

Press Release

5 May 2008



Deptford Green Pupils Host Black Professionals to Learn Secrets of What It Takes to Be at the Top

A group of young school boys, intent on defying the negative stereotype of under-achievement, has organised an event that will inspire them to achieve their dreams.

The 12 boys, in Year 10 at Deptford Green School, have taken the unprecedented step of initiating and organising the event with the support of their Head of English and mentor organisation, Urban Synergy.

The event, on Wednesday 7 May has been coined the 'Top Tips to Get to the Top' Role Model Seminar by the boys. Orchestrated entirely by the boys, aged 14 - 15 years old, it aims to encourage them and 400 of their invited peers in Years 9 and 10 to think big, to learn the secrets of success and to work towards their dreams in order to get to the top.

The seminar will showcase 25 black professionals from diverse career backgrounds revealing their top tips for success. Among those speaking to the students are commercial airline pilot, Olu Ayoola, 29 year old dental practice owner Ogo Eze and national newspaper photographer, John Ferguson who is exhibiting his photographs to inspire the next generation at London's City Hall.

Urban Synergy - The Mentoring Resource Pool - is a London volunteer-based Community Interest Company (CIC) that delivers mentors and support services to young people who need extra support in various forms. Once a week for the last two months Urban Synergy has been working with the twelve boys who were part of the London Challenge Programme¹ at Deptford Green School to help support them outside the classroom.

¹ The London Challenge Programme, part of the City Challenge covering three urban regions: London, The Black Country and Greater Manchester is a highly targeted drive to crack the cycle of under-achievement among disadvantaged children in primary and secondary schools.

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The sessions have given the boys the chance to discuss and share their goals and work towards them. The idea for the role model seminar came from these sessions when the group decided that seeing successful black professionals would not only help them but could inspire their fellow students to achieve educational and personal success.

Jacqueline Bygrave, Subject Leader (Head of English) at Deptford Green says: "The fact that these boys have not only initiated but organised this event reflects their deep-seated desire to excel and to turn the tables on low expectation. Hearing first-hand from successful role models operating within a wide range of careers will be an important and inspirational lesson for all the students as they will see that these types of roles are absolutely achievable."

Top Tips to Get to the Top Role Model Seminar

Date: Thursday 7 May 2008

Time: 6pm - 8.30pm

Location: Deptford Green Secondary School

Address: Upper School, Amersham Vale, New Cross, London, SE14 6LQ

For further information about Urban Synergy's work with young people, visit the website at www.urbansynergyuk.com or email: info@ubransynergyuk.com

Ends

For interview opportunities or further information, contact:

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Notes to Editors:

- Urban Synergy's volunteers provide advice, encouragement, advocacy, career and life skills guidance, employment opportunities and inspiration to teens and young adults so that they can reach their full potential
- A Community Interest Company (CIC), the organisation has volunteers united by a singular organisational vision and commitment to helping vulnerable young people raise their aspirations and positively achieve their goals
- Urban Synergy's first substantial project focuses on mentoring young people from BME communities (largely African-Caribbean communities)