

# RAFFA NEWS Winter edition 2017



Welcome to the winter edition of RAFFA News 2017. This newsletter has been designed to keep you updated about the various projects and activities that RAFFA has been involved with; but also to give you a platform to share information about the various social action initiatives taking place on a national level.

## RAFFA is for *social action* but what does that mean?

Today, 'social action' has come to mean different things to different people, For RAFFA, our overall vision is to '**Serve communities around the world,**' this statement of social action goes hand in hand with COGOP's global mission of evangelism and out-reach and can be seen as the coming together of both faith and works. The unwillingness to see injustice and lack within a society and do nothing, and this should be the natural attitude of the church, as it shows a practical love and commitment to the places in which we live.

Faith based social action happens when people of faith work together, often with others outside their faith community, in order to achieve real and positive change within their local community, or in wider society. It springs from the application of spiritual principles, for the betterment of society and the improvement of people's lives.

In this edition I will highlight just some of the projects that RAFFA has supported so far this year, and will also provide you with opportunities to get involved with national initiatives.

## RAFFA SUPPORTS THE REACH SOCIETY 2017 CAREERS CONFERENCE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



On 4<sup>th</sup> April 2017 the Reach Society put on the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Careers Conference for young people at the Royal National Hotel in London. The event was attended by hundreds of young people who were able to access career opportunities and information. Lord Ouseley was also in attendance

The Reach Society is a social enterprise that encourages, motivates and inspires black boys and young Black men to realise their potential and make viable transitions into adult life.

RAFFA has supported the Reach Society over the years and more recently helped with the collection of the data for the Council of Leaders (COL) data questionnaire. In 2015 the COL conducted its first attitudinal survey of the British Black Community (BBC). This year saw the third 'Wave' of surveys that seeks to discover how African and Caribbean people feel about certain socio-economic aspects of their lives. RAFFA received an award for its contribution.

RAFFA presented a report at the 4<sup>th</sup> annual COL (Council of Leaders) Leadership conference on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2017 where the group's priorities for this year was – The Social Skills of Young People.



## MOBILE BLOOD COLLECTION UNIT FOR GRENADA



Global Diaspora Director, Rudi Page with Samuel Sandy, Acting High Commissioner, Grenada supported by Claude Sylvester, Grenada Voluntary Hospital Committee, receives the keys from Gail Miflin, Medical and Research Director, NHS Blood & Transplant.

This is the 3rd Mobile Blood Collection Unit for the Caribbean Region facilitated by Diaspora-led RAFFA International Development Agency

## RAFFA SUPPORTS LOCAL AUTHORITY AND CCG TO ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH IN YOUNG PEOPLE

It has been reported that 70% of children and young people who experience a mental health problem have not had appropriate interventions at a sufficiently early age. The emotional wellbeing of children is just as important as their physical health. Good mental health allows children and young people to develop the resilience to cope with whatever life throws at them and grow into well-rounded, healthy adults



RAFFA has recently provided support to the CCG and a Local Authority steering group to address concerns around the required support for young people. They will be establishing a youth forum in an effort to give children and young people a voice. The first meeting for the youth will be held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2017. We will provide regular updates as this progresses as we have been able to invite young people from the local churches to become part of the forum.

## RAFFA PRESENTS AT NATIONAL BAME NURSING CONFERENCE

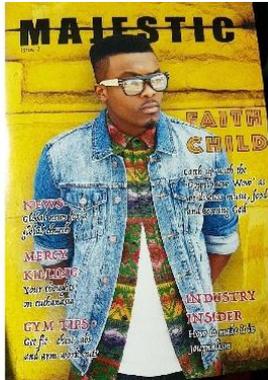


Hundreds of professionals gathered in Wembley to celebrate the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Chief Nursing Officers Strategic Advisory Conference. Angela Clarke, RAFFA National Director co-facilitated a presentation on the Patient and Public experience. Sharing good practice around the experience of people who use care services but also representing the voices of those who have used services and wanted their concerns or experiences to be shared in an effort facilitate change.



**Dawn Butler MP with Angela Clarke**

**RAFFA CONTINUES TO ENDORSE MAJESTIC - A FAITH BASED MAGAZINE SUPPORTING YOUTH CREATIVITY**



**So what is Majestic?** Majestic magazine is the brain child of Jan-Marie Revers who is the daughter of Pastor Gladstone Revers – COGOP Enfield in London. Jan-Marie describes the magazine as a print and online publication creating a link between Christians and the world while providing a platform which encourages creative and spiritual growth; going beyond the walls of church.

The magazine was launched earlier this year and has recently released its second edition. For more information or to get involved contact [jan@majesticmagazine.co.uk](mailto:jan@majesticmagazine.co.uk)

**JA55 – CELEBRATING JAMAICANS AT HOME AND ABROAD**



This year marks the 55<sup>th</sup> year of Jamaica independence. The event will be marked by a series of celebrations here in the UK and abroad.

