

Mentoring Works

**Celebrating
20 years of success**

ELBA and the BIG Alliance's Mentoring Works programme celebrates its 20th anniversary this year and in this booklet you will find accounts from some of the young people that have participated together with their mentors. When ELBA came together in partnership with Islington Giving and Macquarie to form the BIG Alliance, Mentoring Works was able to extend its coverage. Now over 5,000 young people have benefited from the programme and this selection of stories brings alive just what an impact a business mentor can have on the life of a young person – particularly at a key transition point in their education, when they are making decisions about what careers they want to pursue.

The beneficial influence of an adult other than a parent or teacher has long been recognised. But it has to be meaningful, not fleeting and transitory. Mentoring Works provides the input of a business mentor over a full academic year, and carefully matches the mentor with the student to reflect their interests, with a structure to the sessions which helps students to develop the skills and qualities to enhance their employability, boosts their confidence and gives them insights into the world of business that will help them make good career decisions.

20 years ago when Mentoring Works started the internet was still in its infancy, and most phones were still attached to the wall with a piece of wire. Searching for information and intelligence on which to base a decision about which job to pursue was hit and miss, and very dependent on the networks of parents and family. Mentoring Works was able to support those students who did not have those networks.

Two decades later there is an over-abundance of information about work, business and careers available to every young person 24/7 through their phones and mobile devices. However, recent research by the Careers and Enterprise Company shows that this has not necessarily made it easier for young people to make crucial life decisions. They need the input of business and employers to put all the information and data in context. Social and family networks are just as important and those young people who do not have access to this informal intelligence are still at a distinct disadvantage. Mentoring Works is therefore just as relevant today and just as needed.



Ian Parkes
Chief Executive, ELBA

KRISTINA GLENN, DIRECTOR, ISLINGTON GIVING

“Islington Giving is an independent group of funders, businesses, residents and voluntary organisations working together to tackle poverty and inequality in Islington. We shine a light on these issues and harness resources to create positive change in the borough. We want to provide opportunities for all young people to make the most of their talents and potential. We aim to support young people to:

- Develop high levels of confidence and self esteem
- Be resilient and able to cope with setbacks
- Establish, and maintain, positive relationships with others
- Feel a sense of agency and understand how to ‘move on’ in their lives to achieve their aspirations
- Be enterprising and demonstrate an openness to new ideas and experiences

ELBA and the BIG Alliance's Mentoring Works is a core element of how we achieve these goals. It creates pathways for our young people's futures through the dedicated input of businesses and mentors. It is the first Islington wide schools mentoring programme and we are delighted with its success. We look forward to our continuing partnership so that Mentoring Works will soon be in every Islington school helping more young people to be the best they can be.”

RACHEL ENGEL, REGIONAL HEAD, MACQUARIE GROUP FOUNDATION, EMEA

“As part of Macquarie's supported volunteer programme, we work directly with schools and colleges in Islington through our partnership with the BIG Alliance, enabling staff to mentor young people from Year 10 and Year 12.

We have been partnering with Mentoring Works for ten years, initially focusing on schools in Hackney. In 2012, when Macquarie moved offices into Islington and became the founding funder of the BIG Alliance, we turned our attention to supporting schools in Islington and started a three year partnership with Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Girls School. Since then, 6 other businesses and 8 schools have joined us and Mentoring Works in Islington. We have subsequently rolled out the Mentoring Works Year 12 programme, working with City and Islington College.

Since launching the programme, over 550 students in Islington and Hackney, many of whom are girls, have been supported by over 350 Macquarie volunteers.”

Mentoring Works: Celebrating 20 years

Well, doesn't time fly? ELBA's Mentoring Works programme is celebrating its 20th birthday. What started as a local initiative has now grown into a large-scale community education programme, helping to bridge the gap between The City and inner-city London schools. Since its beginning in 1996, the programme has developed and supported thousands of 1:1 and group mentoring relationships between students and city mentors. In turn, these relationships have assisted local students to gain confidence, independence and employability skills as well as broaden horizons and raise aspirations.



