unity '10

The newsletter of Football Unites, Racism Divides

INSIDE

South Africa WC2010
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Sharrow United
U-mix

football unites racism divides

www.furd.org

Welcome to the fourth edition of 'Unity', FURD's annual newsletter.

'Football Unites, Racism Divides' is a youth and social inclusion project and charity based in Sheffield which works locally, nationally and internationally to combat racism and increase understanding between different communities.

FURD has come through the most difficult period in its fifteen year history, tragically and prematurely losing three close friends in Tom Collins, Ahmed Hassan and Kola Lucas in the space of four months in 2009.

In addition, the economic and political situation means that we are entering an uncertain period for third sector organisations. The imminent closure of the Football Foundation's Community Grants programme will hit us hard, as it will over a hundred community initiatives across the country.

Nevertheless FURD has a great future ahead, with many new initiatives planned or underway. These include a Big Lottery-funded three year research project, 'Football - A shared sense of belonging?' a Heritage Lottery Fund project on the iconic Arthur Wharton, and most of all, the rapid development of the 'Urban-Mix' MyPlace facility at Lowfields, which is on schedule to provide a new home for FURD from july 2011.

U-Mix: the future for FURD

Offside: South African Footballers in the UK

On the back of this newsletter, you'll find a poster about South African footballers who've played in the UK, from 1899 up to the present.

The poster contains a summary of some in-depth research that FURD has carried out into the history of South African footballers in the UK. The research forms the basis of an exhibition, 'Offside: Kick Ignorance Out, Football Unites Racism Divides', to be held at the District Six Museum, Cape Town, South Africa. The exhibition will open at the start of the World Cup finals in June 2010 and is expected to run until the end of 2010.

The exhibition, which features life size comic strip style cut-outs of players, includes many fascinating stories and some shocking ones. It aims to use the players' stories to highlight the effects of the apartheid system in South Africa and of the post-colonial relationship between Britain and South Africa.

The project is a partnership between FURD, Kick It Out in the UK, the British Council in Cape Town and the District Six Museum.

The exhibition was researched and written as part of FURD's Resources and Information work. This work also encompasses a unique lending library of anti-racist resources (browse the catalogue on our website), loanable exhibitions, online information through our website, and an enquiry service to answer any questions you may have on issues around race, sport and equality.

Contact Ruth Johnson at FURD for more details.

U-mix

In summer 2011, FURD is due to move to a brand new home 400 metres away from our present base, adjacent to Lowfield School, just a few minutes walk from our current base on Sharrow Lane.

myplace

The building will also house The Hub African-Caribbean Centre. The U-Mix facility is being funded by the government's MyPlace programme, designed to provide first-class modern facilities for young people to take part in positive activities.

It will include a dance studio, performing arts area, IT learning suite, activity space and two changing rooms to service an adjacent floodlit all-weather training area, plus improvements to the open space and new play facilities.

Young people are central to the planning and delivery of MyPlace projects, and to make sure this happens, FURD and The Hub are supporting 'Urban Mixtures,' a young people's steering group. The group meets on Monday evenings to discuss key issues regarding this project. Two of the Urban Mixtures group, Chesenga Mulomo and Ebony Stedford have enjoyed the meetings:

Chesenga :
"Coming to these meetings has helped me to become more understanding and open-minded about other people's views".

Ebony:
"They have helped me to improve my social skills and be more outspoken. They have also helped me to listen more to what other people have to say".

Both
"As members of a performing arts group, we are most looking forward to using the dance and performance arts area".

For more information, visit www.lowfieldmyplace.blogspot.com or contact FURD if you are interested in joining Urban Mixtures.

Football
A shared sense of belonging?

FURD is undertaking a three year research project, funded by the Big Lottery, that will investigate the role football might have in helping refugees, asylum seekers and other new migrants to settle into British life.

One of the main aims of the project is to offer an opportunity for new arrivals to tell their stories about living in Britain, how they have come to be here and the informal aspects of British culture, such as football, that may help with integration.

We are looking for refugees and asylum seekers to get involved with the project as both volunteer researchers, who will help with research tasks such as interviewing and observation, and research participants who are willing to be interviewed and tell us about their experiences.

Contact Chris Stone at FURD for more details.

