



The Race Equality Centre in Leicester and Leicestershire

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The Race Equality Centre

The Race Equality Centre actively promotes, and seeks to implement a racially just, fair and equitable society, which will enhance the quality of life for all citizens of Leicester and Leicestershire.



December 2019

TREC Updates



- **Since Launch of Scare (Student Campaign Against Racism in Education)**

As part of the Journey to Justice series of events, the Highfields Centre and The Race Equality Centre (TREC) with support from the Journey to Justice Leicester and the University of Leicester held a conference at the Highfields Centre on Saturday, 26 October. The conference was to reflect on the launch of SCARE (Student Campaign Against Racism in Education) at an epic moment in the history of Black consciousness in Britain. A lively discussion ensued between the panel and the conference attendees exploring the critical issues raised and exploring strategies to combat racism and racial injustice against Black youth in education and in the criminal justice system. For more information please click here: <https://tinyurl.com/sno7ltz>

- **Nirvana in Leicester**

One of TREC's executive committee members, Learie Gonsalves has recently written an article for the RICS's (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) Build Environment Journal. The article is called Nirvana In Leicester and in it Learie cites continuing work with Bola Abisongun OBE who raised a question in the journal in the preceding article 'As the benefits of a diverse workplace have been researched and proven, why are we still not addressing the race issue?' We at TREC wanted to take this opportunity to highlight the article and draw attention to the work of one of our members. To download a copy of the article please click here:

https://archive.org/download/document1_201912/Document1.pdf

- **Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service**

TREC is a member of the Fire and Police Independent Advisory Group (Race) and the Fire and Police Advisory Group on Equality. We also support the Fire Service's Race Network and joined them during their recent 'Recruitment Have a go Day' at Highfields Centre. At long last the work being done in Leicester is Nationally recognised, with other Fire Services requesting assistance in the area of recruitment. Well done guys:

<https://trecblog.tumblr.com/post/189827360208/leicestershire-fire-and-rescue-service>

- **White Privilege the Myth of a Post Racial Society Review**

White Privilege: The Myth of a Post Racial Society is a book written by Kalwant Bhopal. The book was written to provide an argument that white privilege exists and the idea that we live in a post racial society is a myth which is perpetuated so white privilege can protect itself and continue. It includes evidence to aid this goal including detailed statistics and interview-based case studies which help build a view of just how far reaching and all-encompassing white privilege is. To read the review about this effective and insightful book please click here:

<https://trecblog.tumblr.com/post/189776420323/white-privilege-the-myth-of-a-post-racial-society>

Local News

- **Trojan Horse**

The touring theatre company LUNG in association with Leeds Playhouse are putting on a production of Trojan Horse at the Curve Theatre on the 30th and 31st of January. Trojan Horse is a play which follows the real-life stories of Muslim teachers and Governors who were accused of plotting extremism in several East Birmingham schools in 2014. This play has been adapted from over 200 hours of interviews with 90 witnesses including pupils and parents. It explores the real-life testimonies of those at the heart of the UK Government's investigation, focusing on five stories, and revealed the devastating impact it had on those involved and the city in which they lived whilst also investigating the role Westminster played. For more information, including how to buy tickets please click here: <https://www.curveonline.co.uk/whats-on/shows/trojan-horse/>

- **DMU to help businesses recruit, retain and promote more BAME staff**

Businesses across Leicester have signed up to be part of a project designed to put diversity front and centre of staff development. Leicester's Future Leaders is a three-year programme aim to increase the number of black, Asian and minority ethnic graduates getting internships, jobs and senior roles within the region's businesses. De Montfort University Leicester (DMU) was awarded £230,000 funding from the Office for Students to support the project, working alongside Freeths LLP, Brewin Dolphin and Eileen Richards Recruitment. For more information please click here: <https://tinyurl.com/spv9gre>

- **University of Leicester Vice-Chancellor: diversify support staff to close minority 'awarding' gap**

Ensuring there is diversity among support staff in universities is just as essential as improving the representativeness of the academic workforce to helping students from different backgrounds succeed, according to Nishan Canagarajah, University of Leicester Vice-Chancellor. He said it might be difficult for students from an ethnic minority or poorer family "to feel they belong" if professional services staff were from different backgrounds to them. He has also pledged to close the gap at Leicester between black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students and their white counterparts, in terms of those getting a first or a 2:1 at undergraduate level, by 2025. For more information please click here: <https://tinyurl.com/rbtll27>

