



# UNITAS UPDATE

QUARTERLY UPDATE  
JANUARY - MARCH 2024

## A UNIQUE NIGHT TO REMEMBER



## OUR FIRST IMPACT DINNER

BY UNITAS CEO ROBIN MOSS

On Thursday 8 February, more than 150 guests joined us for 'Uniquely Unitas', a celebration of Unitas' young people and youth workers and a chance to raise much-needed funds. The Youth Zone was buzzing as people arrived, and every room was open with young people eager to share the activities they love doing.

The event was compèred in a transformed Sports Hall by Unitas Senior member Fawziya, who guided the proceedings with poise and confidence. There were two memorable

ON THE NIGHT, OVER **£230,000** WAS RAISED FOR THIS YEAR'S CAMPAIGN, WITH OVER **£60,000** PLEDGED FOR FUTURE YEARS. THESE FUNDS WILL HELP SAFEGUARD UNITAS, A SERVICE SO VITAL, SO NEEDED AND SO APPRECIATED BY SO MANY LOCAL YOUNG PEOPLE

performances - a powerful rendition of Lewis Capaldi's 'Cure for Minds Unwell' by Junior member Darius, and a mixed Juniors and Seniors dance troupe performing to 'I Believe' by Yolanda Adams. The latter had the whole room on their feet clapping and cheering.

**“ WE’VE COME TO INVEST IN THE FUTURE OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ”**

(STUART LEVY, INCOMING CHAIRMAN)

We heard from outgoing and incoming Chairmen Keith Black and Stuart Levy after guests had heard Fawziya's inspiring story and seen a video about the impact Unitas makes on thousands of young people every year.

The evening closed with a special thank you video for Keith Black as he leaves the Chairmanship after eight years. His contribution has been immense and it was a fitting tribute for Keith to receive the applause of young people, youth workers and supporters. As guests left, the words on everyone's lips were the same: Unitas is unique.

# FAREWELL KEITH...

After eight incredible years, Keith Black stepped down as Chairman of Unitas in February 2024.



It was Keith who was originally approached by OnSide to head up the nascent Barnet Youth Zone (before Unitas got its name!). His drive and passion helped convince Barnet Council to green-light the project and an amazing community of business people and philanthropists to get on board, ultimately leading to the opening of Unitas in June 2019.

Since then, Keith has chaired the Board of Trustees and overseen the enormous successes we have had in our first four-and-a-half years of operation, including over 150,000 visits by more than 12,500 young people.

Keith steps down with Unitas in a strong position. He has accepted the Trustees' invitation to become our Honorary President and will continue to act as an ambassador for Unitas, as well as offering advice and support. Unitas is 'the house that Keith built' and his achievements are marked by a plaque erected at the entrance to our building.

# ... AND HELLO STUART

We are delighted that, after an open application process, the Trustees appointed Stuart Levy to be the new Chairman of Unitas, taking up the role in February 2024. Stuart and his family



have supported Unitas since we opened. He and his brother own a chain of luxury 4\* and 5\* hotels, along with a film studio.

**👂 LISTENING TO ... YOUNG PEOPLE WILL BE AT THE HEART OF UNITAS' SUCCESS 🗨️**

Stuart's vision for Unitas is to consolidate the existing, amazing, services that the Youth Zone provides and to expand to reach new young people and offer even more opportunities. Creativity and really listening to and understanding young people will be at the heart of Unitas' success in the years to come.

Philanthropy has always been vital for Stuart and his family and he is looking forward to engaging with our donors and supporters - past, present and future. If you would like to meet with Stuart, do get in touch at [fundraising@unitasyouthzone.org](mailto:fundraising@unitasyouthzone.org)

