

ROBERT CLACK ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the Robert Clack Alumni Association newsletter

Welcome to our summer newsletter. In this edition we reflect back on a fantastic academic year in which numerous current students have again been supported and inspired by former students to 'think big' and achieve their study and career goals. We report on progress with our exciting new library bus renovation, generously supported by Stagecoach London and alumni donations, and celebrate successes for students in the classroom and on the sports field including NFL National Flag Football League finals.

As the school winds down for another year, we wish you all a wonderful summer and hope you get a chance to take a break, recharge, and enjoy the sun!

Alumni inspire current students across a range of career paths

This term, we have welcomed a number of former students back to school to speak virtually, with our current Year 9 cohort about their interests and future careers. As part of ongoing careers provision for Year 9, and following an approach from the Heads of Year 9, Mrs Monk arranged alumni visits to support students in their option choices.

Representing a wide range of professions—including law, medicine, engineering, architecture, psychology and construction—our alumni shared valuable insights into their journeys from school to where they are today. These real-life experiences help bring career pathways to life and provide students with a clearer understanding of the opportunities available to them.

Hearing from those who once walked the same corridors is particularly powerful. Our students can relate to these role models, knowing they came from similar backgrounds, have grown up in the same community, and benefited from the same school environment.

These visits not only inform but inspire, encouraging students to believe in themselves and their potential. The message is clear: if they can do it, so can you.

On the 8th May we were delighted to welcome former pupil Ayomide Sadare (class of 2018), a Structural Engineer at Curtins, to speak with our Year 9 students at Lymington Fields about his journey into engineering and what a career in the industry really looks like.

Ayo shared his educational pathway, from studying French, History, Music and Food at GCSE, to Maths, Physics and Chemistry at A-Level, before completing both his Civil Engineering degree and Masters at University of Bristol.

Students were fascinated to learn about the difference between Civil and Structural Engineering, with Ayo explaining how his role focuses on designing safe buildings and collaborating closely with architects and contractors across a wide range of projects — from community developments and new builds to skyscrapers.

He also gave students an insight into the day-to-day reality of the role, from carrying out site inspections and regulatory checks to using industry software such as AutoCAD and TEDDS for analysis and design. Sharing his screen helped bring the technical side of engineering to life for our pupils.

Ayo highlighted the importance of using qualifications as stepping stones throughout your journey, while also developing wider skills such as communication, teamwork, and confidence collaborating with different people. He encouraged students to challenge themselves socially, build computing knowledge, and develop skills in coding and Excel to strengthen future applications.

Ayo also returned to repeat this session on Friday 12th June with students at the Gosfield Road site.



Alumni inspire (cont.)

On the 11th May we had two virtual visits from former students, one to speak to some of the Year 9 cohort about careers in construction and another to give a Year 12 student advice about applying for medicine.

Yasin Weyli (class of 2025) spoke to Year 9 students about his journey from school to his current role in construction. He talked students through the choices he made along the way, including the GCSE Options he selected and the A Levels he studied, explaining how these helped shape his future pathway.

Interested in construction from an early stage, Yasin also took part in the Construction Youth Trust programme during Sixth Form. Although he was initially unsure exactly what he wanted to do, and had received university offers, he decided to accept a five-year degree apprenticeship with The Hill Group.

He is now working on a variety of projects, including a development in Dagenham.

Yasin encouraged students to remember that early decisions do not tie you down permanently, and that it is possible to change direction and explore different pathways as your interests develop.

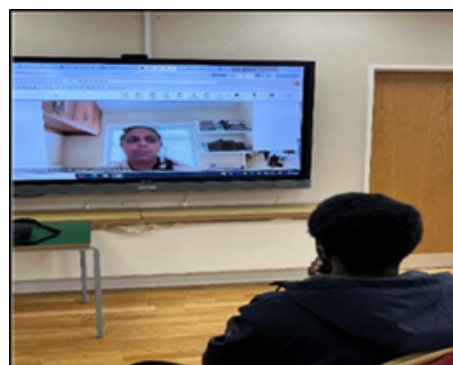


Dr Kajal Ruparell (class of 2015) was on hand to offer Year 12 student Glen advice about applying to study medicine. She explained that universities are looking for well-rounded individuals who can demonstrate empathy and resilience. She also spoke about how students from state schools can sometimes face stigma when applying for medicine and that university can feel very different from the supportive, community-based environment at Clack, which can come as a culture shock.