To celebrate our 20 years, the Mentoring Works team has been catching up with some past students to find out what they have been up to. There was no danger of students not remembering the programme, with our inbox full of comments, stories and positive experiences. Maya who participated in the programme in 2012 told us "The experience was brilliant and I feel lucky to have been involved. I definitely believe it was beneficial for me".

"I remember the experience well. It gave me the confidence to aspire and work hard towards my future career."

Oyinkan who took part in 2007 remembered the experience well: "It gave me the confidence to aspire and work hard towards my future career." Haggerston School's past student, Gulsen, still remembers her experience 10 years on: "The experience was extremely helpful and assisted me to decide to work in the legal sector and carry out higher education to become a lawyer, like Susie."

"Even the travelling helped give me an insight to the world outside Hackney, which at the time I didn't really experience."

Many past students reported that travelling into The City to meet their mentors helped to boost their confidence and independence, as well as being an exciting experience. Anupriya, who participated in 2005, wrote "it was exciting to leave school and go to The City! In fact, the reason I probably love The City as much as I do now is because I actually got to visit Central London from such young days!" Ishmael, a Mossbourne Academy student who had a mentoring relationship in 2010, said the experience helped him to "talk more confidently with adults especially in The City. I can't really be speaking slang in a professional environment can I?"



Many students and mentors decided to stay in touch with each other after the programme finished. Maya from the 2012 group is still benefitting from the match to her Schroders mentor "we are still in touch and he still helps me with applications as I am on my gap year and has helped with project funding grants, which have been successful." Some relationships are still continuing ten years later! Cassandra, who was mentored in 2005, said "I have been in touch with Emma for a while since leaving school. I even have her on Facebook!" Anupriya who was matched with a Freshfields mentor ten years ago told the Mentoring Works team, "the experience was unforgettable and I am still in contact with her till now!"

Mentoring Works continues today in the boroughs of Hackney, Islington and Haringey, with a new pilot programme in Camden. The programme is delivered in partnership with over 10 City companies including investment banks, law firms and insurance companies.

"I have gained valuable skills and knowledge through business mentoring which definitely increased my confidence. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for giving me such an opportunity to be who I am today."

"The experience was unforgettable and I am still in contact with her now. We try to see each other regularly - depending on our busy schedules!"

DR ANTHONY MANN, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYERS

“Over recent years, UK and international research has made a consistent and compelling case that the quantity and quality of employer engagement experienced by young people while in school or college makes a difference to how well they do in the world of work in their twenties. Young adults who have had greater levels of contact with employers whilst at school are significantly less likely to be not in employment, education or training; and to earn up to 18% more than peers who did not have the same contact.

The input of employers and especially business mentors is more important than ever as young people struggle to make sense of the overwhelming mass of information that is available to them about the world of work and jobs. Young adults who have been mentored consistently report that the experience not only helped them to decide on a career, but it also in getting a job or onto a university course of choice after leaving secondary education.

Mentoring Works is an exemplar of a high quality input from employers which is making a real difference to the life chances of young people.”

AMRITA DAS, CAREERS AND ENTERPRISE COMPANY

“In January 2016, the Government announced the launch of a national mentoring campaign that will connect a new generation of mentors to pre-GCSE teens at risk of disengaging and under-performing. The Careers & Enterprise Company is delighted to be playing a major coordinating role in this important mission.

Over the last few months we have spent time with many organisations that are committed to providing mentoring opportunities for disengaged young people. Our aim is to partner with this mentoring community, to support and amplify their great work. Our role is to ‘join the dots’ between schools & colleges, employers, mentoring organisations and young people through positive collaboration. It is our ambition over the next few years to help create a ‘movement’ around mentoring that will create a long-term change in attitudes to mentoring across the country, by supporting and celebrating the powerful human connections that empower young people and their mentors. We are very excited to be launching this mentoring campaign and hope to work with many partners including all of those involved in Mentoring Works.”

Changing lives

NEPHERTITI AND LOUISE

In the very early days of Mentoring Works, Nephertiti, then a 14 year old student at Haggerston School, joined the programme and was matched with mentor Louise from UBS. 19 years on the two are still in close contact and both recognise the impact and influence mentoring and their continuing supportive relationship has had on their lives.

