

Vice President BME Sabbatical Officer, Report #2

Tré Ventour, October – November 2019 (Student Council)

Summary

On the back of October, Black History Month UK, I'm of the notion that to not be tokenistic, we shouldn't be designating months, weeks or days to commemorate things.

For example:

- Black History Month
- Mental Health Day
- LGBT History Month

And more.

In this train of thought, I will be continuing the events throughout the year, looking at Black history – from film nights to guest speakers. So, initiatives like Black History need to be done for a year consistently to yield any sort of results.

After going through the registers for everyone of my events between Welcome Week and 1st November, close to 400 people have been impacted by my events and just over 300 are individuals.

As of the 6th November, looking at just Black History (Month), that number sits at 341 – including students, staff and members of the public. Twenty-seven individual events across thirty-two days, with performance-based events gaining people in mass (peaking at 40 on the 1st November), whilst the more education-based events gathered small groups, but attendees left feeling challenged.

International and EU students found the events enjoyable and so did White Home students.

However, I continue to find challenges in penetrating the Black British demographic.

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Though, like most things, it will gain traction with time and persistence.

In the future, I'll be going out into other institutions promoting Black History via the Union, including, Onley Prison, Quinton House School and Northampton Football Club, making connections and links with the wider community and impacting our immediate environment.

Key Talking Points:

1. *Black History Speaks* (lectures)
2. Community Outreach

Manifesto Pledges

1. **Introduce a support group where students can talk (without judgement) about being of colour and British in the 21st century – Complete.**
2. **Liaise with local organisations to deliver events. Such organisations can include: NREC, NBHA, Changemaker Hub and Lemon Pop Workshops – Complete.**
3. **Introduce a monthly book club, reading BME authors while discussing BME topics based on what's being read – Started.**
4. **Introduce a monthly film night where films will be watched and discussed, in collaboration with Northampton Filmhouse. It's about seeing yourself reflected – Complete (Doing our own film nights without the Filmhouse).**
5. **Take students on trips to events. e.g. a panel with Nikesh Shukla, or The Black Verse – a poetry night in London made by Black poets to promote Black poets (Incomplete)**

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Other Activities

N/A

Declarations

N/A

Conclusion

As of 6th November 2019, I have completed three out of five of my manifesto pledges. Like with any event, engagement will only increase if we keep the momentum. However, from organising #BlackHistoryUoN, it's shown me that everything we do has to be public, promoting inclusion.

