


PHOTOS: JEFF HOPKINS



A SENSE OF BELONGING

UNITY was launched in 2015 with an aim of building a network within which Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Partners could gain confidence and 'find a forum to be heard', says Baz Naik, Branch Manager, Waitrose King's Road, and UNITY Chair. "UNITY, like other Partnership networks, aspires to enhance a sense of belonging among Partners, share experience, challenge thinking and connect and unite Partners," he says. "Our vision is to support the Partnership with recognising, valuing and unlocking the potential of BAME Partners in our business."

 Keep up to date with the network's events and become a member by joining the UNITY Google+ community.

CLOCKWISE: Deborah Clarke, Rory Campbell, Director of Personnel Tracey Killen, Baz Naik, the UNITY committee, Partners networking

United we stand

The Partnership's UNITY network held an event recently that was attended by more than 90 Partners who were all interested in sharing their experiences, writes Kirsty Bennett

There are more people in the world who will help you and who will celebrate your successes, than there are people who will put barriers in your way." This was the message – or you might say mantra – that Rory Campbell shared with the audience of more than 90 Partners who attended the UNITY network's recent event.

UNITY is the Partnership's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic network and Rory was guest speaker at the event, which was held at Peter Jones in London and was the first of 2016. Career progression was the subject at

the heart of Rory's discussion with the group, which, fittingly, came just days after he officially took up his new role of Acting Partnership Registrar, John Lewis, joining its Management Board, on 4 April.

Rory said: "I love stories. Only through time do we realise the strength of stories – they help us make better choices. I'm going to share

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Rory Campbell, Acting Partnership Registrar, John Lewis

some quite personal stories."

Those stories touched on everything from his passion for martial arts and a memorable jiu jitsu defeat, to some of the disturbing discrimination experiences his family members suffered during his childhood – highlighting how success comes



through perseverance and a positive attitude. "I'd encourage you to find what it is that you love and that you are brilliant at," he said. "But you must stay humble, because no matter how brilliant you are, there is always something to learn."

A question and answer session revealed Partners' curiosity, as well as several reflections. Partnership Services' Deborah Clarke observed that "we've all got opportunities in the business, but we have to be the ones to grab them", while John Lewis Victoria's Alex

Bediako noted that although it can be difficult to talk about difference, "we need to have honesty". Rory, in response, recalled founder Spedan Lewis's reflections on the benefits of having 'mixed teams' of Partners (see *Comment*, p15).

Partner Survey was on the mind of Waitrose Canary Wharf's Mark Anderson, as he questioned what can be done to improve the scores in

ethnic minority groups: "What can we do to make that better?" Peter Jones's Khalid Afrah added: "Looking at the Partnership, what's the one thing that gives you hope?" Rory replied: "It's not common, in other businesses, to have the depth of meaning we have here at the Partnership. That's our gold dust."

Waitrose South Woodford's Lubna Aslam and Usha Panchal were in the audience. "Rory's words were

inspirational – he's absolutely right that we have to be hungry for what we want to achieve," says Lubna. "I'll definitely be attending the next UNITY event and I'll be bringing more people with me, too."

The conversation continued later on the network's Google+ community.

Waitrose Canary Wharf's Sim Sanni commented that Rory's stories were 'truly inspirational', reflecting

that the session "certainly made me think more about how I continue my personal journey in our business."

Waitrose Bracknell head office's Janice Johnson concluded: "I took away so many messages that could apply to any Partner, no matter what their background." 📢

What was the reaction?

Vida Kye, DM Retail Support, Waitrose Balham



'SINCE BECOMING A DM, ONE OF MY PRIORITIES HAS BEEN SUPPORTING PARTNERS TO DEVELOP THEIR CAREERS WITH THE PARTNERSHIP – IT'S REALLY ABOUT CONFIDENCE'

Karen Ward, Online Trade Fashion, John Lewis



'I'VE BEEN IN THE PARTNERSHIP FOR 25 YEARS AND THERE'S A LOT WE CAN LEARN BY SHARING EXPERIENCES AND KNOWLEDGE TO HELP OTHERS DEVELOP AND PROGRESS'

Deborah Clarke, Resourcing Manager, Partnership Services



'THERE'S NOT ENOUGH DIVERSITY IN OUR BUSINESS, PARTICULARLY IN SENIOR ROLES, AND I'M INTERESTED IN HOW I, AS AN INDIVIDUAL, CAN HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE'

Sydney Addo, Assistant Section Manager, Waitrose Balham



'EVENTS SUCH AS THIS ARE A GREAT WAY TO MEET NEW PEOPLE AND FIND OUT ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON ACROSS THE BUSINESS, AS WELL AS HEAR ABOUT PROGRESSION OPPORTUNITIES'