

THE DRAYTON CONNECTION

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER



Message from the Head

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the second edition of our alumni newsletter, as we continue to celebrate the vibrant legacy of Drayton Manor. With each passing term, we witness the extraordinary achievements of our students and the lasting impact of our alumni, whose journeys continue to inspire the next generation. As we draw closer to our 95 Year Anniversary, it is heartening to see the strength of our community. Bound by shared experiences, enduring friendships, and a deep-rooted pride in our school, I hope you enjoy this latest collection of stories, which reflect the passion, dedication, and excellence that define Drayton Manor.

Mrs L Mills
Head Teacher

DRAYTON MANOR TRIUMPHS AT NBA 3X3 LONDON BASKETBALL FINALS



We are proud to celebrate the remarkable success of our boys' basketball team, who sealed a thrilling victory at the NBA 3x3 London Championship, held at the iconic Trafalgar Square. Competing against over 300 schools from across the capital, our

students rose to the occasion, demonstrating outstanding skill, unwavering teamwork, and true resilience under pressure. Their journey through the highly competitive tournament, culminating in a win against the top five teams in London, is evidence of their hard work and the strength of the Drayton Manor spirit. This inspiring achievement not only reflects the talent and dedication of our players but also highlights the supportive coaching and encouragement that defines our school community. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the team for bringing this prestigious title home to Drayton Manor!

WILKINSON SWORD STAYS HOME - A DRAYTON LEGACY CONTINUES



It is with great pride we share that Drayton Manor has once again brought home the Wilkinson Sword, which is one of the most prestigious accolades in the Borough's athletics calendar. The Wilkinson Sword Athletics Competition brings together all 17 secondary schools in the Borough for a spirited display of sporting talent. Drayton first claimed the title in 1998, followed by wins in 2001 and 2002. Since 2008, the school has enjoyed a golden era in the competition, winning 14 out of the last 15 events. This year, 58 of our students from Years 7 to 11 represented the school in both track and field events across two stages: the Senior Event (Years 8–11) held in May, and the Junior Event (Years 7–8) in June. Points were awarded across all eight final positions in each event, with gold, silver, and bronze medals earning the most. After a dominant

showing at the Senior Event, Drayton held a commanding 90-point lead. Our overall combined score secured a clear victory, winning by 23 points and retaining the Wilkinson Sword for another year. This marks Drayton Manor's 11th consecutive win since 2008 and a record-breaking 17th overall victory.



ALUMNUS GRACE QUANSAH RETURNS TO SHARE HER STORY OF CREATIVITY, COMMUNITY AND CHANGE

We were honoured to welcome back Grace Quansah, a Drayton Manor alumna whose dynamic career spans writing, editing, performance, and grassroots activism. A powerful voice in her community, Grace spoke to students about the experiences that shaped her. From growing up in the 1970s and working in care, to becoming a respected community leader and creative mentor. Now a Councillor for Walpole and Ealing Labour Candidate, Grace is also the force behind WAPPY (Writing, Acting & Publishing Project for Youngsters), a platform that has empowered countless young voices through the arts. Her return to Drayton Manor was a truly special moment, filled with warmth and recognition as she reconnected with staff and students alike. Her talk, grounded in resilience and rooted in service, left a lasting impression on all who attended.



TURNING POINTS AND GLOBAL PATHS: WALEED MAISERY'S STORY

We were excited to welcome back Waleed Maisery, a Drayton Manor alumnus whose remarkable career path is a testament to resilience, adaptability, and a strong sense of purpose. Waleed began his journey studying Law at the University of Westminster, but his ambitions took an unexpected turn in 2008 when he returned to Yemen to pursue a professional football career. Today, he serves as Senior Legal Counsel at QatarEnergy LNG, a global leader in liquefied natural gas. On his return to Drayton Manor, Waleed spoke candidly about growing up in the local area, the challenges he overcame, and how the choices he made were

guided by his values. He highlighted the importance of integrity, adaptability, and helping others. These were principles that have shaped not only his career but his approach to leadership. Waleed also joined the Leadership in the Community Conference, held in partnership with the Znaniye Foundation, where he shared his story with current students and offered encouragement for their own journeys.



