

Tom's Trust Newsletter – May 2010

www.tomaprhystryce.com

It is now just over 4 years ago that Tom was murdered in the street by two teenagers on his way home in Kensal Green. While his family, friends and colleagues no doubt remember him in their own way and still miss his presence, his zest for life, enthusiasm, generosity and many other qualities, we have all united to try to do something worthwhile in his memory. We aim to address some of the problems endemic in our society which results in people whose way of life shows such a propensity for violence and lack of concern for the value of life.

Tom's Trust was set up by Adele Eastman, Tom's fiancée, and his parents, Estella and John ap Rhys Pryce, with support from Tom's law firm Linklaters. We have worked hard together to produce some positive outcomes from his senseless death. The aims of the Trust are to (1) provide educational and vocational training opportunities to disadvantaged children and youths who might not otherwise have access to them, in the hope that they can achieve their potential and lead rewarding lives, and (2) help tackle and prevent the root causes of violent gang culture and violent street crime. In this connection, Tom's Trust sponsored The Centre for Social Justice to hold a Seminar on 23rd February "Gangs in Britain – Now is the Time to Act". The CSJ has published policy recommendations that offer hope to communities devastated by gang violence, which need to be implemented now.

The following real-life accounts record how Tom's Trust has helped a number of individuals through projects run by the various Charities that have received funding from the Trust:-

1. **Greenhouse Charity** runs sports and performing arts programmes for 'at risk' young people:

Emmanuel 13: 'Before I joined Greenhouse, I was always getting into trouble but I blamed the teachers for being racist. Since I started football, my Greenhouse coach has taught me to stop using racism as an excuse for my behavior. He's taught me how to respect myself and become a man. My parents and teachers can't believe how my grades and behaviour have improved.'

'Greenhouse football coach, Ben: 'You should have seen the state of this boy when he started with me two years ago. He was dishevelled, his attendance was erratic, he was antisocial and he had a hard time relating to the other players. But I saw he had leadership potential, so I made him captain. This year he was voted 'players' player of the year' by his team, he finished as their leading goal scorer, his attendance was 100 per cent and, to top it all, he's been scouted by Charlton.'

Emmanuel: 'I'd never met someone like Ben. He's ended up teaching me maturity and lots of other things and totally changing the way I feel about my life. I used to be always anxious and angry and bored; I had nothing to look forward to. Now I feel happier than I've ever been. Greenhouse has given me a chance to progress. It's given me a future.'



2. **IntoUniversity** helps 7 – 18 year olds get to University, if they are at risk of failing to achieve their potential because of social, economic, cultural or linguistic disadvantage:



Name: Mohamad Hussain **Age:** 16

School: Cardinal Hinsley Mathematics and Computing College, Brent **Year:** 11

Mohamad came to the UK two years ago from Iraq and is currently studying for his GCSE's. His favourite subjects are maths and geography and he hopes to be able to study medicine at university one day. Mohamad is most excited about learning “*how to be successful*” and how to develop his “*revision and exam techniques*”.

Mohamad has an **IntoUniversity** Mentor, Siddhartha, who is currently studying for a Graduate Diploma in Economics at Birkbeck College, University of London. Since their first meeting in November, they have attended the group Mentoring Quiz event and completed the ‘Plan

Your Fresher’s Week’ activity together. Siddhartha has been helping Mohamad to prepare for exams ahead of his GCSE Mocks. About being paired with Siddhartha, Mohamad said:

“I’ve learnt a lot of stuff...he’s helped me with interview skills because I have an interview coming up soon for college. He taught me to be more enthusiastic and how to speak in interviews.”

Mohamad has also taken part in the new **IntoUniversity** Secondary FOCUS workshops which were launched in September 2009. He has completed two modules of the package: *Education Choices* and *A Guide to University Life*.

Mohamad looks forward to taking part in the Holiday FOCUS Weeks which are planned for the summer. Before then he hopes to head to York with **IntoUniversity** on a two-night Extending Horizons trip where students will explore the Jorvik Viking Museum and visit the University of York.

Mohamad’s favourite thing about IU is that the tutors “give lots of encouragement” and they are very kind and helpful.