Dr Ruparell advised that Glen's main priority at present should be focusing on his academic studies to ensure he achieves the grades required for entry into medicine. She also recommended gaining relevant experience through volunteering in a care home or hospital setting.

Glen was Head Boy in Year 11 and has been heavily involved in the School Council throughout his time at Clack. He has also supported younger students through the school's peer mentoring programme. Dr Ruparell encouraged him to reflect on the skills and experiences he has gained from these roles and to include them in his application. She also discussed the importance of resilience, explaining that setbacks are inevitable and that the key is to learn from them, overcome challenges, and move forward positively.

Going forward, Dr Ruparell has kindly offered to mentor Glen throughout the application process, which we are extremely grateful for. They will meet again before the summer holidays to continue discussing his progress and next steps.



Alumni inspire (cont.)

Elona Morina (class of 2017) returned on Thursday 4th June to share her inspiring journey from school to a career in law. After leaving Robert Clack, Elona continued her studies at Havering Sixth Form College, before progressing to Brunel University to study law, including a placement year. Reflecting on her time at school, Elona spoke honestly about the challenges she faced, particularly with English, and how her determination and commitment to attending revision sessions helped her succeed. Alongside her studies, she was heavily involved in sport, with a particular passion for netball.

A highlight of her university experience was her placement year in a law firm, which she described as invaluable. This opportunity provided hands-on experience as well as important networking contacts, both of which have been key to her progress.

Elona is now completing a training contract in criminal law near London Bridge and is close to fully qualifying, with only her final exams remaining. She reassured students that while the legal profession is highly competitive, it is achievable through hard work, resilience and developing the right skill set.

During her presentation, Elona provided insight into the different pathways into law, explaining the roles of solicitors and barristers, and highlighting other careers such as paralegal, barrister's clerk, court clerk, and legal apprentice. She also addressed common myths about working in law.

She emphasised the importance of key skills including communication, organisation, problem solving, confidence, and initiative. Her advice to students was clear: focus on your studies, take advantage of opportunities such as clubs and work experience, stay curious, and recognise that making mistakes is part of the learning process. Elona also returned in person to repeat this session on Monday 6th July at Gosfield Road.

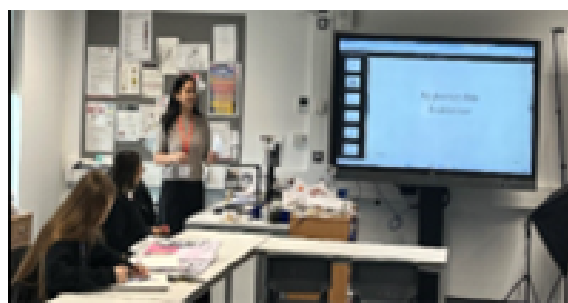


On Monday 15th June, we were delighted to welcome back former student Mariah Jover (class of 2018) to deliver an engaging career talk on architecture.

The session, attended by students in Years 9 and 10, provided a valuable insight into both the academic and professional pathways within the field. Mariah explained her journey into architecture, including the stages of qualification, and shared that she is now Part 2 qualified, currently working as an Architectural Assistant while studying towards her Part 3 qualification.

A key highlight of the talk was Mariah's focus on the importance of building a strong portfolio during Sixth Form. She shared examples of her own work, giving students a clear understanding of how creative ideas are developed and presented. This practical insight helped students to appreciate the level of commitment, creativity, and organisation required to succeed in the profession.

Students were highly engaged throughout and Mariah encouraged them to make the most of their current studies, explore their interests early, and begin thinking about future pathways.



Alumni inspire (cont.)

It was wonderful to welcome back former pupil Ibukun Dada (class of 2021) on Thursday 18th June for an inspiring and informative visit.

Ibukun spoke passionately about her journey in psychology, describing how her interest in the subject began when she chose it as an option at the end of Year 9 following an assembly talk by a teacher. From those early beginnings, she has gone on to achieve great success and is now working as a trainee Clinical Psychiatrist while also studying towards her Doctorate in Psychology.

Our Year 9 students were fully engaged throughout the session and asked a wide range of insightful questions, showing great curiosity and enthusiasm for the subject. They particularly valued hearing about the steps involved in pursuing a career in psychology and the dedication required to reach such a high level of study.

