

National Careers Week 2022, Teacher Case Studies:

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Around 13 years ago I took a career break from a graduate management program to volunteer in Tanzania for 3 months. The experience completely changed my outlook and priorities and to cut a long story short, I quit my job, moved back home to Durham and began my PGCE at Durham University. I was fortunate to secure a history teaching job at a local secondary school who were extremely supportive of career development opportunities.

At the end of my NQT year I applied to complete training with the Holocaust Education Trust at Yad Vashem and my journey with Holocaust education began. I knew I had found my calling and although a Medievalist at heart, I was always on the lookout for Holocaust education CPD. Applying to become a UCL Beacon School was the next logical step and allowed me to immerse myself in the most recent Holocaust research and pedagogy. At the same time, I secured a TLR for student voice and I am

sure that my work to become a beacon school was instrumental in the growth of my confidence and successful completion of my NPQML and masters in teaching and learning.

Specifically reflecting on the work to become a UCL Beacon School, I developed a scheme of learning which I am still extremely proud of. It was part of the reasons we were awarded the quality assurance mark for Holocaust education. My work with UCL meant rewards both inside and outside of the classroom. As I gained confidence I met with governors, senior leaders and esteemed members of the local community. One of my proudest moments was presenting at Durham County's hate crime awareness event, having been invited by the then Police and Crime Commissioner. I've lost count of the talks I've given to students, staff and at Holocaust memorial events. I remember a member of staff speaking to me at the end of some CPD I had delivered saying it had been like a TED Talk and I knew then that my public speaking skills had certainly improved!

Alongside my network in County Durham, I developed contacts with the Defiant Requiem Foundation in Washington DC and was due to fly out before the pandemic hit. I think I am still the only Defiant Requiem Foundation Ambassador in the UK. Closer to home, I most recently secured another Head of History role at Bedminster Down School in Bristol. Starting in September, I have led on Black History month assemblies as well as Holocaust Memorial Day activities across the school. I have set up two clubs, one being our genocide awareness project. I am leading on Holocaust education across the secondary schools within the Trust and have just delivered some CPD to other heads of history.

If you had asked me at university where I saw my career path going, I would have never said teaching. But now, I can honestly say I believe I was born to do it. There is no better feeling than inspiring students in a classroom. Actually, there is possibly one - I was recently asked to proof read an application for initial teacher training by a student I had taught in Y9. I can't remember the exact wording but do remember her stating it was her history teacher teaching the Holocaust that had inspired her. I hope to inspire generations to come. I'm not sure where the next step of my career will be but what I know for sure is you'll find me in a school, probably talking about the Holocaust!