After leaving school Nephertiti worked at the Islington Law Centre, a social justice charity that offers free legal advice and representation, where she thoroughly enjoyed her role as the centre’s Law Works and Volunteer Coordinator. In autumn 2010 Nephertiti moved on to realise her artistic passions, completing a foundation course at Central St Martins, and from there she secured a place on a Photography degree at the Manchester School of Art. This summer she successfully completed an MA in Curating Contemporary Art at London’s Royal College of Art. Nephertiti reflects that whilst she has always loved art and photography, it’s Louise’s support, amongst others, that gave her the push she needed to fully pursue it as a career. Nephertiti describes how “Louise always believed in me”. But Louise insists that Nephertiti’s talent has always stood out and that it has simply been her role to nurture the talent of a clearly “outstanding individual”.

Nephertiti explains how Louise has always been there to support and offer opportunities. “My after school mentoring sessions helped with everything from coursework and revision to being rewarded for my commitment”. Louise also went out of her way to get Nephertiti a personal tutor in French by

enlisting a French colleague to join them for mentoring sessions. Nephertiti believes that only because Louise did this, was she able to pass her GCSE French, a subject she’d struggled in. Nephertiti explains “we just clicked and liked each other straight away”. And now, as adults, the two continue to play a large part in each others lives. Nephertiti explains “Louise opened up her world to me and saw the potential in me. I was a typical young girl, being gobby at the back of the bus, but my attitude has changed. Mentoring gives you the confidence and empowerment to make good decisions. I could have gone down lots of other paths, but with Louise’s support I have chosen the right paths.”

Furthermore, Nephertiti credits her mentoring experiences as changing her values and giving her a strong belief in Corporate Social Responsibility. Through her role at the Islington Law Centre, Nephertiti has managed volunteering first hand and she has also been involved with ELBA, by volunteering to run photography projects with young people in East London.

Since meeting Nephertiti, Louise’s life has also changed. She left the corporate world behind and now runs a retreat in Kent. Louise describes how mentoring fits in with the key Buddhist concept of “creating value”. They see mentoring as a two-way process which has grown and benefitted them both. Nephertiti’s message about the value of meeting new and different people is clear “Living in London, people are fairly separate. Mentoring is about getting to know your neighbours - if you only ever know people just like you, then you don’t really know people, you’re just staying in your comfort zone. Mentoring is essential for everyone.”

LORIJENT AND OLIVER

Lorijent first found himself walking through the doors of Macquarie's London offices in 2006 when, as a 14 year old student from Cardinal Pole School, he came to meet his business mentor, Oliver. The two had signed up and been matched through ELBA's Mentoring Works programme, committing them to an academic year of fortnightly meetings where they'd work on developing Lorijent's career aspirations, employability skills and confidence, amongst others.

Six years on, Lorijent, then a second year Law student at London School of Economics, found himself back in the fold at Macquarie, but this time to undertake a nine week work placement during his summer break. "I got back in touch with my mentor Oliver when I wanted to apply for the placement", explained Lorijent, "he helped me with my application and gave me pointers on what they might be looking for." Oliver elaborates that the Macquarie placement is like a much more detailed version of work experience "it's like an extended interview and Macquarie take on students for the placement with a view to being able to offer them a job further down the line." Lorijent competed with a number of others and undertook a series of one to one interviews and psychometric and reasoning tests, to win the placement, working in the Compliance department, which, as the legal arm of the finance industry, was the perfect fit for a law student. Just a few weeks in Lorijent, already felt he'd learnt a lot at Macquarie, particularly all the terminology that goes hand and hand with the job.

Oliver also noted the part that mentoring plays in City life: "I had mentors in the past, teachers who were inspirational, but it didn't stop there. My senior bosses at work

have been my mentors and I have seen how your future progression can be shaped by having a mentor – a senior sponsor. I owe a lot of what I've been able to achieve in my career to my mentor."

On completion of his degree Lorijent returned to Macquarie, having landed himself a full-time job in Compliance in Macquarie's Risk Management Group.