# UNITAS IN NUMBERS

JANUARY - MARCH 2024

# 2582

FREE MEALS GIVEN AWAY THIS WINTER TO YOUNG PEOPLE

# 8561

VISITS TO UNITAS FROM JANUARY-MARCH 2024

# 683

AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE TO OUR SESSIONS, THE HIGHEST SINCE LAST SUMMER

# 39

FAMILIES VISITING OUR LIMITLESS SEND SESSION ON AVERAGE EACH WEEK - A 22% YEAR-ON-YEAR INCREASE

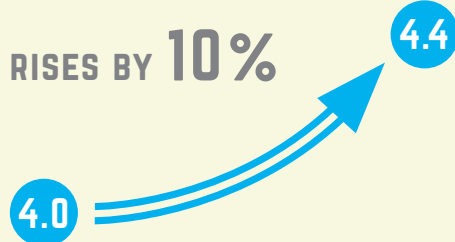
# 49%

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF SENIOR FEMALES ATTENDING UNITAS COMPARED TO LAST YEAR

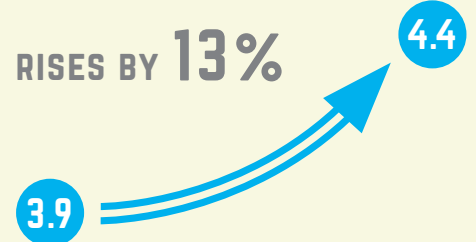
## UNITAS CHANGES YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIVES

EVERY SIX MONTHS WE MEASURE THE IMPACT OF UNITAS ON YOUNG PEOPLE  
HERE IS THE LATEST DATA (SCORES OUT OF 5)

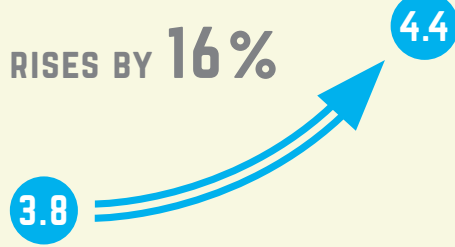
### CONFIDENCE



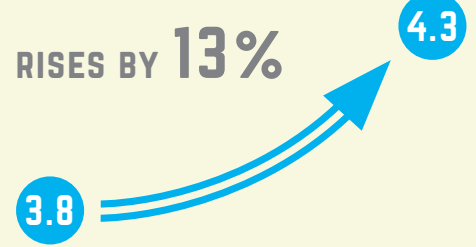
### SOCIAL SKILLS



### RESILIENCE



### MENTAL WELLBEING





# VOLUNTEERING JOURNEY

YESIM KUL IS ONE OF UNITAS' 25 REGULAR VOLUNTEERS, COMING EVERY TUESDAY EVENING. SHE WORKS IN THE TRAINING KITCHEN, INSPIRING YOUNG PEOPLE TO COOK AND SHARING HER PASSION FOR FOOD WITH THEM.

YESIM STARTED VOLUNTEERING WITH UNITAS LAST SUMMER AND HAS MADE SUCH A POSITIVE IMPRESSION THAT IN JANUARY SHE WAS AWARDED OUR ANNUAL 'VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR' AWARD FOR 2023.

WE CAUGHT UP WITH YESIM AS SHE SHARES HER VOLUNTEERING JOURNEY.

**Q:** How did you first hear about Unitas?

**A:** I heard about Unitas from a friend who is a trustee.

**Q:** What was your first impression of Unitas when you started volunteering?

**A:** My first impression was WOW! I could not believe how big it is, how many activities are going on and what a great team there is to support it.

**Q:** What's your favourite thing about volunteering at Unitas?

**A:** My favourite thing is being part of the team and being there for the kids - listening, helping and supporting them in any way I can.



**Q:** Would you recommend volunteering at Unitas to others?

**A:** I have gained a great deal of satisfaction volunteering at Unitas. I would definitely recommend anyone with time on their hands to join and help support the centre.

**Q:** And finally, in one sentence, how would you sum up Unitas?

**A:** Fun, caring, supportive and an amazing place for kids to spend their time.

## TWO CHANCES TO SEE UNITAS IN ACTION

OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US TO MEET OUR YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUTH WORKERS AND EXPERIENCE THE AMAZING ENERGY AND ATMOSPHERE WHEN UNITAS IS OPEN AND BUSY

### UNITAS FROM THE INSIDE

**Saturday 8 June - 10.30am-12.30pm**

A chance to visit a regular Saturday morning session, meet other supporters, hear from our young people and youth workers and see up-close the work we do week-in-week-out. Breakfast provided

### UNITAS BIRTHDAY BASH

**Sunday 23 June - any time from 12pm-4pm**

Unitas turns five and we'll be throwing open the doors of the Youth Zone to the local community. We invite you as a supporter to join us for an afternoon of celebration!

