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Can you tell us a little bit about your job and your career journey?

I am an HCPC registered Senior Biomedical scientist (BMS) with the IBMS Higher Specialist diploma in Virology, MSc. in Clinical Microbiology and Fellow member of the IBMS.

I graduated from Brighton & Hove City College with HND Applied Biology, then graduated from University of Brighton with a BSc in Biomedical Science. Upon graduation, I secured my first role as part of the biomedical team at Hammersmith Hospital and later at St Georges Hospital, both in London, UK.

I later trained at Great Ormond Street Hosp for children with specialty in Microbiology/Virology. During the subsequent years of intense training, I completed the IBMS Specialist and Higher specialist portfolio in Virology, an MSc in Clinical Microbiology at Queen Mary University, London.

What did you want to be when you grew up and why? Who inspired you?

My fascination with science started from a young age owing to the fact that my mum was a registered nurse, we have pharmacists in the family and my aunty was a qualified doctor in Nigeria. I remember being taken along to graduation ceremonies by my grandmother. She encouraged that I should aspire to succeed in my academics and that I can be whatever I want to be as long as I put my heart to it.

What difference did you want to make for yourself and young people through volunteering with Inspiring the Future?

Volunteering with Inspiring the Future gives me the opportunity to be a part of something bigger than myself and use my civic responsibility to empower people especially the young minds across the globe. I wanted to give back to my community especially the underrepresented groups who would not have otherwise considered STEM subjects or careers.

As a woman in STEM-related careers there are a lot of obstacles and having the advice of a woman who has already "been there, done that" can help them see that success is possible. Volunteering is another avenue for me to develop new skills and build on existing experiences and knowledge.

What has been the best part about volunteering?

The best part of volunteering is the complete satisfaction I get when I see the enthusiasm on the faces of the students who were otherwise not engaged at the beginning of the sessions. I relish the idea that I am influencing the minds of the younger generation at such a crucial time in their lives when their minds are being formed.

Describe Inspiring the Future in five words

Change agent, innovative, educative, transformation and result driven.

How have you benefited from volunteering with Inspiring the Future?

I have benefited immensely from volunteering with Inspiring the Future. I have been able to network strategically and work outside my boundaries. My communication and presentation skills have greatly improved because I have learnt to explain scientific technicalities to students in the simplest forms possible.

Who or what inspires you today and what is the reason?

My inspiration comes from wanting to be an agent of change, leaving a legacy for future generations. I was inspired by my mum who was a registered nurse. I was motivated by her commitment to the profession and the way she helped in the community treating those who were unable to afford medical expenses back home in Nigeria.

What's the one message you feel is important to share with the young people you speak to?

I always tell them to take advantage of every opportunity that comes their way. They should believe in their own abilities even when it looks like situations are against them. They should not undermine themselves and most important of all, they can be whatever they put their minds to be.

What have you learnt from volunteering with Inspiring the Future about yourself and about young people?

It is amazing how much you learn from these young minds... they have such inquisitive minds. Their enthusiasm motivates me to keep doing what I'm doing.

What would you say to other volunteers thinking of volunteering with Inspiring the Future?

There's no better time than now to join the wagon of Change agents out there, inspiring the future generation and showing them, they can do it just like you. Committing even as little as one hour a year can have a profound benefit on your own life.

What difference do you think you've made to the lives of young people who you spoke with?

I believe I have been able to positively influence the mindset of some of the younger generation through my volunteering activities. There are still misconceptions about STEM careers and there's a myth about IT and Engineering being a male dominated field. A lot of students have come up to me after STEM sessions to tell me that they would love to be like me when they grow up. The sense of accomplishment that comes with this is second to none.

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