Mentoring then came full circle for Lorijent when he signed up as a mentor with the Mentoring Works programme and was matched with a student from his very own Cardinal Pole School. Lorijent mentored Fritz, a Sixth Form student, and the two hit it off immediately. They met numerous times over the programme year and Lorijent commented that "the experience was beneficial because I had to learn how to get complex ideas across in a simpler way so I could share knowledge." Mentee Fritz commented "being on this programme, I have had the wonderful opportunity of gathering crucial knowledge about the world of work and have learnt how to better manage my time as well as analyse important information. All with the help of my mentor."

Looking back on what part mentoring has played in his success, Lorijent said: "Mentoring gave me a structure, showed me how to dress for business and write a CV and prepare for interviews. It was just so useful to come and visit a guy who has a job in the City and learn from someone who I was interested in being like. It felt relevant, helped me form and achieve my own goals, and seeing his office environment and the hours he put in was the kick I needed."

CHANGYI AND ANDY

Andy from Aviva Investors mentored Our Lady's Convent School sixth form student Changyi in 2009. When they first met, Changyi had recently arrived in the UK from China. As her grasp and use of English was very restricted, they used mentoring sessions to work on her spoken English and Changyi insisted that Andy should correct her whenever she made a mistake. The time and effort they both put into this soon paid off as her language skills improved rapidly.

Other than language tuition and practice, Andy helped Changyi to understand the UK education system and the range of careers available and how she might access them. They researched potential university courses for Changyi and wrote a personal statement together to support her applications. During that time Andy also arranged for Changyi to do two blocks of work experience at Aviva Investors. On the first placement, Changyi worked in the Accounts team and, on the second, in the Project Management team. Andy notes that Aviva Investors, as an investment management company, was a good fit for Changyi as she was already interested in business and economics. All their commitment and hard work has paid off - in September 2010 Changyi went on to study Maths and Economics at University College London.

Andy found mentoring mutually beneficial and an incredibly rewarding experience and he loved helping someone who was new to the UK. He says he learnt a lot from Changyi too and was fascinated to hear about her inside knowledge of the Beijing Olympics and her experiences growing up in an only-child culture. Andy only wishes that his own two daughters were as receptive to his advice and worldly wisdom as Changyi has been.

Andy's message to future mentees thinking of joining the programme is, "mentoring is a great way to help you understand the outside world and the job market and careers." And to mentors, "it gets you back in touch with the youth of today and opens your eyes. It is a tough world out there and so hard to get your foot on the careers ladder these days, so anything we as adults can do to assist is so valuable."

Mentoring Works contacted Andy again to see how he felt about his experience in hindsight and he said: "I found the mentoring programme at Aviva Investors extremely rewarding. I would thoroughly recommend it to anyone who would like to broaden their horizons and give something back to society, whilst getting paid for doing something highly rewarding and enjoyable!"

"As a mentor, you are not a teacher, more of a worldly wise friend. Someone they can trust, and ask for help with complete confidence, and without fear of judgement. For example, this could be help and advice on issues at school, advice on career paths, advice on types of qualifications, help with university applications, understanding British culture, and help to get work experience. The key is not to put in hours of work, but to broaden the students' horizons, and to act as a catalyst and facilitator for them.

I cannot put into words how rewarding it was for me to watch Changyi develop her understanding of English, study for her GCSE's, and to go on to win a place at University College of London. It was a privilege to be her mentor, and I am sure that she will go far in whatever she chooses to do; something that might not have happened if it were not for the mentoring programme."

Where are they now?

**GULSEN,
HAGGERSTON
SCHOOL
YEAR 10 – 2005**

“I have completed my Law degree and now trying to get training contacts (to qualify as a lawyer) from law firms, including Freshfields. I currently work for General Medical Council investigation department and wish to proceed with a legal career. Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for giving me such an opportunity to be who I am today.”

**MORIAM,
CLAPTON GIRLS’
ACADEMY
YEAR 10 – 2009**

“My mentor was a good role model for me, encouraging me to go into further education. She loved her job and always told me to do what I love. I am currently in my second year of university studying child nursing.”

**SAMIRA,
CLAPTON GIRLS’
ACADEMY
YEAR 10 – 2008**

“Being part of the programme was an amazing experience which I really enjoyed. Mentoring was really beneficial as it introduced me to the working world. With my mentor we met staff from different teams at AON to understand their job roles and how we can progress into specific careers. We talked with our mentor about the different aspects of our studies and our ambition for the future. The time spent on the programme helped me become more confident; it enabled me to develop my communication skills, and prepared me for a working environment. Currently I am working as an Export Assistant.”

