academy in the Isle of White. Here they followed the daily ritual of hoisting the mainsail, raising the sheets and heading the boats into the wind before their fleet could set sail.

With life jackets secured and safety briefings noted, the young crew were given a thorough lesson on boat control, tides, wind velocity and direction prior to scrambling into their dinghies.

Also on board was our very own master and commander, Mark Shopi, Leadership Instructor and acting Admiral overseeing his crew. Mark believes sailing is about control and maximising an individual's potential.

“They got the most out of their boats even with low wind, demonstrating resourcefulness,” he said, “it's also a fear-conquering exercise, the dangers of playing in uncharted waters can be analogous to life, these boys did it for real,” he added.

And the fun didn't stop there. One of our intrepid sailors had managed to capsize his dinghy, “it was freezing cold... the salt water was disgusting,” he said. Another team member, also went ‘man-overboard’ but this time in deeper waters, some ten meters out from shore; within a split second his brother, plunged in after him. Life-guards and safety crew arrived at the scene and lifted the brothers out, who were both chuckling with excitement.

The five day adventure also included teams taking part in volleyball and water polo matches, six miles of kayaking, and of course there was plenty of swimming. The last two days were spent with the boys taking excursion trips to explore the Isle of White on land and visiting many of the historical sites.

Mark explains: “Many skills in sailing are transferrable; concentration, focus, persistence, perseverance and enhanced listening skills as understanding of safety is paramount. The lads pushed themselves physically, mentally and emotionally always working as a team, chances of their feet landing firmly on the ground are better now because they've already walked on water first.”



“uncharted waters can be analogous to life”

Special Thanks

- Funders
- Volunteers
- Contributors

This issue of The Syla Scoop features articles by :

- Jason Prasad
- Southside Chair of Trustees Francis Evans QC
- Chief Executive Andy Walker



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If you think you can provide SYLA with help through an individual or regular donation – no matter how large or small – or by sponsoring a particular activity please do get in touch with Chief Executive Andy Walker on 020 7701 9055 or andy.syla@btconnect.com

Leadership in Action

Summer holidays offer great opportunities for developing Leadership and this year the Programme started with a day's orienteering in Bostall Woods near Woolwich. With the aid of map and compass, the boys worked in pairs to navigate their way around a series of way-markers. The course was tricky because there were many paths through the tangled woods and it was easy to take a wrong direction and get off course. The secret was to keep checking the compass and eventually, after many dead ends, the teams found their way back to the start. A great day in beautiful weather.



Show me the money! Summer financial Literacy session

Later that first week there was wall climbing at Brixton Recreation centre and a visit to the Imperial War Museum to see Horrible Histories / Terrible Trenches, an exhibition about the First World War.

We were very lucky that the sailing week in the Isle of Wight was fully funded by the UK Sailing Academy. We hope to take another group back there this summer and there will be opportunities in the future for some of our older boys to train as sailing instructors.



On your bike! - Young Leaders' learn safe cycling skills

In the final week, six boys successfully completed a Cycle Proficiency course to lay the foundations for safe cycling trips this year. Hopefully the first of these day cycle rides will be along the north bank of the Thames from Tower Bridge through Greenwich to Bermondsey. Two other highlights of the week was a Financial Literacy day led by Sandra Hearst and a day practicing African martial arts and dance which included learning math to the beat of a drum!

At SYLA, we strive to provide hands-on-learning experiences that not only challenge but enable our Young Leaders.