It was wonderful for both pupils and staff to hear first-hand about Ibukun's achievements and the journey that started right here at our school. Her visit was both motivating and empowering, with a couple of students looking to change their Options choices as a result of her visit!



This article highlights how fortunate we are to have such a dedicated alumni who are always willing to return to school to support and inspire our students. Your continued guidance, advice, and shared experiences have made a meaningful impact and are greatly appreciated by both the students and the school. We look forward to continuing to work with you in the future.

Stagecoach bus donation update

In our Summer Newsletter in July 2025 we shared the exciting news that the school had received a decommissioned bus through the generosity of our alumni and the kindness of Stagecoach London. From the very beginning, the vision was to transform the bus into a dedicated library space for our primary school students.

Thanks to the incredible support of our community through fundraising events and generous donations, that vision is now becoming a reality. The bus is well on its way to becoming a comfortable, unique, and inspiring learning environment for our students. Emily Lines, Business Manager and primary school Senior Leadership Team Lead is absolutely delighted to see her long-held dream finally taking shape.

'We are pleased to share some wonderful progress updates as the library bus continues its transformation into a welcoming and functional resource for the school.

Significant electrical upgrades have now been successfully completed, made possible entirely through the generosity of our supporters. These essential works ensure the bus is safe, reliable, and fully equipped to operate as a mobile library. In addition, a new air conditioning and heating system has been installed, allowing the space to remain comfortable and accessible for students throughout the year.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Stagecoach, whose generous donation of the bus and continued support have been invaluable to the project. We are also extremely grateful to them for kindly re-covering the seats and carrying out a full professional clean of the bus, giving it a fantastic foundation for its new purpose as a learning space.

Stagecoach bus (cont.)

We are now entering the next exciting phase of the project. Work is currently underway to install the bookcases and organise the books in their new home, bringing us ever closer to opening the library bus for students to enjoy.

We are incredibly proud of how far this project has come and would like to sincerely thank Stagecoach, our fundraisers, donors, alumni, and everyone who has contributed their time, generosity, and encouragement along the way. Your support has helped turn an ambitious idea into a truly meaningful resource for our children. We look forward to sharing further updates as the library bus continues to develop and prepare to welcome its first young readers.'

The bus even has its own charming resident, the Stagecoach Bear, a character crafted from genuine Transport for London (TFL) moquette made by bus manufacturer, Wrightbus. These bears have been individually handmade, giving every one its own distinctive personality. Many of these delightful creations have been sold or auctioned to raise funds for Macmillan, with whom Stagecoach has a longstanding partnership. Together they've hosted numerous charity events and raised more than £170,000 for the cause. Emily will be holding a competition with the students to name the bear when the bus is fully functional and ready for use.

This is such a wonderful story and a true reflection of how the support and generosity of our alumni community can make a lasting difference to the future of our students.



Celebrating student success at Robert Clack School's annual presentation evenings

As another successful academic year draws to a close, Robert Clack School recently hosted their annual Presentation Evenings across its three sites (Green Lane - GL, Gosfield Road - GR, and Lymington Fields - LF) to celebrate the outstanding achievements, dedication, and hard work of its students.

These special events, held on Wednesday 18th March, Thursday 23rd April, and Thursday 11th June, recognised the incredible accomplishments of students in Year 13, Year 11 and Year 9, with each evening shining a spotlight on their successes both inside and outside the classroom.

Across all three evenings, students were proudly presented with a wide range of prizes, trophies, and certificates in front of family and friends who came along to join in the celebrations.

The evenings opened with warm welcome speeches from the Heads of Site, who were joined by special guests from the Alumni Association and Governing Body. Together, they helped present the awards to the very deserving students, making the occasions even more memorable.

Distinguished guests for all three evenings included; retired Head of the Gosfield site Steve O'Brien, former student Georgia Webster (class of 2005), former student Sophie Smoleac (class of 2021), school governor David Southhall, Alumni Trustee and former Deputy Head, teacher of mathematics, and Business Manager, Mick Fox MBE, former student and chair of the governing body, Carley Monk (class of 1997), former student and school governor, Jeff Stafford (class of 1969), former student Luqmaan Said (class of 2019), former student Angela Ogunfojuri (class of 2011), and Jane Meaden, former staff governor.

