Welfare and Communities Board

21.11.24, Hybrid- In person and online

Attendance

Present:

* Nabihah Ali, Vp Welfare, (NA)
* Hassam Naeem Vp Liberation, International and Postgrads, (HN)
* Grace Bailey, Womens Rep ME, (GB)
* Bishoy Daoud Yassa, BAME Rep BL, (BDY)
* Naz Ismail, Womens Rep BL, (NI)
* Adila Bashir, Disabled and SPLD Rep BL, (AB)
* Al Hassan Salama, International Rep BL, (AHS)
* Adam Khan, Trans Rep, (AK)
* Ravleena Kaur Wasan, Welfare Rep BL, (RKW)
* Diya Mary Selastin, International Rep HSS,

Apologies:

* Rosie Nee, Disabbled and SPLD Rep ME
* Arianne Jones and Lucy Lai, LGBT Rep BL

In attendance:

* Ruth Truscott, Welfare and Liberation Coordinator (RLT)

General Liberation Fund

* Seven funding applications were discussed. All we approved.

PTOs

* AK: Has run check-ins for trans students at ME, BL and off campus to get feedback from the community. From these check ins supporting students form a campaign on campus. Currently put forward a student council policy which is part of the wider campaign to get gender neutral changing rooms in qmotion as there are currently no gender-neutral spaces in qmotion. Noted it is important for this campaign and the change they hope to make will not take away from the gendered considerations that are already in place in qmotion. AK organised two vigils for Trans Day of Remembrance. Vigil has been up for a couple of days. Working on larger scale project in time for LGBTQ+ History Month, tower hamlets trans pride.
* AB: Elected in most recent by-election so has just started role. Already met BL Welfare. Aiming to fix some accessibility issues in Garrod: currently don’t have access to lockers, fix disable parking amongst other areas. Also want to survey the student feeling and think what is able to be done. Look at curriculum to be more inclusive. E.g. in the past there has been a removal of Autism from certain curriculum but there are new NHS guidelines. Dealing with some individual student issues relating to accommodation. had been given wrong accommodation. Uncovering things that need to be changed.
* AHS: Currently looking at writing an international student guide as BL students. Exploring what is like being an international student at BL such as accommodation. Aiming to set up calls for offer holders, making them feel more comfortable. Looking at organising an international student meeting with a meal/coffee. Applying for funding for that. Have been checking in with international students online. Hosted with third year of MBBS programme to introduce to NHS and healthcare programmes.
* BDY: Hosted BHM event with BL ACS, Event coming up for Bridge the Gap on neurodivergence aim to do before December for Disability History Month. Attending Race Equality Action group. Planned a multicultural fayre, however looking to rearrange as currently don't have numbers needed and aiming to have a bit more traction.
* GB: Organised self-defence class which will occur during This Girl Can women's takeover sat the gym on November 30th 6:30pm-7:30pm. Worked with Sport team to find an instructor. Made an Instagram account, to increase engagement with the role.
* NI: Collaborated with Women in Healthcare on FGM event for International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Children on the 20th Nov. Also held an FGM education event, invited speaker, hosted event with Women in Medicine with Humanitarian Plastic Surgeon, practising medicine in Gaza. Aiming to spotlight female Drs who work front line. Held a networking event for years 1-5. Organised Self-defence class in qmotion for consent week. NI and GB to work together to cross promote.
* RKW: Noted happy to share the self-defence classes. Currently organising consent week. Monday: Drop in sessions at accommodations Floyer and Dawson. Tuesday Positive East Workshop. Thursday Panel with Drs and health care professionals to talk about sexual health. Looking to have this be hybrid. Aiming to share Myth busting flyers around the Garrod and sports club sending in videos.
* DSM: Working on safe space creation for international students. University have hosted two Global Cafes in October and November, DSM has been promoting this. DSM Asked for reps to share it to other international students. Reached out to university staff who look after international students. Completed mental health first aid training. Looking to start international student support group. Working on hand-held bidets- exec officers have presented to estates team. Working on HSS issues, relating to tutorials and attendance. Working on legal advice centre working with VP HSS. Working on Winter Ball and cultural unity week.
* Updates from PTOS who could not attend:
* LGBT PTO BL UpdatedL Continued working with BL LGBT+ society to help run and organise events. For example, movie night to watch Rocky Horror. We also are aided and helped host the Lesbian Bar Crawl this month. We are working with BL Bridge the Gap Society to arrange a scavenger hunt.
* Started the creation of an awareness board in the Garrod building for HIV and people’s stories. We have started creating the material and have requested booking the board. We have met with Starfish Charity who have provided us with materials and have reached out to people to provide resources and people’s stories.
* Started work on supporting the organisation of the panel for consent week, as well as liaising with Positive East for them to run a workshop as well. Furthermore, discussed with Ruth the creation of “Shag Packs”. This is all in conjunction with BL Welfare Representative, Ravleena.

VP Updates

* VP LIP Updates: Aiming to incorporate sustainability in liberation campaigns. Working with the Mile End Sustainability Officer, gave away 10 books in a book raffle of sustainable black leaders for BHM. IHM article on Islam and Sustainability has been published written by VP LIP and VP HSS. Looking at Bidet installation in union buildings- hoping to install some pilot bidets and finding key locations. Cultural unity week, create positive impact, promote unity, campaign of one week. 2 events been finalised, secured £5-6,000 funding from Residential Life and People, Culture and Inclusion Funding. Working on Scholarship for international students, lobbying International Officer at the university, aiming increase from £3000 to £5000. Aiming to include current ineligible degree programmes to make it inclusive. Creating more transparency on how decisions are formed. Working on buddy scheme project, increase buddy scheme to PG first years to help late arrivals for international students. Supporting PG consultation group- provided students with refreshments, collected insights from PG students, releasing an article next week on findings. Working with su staff members to include alumni on students’ union website.
* VP Welfare Update: lobbying university to create a women’s only space, collating students' voices on academic advisor scheme, channel this to the university, working to get rid of late fees for self-funded students, looking at models for this to make this happen, having individual meeting booths on campus, agreed on 5 different locations. Supported Liberation work, organised a blood drive and information stall for BHM, set up Muslim business fayre, hijab, revert, collaborating with DHM on mental health and BSL event. Organising women's wellbeing walk. Started working on Study Well, lobbying TFL prices as part of London higher students’ Union group. Have an ongoing project with advice and counselling sharing information on social media.
* Scrunity Process:
* AK put forward VP Welfare for a commendation.
* Vote took place and it was agreed.

AOB

* DMS: VP Welfare hosts wellbeing walks every month, NI is helping. Collaborating with Women in Law. Asked if GB like to collab with the walk.
* DMS: Made a group chat for PTOs, asked for PTOs to introduce themselves in it.
* RLT note the majority have joined online, be ok to move back online meetings. PTOs agreed.
* RLT encouraged PTOs to meet with RLT if need and interact with Liberation, currently doing our first ever DHM and IHM.
* DMS and HM asked PTOs to reach out to support cultural unity week

# Voting record

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| --- | --- |
|  | Vote 1 for VP Welfare to achieve Commendation |
| Adam Khan, Trans Rep | For |
| Hassam Naeem, VP LIP | For |
| **Diya Mary Selastin, International Rep HSS,** | For |
| **Grace Bailey, Womens Rep ME** |  |
| **Diya Mary Selastin, International Rep HSS** |  |
| **Ravleena Kaur Wasan, Welfare Rep BL** |  |