

HAMMERSMITH

Academy

HAMMERSMITH ACADEMY

ALUMNI. *Magazine*

FEBRUARY 2025

IN THIS EDITION:

STAY IN TOUCH - SIGN UP • OMHARIA PIERRE • MOHAMAD KIANPISHEH • NAEEM MALEK
GIVING BACK • ALUMNI REUNION EVENT

Welcome



It is with great excitement that I welcome you to the very first edition of our Hammersmith Academy Alumni Magazine!

This publication marks an important milestone for us as we celebrate the launch of our formal alumni organisation, which began just this past summer. It has been truly heartwarming to see so many of you signing up to stay connected with the Academy. Hearing your stories and learning about the incredible paths you've taken since leaving our school has been a genuine pleasure.

We're also thrilled to be hosting our first-ever Alumni Reunion this June—a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with old friends, meet former teachers, and celebrate the achievements of our alumni community. Whether you've kept in touch over the years or are reconnecting for the first time, we'd love to see as many of you as possible join us for this special event.

As we continue to build our alumni network, we encourage all of you to stay connected with us. Together, we can celebrate the successes of our graduates, make valuable professional and personal connections, and support the next generation of Hammersmith Academy students.

Thank you for being part of this exciting journey. We look forward to staying in touch and creating more opportunities to celebrate our vibrant alumni community. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Lucy Frederick'.

Lucy Frederick
Alumni Coordinator

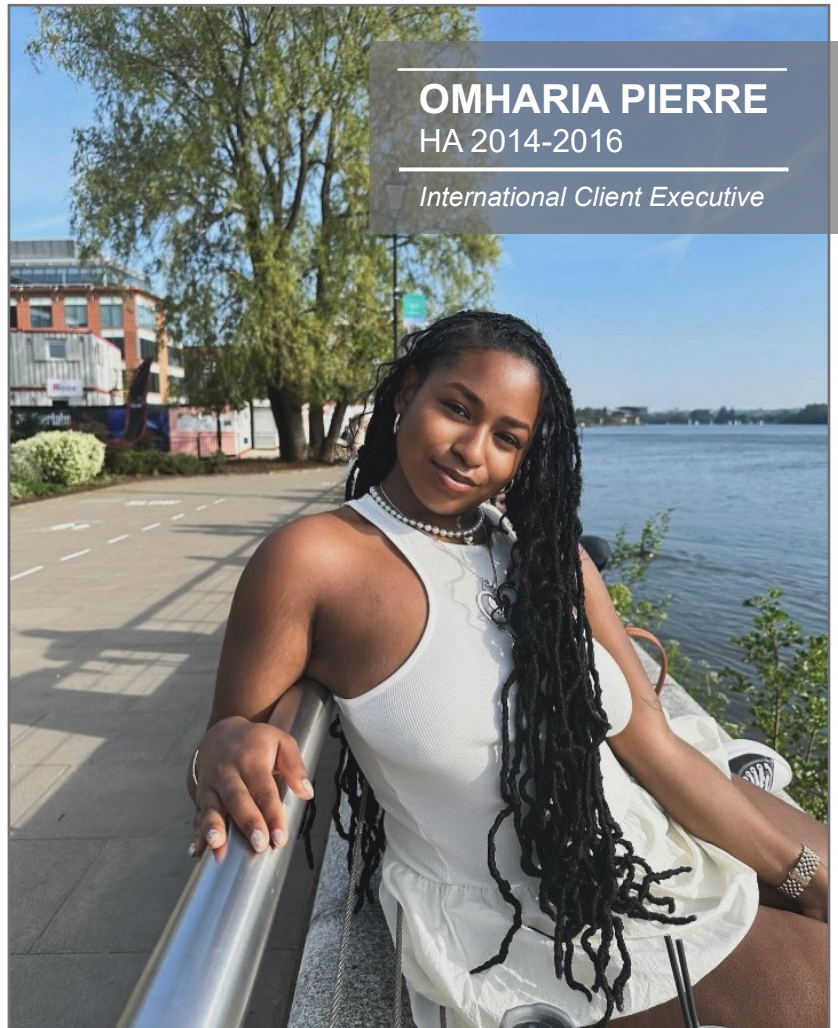
STAYING IN TOUCH

At Hammersmith Academy, we take immense pride in the accomplishments of our alumni, whose journeys beyond our school gates serve as a source of inspiration and aspiration for our community. In this section, we are delighted to showcase the fantastic achievements of our alumni, catching up with them as they navigate their careers, personal endeavours, and contributions to society.

By maintaining ties with the Academy, alumni have the opportunity to foster professional networks, rekindle friendships, and see how former classmates and peers are thriving in their respective fields. More importantly, this connection enables alumni to play a pivotal role in supporting the next generation of students—whether by sharing their expertise, providing mentorship, or offering insights into life beyond school.

