



WORDS FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

As we enter 2023, I have been reflecting on what an incredible 2022 Unitas Youth Zone has had. Thankfully, as the pandemic headed into the rear-view mirror for most of us, we were able to be fully open the whole year. And “if you build it, they will come” – we had tens of thousands of visits by thousands of young people, doing hundreds of different activities run by dozens of inspiring youth workers.

I am also proud that we were able to open our doors to the community as well, whether that be for boxing shows, our Motown extravaganza, our Third Birthday, Winter Wonderland, Black History Month, the Black Business Fair or many other times.

The cost-of-living crisis has been so hard for so many families, and thanks to some generous corporate supporters, Unitas is currently able to offer free entry and a free hot meal to every young person on every session, all the way through to the end of March. We are supporting those hardest-hit in a meaningful and tangible way. This is exactly why Unitas was set up.

On behalf of all of our staff, volunteers and most importantly young people, thank you for your ongoing support.



Thank you for your ongoing support!
Robin Moss, Chief Executive

2022 IMPACT REVIEW

1,634

JUNIORS MEMBERS



2,080

SENIORS MEMBERS



49,666

NUMBER OF VISITS



3,451

NUMBER OF VISITS TO
HOLIDAY CLUB



2,065

FREE MEALS PROVIDED

37

NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE
MENTORED



178

MENTORING SESSIONS
PROVIDED

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS



The first-ever Black History Month attracted over 350 visitors

2022
23 OCT

Black History Month

Unitas organised the first-ever Black History Month event to celebrate Black achievements in the UK and around the world, and successfully brought the community and young people together through culture, music, history, dance, fashion show, and art. We had African drumming and Steel Pan, and the Mayor of Barnet and the young people had the opportunity to learn a few tunes. We had various African and Caribbean cuisines available for young people and their families to taste and purchase. We also had local vendors selling their wares and an Egyptian exhibition. In Art, the youth and their families created African-inspired masks and art pieces, as well as a Black history wall featuring famous Black celebrities from past and present. They also included their dreams, which was an inspiration from Martin Luther King's speech "I have a dream".



Over 50 vendors showcase their products and services

2022
26 NOV

Black Business Fair

The Black Business Fair 2022 provided an opportunity for young entrepreneurs and small businesses to showcase their products and services while also networking to see how they could learn and support one another. On the event day there were over 50 vendors, some of whom shared how they got their businesses started. A cross-section of the local community came down to shop and soak up the atmosphere. In addition, some families signed up their children for membership at Unitas, and some partnerships were formed that can be further built upon in the coming year. We are looking forward to the next event coming up soon.

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS



We are providing a free meal and free entry until end of March



Cost of Living Crisis

Many of our members' families are struggling financially as incomes are squeezed and living standards fall. It is a winter where "every penny counts," and it is at times like these that Unitas comes through. Thanks to the generous support of St James's Place Charitable Foundation, Intermediate Capital Group, and Burberry Plc, all financial barriers for our members have been removed. From the beginning of December 2022 to the end of March 2023 - four critical months during which many families will be forced to make difficult decisions - Unitas is providing free entry and a free hot meal to every young person at every session. This will support thousands of young people to visit, where they will receive a warm (in both senses of the word!) welcome, the chance to engage in more than 20 fun and meaningful activities each session and of course the support and attention of our amazing youth workers.



Germany Exchange

Two young people Ganna and Aaron were able to secure two of the seven available places in the United Kingdom for the "Exchange2Change" programme - a six-month intercultural exchange programme organised by The Goethe-Institut for young people in Germany and the United Kingdom to work on a collaborative art project, aims to improve their language skills, increase their cultural awareness, and gain insight into artistic professions. Throughout the trip, the young people cooked together and visited museums and galleries in Berlin and London. They explored a diverse Arts Programme and gained new skills in script writing, photography, filming, and editing. They also co-created a wonderful documentary, which they presented to Unitas during their visit to London, and they have been asked to share their valuable exchange experience in schools and other youth zones.



The young people created a documentary during the trip

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS



2022
11 DEC



Winter Wonderland

Last December, Unitas welcomed 650 visitors of all ages to Winter Wonderland to celebrate the holiday season. Our youth workers were running activities throughout the building. There were games and prizes for the young people, three inflatables and a rodeo reindeer were setup in the sports hall. The holiday baking was keeping the training kitchen busy. We had transformed the sensory room into Santa's Grotto, where children could meet Santa and receive a gift. Young people could also get a festive hairstyle, face painting, or watch a holiday movie screening. In addition, there were 26 stalls of local vendors and organisations, displaying everything from pastries and food to books and crafts. The event was a resounding success, with everyone asking if we will do it again in 2023!



Young people meet Santa

2022
DEC

Christmas Donations

This year, we were able to provide Christmas gifts and treats to some of our members and their families who had been identified as most in need, we were able to provide something to put under the tree for over 100 families. This was only possible because of our partners Pentland Brands, who donated brand new clothing, Burberry, who donated gifts, and Young Barnet Foundation, which solicited donations from local corporate partners.



Our staff member Pat (left) sends Christmas gifts to young members

CASE STUDY



The Story of Kyle & Cihat Employability & Enterprise Support

Prior to the pandemic in 2020, Kyle, 18, and his brother Cihat, 17, began visiting Unitas Youth Zone. They especially like playing football on the rooftop pitch in Unitas. "I like playing football because it lets me get outside, burn off all my energy, and have a lot of fun. I also enjoy music because it allows me to express myself creatively and to the best of my abilities." Kyle stated. When they returned to Unitas a year ago, they were both NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training), and their family was also struggling financially.

Michelle Allen, our Enterprise Coordinator assisted them in developing their skill set, boosting their employability and enterprise opportunities. Kyle and Cihat signed up for an 8-week Enterprise programme, completed their CSCS cards (Construction Health & Safety Accreditation card) and provisional driving licence, and attended career talks and trips. Michelle also assisted them with resume writing, interviewing skills and job applications. She also facilitated their family's access to the food bank and clothes donations.

Today, Kyle and Cihat both return to college and play on a local football team. Michelle is pleased with their amazing advancement. "It is great to see that since their return to Unitas, both Kyle and Cihat have engaged in a wide range of opportunities not only through the Ambitions Zone, but also in other areas where they have been able to explore, learn new skills, complete qualifications, boost their self-confidence and raise aspirations. I know they have a bright future ahead of them. Where traditional schooling may have fallen short or not an option for some, we must step in to offer young people the support and training they need to improve their employability and boost their confidence."

The brothers' assistance is still ongoing - Michelle has now passed the baton onto Vernon, Employability Coordinator at Unitas, who is also supporting their youngest brother in gaining self-confidence, reintegrating into mainstream education, and securing some part-time employment, as well as their mother in dealing with challenges related to self-esteem and employability.

According to the most recent census data, 10.5% of all people aged 16 to 24 in London were NEETs. Unitas will continue to provide specialised, targeted assistance to the most vulnerable young people in order to help them achieve a bright future.