# UNITAS EVENTS ROUND-UP

## BOXING SHOW

On Sunday 4 February Unitas ABC hosted our first boxing show as part of our partnership with Finchley ABC. The event saw 16 bouts, two of which featured our boxers Malcolm and Andrei (pictured right in the red headguard). Malcolm lost his bout to a tough south London boxer while Andrei, in arguably the best bout of the day, lost a close split decision to a Dale Youth boxer. We are very proud of Andrei's performance as Dale Youth is one of the most decorated clubs in London, producing countless ABA and Olympic champions.



## UNITAS CELEBRATES ST PATRICK'S DAY ENERGETICALLY!



At Unitas, our young people come from diverse backgrounds and we make an effort to honour and celebrate their cultures.

Our St. Patrick's Day event was designed to be enjoyed by both young people and staff alike. Activities included face painting, a scavenger hunt, card making and St. Patrick's Day-themed hair and nails. There was a competition for the best-dressed young person (the winner receiving a hamper of goodies) and we provided Irish-inspired food.

Music by Irish artists was played throughout Unitas, including the music room, where there were more activities, including a special St. Patrick's Day karaoke.

## CAREERS FAIR

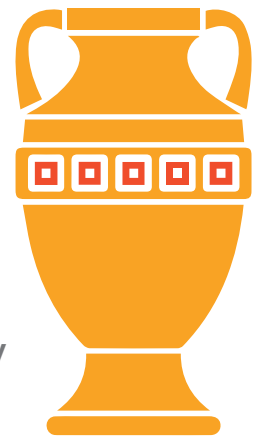
At the start of March, we hosted a Careers Fair to showcase a wide range of employers. The aims were to expand our members' horizons on what the world of work might look like and to introduce them to employers as potential job applicants. Organisations present included the British Army, Warner Brothers, The Grove Hotel and the Met Police. Sixty-five young people attended and we look forward to seeing the work experience, placements and hopefully jobs that come out of this event!







# POTTERY CLUB



We recently kicked off our brand-new pottery club with support from the FiredUp4 project. Staff members went through an exclusive training session where they learned to operate a kiln, some basic clay techniques, how to hand build, and how to throw a cup.

Delivered on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, we expect these sessions to become an important part of our offer, opening opportunities for young people to find a new passion and develop a new skill.

## OUR YOUNG PEOPLE WERE EAGER TO GET THEIR HANDS DIRTY

From the moment we launched the activity, our young people were eager to get their hands dirty, with the Juniors crafting Easter ornaments out of clay and our Seniors practicing their dexterity on the wheel.

Both groups have now had time to create some truly beautiful pieces in a laid back and friendly environment, accompanied by Blanca, the Art Room Lead, and Olga, the Sessional Art Specialist.

We are excited to see what talents develop and what this new opportunity represents for the art department at Unitas.

As pottery is typically a niche and expensive hobby, offering it at Unitas makes it accessible to young people who would not otherwise have discovered the craft and could lead to an increase in new members. The more, the merrier!

Those who follow Unitas should look out for upcoming art showcases and for pottery pieces made by our young people for sale.



# RICHARD'S STORY

Growing up in the local area, life was sometimes tough.

I'm the youngest in my family and all my siblings are really academically smart - there was a lot of pressure on me. The way I learnt to cope was to always smile - if I smiled at the world, the world would smile back. That was great some of the time, but I would get upset or angry and not really know what to do with those emotions.

I've never been good at finding the words for how I feel. Looking back, I didn't have much self-confidence.

When I was in year 10, there was an assembly at my school. They told us that this new youth centre, Unitas, had opened and that we should come down and check it out. I always loved playing sport and would spend all my free time in local parks. We used to get bored so the idea of a new youth centre really appealed.

## Unitas had everything!

When I first walked in, I thought "WOW! This is amazing!". Unitas had everything! I tried all the activities, and was particularly proud of myself when I got to the top of the climbing wall for the first time. I remember that I used to come through the doors and immediately feel relaxed. I was somewhere safe, fun and where I could be myself.

Basketball became my life. I love the game and I love the friends here at Unitas that I play with. The sight and sound of the basketball court makes me so happy.