The presentations began with warm opening speeches from Assistant Heads and Heads of Year, who spoke about how wonderful it was to see so many proud staff members, students, friends and families gathered to celebrate the outstanding achievements of our young people. With a real sense of pride and excitement in the room, the presentations then got underway. Throughout the evenings, a wide range of prizes and certificates were presented in recognition of students' exceptional achievements and hard work. Every student received a completion of year certificate, while special awards were also presented to those who had maintained perfect attendance across Key Stages 3, 4, and 5.

One of the highlights of the evening was the presentation of the Specialist Alumni Awards, generously sponsored by the Robert Clack Alumni Association. These awards recognised students who had gone above and beyond in their commitment to school life and included:

Citizenship Award

Recognising students who embody the values of the school community, winners of this award received a £25 prize.

- Year 13 - Rachael O
- Year 11 (GL) - Jeffas O
- Year 11 (LF) - Rosie T
- Year 11 (GR) - Olivia C-B
- Year 9 (GL) - Zunairah S
- Year 9 (LF) - Kacey S
- Year 9 (GR) - Ollie D



Awards evening (cont.)**Ethos Alumni Award**

Awarded to students who exemplify the Robert Clack ethos, this award celebrates those who demonstrate potential for making a valuable contribution to society. Winners received a £25 prize.

- Year 13 - Sam T
- Year 11 (GL) - Eureka O
- Year 11 (LF) - Simrat S
- Year 11 (GR) - Joe R
- Year 9 (GL) - Aaliyah B-M
- Year 9 (LF) - Ali A
- Year 9 (GR) - Armandas D

Schools Values Award

Recognising students who consistently demonstrate respect, compassion, discipline, hard work, and high aspirations, this award also carried a £25 prize.

- Year 13 - Vajran S
- Year 11 (GL) - Jamel J
- Year 11 (LF) - Jesse A
- Year 11 (GR) - Grace H
- Year 9 (GL) - Ireoluwatomiwa S
- Year 9 (LF) - Shyla F
- Year 9 (GR) - Valeria R

The Pittaway Prize

This prestigious award, sponsored by Ian Pittaway, Development Trust co-chair and Alumni Association member, celebrates students who overcome significant barriers to learning. The winners of this award each received £80.

- Year 11 (GL) - Vinnie C
- Year 11 (LF) - Lorena-Ioana I
- Year 11 (GR) - Riley P
- Year 9 (GL) - Shiro S
- Year 9 (LF) - Dominyka P
- Year 9 (GR) - Riley H

This award was also presented to the Year 7 students, in their end of year assemblies on all three sites. The well-deserved winners were proud to accept their awards in front of a packed hall of teachers and their peers.

- Year 7 (GL) - Kristian P
- Year 7 (GR) - Ahmed M
- Year 7 (LF) - Michalina A

In addition to the awards, students delighted the audience with a variety of performances that beautifully showcased their talents. Musical performances, dance routines, and heartfelt readings reflecting on their experiences at Robert Clack School brought a truly special atmosphere to the evening. These memorable moments highlighted the vibrant spirit of the school community and celebrated the wide range of talents and creativity that continue to flourish within the school.

The Year 11 cohort at Green Lane shared a particularly emotional evening as their Head of Year, Amie Preston, has supported and guided them throughout their entire journey from Year 7 to Year 11. She spoke warmly about what an honour it had been to be their Head of Year, watching them grow from nervous new starters into an incredible group of young people ready for the future. She shared how proud she was of each and every student and thanked parents for their continued support in helping shape such a wonderful year group.



Awards evening (cont.)

The Head Boy and Head Girl also took the opportunity to thank Amie for her unwavering dedication, guidance, and constant encouragement to always strive to be their very best. In itself, this was a truly special achievement to celebrate.

The closing speeches reflected warmly on the students' dedication, resilience, and determination, recognising the hard work and perseverance they have shown throughout the year. Heartfelt thanks were also extended to the parents, families, and staff whose encouragement and support have helped guide the students every step of the way.

