We are not worlds apart – free event in Swansea

Monday 18 March, 2013

A student from Swansea is holding a free event to help get different generations within families to interact better and decrease family rifts.

Fixer Mustak Abdul, 22, feels there is a lack of communication between young and older people in their own ethnic groups, particularly when the younger generation are pursuing ambitions away from their country of origin. He is worried this leads to misunderstandings and family problems.

The event, for anyone aged 11 and up, will take place on Thursday 4 April from 12 noon to 6pm at EYST, 11 St Helen Road, Swansea, SA1 4AB.

The day will be split into two sessions to cater for both sexes, with grandmothers, mothers and daughters able to attend from 12 noon – 2.30pm, and grandfathers, fathers and sons from 3pm - 6pm.

Fixers, the national movement of young people 'fixing' the future, will be filming interviews at the event. The interviews will focus on the culture and identity of the interviewees, the expectations they feel, and how integrated they feel in Swansea.

This will then be published on to DVDs for Mustak to use in workshops to encourage young and old members of families to understand one another better.

"Swansea is very multicultural, but there are still misunderstandings when parents originate from different countries," he says.

"I want everyone to bring something personal with them to the event that maybe either reminds them of their childhood or has a good memory attached, for example a photograph or a book.

"Young people who grow up here in the UK do not understand the challenges facing their parents back home, and their families may not understand the different lifestyle of the young person in the UK.

"Within families there are different expectations, especially when older members of a family hold more traditional views than the 'more Western' views of their children.

"There is a generation gap between family members, and across the city as a whole. I want to get the older and younger members of different ethnicities to interact better, decreasing family rifts."

Mustak, who is studying HND Public Services and hopes to become a Police Officer or Youth Worker, also works with the Ethnic Youth Support Team (EYST) in Swansea to develop links between different groups of people in the city.

Fixers can address any issue they feel strongly about. How each Fixer tackles an issue is up to them – as long as they benefit someone else.

The award-winning Fixers project has already supported almost 7,000 young people aged 16 to 25 across the UK to have an authentic voice in their community.

Now, thanks to a £7.2 million grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers aims to work with a further 20,000 young people over the next three years.

Each Fixer is supported to create the resources they need to make their chosen project a success, with creative help from media professionals to make their own promotional material, such as films, websites or print work.

Fixers is a trademark of the Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT), a charity that brings together mainstream broadcasters, public and voluntary sector services, and viewers.

"Fixers started in 2008 as just an idea… an idea given a voice by some 7,000 young people over the past five years," says Margo Horsley, Chief Executive of PSBT.

"They have reached thousands of people with their work, on a national stage as well as in and around

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where they live. They choose the full array of social and health issues facing society today and set about making their mark. Fixers are always courageous and their ideas can be challenging and life-changing, not just for themselves."

Peter Ainsworth, Big Lottery Fund UK Chair, says: "The Big Lottery Fund is extremely proud to be supporting Fixers to engage with more young people to change things for the better. Fixers has a tremendous potential – one young person's initial idea can be transformed into reality, spread across a community and make a positive influence on a wide range of people. There are thousands of young people campaigning to make improvements in their neighbourhoods and Fixers provides a platform to highlight their voluntary work and many achievements."

For images, interviews or more information, please contact Sue Meaden in the Fixers Communications Team by email sue@fixers.org.uk or phone 01962 810970.

There are lots more stories about young people doing great things on the Fixers website, Twitter and Facebook pages:
http://www.fixers.org.uk
http://twitter.com/FixersUK
http://www.facebook.com/FixersUK

Notes to editors:

• Since 2008 some 7,000 young people in England have become Fixers and created 800 projects. Now with a £7.2 million grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers is extending into Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.
• The Public Service Broadcasting Trust is a charity that brings together mainstream broadcasters, public and voluntary sector services, and viewers.
• The Big Lottery Fund (BIG), the largest distributor of National Lottery good cause funding, is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised for good causes by the National Lottery.
• BIG is committed to bringing real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need and has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since June 2004. The Fund was formally established by Parliament on 1 December 2006.
• Since the National Lottery began in 1994, 28p from every pound spent by the public has gone to good causes. As a result, over £29 billion has now been raised and more than 383,000 grants awarded across arts, sport, heritage, charities, health, education and the environment.

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