

Black History Month



Emeli Sandé

Born in Sunderland and raised in Aberdeenshire, Emeli wrote her first song at the age of 11 for her primary school talent show. By the age of 16, she was offered a record deal with Telstar; however, she turned it down to study neuroscience at the University of Glasgow. A highly creative, soprano artist, she awarded an MBE in 2017 for her contribution to music. In 2019, it was announced that Emeli was appointed as the new chancellor of the University of Sunderland.

Malorie Blackman

A talented and brave British children and young adults' writer, Malorie was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 2008. Her work is cutting-edge and recently her series Noughts & Crosses was released as a BBC Series. She gives a voice to ethical, racial and wider social issues and helps to flip the narrative on age old issues. Malorie - you challenge us to live bigger and be aware of our own biases. We salute you!

Mary Seacole

Born in 1805 and leaving this earth in 1881, Mary's legacy so great that in 2004 she was voted the greatest black Briton. Born in Jamaica, while Mary did not have formal British nursing qualifications or training, she was known for her compassion. When the Crimean War broke out, her help was refused; so, she decided to assist by opening the 'British Hotel' supporting British soldiers. Her book, Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands (1857), is one of the earliest autobiographies of a mixed-race woman.

Rose Hudson Wilkin

Born in Jamaica, Rose Josephine knew from a young age what she was going to invest her life into, that being Christian ministry. She is a British Anglican bishop, and notably, the very first black female to become a Church of England Bishop. She has had many exciting roles and has been the Bishop of Dover since 2019. Rose carries the honour of being an MBE and QHC an honorary chaplain to the Queen. She speaks out and stands up and we love her for this!

John Boyega

Born in Peckham, London, John's first acting role was as a leopard in a play while at Oliver Goldsmith Primary School. He rose to fame as Moses in the sci-fi comedy film Attack the Block and later became best known for playing Finn in the Star Wars sequel trilogy films. Taking an active stance against racism, he made a passionate speech at a Black Lives Matters rally in Hyde Park. In the 2020 Powerlist, John was listed in the Top 100 of the most influential people in the UK of African/African-Caribbean descent.

Mike Royal

Co-Chief Executive of Cinnamon Network UK, Mike is also a leader, speaker, activist, social entrepreneur, husband and policy adviser. With a first-class honours' degree in Urban Planning and a master's degree in Black Theology from the University of Birmingham, he works closely with local and central government agencies focusing on these issues. Passionate about racial justice and educational exclusion, he is a Non-Executive Director on a number of NGO's working in Birmingham UK and West Africa. Mike is a grass roots person who advocates and supports so many. We salute you Mike, you're a LEGEND!

Nicola Adams

Much loved and respected West Yorkshire wonder, Nicola is a British retired featherweight boxer who won Gold Medals at the 2012 and 2016 Olympics. She retired with an undefeated record and held the WBO female flyweight title in 2019. Incredibly, she is the first British boxer to successfully defend their Olympic title for 92 years. Her ability to emerge through the domestic violence within her family at a young aged shows her determination to stand up and move into better days.