These Presentation Evenings truly showcased the remarkable talents, achievements and spirit of the Robert Clack community. They provided a wonderful opportunity to celebrate and reflect on all that has been accomplished over the past year. The joyful atmosphere, made even more special by the presence of alumni, members of the governing body and former members of staff, was a true reflection of the school's commitment to nurturing success both inside and outside the classroom. Congratulations to all our students — your hard work, dedication and achievements continue to inspire us all.

**Celebrating Brilliant Club achievements**

We are proud to celebrate the achievements of our 2025/26 Brilliant Club graduates!

This year 28 exceptional Year 12 students took part in the programme, demonstrating impressive commitment, curiosity, and academic ambition throughout. Their hard work and enthusiasm have truly set them apart, and we couldn't be more delighted with their accomplishments.

The Brilliant Club is an award-winning charity dedicated to widening access to highly selective universities, particularly for students from underrepresented backgrounds. Through the programme, doctoral and postdoctoral researchers are placed in non-selective state schools, where they deliver university-style tutorials. These sessions help students develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to aim high and succeed in higher education.

Thanks to the ongoing support of the Robert Clack Alumni Association, who generously help to fund places for our students, we were able to run two tutorial groups during the spring term. These sessions were led by two inspiring tutors: Shifa Hamdule, a first-year Developmental Neurosciences PhD student at UCL looking at the challenging topic of "Sleep Apnoea, Stroke and Survival: Understanding the Hidden Relationship", and Dr Leslie Newsome tackling the question "Are children important? The history of childhood."

All participants completed rigorous final assignments, many of which were graded at 1st class or 2:1 classification — an incredible achievement that speaks to the hard work and high standards maintained by our students.

Brilliant Club (cont.)

One student reflected on her experience:

During the programme, I had the pleasure of working with Leslie Newsom who studied history at Birkbeck University and got a PhD in modern European history at UCL.

For my assignment, I had to discuss the question 'Is the experience of childhood a universal one?' and researched how wealth affects children's lives historically and even now through education, leisure, and healthcare.

One of the biggest things this programme taught me was research and essay writing skills. I learnt just exactly how to articulate and structure my arguments at a university-style level to truly grasp what university learning will feel like should I choose this path in the future. It also pushed me to feel more confident in exploring more complex ideas around a topic that's slightly more foreign to me, as I personally study and prefer STEM subjects. I also improved on my independent learning skills and time management as I had to find a way to balance this assignment alongside sixth form studies which requires organisation and discipline.

Another student stated:

My group was taught by Shifa Hamdule. Shifa holds an MSc in Applied Paediatric Neurophysiology, an interdisciplinary field examining the interplay between brain development, cognition and behaviour in children.

We studied the relationship between strokes and sleep apnoea and the role that CPAP machines play in mitigating the effects of sleep apnoea in stroke survivors. Sleep apnoea being a sleep disorder that is when breathing stops and starts during sleep and CPAP standing for continuous positive airway pressure the gold standard of therapies for sleep apnoea in the general populace.

During the scholar's programme it was made clear from the start that this was a step up from what we had learned previously. Critical analysis was a requirement and not a preference, questioning not just the content but also the scientific papers that we had to refer to, to ensure reliability, nurturing our research literacy. Independent inquiry similarly played a key role in our research. It was up to us to find studies that supported our opinions and what we had learnt in tutorials; the expectation being, we could research and push ourselves further without constant guidance. These skills weren't just taught but nurtured and it was evident from start to finish that improvements were common throughout the group.

A huge thank you must go to the Alumni Association for funding this event for our Sixth Form students, without their support this opportunity wouldn't be possible. Also, to Mr Joseph, Head of Sixth Form, for organising this exciting event.

The experience will help boost student's university applications and help prepare them for similar work in the future with the skills they have gained.

We congratulate all of our graduates and look forward to seeing what they achieve next!



Year 10 Careers Week

This year, Robert Clack hosted its first-ever Careers Week for Year 10 students. The week featured a variety of interactive activities in and beyond the classroom, helping students explore different career options and gain a better understanding of the opportunities available to them in the future.

Of course, our incredible alumni played a key role in supporting several careers-focused events, including the annual Year 10 Interview Day on Wednesday 6th July, the Careers Fair, and the Amazon workshops held on Friday 10th July.

Interview Day

The highly anticipated annual Interview Day - which was held simultaneously across all three school sites is designed to give students a realistic and valuable introduction to the world of professional interviews.

