

# Unitas

An **OnSide** Youth Zone

## SUPPORTER UPDATE **JULY 2022**

### **CELEBRATING THREE YEARS**

June 23 2022 marked three years since Unitas first opened its doors for the young people of North West London. It would be an understatement to say that a lot has changed in those three years – but one thing that’s stayed the same is the appetite from local young people for high-quality, accessible, and inspiring Youth Work. This was demonstrated emphatically by the 957 members of our community who joined us in just four hours to celebrate our third Birthday.

The very best of Unitas Youth Zone was on display as our team of staff, volunteers and young leaders epitomised our #OneTeam values, working in unison to provide a day to remember for everyone who came out to celebrate.

With every space open and brimming with energy and activity, there was truly something for everyone to enjoy as families and young people took the opportunity to enjoy what's on offer across our seven-day-a-week provision. Topping off a fantastic day was a series of inspirational performances from members of our Junior, Senior and Limitless sessions – you can enjoy some of the highlights via our social media channels.



# DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

## SPORTS

In each edition we'll be shining the spotlight on a specific department, project or staff member - kicking us off is our Sports department, led by Sports Coordinator Rory Britton.

Our sports offer is fundamental to the Youth Zone, incorporating our most-attended spaces, with the Sports Hall, Gym and 4G pitch always full to capacity. In the last three months we've seen a huge growth in the number of engagements recorded across our different sports spaces, with each young person having the opportunity to try something new and fall in love with an active and healthy lifestyle.

During the spring and early summer period, our team have worked hard to provide our sportspeople with a number of unique opportunities to engage in competitive sports. Kicking us off was our inaugural 'Senior Girls Football League', which was well-attended by a mixture of experienced players and those playing for the first time. With an emphasis on fun and skill development, the group quickly developed as their confidence, teamwork and abilities improved week by week. Upon conclusion of the league, each participant was awarded a medal and had the opportunity to be nominated for a number of awards, both by their coaches and peers.



*Senior Girls Football*



*London Youth Games*



*Award Winners!*

Collecting an impressive three awards alongside the league trophy itself was goalkeeper Sarah having only ever played football casually in the past, the opportunity to play again, in a safe and supportive environment, alongside her friends was too good to pass up. After the final round of matches Sarah reflected on her progress over the course of the league programme and her rediscovered passion for the sport. Sarah is determined to continue to play football and has offered to support other members, by encouraging them to take part in the next league.

Basketball stands alone as the most popular sport for our Senior members - from those who just play casually to our committed group of 'Senior Ballers' who dedicate their evenings to a rigorous routine of drills, fitness, and matches. In recognition of their dedication, Unitas was recently selected to represent the Borough as Team Barnet at the London Youth Games basketball tournament. The yearly event brings together the finest young athletes from across London, in a celebration of youth sport. Hosted at the University of East London, it was for many their first opportunity to play representative sports at such a competitive level.



This fact became evident straight from the tip-off in the first fixture. Unitas' players came up against well-drilled, experienced opposition who'd played together as a team for some time. A heavy defeat followed in the first games. It was a shock to the system for the group from Unitas, who despite their talents were caught off-guard by the chemistry and experience of the opposing players. As confidence dropped it would have been forgiven for Team Barnet to accept the inevitable and go through the motions of defeat - Basketball is played at such a pace and scores add up very quickly. The team went on to put in several spirited and committed performances, with visible improvement as the tournament progressed. This was led by the dedication and leadership of our older players, who helped motivate and reassure those members of the squad whose confidence had been affected. Those values demonstrated optimise the purpose of our Youth Zone. We strive for success and winning is important, but the demonstration of empathy, leadership and resilience are skills that will carry our players to success far beyond the basketball court.

# IN THE ZONE

## YOUTH WORK UPDATE



*Growing Organic*

### GROWING FOR THE FUTURE

Following on from its recent renovation, our outdoor space, or 'Uni-Garden' as it's known, has truly come to life over the last couple of months. Driven by a desire to equip our young people with valuable life skills, and gain a greater understanding of our natural world, we first launched our Seniors' growing club in early-spring. Driven by our passionate volunteer Terri Young, the group has taken on the challenge of planting, nurturing and harvesting Unitas'

very own crop of organic vegetables, colourful flowers and plants. For many of our participants, this opportunity was their first experience of gardening, be it due to a lack of access to a garden of their own or simply not feeling gardening was an appealing prospect. As a reward for their effort and commitment, the group was recently able to pick a batch of beautiful fresh radishes, potatoes, leeks, and more. Continuing the sustainable cycle, the young people were able to supply our Training Kitchen with their produce, ensuring their hard work was used as part of a delicious meal prepared on-site.