DRAYTON MANOR WELCOME BACK ALUMNI TO RUN EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Drayton Manor High School recently hosted an inspiring Leadership in the Community Conference, welcoming over 30 speakers, including 12 accomplished alumni, for a day dedicated to empowering our Student Leadership Team and Wellbeing Ambassadors. Organised in collaboration with the Znaniye Foundation, a charitable organisation founded by Drayton alumna Patima Sherifi, which supports young people through educational opportunities. The conference created a powerful platform for students to explore leadership through real-world experience. Throughout the day, students heard from a broad range of professionals across industries, gaining unique insights into their career paths and the challenges and rewards of leadership in the modern world. Each speaker brought something special to the room, offering honest reflections and actionable advice. The day concluded with a vibrant mixer in our brand-new Sixth Form Centre, where students had the chance to connect with the speakers in a relaxed and engaging setting. These open conversations sparked fresh ideas,

built confidence, and reminded students of the incredible possibilities that lie ahead. We are always proud to welcome alumni back through our doors, especially when they come to share their experiences and uplift the next generation. Click [here](#) to read more about this special day and the incredible work of the Znaniye Foundation. Thank you to the following alumni for your work on the day; Jeremy Cook OBE, Anna Adesigbin, Leah Whittaker, Christopher East, Pippa Adamthwaite-Cook, Santino Jay, Zachary Okundaye, Rahma Hussein, Tosin Adesigbin, Mary Asseratte, Vanessa Kanu, Milo Whittaker, Rikki Broadmore, Arun Madar, Nazgol Esnaashari, Cllr John Martin, Kitty Lantos, Cllr Dr Aysha Raza, Adeniyi Olopade, Ismail Ansari, Dionne Mason, Danny Evans, De'Andre Blake, John Nimba, Rotimi Akindeinde, Dr Mirali Patel, Louis Gladstone Annan and Gerad Logan.



VALUABLE INSIGHTS FROM CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSIONALS

Our Year 12 students had the unique opportunity to hear from trainee Clinical Psychologists, Ravina Rao and Drayton Manor alumnus Mory Kakar, who shared their personal career journeys and experiences in the field. Mory's reflections on transitioning from Sixth Form to postgraduate training resonated deeply with the students, offering a relatable and motivating perspective. The session provided valuable guidance on the academic routes into psychology, from university courses to essential work experience

and postgraduate qualifications. Ravina and Mory also highlighted the wide range of roles psychology plays within mental health services, research, and applied practice, while offering practical advice on gaining relevant experience and maintaining motivation. This engaging discussion left our students inspired and better equipped to consider a future in this vital and rewarding profession.



ALUMNUS CHRISTOPHER BOARD HIGHLIGHTS PATH TO GLOBAL CHANGE

Christopher Board, a proud Drayton Manor alumnus, returned to share his inspiring journey in International Development and Sustainability with our students. Reflecting on the academic and professional decisions that shaped his career, Christopher offered valuable insights into the challenges and rewards of working in this global field. He provided a fascinating overview of his current role, where his team addresses pressing international issues with innovative strategies aimed at creating lasting positive change. The session left students both motivated and informed, equipping them with practical advice and a clearer understanding of how they too might pursue careers dedicated to making a meaningful impact on the world.



DAME MARY ARCHER MOTIVATES STUDENTS WITH INSIGHTS ON SUSTAINABLE ENERGY



Earlier this term, Dame Mary Archer visited Drayton Manor to engage with our Year 10 students, the Student Leadership Team, and the Student Communications Team. Drawing on her distinguished career in science, public service, and leadership, Dame Mary shared compelling insights into the future of sustainable energy and the important role young people can play in driving environmental progress. Following her presentation, students had the chance to ask thoughtful questions about the challenges and opportunities within green industries. Dame Mary responded with thought-provoking answers, offering valuable guidance that will no doubt help students as they navigate important career decisions in the years ahead. The visit proved to be an inspiring and enlightening experience, giving students a unique opportunity to connect with a leading figure in the field and gain fresh perspectives on how they can contribute to a more sustainable future.

YEAR 12 STUDENTS GAIN FIRST-HAND INSIGHT INTO LIFE AT OXFORD UNIVERSITY



A group of Year 12 students recently visited St John's College, Oxford, for an enriching experience that offered a genuine glimpse into life at one of the world's leading universities. The day began with an informative 'Oxford Explained' session, introducing students to the University's unique collegiate system and the wide range of courses on offer. Guided by current undergraduates, students toured the college grounds and engaged in a Q&A session that shed light on both academic expectations and everyday student life. In the afternoon, they took part in a hands-on Admissions and Interviews Workshop, where they worked through real interview-style questions and explored the application process in depth. The visit proved to be both inspiring and practical, equipping students with greater confidence and clarity as they consider applications to top-tier universities.

UNFORGETTABLE CULTURAL ADVENTURE IN VALENCIA

Students recently returned from an unforgettable trip to Valencia, where they immersed themselves in the city's vibrant history, language, and culture. From exploring the charming historic centre to confidently ordering churros in Spanish, the experience offered countless opportunities to put their language skills into practice. Highlights included awe-inspiring visits to the Oceanogràfic and Science Museum, where dolphin shows, interactive exhibits, and a 3D Blue Planet screening left a lasting impression. A behind-the-scenes tour of Valencia's iconic football stadium, a lively market language challenge, and a spirited beach football match added to the excitement. The trip offered not only cultural enrichment but also unforgettable memories. ¡Hasta la próxima, Valencia!