We were proud to welcome an incredible group of alumni and employers from a diverse range of industries including, Construction, Law, Banking, Recruitment, Human Resources, Stock Exchange, University Lecturers and Government employees - to name but a few.

These professionals generously volunteered their time to put students through mock interviews that mirrored real-world scenarios, offering immediate feedback and a performance score out of 25.

Among our dedicated alumni volunteers were, Yasin Weyli, Umar Khilji, Richard Harrington, Melissa Pepper, Jeff Stafford, Jo Reeves, Charlotte Burch, Tim Fry, Iain Lockhart, Chris Marshall and Dawn Polain who returned to support the next generation of professionals and inspire them with insights from their own career journeys. The sessions not only tested the students' communication and interpersonal skills but also encouraged them to reflect on their future ambitions.

Throughout the day, over 500 students took part in the interviews. The results were outstanding, with the majority achieving performance scores of 25/25.

Students who achieved full marks were recognised during assembly and awarded a special Outstanding PSHE/Careers Achievement Certificate in recognition of their exceptional performance and achievement.

Feedback from interviewers on the day was very positive.

"I wanted to let you know that I was absolutely blown away by how lovely the students and the staff are. What an amazing group of people!"

"It was a real pleasure interviewing 16 of your students - they are all very driven and I'm sure destined for fantastic things. Something that really stuck out is how good they all are at talking about their emotions. When I asked them to give me an example of a time they've overcome a challenging situation outside of school, a lot of them spoke comfortably about how they've handled anxiety / shyness / family matters, which I found really impressive (definitely not something that I or my peers could do at aged 15!)."

"I just wanted to thank you for the chance to visit Robert Clack last week. Both my colleague and I really enjoyed the opportunity to meet the Year 10-year group! All of the students were very impressive and engaging throughout both the mock interviews and the careers questioning!"

"We thought the students were genuinely impressive, professional, well-behaved and fully engaged throughout. What stood out most was how clear they already were about their future career paths; their confidence and clarity at such a young age was remarkable!"

Interview Day (cont.)

"I've done similar exercises in many schools across London, and I always have felt the Robert Clack pupils set themselves apart in terms of their overall approach to the exercise. Confidence levels of the students of course vary, but there is a willingness to engage and learn from the experience that is consistently admirable.

As impressively, I did not come across a single pupil who had anything but a favourable view of their school. Whether it was the range of sites and facilities, the lack of bullying or the richness of diversity that the school's size affords, these all came up as real positives!"

We look forward to building on this success again next year.

Careers Fair

Our first Year 10 Careers Fair took place at the Green Lane site, bringing together the entire cohort to explore future career pathways. Students had the opportunity to meet employers and alumni from a diverse range of professions, including finance, architecture, nursing and midwifery, property surveying, and apprenticeship providers such as West Ham United.

Through sharing their personal career journeys and professional experiences, our employers and alumni volunteers, Eli Baioud, Richard Batchelor and Lewis Holmes, provided valuable insights and inspiration, making a lasting impact on our students as they begin considering their next steps.

Hearing former students speak about their personal journeys from school to their current careers helps make future aspirations feel both tangible and achievable for our students. Their experiences reinforce a powerful message: with determination, hard work and perseverance, great achievements are possible regardless of background or circumstance. Some employers even offering work experience opportunities.

We look forward to welcoming more of you back next year and hearing more about your continued successes and experiences.



Amazon Think Big Mobile STEM Programme

This initiative was made possible thanks to Bradley Stokes, a former student, valued supporter of the school, and Amazon employee.

Amazon delivers hands-on, curriculum-aligned workshops designed to inspire the next generation of innovators and problem-solvers. By partnering with schools, charities, and educators, Amazon makes STEM education more accessible and inclusive, providing engaging learning experiences that encourage young people—particularly those from underserved communities—to explore careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. All equipment and activities are fully funded by Amazon.

Students from Year 4, KS3 and KS4 took part in a LEGO Education Robotics workshop. Working in teams, they designed and built robots before competing against other groups in a series of races. The challenge required creativity, teamwork and problem-solving skills to ensure their robots were both robust and fast enough to succeed.

Students thoroughly enjoyed seeing their creations race against one another at the end of the day. It was an exciting and engaging event that kept participants focused and enthusiastic throughout.

This was another fantastic opportunity made possible through our strong relationship with our alumni community.