*Garden Greenery*

### CHECKING IN TO THE BUG HOTEL

We were recently joined by members of staff from our Partners Redrow Construction and Focus Logistics, who worked alongside our Juniors to construct our very own 'Bug Hotel'. In an unforgettable experience, our Juniors immersed themselves in the ecosystems surrounding them, collecting the materials and learning to construct the sustainable structure. A particular highlight of the day for the group was being shown how to use the power tools by professional tradespeople. The impressive structure now takes pride of place in our busy garden. Make sure you check it out next time you visit!



*Learning to Drill*



*Finishing touches*

## UNITAS DOES MOTOWN!

After almost two years of planning and Covid cancellations, our young people finally got to deliver a night of fantastic entertainment. Young People from across our Junior, Senior and Limitless clubs performed a range of inspiring music and dance acts to staff, parents and peers. We were incredibly proud of the brave performers, whose talents were showcased on a deserving platform. Below are just a few of our favourite images from the night.



*Motown Performances*



## ENTERPRISE ZONE

Our Enterprise Zone has been busy providing our older members with a huge range of employability opportunities. Most recently groups have had the opportunity to meet staff members at Charles Stanley Wealth Management, Meta and Volker Fitzpatrick, where the young people learned about apprenticeship opportunities and interview techniques. The chance to engage directly with employers provides our young people with valuable knowledge and confidence to progress in their own personal and professional development. A shining example of this was the recent completion of a six-week course, delivered in partnership with Barnet Council, Tarem Services and Morgan Sindall Construction. Titled 'How to set up and run a successful business', the course gave the young people real world experience of what's needed to make it in business. Celebrating their success, everyone involved in the project came together for a well-deserved graduation event at Unitas.



*Celebrating our success*



*Certificate time*

# UNITAS IN THE COMMUNITY

## VOLUNTEERS' WEEK

1-7 June saw the charity sector celebrate Volunteers' Week 2022. We are blessed with an incredible team of volunteers at Unitas, who week-in and week-out give up their time, building relationships with young people, whilst helping support and grow our youth work offer.

Since January, Volunteers at Unitas have racked up an incredible 1350 hours of delivery time, saving the organisation £149,000 in staffing costs. However, our dedicated team brings much more than financial value. Each of them possesses a unique skill or passion, which is the driving force behind their work with our young people. As part of our Volunteers' Week celebration, we created an in-depth video showcasing each of our volunteers and getting to know their motivations for volunteering. Have a watch via the link below!

[Volunteers Week video](#)

## SUMMER OF FUN

Our team is building up for a packed summer holiday period as we get ready to welcome 100 8-12 year-olds every day from 8am to 3pm as part of our summer Holiday Club. We are also delighted to be able to offer 40 of our places completely free of charge to children receiving Free School Meals after securing additional funding for this purpose from the Young Barnet Foundation.



*Young Leader Tavlor*



*Volunteer Terri*



*Holiday Club*

## MAYOR'S QUIZ NIGHT

In April we were privileged to host the outgoing Mayor of Barnet, Cllr Alison Cornelius, for a very special Quiz Night benefiting Unitas Youth Zone. A fun-filled night saw a wonderful turnout of over 100 people from all around the Borough getting a glimpse of Unitas and learning about our work. The attendees were also treated to an amazing performance from Layla, a Senior member, and immensely talented singer. We are pleased to share that we raised over £3,000 on the night. We are incredibly grateful for the Mayor's continued generosity and support.



*Mayor of Barnet and Layla*

## JACK PETCHEY AWARDS

We recently celebrated an unprecedented 27 Jack Petchey Award winners, made up of young people of all ages from right across the Youth Zone. Young people can win a Jack Petchey Award by being nominated by a staff member or another young person if they are believed to have achieved something outstanding. Each award winner is given a certificate of achievement, a pendant, and £300 to spend as they see fit at Unitas. Many young people have decided to use the money to invest in new equipment that will allow them to further their passions in the future. To top off the award, each participant was invited to Artsdepot in Finchley for a very special ceremony to officially collect their certificates. Unitas was proud to be the only group in attendance that wasn't a school or college, as well as having the largest (and loudest) cohort of young winners.



## STAY CONNECTED



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Unitas, Barnet Youth Zone



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