**ANUPRIYA,
HAGGERSTON
SCHOOL
YEAR 10 – 2005**

“The experience was very beneficial, it was the highlight of my secondary education as it made me grow and made me more confident. I did my undergraduate degree at the University of Hertfordshire in English Language and Communication with Media Cultures and Spanish and then moved straight to my Postgraduate degree at King’s College London in Cultural and Creative Industries. Currently, I am an exam invigilator for King’s College London.”

**OYINKAN,
CARDINAL POLE
SCHOOL
YEAR 10 – 2007**

“I remember the experience well. It gave me the confidence to aspire and work hard towards my future career. I went to university and studied biomedical sciences. Upon graduating last year I found employment with a medical laboratory company and I’m working towards becoming an accredited biomedical scientist.”

**NATASHA,
MOSSBOURNE
ACADEMY
YEAR 10 – 2012**

“I was part of the mentoring programme and loved it. My group’s mentors were Rick and Martina. Though none of us wanted to go into business, the experience taught us useful skills, such as confidence, CV writing and interview techniques which will be valuable in any profession. We were lucky enough to be taken to the Shard for lunch after our exams (we all did very well), and that was incredible. I have stayed at my school for Sixth Form, and hope to apply for Medicine later this year.”

**ISHMAEL,
MOSSBOURNE
ACADEMY YEAR
10 – 2010**

“The experience as a whole was insightful, they helped with CV writing, helped me talk more confidently with adults especially in The City. I’m at university now, studying Mathematics at the University of Greenwich and I’m in the exam period already, time really does fly. Obviously hoping to achieve a First and to continue doing well throughout my 3 years. I think the programme is extremely helpful for students that are looking into the business world as a career path, this programme will help create links which is as important as grades in this day and age.”



Where are they now?

**OLEKSANDRA,
STOKE
NEWINGTON
SCHOOL, YEAR
10 – 2012**

“I volunteered for the mentoring programme when I was in Year 10, and I was partnered up with Alexandra from the law firm CMS Cameron McKenna. During the programme I had constant meetings with my mentor and we looked at different things ranging from revision, looking at sixth forms and universities up to day to day skills that I would have to use. The experience was great, and I would really recommend it to anyone. When mentored I was able to be myself around my mentor. By the end of it, it felt more like talking to a friend. Since the project finished I've been continuing with school, and I am now in year 12. The programme helped me choose some of the subjects that I am now studying, and gave me more confidence in areas such as interacting with people. I would say that the programme was great, and I personally did benefit from it. I hope it continues on after the 20th anniversary.”

**TEMILOPE,
OUR LADY'S
CONVENT HIGH
SCHOOL, SIXTH
FORM – 2011**

“I had a mentor in year 10 and year 12. I found it very interesting and the weekly sessions with my mentor have increased my confidence when meeting new people. She introduced me to people with different jobs such as a PHD physics graduate from Cambridge and an ophthalmologist. I'm now at Keele University studying Medicinal Chemistry and Mathematics.”

**MAYA,
MOSSBOURNE
ACADEMY SIXTH
FORM – 2012**

“I had a mentor throughout sixth form. The experience was brilliant and I feel lucky to have been involved. I definitely believe it was beneficial for me as my mentor, Edwin, helped me with a range of skills such as interview skills, as well as helping me with my university application. Having the opportunity to regularly visit his workplace in The City was something I thoroughly enjoyed too. Since I have left school I am on my gap year before I start studying Psychology at Kings College London. I have been working as a sales assistant and for a disabled children's charity and am going travelling next week for four months!”



We've heard mentoring works

“The most enjoyable aspect about the programme was writing my CV because I’ve learnt things about myself that I didn’t know”

– Student, Elizabeth Garret Anderson School

“The best thing so far has been learning new things and having someone listen.”

