

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

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“ It is important to inspire the younger generation to aspire to achieve the same as our ancestors ”



Tell us something that might surprise us about you?

I was part of the Hulme Regeneration programme in 1993. I was 15 at the time. 16 young people from Hulme, Moss side Longsight, Old Trafford were selected and sponsored to travel and stay with a family in Los Angeles. The aim was for us to research and see what the communities in the inner-city areas of Los Angeles did to keep their young children off the streets. We visited schools, sport clubs, singing, rapping, and dancing clubs that were designed for young children. Most of these places were in gang related areas so we did get to talk to some gang members also, With their permission and with caution. Our time in LA was recorded and a documentary was made and shown on channel 4. Soon after that, with funding, Hulme's concrete jungle was knocked down and replaced with new houses, flats, and shops for the residents of Hulme.

What advice would you give your younger self?

Be kind to yourself more and do not seek other people's approval. No matter how much you try to please or help another person, that person may not have the same good intentions towards you.

What does Black History Month mean to you?

I had 2 sets of grandparents move over to England during the Windrush times. They came over by boat apart from one of my nan's, who refused and flew by plane. Jamaica and St Kitts they travelled from far. They worked up until they retired, raising a family, whilst dealing with violence, prejudice, racism, and discrimination.

My upbringing was surrounded by family and friends' culture and traditions from the west indies whilst living an English lifestyle.

When I was in school, we were only taught about slavery and Ancient Egyptian times. Because we were West Indian, we couldn't relate to the African history that was being taught. It does make more sense now in my older years. It was my mum who took my brother and I to black history lessons in the evenings where we learnt our ancestors/relatives achieved more than just being slaves or African Kings and Queens.

Due to my dark complexion, my Dad always told me to be proud of who I am. As the looks of confusion, I would often get whenever I was with my lighter skinned mother and brother would dent my self-esteem.

Black history month is important to me because it reminds me that I did come from something great and is still fully involved in this history.

It is also important to inspire the younger generation to aspire to achieve the same as our ancestors who were once our relatives too. Black history effects the world not just the small few.

Career journey

I started in the social housing sector in 2001 for Manchester on call. (Manchester City Council) I left there for pastures new moving to London, making a life there. After ten good years I came back home to Manchester. Working temporary until finding a permanent job working for an insurance company progressing through pensions, bereavements, and customer relation departments. I also achieved a Qualification in Financial Advice and life insurance for the Republic of Ireland. Unfortunately, no longer any use, thanks to Brexit.

I still had my heart in housing and when the opportunity came up, I applied for the customer communication advisor role here at MSV. That was 3 years & 6 months ago and I haven't looked back since. My future would look like a valued member of MSV who could also contribute to providing care, unity, and a voice in the MSV communities.

Special thanks to Joanna for sharing and please keep an eye out for more staff spotlights throughout October.