A heartfelt thank you to all our alumni who supported our very first Careers Week. By sharing your experiences and career journeys, you helped inspire our students and broaden their aspirations for the future.

We look forward to welcoming even more alumni next year as we continue to grow and develop this exciting event.

Alumni share experiences of studying in USA

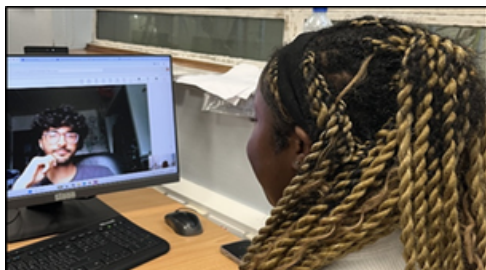
On Monday 6th July, former Robert Clack student, Muhammad Taha Tariq (class of 2022), joined a virtual meeting with one of our current students to share his experiences of studying in the United States.

Since leaving Robert Clack, Taha has successfully secured a place at the prestigious Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, through support from The Sutton Trust. The charity helps high-achieving students from lower-income backgrounds access leading universities in both the UK and the USA.

Clack student Juelcia is currently progressing through The Sutton Trust application process and, to support her journey, Mrs Monk arranged a Teams meeting with Taha. This provided Juelcia with a valuable opportunity to gain first-hand insight into both the application process and life as a student in America.

During the discussion, Taha offered advice on applying through The Sutton Trust and spoke about his experiences studying at Dartmouth College. He also reflected warmly on his time at Robert Clack, sharing fond memories of school life and reminiscing about local favourites, including King's Chicken Shop on Whalebone Lane.

The meeting proved both informative and inspiring, giving Juelcia practical guidance and encouragement as she continues her own application journey. We are grateful to Taha for giving his time to support one of our students and for sharing his experiences so openly. We wish both students every success in their future endeavours.



Year 8 team reaches NFL National Flag Football League finals

The school is proud to celebrate the outstanding achievements of its Year 8 flag football team, a dynamic mixed group of boys and girls who have shown exceptional dedication and success throughout the season.

Although flag football has been played in the UK for several years, its recent inclusion in the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games has sparked a surge in participation at grassroots and school level. Our students have seized this opportunity, representing the school with distinction and enthusiasm.

The team's journey to the national stage has been remarkable. They began by securing victory in the Barking and Dagenham borough tournament, earning qualification for the London Regional Championships. There they faced 11 borough champions from across the capital and delivered an outstanding performance. Notably, they defeated reigning national champions Ealing Fields during the group stage—an achievement rarely seen at this level.

Remaining unbeaten throughout the group rounds, the team advanced to the final, where they once again met Ealing Fields. Despite a determined effort, they finished as runners-up, with the demanding schedule of consecutive matches proving a significant challenge.

Their success at the regional level secured them a coveted place at the Great Britain National Finals, held in Manchester on 16-17 June 2026—an exceptional accomplishment for both the students and the school community.

The two-day trip to Manchester proved to be both rewarding and memorable. On the opening day, students visited the Science and Industry Museum, where they explored interactive exhibits highlighting advances in science, technology and engineering, alongside Manchester's rich industrial heritage.

NFL National Flag Football League finals (cont.)

Day two brought the main event: the Great Britain National NFL Flag Football Finals. The team demonstrated determination, teamwork and resilience throughout the competition. They also had the opportunity to meet former NFL players, including London-born Efe Obada, who has played for the Dallas Cowboys, Buffalo Bills, and Washington Commanders.

After topping their group, the team progressed confidently through the knockout stages and reached the final. In a closely contested match, they finished as runners-up, earning the distinction of being ranked the second-best school in Great Britain for NFL Flag Football.

The achievement is all the more remarkable given that the team only began playing the sport in late February. Their rapid progression from beginners to national finalists is a testament to their commitment, hard work and positive attitude. Throughout the journey, they represented the school with pride, both on and off the pitch.

The PE Department extends its sincere thanks to Mr Taylor for his ongoing support of our sporting events, as well as to the School's Alumni Association for their generous contribution towards the team's kit. These events would not be possible without your valued support.