– Student, Highbury Fields School

“I’ve gained a lot of support in my CV. My mentor has also given me good advice on university”

– Student, City and Islington College

“My mentor was very down to earth”

– Student, City of London Academy School Islington

“The best thing about my mentor was that I was able to talk to her like I was talking to a friend and not someone I don’t know”

– Student, City of London Academy Islington

“My mentors deserve a raise because of their sensational attitudes towards us, they have been perfect in every way”

– Student, Arts and Media School Islington

“I loved meeting a new person and having someone I could ask about school and work. It was also nice to talk to someone who was older than me, who was not a teacher or relative.”

– Student, Clapton Girl’s Academy

“Our mentor projected his ideas in a fun and interactive way which helped us to learn.”

– Student, Haggerston School

“One of the most enjoyable aspects of my mentoring was finding out about other departments and how they work. My mentor showed a real interest in me and it was great to talk to someone in the industry that I was interested in”

– Student, City and Islington College

“Meeting my mentor has been a very exciting experience. I feel more prepared for my future job and have more confidence.”

– Student, Cardinal Pole School

“The best part of the mentoring programme was the personal, tailored mentor, it was literally amazing and I was able to understand more about work life.”

– Student, Mossbourne Community Academy

“The advice my mentor gave was very insightful and he helped with my confidence before an interview”

– Student, Our Lady’s Convent School

“My mentoring sessions have been really enjoyable. Both my mentors are great teachers and listeners.”

– Student, St Aloysius College

Today’s students say....

Today's mentors say....

“The mentoring programme offered mutual tangible and meaningful transformation in the lives of all involved. In essence, it is both a privilege and joy to be part of it and be of service.”
– Mentor, CMS

“I feel slightly humbled by the programme. One can get very inward looking as a professional lawyer, living, objectively, a very privileged lifestyle. It is great to be able to pass on experiences and advice. This year has been a great experience and it is a great challenge to put myself in a very different environment.”
– Mentor, Linklaters

“I would recommend people volunteer their time and participate in the Mentoring Works programme as it is not only fulfilling for the students but for professionals too. The best thing about my mentoring experience to date is knowing I am helping students to reach their full potential and when they express their thanks for the time I have spent with them; it feels incredibly humbling and rewarding”.
– Mentor, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

“Mentoring has been very rewarding; students are engaged and diligent at attending. Our students are more confident about their potential.”
– Mentor, MUFG

“I noticed a big difference in my mentee, she was really shy and found it difficult to verbalise but now is more confident. She has opened up and trusts me”
– Mentor, Expedia

“Mentoring has been very rewarding and interesting. I’ve observed that my mentee is more engaged in business affairs and in understanding different career paths”
– Mentor, Hammerson

“My mentee is very committed, keen and active. She always does her work. She used to be shy and reserved but is now more confident.”
– Mentor, Macquarie Group

“We were extremely impressed by the scope, range and depth of the responses/questions from our mentees. They were thoughtful, open minded, curious and wonderfully confident young learners who are a tribute to their families and school.”
– Mentor, Schroders

“Mentoring Works has given me a chance to give back to the community.”
– Mentor, Aviva Investors

We've heard mentoring works

STUDENTS DESCRIBE MENTORING IN ONE WORD



We would like to thank every business supporter over the last 20 years. None of this happens without the support of companies who are ELBA and BIG Alliance members. Not only do they provide essential funding to allow for delivery of a high quality programme, they release their employees to act as mentors and they host the mentoring sessions in their offices.

Finally, and most importantly, we would like to thank and pay tribute to all the mentors, many of who come back year after year, who have supported these 5,000 young people over the last 20 years. Your commitment and support, freely given, has changed lives.

In January 2016 The Government announced the launch of a new national mentoring campaign which aims to find 1 million mentors by 2020, encouraging more school and business partnerships to give young people the best chance to succeed in later life. We are delighted that more young people will benefit from having a mentor and there is much to learn from the experience of Mentoring Works. We look forward to the next 20 years.

...Looking ahead

ELBA

@OurELBA

info@elba-1.org.uk

elba-1.org.uk

020 7068 6960

BIG Alliance

@TheBIGAlliance

thebigalliance.org.uk



Creating Possibilities
in East London



BIG ALLIANCE
Businesses creating social
change for Islington