We encourage all alumni to stay in touch and be part of this vibrant community. Whether you're looking to reconnect, explore networking opportunities, or contribute to the development of current and future students, there is a place for you within Hammersmith Academy's alumni network.

To join us, simply scan the QR code. ■



OMHARIA PIERRE

HA 2014-2016

International Client Executive

OMHARIA PIERRE

What job/study are you doing currently?

I work as an international client executive at Talon, the biggest independent Out Of Home planning and buying specialist agency based in London.

What does a typical day at work entail?

It's important to explain what Out Of Home Advertising is - because before I started this role, I wasn't quite sure either. I plan, buy and activate advertising spaces for clients

all around the world. This ranges from billboards, to bus wraps, London underground posters, experientials, banners, murals and more, everything you consume outside of your home!

I develop key account relationships with clients to maximise campaign effectiveness. Notable clients and campaigns include Estee Lauder Companies, Converse, Mandarin Oriental, Fossil Group, Saudi Tourism Authority and charities such as ActionAid, and Breast Cancer Awareness for ELC.

Best/worst thing about your job/course?

The best part of my job is seeing my campaign's come to life in person, it's such a surreal experience to know that you've put so much hard work into something and millions of people pass it everyday, even take photos! The worst part for me is having to work with maths, it's not my strong suit and it never has been.

I never thought I'd be in an industry where I have to work so much with numbers. I now work with maths everyday; it is a struggle but it's so vindicating to know that I'm learning and I'm pushing through my weak spots in order to succeed. If things come too easy, often it means you're not working hard enough, growing is being out of your depth and rising above it. So although this is the 'worst' part of my job, it goes hand in hand with what I'm most proud of accomplishing.

Greatest achievement so far?

I actually secured a one-year internship at Talon through Creative Access (a company who aid ethnic minorities to find work within creative industries). I quickly advanced from intern to Client Executive in just three months. Initially assigned to the international planning team, my skills and enthusiasm led them to bring me on board immediately, bypassing the marketing and UK planning teams I was set to explore for the duration of my internship. Becoming a permanent member of staff from an intern will always stay dear to my heart.

What skills did you develop at HA that you have taken with you?

100% confidence and the ability to lean on superiors who see your growth. School can be a challenging time but it is character building at it's finest. At HA my favourite classes were drama, history, English and tutor time (no maths involved). In these classes I really built my confidence with public speaking, and channelled my love for these subjects into succeeding. When a teacher sees your promise, you need to see that too and develop your skills wholeheartedly.

What do you look back fondly on during your time at HA?

I never took art as a GCSE but my close friends from HA did, we developed such strong bonds because after school I would go to the art room and STILL have the opportunity to immerse myself in this creative space without doing it as a subject. In school there are spaces you feel safest, teachers you feel the most comfortable with and friends you can be your authentic self with. It's so important to find that and after school in the art room was my happy place.

What advice would you give to current HA students?

As someone who works in the creative industry, this is for my fellow creatives. Figure out what you want to do (easier said than done, because you're so young and it's normal to not know exactly what!). Roadmap your prospective job opportunities and align the experience needed to succeed within them. For example, to become a

stylist, work in film, production or be an artist - I would suggest you go straight into the real world, fortify connections and work your way up! ■



Be a feature!

We'd love to hear your story - Whether you're climbing the career ladder, pursuing your passions, or making a difference in your community, share your journey with us and inspire others.

Get in touch to be featured in the next edition of the Alumni Magazine:
alumni@hammersmithacademy.org



MOHAMAD KIANPISHEH
 HA 2012-2019
Financial Analyst

MOHAMAD KIANPISHEH

What job are you in currently?

I am an analyst at Alvarez & Marsal in Dubai, working in the sovereign advisory team. We provide financial and operational advisory services to central banks, ministries of finance, sovereign wealth funds, multilateral development banks and more.

What does a typical day at work/study entail?

A typical day includes some form of analysis or study (e.g. macroeconomic, benchmarking...) that would then be developed to a set of actionable items for our clients to carry out.

Best/worst thing about your job?

Advising our clients in ways that deliver a positive impact which is rewarding.

Worst thing; working with sovereign clients, there are often scenarios where bureaucracy can limit our effectiveness.

Greatest achievement so far?

Taking a big step by moving to Dubai after university on my own to pursue my career.

What skills did you develop at HA that you have taken with you?

The greatest skill I learnt at HA was a growth mindset - keeping an open mind to anything that comes around as there is always an opportunity to learn something, even when making mistakes.

What do you look back fondly on during your time at HA?

I look back fondly on the memories with my friends and the relationships I built, many of which still exist to this day.