Spotlight On..... Angela Ogunfojuri (Class of 2011)
Angela Ogunfojuri, Freelance Photographer

Working life:

I'm a freelance photographer, working mainly across lifestyle, food, fitness, and fashion. I also work in production coordination on commercial shoots.

I studied management and finance at university, then became a research analyst for a government body. After that I moved into fintech and IT for a few years. Photography had been a passion since university; I'd been developing my skills on the side the whole time but never thought it was a realistic career option. Then COVID happened and I lost my job, which oddly turned out to be the push I needed. I decided to take photography seriously, took a job within the industry to learn it properly, kept building my own personal work alongside it, and started reaching out to agents. Eventually that led to where I am now.

At school I had no idea this was even a viable path, and I think that's reassuring for students to hear. It took losing everything else to finally take it seriously.

School day memories:

I attended Robert Clack School from 2004 to 2011, including sixth form.

Some of my favourite memories include assemblies, surprisingly! I used to dread them at the time, but looking back, the way teachers used them to build a sense of pride, in yourself and in the school, genuinely shaped my confidence and that's stayed with me well beyond school. School trips were another big one. Mr Hopkins used to organise theatre trips, and they opened a whole world I wouldn't otherwise have had access to.

Spotlight on (cont.)

In Year 11, I somehow ended up throwing my shoe in the air - still don't know why - probably some daft competition, and it landed on the school roof. My Head of Year had to interrupt my lesson to hand it back to me. Completely random, mildly humiliating, very memorable.

When I attended the lower school, my favourite lesson was PE, which was the highlight of the week. But by GCSEs my taste had completely changed. Economics and History became the ones I looked forward to. Something about getting to argue your point and analyse things rather than just memorise them.

If I could go back to school now, I would have explored more subjects, like languages and art. I've realised since leaving that there's so much more possible than I gave myself credit for at the time, and I'd have got involved in more extracurricular activities too. Other than that, I loved every bit of it.

How do you think school has changed since your time there?

One of the most noticeable changes is the dependence on screens and digital work, but I think the more subtle shift is the pressure students now feel to have their futures mapped out much earlier. It didn't feel quite as intense when I was there.

It seems like there are more opportunities available to students on paper, but there's also far more noise to navigate and more competition for the same paths. Because of that, I'm not convinced it's as straightforward an advantage as it might appear at first glance.

Advice for students today?

My advice to students today is say yes to things that scare you a little. That's usually where the interesting stuff is. And don't underestimate how much of a career gets built through showing up, being easy to work with, and being genuinely curious about what you're doing. Also, enjoy seeing your friends every single day, because adult life makes that surprisingly hard.

And final words from Angela are, 'I've come to believe: the life you want probably doesn't cost as much or look as dramatic as you think it will. Figure out what you genuinely enjoy, and build toward that, not toward what looks impressive'.

Thank you so much, Angela, for sharing your school memories and for taking the time to be 'Under the Spotlight'!



Thank you!

What an incredible academic year it has been, filled with inspiring alumni engagement both online and in person. Our alumni have played such a vital role in supporting our students—from delivering motivating talks and sharing their journeys, to taking part in careers fairs, interview days, awards evenings, and shows. Many have even gone a step further by offering valuable work experience opportunities.

It has truly been a joy to work alongside our ever-growing alumni community. Your generosity in giving your time, sharing your expertise, and showing our students what's possible is genuinely inspiring and makes a lasting impact.

We can't thank you enough for your continued support—our staff and students are so grateful. We are already looking forward to working with you again in the next academic year.

**WISHING YOU ALL A
FANTASTIC SUMMER**

**LOOK OUT FOR OUR NEXT
NEWSLETTER IN THE
AUTUMN TERM**

Find out more about our work

If you would like to find out more about events to support the school that you can take part in, or want to tell us what you've been up to since leaving school, please drop Ellen Monk a line (emonk@robertclack.co.uk).

There's always something going on and always opportunities for you to get involved. We'd love to hear from you and welcome you back to school!

Support our work

Join us Sign up to the Alumni Association at: <https://networks.futurefirst.org.uk/register/robertclack>

Volunteer Come back to school as part of one of the many exciting events we run with current pupils throughout the year. Contact emonk@robertclack.co.uk

Donate Alumni can make a real difference to current pupils' lives. You can donate at www.justgiving.com/rcdt by texting RCDT08 to 70070 or contacting emonk@robertclack.co.uk