

Celebrating Diversity

Welcome to the latest round-up of some of the events which have celebrated the diversity of our community

Eid Breakfast

At the end of **August**, to celebrate the festival of Eid ul Fitr, the University held the special Eid prayers at Beaconside. With support from the catering department and some excellent chefs in the community, a lavish traditional breakfast was provided after the prayers. As well as Muslims from the



University and the local community, many non-Muslim staff and students attended, including the Vice-Chancellor Michael Gunn, Deputy Vice Chancellor Paul Richards and University Secretary, Ken Sproston. Pictured above at the breakfast are Vic Casambros, SU Communications Officer, Hifsa Haroon Iqbal, Equality and Diversity Officer, University Students and members of the local Muslim Community.

Sydney Morris Memorial Lecture

In tribute, following the sad death of Sydney Morris (pictured right) earlier in the year, the Sydney Morris Memorial lecture was held at Stoke Minster in **September**. Sydney, President of the local Hebrew Congregation, worked tirelessly to improve inter-faith dialogue in the city and county and was much loved and admired. Organised in partnership with the North Staffordshire Forum of Faiths, "*Common Beliefs, Common Values*", was attended by about 100 people. A guest panel provided lively and thoughtful dialogue on Abraham from the three Abrahamic faith perspectives – Jewish by



Malcolm Wiseman, Rabbi to HM Armed Forces; Christian by Ray Gaston from the Queen's Foundation in Birmingham; and Muslim by Julie Siddiqi, Executive Director of the Islamic Society of Britain (seated left to right in the photograph of the panel).



Also in the photograph are Heather Farr, former Senior Advisor for Religious Education, and standing behind with Hifsa Haroon Iqbal is Rev. Prebendary David Lingwood from Stoke Minster.

Celebrating Staff Success

There were two awards this year for Equality and Diversity at the Celebrating Staff Success event in **September**. The Team Award went to the Disability and Equality Group in Sciences. Group members Rob Boast, Audra Jones and Andy Willits can be seen here on the right collecting their award from University Governor Cordella Bart-Stewart.



The Individual Award went to Karl Gimblett from Information Services (pictured right) who has been instrumental in updating assistive software provision, and working to improve technology available to disabled staff and students. All involved work beyond their role remits and are great champions of equality – congratulations!



Black History Month

In **October** the Students' Union named their boardroom in the Stoke Union Building the "*September Boardroom*" in honour of Dulcie September (pictured on the right). Dulcie, a former student of Madeley College (later part of North Staffordshire Polytechnic) and an anti-Apartheid activist from South Africa, was assassinated outside of the African National Congress' Paris office in 1988. A plaque about Dulcie was unveiled in the newly named Boardroom by the first Vice-Chancellor of Staffordshire University, Keith Thompson. Watch the event on [Staffslive](#) and view the plaque at



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:September_Room_Plaque.jpg

Also in celebration of Black History Month, Professor Ray Johnson organised the premiere of the documentary “*Caribbean Voices*”. Made in association with BBC TV’s “Reel History” project, this is a unique look at the contributions of local Caribbean communities and the vital role they have played over the years. Local people share their experiences of moving to England in the late 50’s/early 60s and their reasons for making Stoke-on-Trent their home.

Explore Islam Exhibition

The bi-annual Explore Islam Exhibition took place again in **November** at the Beaconside Campus. Over 450 young people from across the county attended. Among others, a group from Sutherland Business and Enterprise College in Telford spent the day with us visiting the exhibition and then touring the campus to learn more about university life. The event is organised by Equality and Diversity Officer Hifsa Haroon Iqbal, along with volunteers from the local Muslim community.

Faith in the Potteries Exhibition

On the 23rd **November** the *Faith in the Potteries Project* was launched at the old Spode works in Stoke on Trent. The six week interactive photographic exhibition explored how the many faiths and beliefs in Stoke on Trent are represented. A number of primary schools were involved working with freelance photojournalist and part-time University lecturer, Martin Elliott. Some of the photographs and testimonies about the young people’s experiences of faith were also on display. For a full report visit the University’s [News and Events](#) website. Above right is one of the photographs from the exhibition featuring Buddhist Monk Ajhan.



Miriam O’Reilly

Also in **November** BBC journalist Miriam O’Reilly came to talk to Staffordshire students about her life and career and why she fought ageism at the BBC. Miriam is pictured right, in the centre, with students Suzanne Jordan and Harlen Leonard. For a full report visit [AMD News and Events](#).



Carol Services to Celebrate Christmas

In **December** the University's Carol Service took place in Stoke Minster and Chaplain Mick Williams led students and staff in singing carols at Beaconside. The Chaplaincy ran very popular frugal lunches throughout December, and the money raised was added to that donated at the Carol



Service and collected in tins at catering outlets around the University and given to support Oxfam SOFTys – over £800! Pictured right are Prebendary David Lingwood from Stoke Minster and University Chaplain Mick Williams.

Bulletin

- **SOFTys** - The Staffordshire Oxfam Fundraising Team is supporting the development of eight girls' schools in the Baluchistan and Sind regions of Pakistan. The aim is to raise £100,000 over the next five years. Keep a look out for events and please support this very worthwhile cause. We are looking for 100 people raise £200 annually for the next 5 years ... curry nights, coffee mornings, cakes sales ... the options are endless, and we will support you. For more information contact [Hifsa Haroon Iqbal](#) or [Judy O'Brien](#).
- **International Students** - Just a reminder that the International Students Centre (ISC) is now [International Student Support \(ISS\)](#)
- **Equality Forum** - We now have an [Equality Forum](#) for staff to keep up-to-date share information, debate and comment on current issues around equality, diversity and inclusion. Log on and have your say! To post articles contact [Clare Ridgley](#) or [Alison Hunt](#).
- **Equality Data** – in line with our Public Sector Equality Duties under the Equality Act 2010 we have published [Equality Data](#) that we use to monitor our progress and identify improvements to practice. Contact [Clare Ridgley](#) for information.
- **Disabled Staff Forum and Disabled Student's Engagement Group** – contact the Equality and Diversity Team to join and have your say on University developments.



For more information on Equality and Diversity at Staffordshire University visit www.staffs.ac.uk/diversity If you have any items for the next Newsletter please contact Alison Hunt on 01782 292775 or a.n.hunt@staffs.ac.uk