DOUBLE VICTORY ON THE PITCH - HISTORIC WINS FOR UNDER 15 AND UNDER 18 BOYS FOOTBALL



It has been a landmark season for Drayton Manor football, with both our Under 15 and Under 18 Boys teams bringing home league titles in what has been a thrilling and hard-fought campaign. After a decade-long absence, the Under 15 Boys returned to Division A under the leadership of Coach Grudgings. Facing seven tough teams throughout the season, the squad showed grit, determination, and outstanding teamwork. Their efforts paid off in spectacular fashion as they were crowned champions of the Under 15 Ealing League.

Division A - a first in living memory for Drayton.

Not to be outdone, the Under 18 Boys team also made history. Competing in the Borough's top and only division for their age group, they emerged as Ealing League Winners, breaking a five-year streak! This marks Drayton's first ever win in the U18 competition since its inception. These victories not only reflect the talent and dedication of our players but also the passion and expertise of our coaching staff.



UNDER 14 GIRLS' FOOTBALL TEAM SECURE SILVER IN EALING LEAGUE FINALS

Drayton Manor's Under 14 Girls' Football Team wrapped up an unforgettable season by claiming silver medals in the Ealing League (East Side) Finals, capping off an unbeaten run with a performance full of heart, skill, and fierce determination. In a dramatic showdown against a strong William Perkin side, made even more challenging by harsh weather and testing pitch conditions, the team rose to the occasion. Rahma made game-saving stops in goal, Yui drove the attack with relentless energy, Cordelia lit up the wings with her blistering pace, and Eloise, ever composed, led the squad with true captain's spirit. Though the match ended just shy of gold, the girls left the pitch with heads held high, proud of their fight and united in their progress. This silver finish is more than a medal, it is a signal that this is a team to watch, with a bright and bold future ahead.



A HEARTWARMING RETURN: DOROTHY AND CLIFF MCCORRY REVISIT DRAYTON MANOR HIGH



This term, we were truly touched to welcome back two very special alumni, Dorothy and Cliff McCorry, a wonderful husband and wife duo who walked the halls of Drayton Manor High School back in the 1940s. The staff were delighted to welcome them back and hear stories of their time at the school. Mr and Mrs McCorry took a tour of the buildings, revisiting familiar spots and sharing smiles as they reminisced about their time here decades ago. The school feels very privileged that Mr McCorry passed over the wonderful cricket trophies from his time as a cricketer at the school to our current PE students. These trophies will take pride of place in our trophy cabinet! Their visit reminded us of the enduring spirit of Drayton Manor and the deep connections our alumni hold with the school. We hope to see many more of you returning to relive and share your stories.

BECOME AN ALUMNI AMBASSADOR – INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION

We are at a pivotal and exciting stage in our journey as a school community, building meaningful, lasting connections with our alumni. As we grow this network, we are proud to launch our Alumni Ambassador programme. We are seeking passionate former students who want to give back, share their experiences, and make a difference to the life of the school. Whether you left last year or decades ago, your journey matters. As an Alumni Ambassador, you will act as a bridge between the school and its alumni community, helping to support current students through mentoring, events, outreach, and more. This is a rewarding opportunity to contribute to the life of the school, inspire young people, and strengthen the legacy of our alumni family.

Join us. Be part of the next chapter. All prospective Alumni Ambassadors will be subject to relevant safer recruitment and safeguarding checks, as the safety and wellbeing of our students is central to everything we do. Click [here](#) for more information.

95-YEAR CELEBRATION: SIGN UP TO JOIN OUR ALUMNI NETWORK!

This year marks a monumental milestone for Drayton Manor High School, 95 years of shaping young minds and fostering lifelong connections! As part of the celebration, we're inviting all alumni to reconnect and join our growing alumni network. Stay updated on special events, share your stories, and be a part of the legacy. Don't miss out! Sign up today by clicking this [link](#) and help us commemorate this incredible milestone!

THE LAUNCH OF THE ALUMNI AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

The school is proud to announce that we will soon be launching an Alumni Ambassador Programme. The Alumni Ambassador Programme will invite former students to play an active role in school life beyond their years as students. By sharing experiences, offering mentorship, attending events, and representing the school in wider society, ambassadors help bridge the past and the future.

Key aims of the programme include:

- Inspiring current students through real-life pathways
- Celebrating the diverse achievements of our alumni
- Building connections for mentoring, internships, and professional advice
- Strengthening the school community and network

The school will soon be sharing more details regarding the programme and application process. Whether you're at the start of your career or well-established in your field, we invite former students to consider becoming an Alumni Ambassador. Their involvement – big or small – can have a meaningful impact. Please feel free to share this information with former students who may be interested.