“I have a lot of interest in learning. At Academic Support everyone wants to do their work, they don’t disturb each other and they help you as well. Seeing [others] concentrate and work makes me want to work harder!”

3. **The Midi Music Company** helps children develop and exploit their musical talents:

Rashaan Brown: ‘My dad is a drummer and MD for the church band, my uncle plays bass and my aunties sing. I joined the Budding Musicians Club (BMC) as soon as I was old enough and started having lessons in vocals, piano and drums. My sister joined too. I love smooth jazz and funky soul. My heroes are Michael Jackson and Wayman Tisdale, and musicians such as Lee Ritenour and George Duke. I've worn out my dad’s old cassette tapes of Earth Wind and Fire.

I was awarded a bursary by the Tom ap Rhys Pryce Memorial Trust and am learning piano. I love it. My mum and dad wouldn't be able to afford it without the bursary, so I'm really grateful. I've put birthday and Christmas money towards my lessons, and my tutor Chris gives

up his free time to help me develop my jazz improvisation.

When I was nine, I joined the BMC band workshop, and got a lot of experience in different styles, learned about group composition and was encouraged to mentor younger students. The band even did public gigs! All this experience helped me get a music placement at Haberdashers Askes, Hatcham College. For my audition I performed classical, jazz, Latin and African compositions on four different instruments.

My love of music sometime gets me in trouble, for air drumming and singing at inappropriate times. My other interests include dance, drama, sports, science, maths and sports cars, especially Aston Martins.

4. **North Primary School**, Southall runs a programme for children from refugee families focusing on their literacy and numeracy skills:

My name is Mahima Mohane. I am a pupil in year six at North Primary School in Southall. Before, I used to go to another school in Southall. I left that school because I was not getting any help to get better with my reading and writing in English. So my parents decided to move me to North Primary School. I was in year 3 when I joined this school. Since then, I have been attending SHINE Club. I enjoy going to this club because we do many different activities. These include help with extra Maths and English. We also go on special trips. We recently visited Woburn Safari Park, which was one of my favourite trips. It was fantastic!! Attending SHINE Club has helped my confidence and self-esteem grow. As before, I struggled to speak English properly. I feel my learning has improved a lot and I will really miss SHINE Club next year when I move on to high school.



5. **Switchback** runs a programme for young adult offenders to find work in the catering industry:

KM signed up for Switchback because he really wanted to become a professional chef. He started at the Crisis Skylight Café straight away and built experience for his CV, including a day with the butcher at Salt Yard where he skinned a squirrel! He worked with his Switchback Mentor to address a range of issues including staying off drugs and getting on with his family.

Switchback set him up with a work placement at Jam Circus gastropub and they offered him a permanent job. KM worked as a chef there for two months. Switchback also organised a week-long placement with Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's team at River Cottage where he worked at a televised event. They were so impressed by his determination that they invited him to return to work there full-time.

It was a difficult decision to move to Devon but KM worked hard with his Switchback Mentor to plan everything, including finding a room in a flat and changing probation office. He has been working as Junior Chef de Partie at the River Cottage Canteen for the past 9 months. We feel sure he will go far.



6. **Tom's Farm at Nightingale School** allows children with learning difficulties and social problems to learn to care for animals, which encourages them to have feelings for others:

Richard came to Nightingale School with a history of disengagement, unhappiness and extreme behavior running throughout his life. He struggled to engage with adults or other children unless he was doing exactly what he wanted to do. Richard's behavior on the street as well as in school was a significant cause for concern and he would often put himself and others at risk as his low self-esteem meant that he had little regard for safety and often led and participated in high risk behavior.

When he came to Nightingale we guessed that Richard had little or no emotional attachment with other people, he lacked empathy and his reality was survival in his immediate world with no regard for consequence. The school tried everything with Richard... individual tuition with experienced, successful professionals, group work, interactive therapy, family counseling, key working but nothing worked for more than a couple of days before Richard rejected the people who were working with him and embarked on another spate of uncontrolled, deeply disruptive behavior.

The level of upset that Richard caused the school on a daily basis meant that he was taught off site at his house for a period of months; this caused his family distress and dis-organisation as well as taking away Richard's experience of going to school and the chance of making connections with his peers. The only other alternative available to the school however would have been to permanently exclude Richard.