What advice would you give to current HA students?

Building your network and surrounding yourself with people you wish to be like is extremely important. I would also highly recommend taking advantage of the opportunities Sophie Harrowes brings, especially for those in Sixth Form as simply getting a degree isn't enough to stand out nowadays. ■



NAEEM MALEK

HA 2016-2023

Degree Apprentice

NAEEM MALEK

What job/study are you doing currently?

A Degree Apprenticeship in Civil Engineering working for GRAHAM Construction.

What does a typical day at work/study entail?

A usual work day will be from 8am-5pm and involves keeping a track of what site tasks need to be done throughout the day, usually reading and replying to so many emails, seeing if there are any problems/issues and ensuring any building work is being carried out according to the relevant drawings and design plans we are working against. Uni is one day a week and is from 9am-5pm and that's just back to back lectures throughout the day.

Best/worst thing about your job/course?

Best part of my job would be being able to be on site all the time using different types of equipment that I've never used before and also being able to get the best of both worlds (Uni + experience in the field, whilst being paid). The

environment and people I'm working with are also something that I love (I may or may not occasionally prank a few of them). Worst is a tough one to pick but if I had to, it would be time management. Working 8am-5pm 4 days a week with Uni one day a week is a lot to manage and coming from having half terms, summer and winter holidays etc. to now only having 30 days for the whole year is a huge difference.

Greatest achievement so far?

It would have to be winning the Mercers' Company Award back when I left HA in July of last year. I've also ticked off a few things off of my bucket list since then, such as camping and travelling.

What skills did you develop at HA that you have taken with you?

There are a lot of skills I've developed at HA that I'm using now. The main ones I would say are communication, teamwork and problem solving, as well as pretty much every design skill you could need, all from DT.

What do you look back fondly on during your time at HA?

I look back on all the people I would see every day since Year 7 and

through Sixth Form, but also the community aspect you could feel from being there and the various opportunities that were always available to you whatever year you were in.

What advice would you give to current HA students?

My advice to current students generally, would be to always keep your mind open to different opportunities and things available to you. For a long time I was heavily set on doing architecture but after doing one bit of construction and engineering work experience, that I enjoyed a lot, I looked more into engineering and here I am. ■



Want to give back?

Are you an alum who wants to make a difference? Whether it's through mentoring, delivering a talk, offering career advice, or sharing your story, your support can inspire and guide the next generation of Hammersmith Academy students.

To get involved, contact the Alumni Office at: alumni@hammersmithacademy.org

We'd love to hear from you!

GIVING BACK

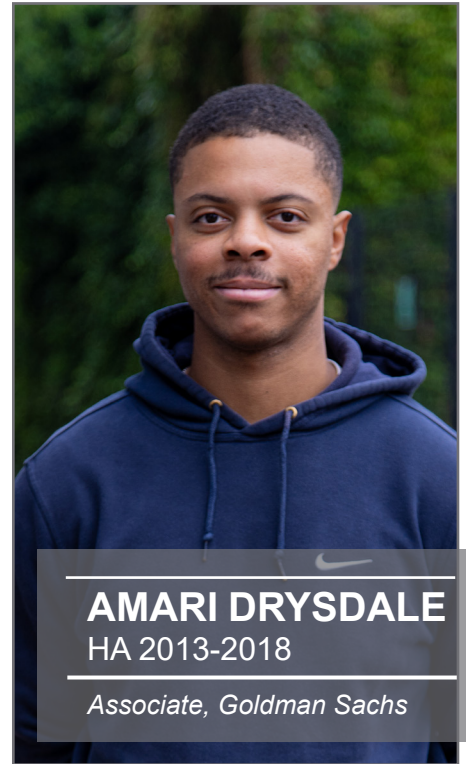
At Hammersmith Academy, we're proud of our alumni not only for their accomplishments but for the ways they give back to support our current students. A shining example is Amari Drysdale (HA 2013-2018), who recently returned to the Academy as part of Team UPSide, a charity he helped establish to empower young people in achieving their academic and professional goals.

In September 2024, Team UPSide ran a week-long Careers and Learning Breakfast Club for our Sixth Form students. This initiative provided students with one-to-one guidance from young professionals representing diverse sectors such as finance, medicine, and marketing. Amari, who went on to study at the University of Oxford and now works at Goldman Sachs, was one of the dedicated volunteers. Alongside Team UPSide's founder and chairman, Sulaiman Iqbal, he has been instrumental in shaping the charity's mission to inspire and guide young people.

Students spoke highly of the event and its impact, "The support and guidance was beyond amazing. We went into real depth and found the exact things which could work for me. The talk was assertive, and we got to a point where I felt very motivated just by hearing the short steps I need to take for success."