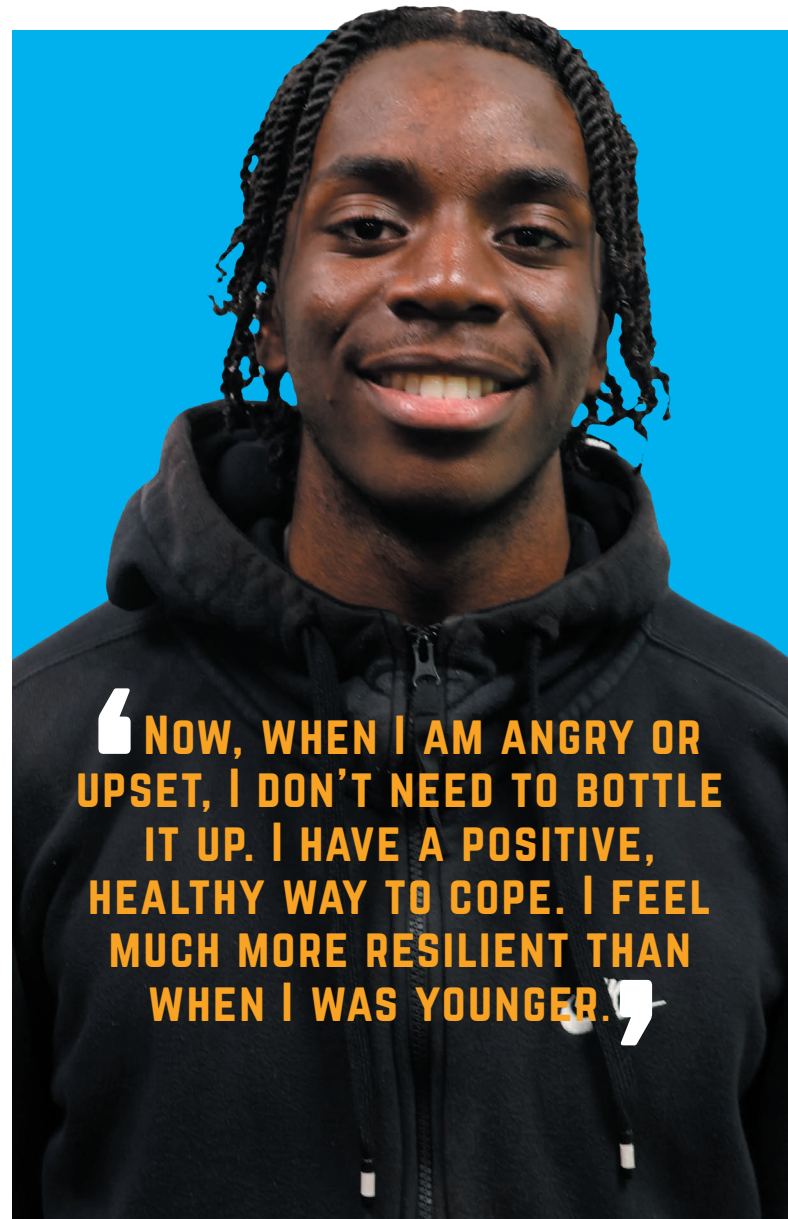
The youth workers encouraged me to take training more seriously, so now I have a solid routine. It is good for my health, it improves my skills at basketball but it also gives me an outlet for my emotions. Now, when I am angry or upset, I don't need to bottle it up. I have a positive, healthy way to cope and feel much more resilient than when I was younger.

## Tania has been so important to me

One youth worker in the Sports Hall, Tania, has

been so important to me. She really 'sees' me, and is always available if I need to speak. I don't think I'm exaggerating when I say she has helped me to understand myself more clearly than before.

I'm 19 now and have a job. I am looking forward to my future, confident that I can do whatever I put my mind to, as long as I work hard and stay healthy. Unitas has been a massive part of my life and I'm so grateful to all the staff who make it the amazing place that it is.



**“NOW, WHEN I AM ANGRY OR UPSET, I DON'T NEED TO BOTTLE IT UP. I HAVE A POSITIVE, HEALTHY WAY TO COPE. I FEEL MUCH MORE RESILIENT THAN WHEN I WAS YOUNGER.”**

Unitas Youth Zone

76 Montrose Avenue, Edgware, HA8 0DT

[www.unitasyouthzone.org](http://www.unitasyouthzone.org)

[enquiries@unitasyouthzone.org](mailto:enquiries@unitasyouthzone.org)

Registered charity number 1173239

Company number 10445685

**Unitas**  
An OnSide Youth Zone