National News

- **Number of MPs reporting migrants to the Home Office 'almost doubles in two years'**

135 MPs sign a pledge not to use the Home Office's immigration reporting hotline after a Freedom of Information request by RightsInfo reveals that the number of reports made by MPs to immigration officials has almost doubled over the past two years. Labour's Preet Kaur Gill says the duty of an MP is 'first and foremost to represent and assist constituents regardless of immigration status'. For more information please click here: <https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/number-of-mps-reporting-migrants-to-the-home-office-almost-doubles-in-two-years-1327654>

- **Bristol University students report rise in racial 'aggression' on campus**

Students at Bristol University say they have experienced a rise in racial "aggression" on campus including offensive language in lectures and seminars, "humiliation" by academics and racist images in halls. Student leaders say that the incidents, which have all taken place in recent months, are symptoms of a wider problem. They say the institution should take more action. The warning comes after a report from the equality watchdog that criticised universities across the UK for being "oblivious" to the racial harassment occurring at a high rate on their campuses. For more information please click here: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/bristol-university-racism-aggression-campus-harassment-students-a9241021.html>

- **Couple win 'race discrimination' adoption battle**

A couple who were rejected by their local adoption service because of their Indian heritage have won their legal discrimination battle. Sandeep and Reena Mander sued The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council after they were turned away from Adopt Berkshire three years ago. Judge Melissa Clarke said the couple were discriminated against on the grounds of race. The Sikh couple have now been awarded nearly £120,000 in damages. For more information please click here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-berkshire-50674761>

- **'People of colour seem to be superglued to the floor'**

The annual Leadership 10,000 report from recruitment consultants Green Park show that the UK's top firms have failed to make any progress on increasing ethnic diversity amongst top executives. According to the report minority representation has fallen over the past year and 47 companies still have all-white staff at board and executive director level. Green Park said that at 3.3% the proportion of BAME executives showed no improvement over the six years since they began monitoring ethnic diversity at the top three leadership tiers of companies, namely senior executives, board members and executive directors. For more information please click here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-50656176>

- **BBC to promote black and minority 'senior leaders'**

The BBC has announced its plan to promote black and ethnic minority colleagues as "senior leaders". Corporation boss Tony Hall outlined the new strategy around "our BAME [Black, Asian and minority ethnic] talent" in an email to staff recently. The note was titled "Going further in building a creative, inclusive BBC". "We can't be the creative, inclusive organisation we want to be if we're not representative of the whole of the UK," wrote Lord Hall. For more information please click here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-50675791>

- **Black Women Share Shocking Stories of Hair Discrimination at Work**

Racial discrimination against natural hair is now illegal in California and New York after new laws were passed earlier this year. The move was seen as a huge milestone for the black community across the pond, with Thandie Newton praising the change, yet it left some black British women scratching their chins and wondering when the same would happen in the UK. Workplace discrimination – on the basis of gender, race or religion – is illegal in the UK. But when it comes to racial discrimination related to hair, the lines are blurred, despite it being something black women constantly worry about. A study by the Perception Institute in 2017 found that one in five black women feel social pressure to straighten their hair for work and are much more likely than white women to feel anxiety over the issue. For more information please click here:

<https://www.refinery29.com/en-gb/hair-discrimination-uk-workplace>

- **They came from South Asia to help rebuild Britain. The racism they saw then is back**

For the past five years Kavita Puri has been interviewing the generation that came from the Indian subcontinent to postwar Britain. This article is about her work taking these testimonials from now elderly people who arrived with as little as £3 due to strict currency controls. These stories she has acquired are an overlooked part of British history and we feel It's important to record them before it's too late so we at TREC wanted to take this chance to highlight her work. For more information please click here: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/dec/20/south-asia-racism-testimonies-hostility>

- **High court says UK's £1,012 child citizenship fee is unlawful**

In a landmark judgment the high court has found that the Home Office's £1,012 child citizenship fee is unlawful. The fee has been described as "shameless profiteering" by Amnesty International. The current fee affects tens of thousands of children in the UK. The Project for the Registration of Children as British Citizens, which brought the case, along with two children affected by the high fees, estimates there to be about 120,000 children in the UK without British citizenship, approximately 65,000 of whom were born here. For more information please click here:

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/dec/19/high-court-says-uks-1012-child-citizenship-fee-is-unlawful>

Thank you for your support during 2019. Wishing you a very



happy and rewarding 2020.