As Tom's Farm began to take shape and the animals started to arrive, Richard's keyworker told one of the managers at Nightingale that Richard had talked fondly of his pet rabbits and how sad he had been when they died. When the farm opened Richard was offered some closely supervised sessions on the farm to see how he would respond to working alongside the animals and caring for them. The rest as they say is history.

Richard now enjoys daily sessions on Tom's Farm and engages independently and with support in a variety of tasks and jobs that require him to feed, clean out and care for the mixture of domestic and farm animals that reside at the farm. He has never had a behavioral incident at the farm and has also started to engage with some one to one lessons in maths and English. Richard has also begun to show some interest and empathy in other people and is proud to be able to show more occasional visitors to Tom's Farm the correct way to care for animals. His self-esteem is gradually increasing and he may have found his pathway to a productive, fulfilling life.

The above examples are from only a few of our partner charities, who also include:

- **The Frank Buttle Trust** who provide funding for children with acute social, emotional and/or health needs to receive secondary education.
- **Future Skills Training** run a mentoring programme for disaffected young people aged 11-19 who have been or are at risk of exclusion from school, or who are NEET.
- **The Ideas Foundation** run creative projects for young people with a record of exclusion and behavioural issues.
- **Kids Company** provides educational programmes and mentoring for disadvantaged young

people

- **Livity LIVE** provide opportunities for young people and ex-offenders to develop skills in journalism, fashion, photography, IT and desk-top publishing.
- **The London Boxing Academy** takes students who are 'at risk' or NEET into a sports-based environment and provides them with full-time alternative GCSE education.
- **Motorvations** run courses teaching construction skills to young people at risk, helping them get qualifications to access formal training programmes or gain employment.
- **The O.K. Club** is a place where young people can gather to take part in various activities and learn new skills including IT, art, cooking and music recording/mixing.
- **Real Action** runs Saturday morning classes to help mainly refugee children to learn English and literacy skills.
- **The Southside Young Leaders Academy** provides a disciplined environment for boys who have the ability and aptitude to be leaders, but who are at risk of exclusion from school.
- **Toynbee Hall** is running a 3-year programme of activities to divert one hundred and fifty 14-15 year olds away from crime. The outdoor challenges have Duke of Edinburgh Award accreditation.

Fundraising.

Many people supported Tom's Trust last year in all sorts of imaginative fund-raising ways, for which the Trustees are hugely grateful. The most exhausting fund-raising event undertaken in support of the Trust has to be the Marathon des Sables, an 8-day event running across the sands of the Sahara. Tom Hunt completed the 217 miles, coming 187th out of over 800 competitors, raising a significant sum in the process. Esther Scott ran the Paris marathon and Sophie McGeoch did the BUPA Great North Run. Karl Wilson dedicated all the profits from his Album Launch of his CD 'Eleven Songs', while The Wire Quiz, hosted by Dominic West and attended by 160 aficionados from the media also proved to be a very successful evening. As always, the 'Cycle to Cannes' participants provided a magnificent boost to the funds, while Simon Bowler completed the 3 Parks and 3 Peaks challenge over a weekend. There were many other fund-raising events through the year which included Tom's River Ride, a book sale, the Claremont Picnic, company 'dress-down' days and collections, and a special Charity Day at Marlborough College culminating in a concert, all of which are greatly appreciated by the Trustees.

We are also very grateful to all of the 537 people who donated to the Trust through JustGiving in 2009, enabling the Trust to claim back a significant amount of tax. The total amount given to Tom's Trust since its inception is now more than £1.4 million. As you know, all charities are facing economic difficulties in this current recession, but you can rest assured that we are using your donations to the best of our ability to improve the lives of disadvantaged children and to counteract the root causes of violent gang culture. Information about all our partner organisations can be seen on the website: www.tomaprhystryce.com.

Fundraising activities can be anything from an egg & spoon race to climbing a mountain!

If you have your own ideas, please contact us at tomstrust@linklaters.com. We'd be delighted to post your plans on the website and to encourage sponsorship.

The Trustees