The official joint UK launch of the Jamaica55 celebrations and the Jamaica55 Diaspora Conference took place at the Jamaica high Commission on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> June and was hosted by His Excellency Seth George Ramocan, High Commissioner for Jamaica.

The steering committee will be co-chaired by Rudi Page, who is a member of the Economic Growth Council (EGC) Taskforce and Ms Janelle Raeburn, Events Planner, who will co-ordinate activities with the primary purpose of encouraging 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> generation Jamaica – UK citizens to expand on the legacy built by their parents for the up lifting of the Jamaica – UK community and Jamaica.

The evening at the Jamaica High Commission commenced with an opening prayer by Bishop Llewellyn Graham and was also attended by Bishop Wilton Powell, Rudi Page in his capacity as Co-Chair of the steering committee and Angela Clarke who sits on the Youth and Social Media Sub Committee.



The High Commissioner told participants which included members of the various Sub- Committees which have been established that ‘our mission is to heighten public awareness of the significant achievements of the Jamaican UK community and its outstanding contribution to the United Kingdom. So this year we will celebrate, collaborate and elevate’.

It was also noted that the High Commission will also be working with the Jamaican community during the year, in



relation to the organisation of a number of core and endorsed events which will showcase Jamaica's rich cultural heritage and its influence in the UK.

The Sub- Committees comprise Jamaicans of various backgrounds and experiences, some of whom are first and second generation Jamaicans.

Angela Clarke sits on the JA55 Faith Based Sub-committee chaired by Bishop Joe Aldred. The committee is currently organising two major prayer breakfasts to be held in London and Birmingham during 2018



## **RAFFA - Our strategy**

RAFFA works with a national network of ambitious and enterprising community-led organisations, working together to help neighbourhoods thrive.

Our members operate across England in many kinds of communities, both urban and rural, and undertake a wide variety of different activities, reflecting the communities they serve. What unites our members is a sense of ambition for their local neighbourhood, an enterprising approach to finding solutions to local problems, and a clear sense that activity should be community-led and based on self-determination. They act as anchors within their community, providing stability and a responsiveness to local need. Community ownership of assets, community enterprise and service delivery are key drivers of the sustainability of our member organisations and our network contains a huge reservoir of inspiring evidence for successful change.

Our membership therefore has huge strength, reach and influence. The role of RAFFA is to ensure that this reach and influence has an impact nationally, using the resources across the membership to influence positive change and support our member organisations in the work they do locally.

Our strategy over the next five years will be ambitious and bold, in how we use our resources and position ourselves.

As a national organisation, we are in a strong position and have achieved a great deal since the organisation was established.

Our members are doing inspirational work in very difficult circumstances and have a trusted position in their communities. However, the external climate means that we have to develop and adapt and we cannot afford to be complacent.

Our membership will grow, and will be inclusive and welcoming to organisations that share our vision and our values. There are many organisations who are not currently members who we need to reach out to and demonstrate how they can benefit from membership. We would like to see a RAFFA representative in every Region and a thriving network of organisations working together to inspire community-led action. We will proactively support the development of organisations, including those at an early stage of their journey. We will ensure that we have a strong focus on equality and diversity, and are targeting and responding to different needs in different communities.

We will take a collaborative and partnership based approach to working with other organisations at national level to achieve our shared goals. We will seek to work more proactively with organisations on specific work areas, including through our influencing work, and will ensure that we play a leading part in wider sector work providing support to other organisations where appropriate.

RAFFA's business model is based on bringing in income from contracts and consultancy work to enable us to fund and subsidise services and support to members. This means that we are able to retain a very low membership fee which is an important principle for us. We will continue to focus on project and consultancy services but will ensure that these are very clearly mission focused. We will take a proactive approach to programme and project development so that we will work in partnership with members to design projects which solve problems or break barriers and which positively add to the evidence base and support our influencing work.



## **RAFFA Strategic objectives**

In order to work towards our vision and mission, the following strategic objectives, in line with the Destiny document will underpin everything we do until 2020 and beyond:

### **1 Develop a strong and diverse membership**

We will significantly grow our membership, reaching out to community organisations who share our vision and values, and ensure that members feel proud to be part of Locality and have a significant impact in shaping our work.

### **2 A fearless, credible and influential voice.**

We will be a nationally recognised voice, using our collective evidence and experience to campaign on behalf of our members and champion their work, with a strong track record of achieving positive change.

### **3 High quality, member-driven services**

We will provide a wide range of high quality services to help members do their work, develop their activity, enable peer-to-peer learning and offer resilience support where needed.

### **4 Projects and services which support communities and neighbourhoods**

We will develop and deliver a range of projects and services focused on inspiring local action and empowering communities, which benefit our members and other stakeholders, and influence policy and practice.

### **5 A strong and sustainable organisation**

We will be an enterprising and sustainable organisation, with a positive working environment which drives success, high quality standards for our work, diverse and sustainable income streams, and clear accountability and governance for our activities.