The Breakfast Club was an incredible success, with many students returning each day to meet with different professionals and explore a variety of career and university options. Amari's dedication to giving back to the Academy community is a testament to the strength of our alumni network and the enduring connection between past and present students.

We're excited to welcome Team UPSide back in 2025 to follow up on the students' progress and continue inspiring the next generation of leaders and changemakers. ■



AMARI DRYSDALE
HA 2013-2018

Associate, Goldman Sachs



If you are interested in volunteering or supporting Team UPSide, please visit www.teamupside.org



Alumni Inspiring Careers

Amari isn't the only ex-HA student to have returned to school in the last year, Head of Careers & Cultural Connections, Ms Harrowes has been really happy to welcome some great inspirational volunteers to share their life experiences since leaving.

Our Year 7 Careers Conference in the summer term is a fabulous and slightly chaotic event, with our youngest students circulating between five different alumni who talk about their time at HA, how they made decisions about everything from GCSEs onwards and what their job is like. Last year we loved hearing from Ashley Ntumba (Personal Trainer and Rowing Coach, Fulham Reach Boat Club), Nadim Choudhury (HR Coordinator, Fitch Group), Ayat

Saeed (Ad Review Specialist, Snap Inc.), Ermir Bela (Architecture Degree Apprentice, BDP) and Anis Uddin (Physician Associate in GP practice).

We've also welcomed students to speak on careers panels, including most recently the wonderful Neve Kearney (Motor Vehicle Maintenance Technician) at the Year 11 Next Steps Event, Chandler Pierre (Assistant Producer, Rogan Productions) and Linda Ali (Associate Solicitor, Mishcon de Reya) who spoke at the Year 12 Drop Down Day. We've really enjoyed the opportunity to learn from the ever-generous Naeem Malek (Civil Engineering Degree Apprentice at Graham Group), Hamza El-Bakkali (Project Manager, IBM) and Shehab Ahmed (BlackRock Apprentice), all of whom have a strong sense of commitment to the HA community and really put themselves out to help students understand how to navigate the route into apprenticeships. We're also very lucky to have benefited recently from ex-students sharing their insight into the unique challenges of gaining a place at Oxford and Cambridge, including Calvin Hartley, Mai Kheir - and of course Amari.

Ms Harrowes is particularly proud of the contribution made by our alumni: "I love seeing our alumni walk through the door, looking slightly like they can't quite believe they're back again, and so full of great and relevant advice for our younger students who look up to them and gain so much from hearing their relatable stories about the challenges of making their school to career journeys. I can't thank our ex-students enough for taking the time out of their work and studies, persuading bosses to release them and travelling back to HA. I always feel quite emotional to see them and I know that Mr Kynaston and other long-serving teachers feel equally proud when we hear about your struggles and your triumphs. Please keep in touch and keep coming back!" ■

REUNION EVENT



We are delighted to announce Hammersmith Academy's inaugural Alumni Reunion event, taking place on Wednesday 18th June 2025, from 5pm to 8pm. This event marks the first time we are bringing together our alumni since the opening of the Academy in 2011.

Over the past 14 years, Hammersmith Academy has seen over a thousand students graduate and embark on diverse paths, pursuing careers and making their own mark in the world. This reunion is your chance to reconnect, share your journey, and celebrate the successes of our ever-growing alumni community. The opportunity to meet with former teachers who played an instrumental role in shaping your school years. Networking opportunities to forge valuable connections with fellow alumni.

Event Information:

- **Date:** Wednesday 18th June 2025, 5pm to 8pm
- **Location:** Hammersmith Academy Garden
- **Alumni:** For those who left the Academy prior to summer 2022
- **Welcome address & keynote speeches**
- **Refreshments:** Drinks and freshly made pizza bites
- **Networking & catching up**

Whether you're just starting out in your career or well-established in your field, this is a fantastic chance to reconnect with old friends, expand your network, and relive fond memories of your time at Hammersmith Academy.

We warmly invite students who left up until August 2022 and former staff to attend. To secure your place, please RSVP by [clicking on the link here](#). We look forward to welcoming you back and celebrating the legacy of Hammersmith Academy together.

Let's make this first reunion an event to remember! ■

SIGN UP
NOW! 



Hammersmith Academy Alumni


25 Cathnor Road, London W12 9JD


T: 020 8222 6000


E: alumni@hammersmithacademy.org

W: hammersmithacademy.org

Find out what's going on at HA every day!

 Like us on Facebook
facebook.com/hammersmithacademy

 Follow us on X
[@HammersmithAcad](https://twitter.com/HammersmithAcad)

 Follow us on Instagram
Instagram.com/hamacad

 Subscribe on YouTube



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®
We invest in people Silver

INSPIRE

CREATE

SUCCEED