



Reach Society

Building Connections

Patron Lord Ouseley



2012 Careers Conference Overview (See Photo Gallery for conference photos)

After some twelve months of encouraging, motivating and inspiring young people, especially Black boys and young men, in small groups it was decided to engage much larger groups.

The 2012 Careers Conference, rolled out during the Easter break on 11 April, was our big idea for achieving this.

Here is a selection of memorable comments we received from young people, and their parents or carers:

- My son liked it and there were people who spoke and encouraged him;
- This was just what I needed right now;
- A fantastic day, very proud to be a part of it;
- Lord Ouseley was an excellent guest speaker who provided class and inspiration which can only help young Black males;
- It was an excellent, encouraging, inspiring conference;
- These workshops were inspiring for teenagers allowing them to look at different options;
- This conference should be held periodically and in local communities.

We were delighted to attract almost 400 young people, their parents and some teachers. Everyone gained the opportunity to interact with **around 30 professional men from the Black community** (whose skillsets included engineers, business owners, doctors, lawyers, university lecturers, surveyors, HR experts, senior educators, leaders of national charities etc).

Visitors also took advantage of our creative sessions in **The Perfect 10 Workshops**, in which everyone obtained information, advice and guidance for becoming successful socially and educationally; and were alerted to the advantage gained by young people when their parents are engaged in their development - hence our decision to found **Smart Children Clubs**, to involve parents in simple steps to improve their children's life-chances.

Visitors also interacted with exhibitors - several private sector firms such as Carnaby Erp and Learners Cloud (IT experts), Rare Recruitment (experts in placing high achieving Black graduates), Altran Technologies (structural engineering experts); established mentoring groups ACES Youth Project and Black Boys Can Association; and Welbeck College and others.



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We noted with delight **that 90% of respondents rated our careers conference as good or very good**, and many asked us to hold more.

I could not end this overview without expressing thanks, on behalf of Reach Society, to those who helped us to make the event truly extraordinary, such as our patron, Lord Ouseley, for his outstanding message to the young people.

I would also thank The Royal Navy for the use of their magnificent facilities, HMS President, St Katherine's Docks; and our strategic partner organisations - ACES Youth Project, Excell3 and Runnymede Trust.

Our deepest thanks are due to the cohort of professional men and women, who volunteered time to encourage, motivate and inspire our young people.

We are also most grateful to *The Voice newspaper* for the huge interest and enthusiasm it has shown in our work to build viable connections to improve the future of our young people.

Reach Society is a social enterprise that is the brainchild of a small group of professional men who are passionate about reaching back into the community to encourage, motivate and inspire our young people.

Dr Dwain A Neil
Chairman, Reach Society (May 2012)