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Vibes & Unity

Thirty FURD V volunteers organised a second 'Vibes and Unity' event at Devonshire Green, Sheffield city centre, in May 2010, aimed at encouraging young people to vote in the local and general elections.

The programme featured the first public performances by the FURD 'Sound Kickers' groups from Sharrow and Parson Cross, plus dance groups, DJs, children's activities together with Sharrow Sure Start, information stalls and the 'Streetkick' inflatable football pitch.

Mehrun Ahmed, FURD V volunteering coordinator says: "The purpose of Vibes and Unity is to encourage young people to be aware of their rights to vote and to not lose that given right. It's non-political but it's also about raising awareness of racism, and focusing on unity and respect amongst people."

We are planning to 'roll out' the Vibes and Unity mix of football, music and dance across South Yorkshire in the next two years, as part of a FURD initiative to build a young person-led popular campaign against extremist groups seeking to promote hatred between communities.

In addition FURD can offer sessions in schools, colleges and with youth groups delivered by FURD's Education Worker, Lisa Sultanti, who says:

"You should never be complacent about racism. Negative information is drip-fed through the media and targets vulnerable groups like refugees and Muslims. That is why it is so important to make an ongoing effort to combat racism, starting in schools".

FURD has developed an educational module based around our 'It's Your Call' dvd, which deals with issues of knife-crime and racist bullying, and incorporates workshops in t-shirt making and lyrics writing.

Youth Music Power Play

sound kickers

Our 'Sound Kickers' music project operates in the Sharrow and Parson Cross areas of Sheffield and its aims are to provide music making opportunities for young people aged 8-18 years old and volunteering opportunities for 18-25 year olds. It's one of the new 'Power Play' projects funded by Youth Music which is the UK's largest children's music charity and partners include Sheffield United and Sheffield Wednesday football clubs. Young people can come to the weekly events and learn to DJ, make their own Beats and Basslines using the 'Logic' computer program, receive tuition on guitar, keyboards or drums and also experience what it's like to play with others in a 'band' environment. Moony Wainwright, project manager and trainee music leader, really enjoyed the lyric writing workshops. He said,

"It was a great experience! A chance for us to hear what was on the young people's minds and the performance at the end of the session showed the young people to be really supportive of each other. There was a lot of smiling and really good vibes".

One the exciting things about the Sound Kickers project is its use of music technology, which gives young people the power to compose music that sounds comparable to their favourite artists in a short time frame. All that is required is enthusiasm and an idea: one of our young people, Sheeraz, describes his experience of the project:

"I think the Sound kickers project was a really good, amazing experience, I enjoyed it all and it opened up my mind about producing music".

The two football clubs' involvement extends to a competition for participants in the project to compose a 'run-out' song for the club, with the winning entry to be played at a home game during the 2010/11 season.

Contact Moony at FURD for more information.

Volunteering at FURD

V is a national volunteering charity that aims to involve young people aged 16-25 in their own communities.

FURD volunteers are involved in many initiatives, such as workshops and festivals as well as our mobile sports arena, Streetkick. Volunteers work in their own community and learn about civic responsibility. They get training and these new skills look great on a CV. Volunteers can do as much or as little as they like. Some choose to get involved in particular events that sound appealing, while some volunteers get involved as often as possible. We also welcome fresh ideas and support projects that our volunteers suggest.

The energy and enthusiasm of volunteers is great - they're there because they want to be, not because they have to.

To get involved, send us an email, give us a call or drop by our office. We're on Facebook and Twitter too. FURD will contact you about what events we have coming up to see if you want to get involved. Contact FURD V coordinator Mehrun Ahmed.

FURD volunteer Paul Rodda says;

"I'm doing my Level 1 Coaching at the moment and regularly help out with football coaching at the Sheffield United academy.

I heard about V when someone I play football with started doing volunteering and he told me about it. It's perfect for me because I love football and it's a chance for me to be involved as often as possible.

Eventually I'd like to get a job from it. It's such a great opportunity to be coaching kids as well as learning from experienced coaches so hopefully I can take it as far as possible."

Positive Futures with FURD

positivefutures

FURD operates a Positive Futures programme, using activities to engage with young people. Many of the young people to be considered as being 'at risk' particularly with regards to drug misuse, anti-social behaviour, crime and exclusion.

The scheme works in partnership with other FURD projects to provide a wide range of opportunities for young people, including football coaching sessions and tournaments; youth club sessions; holiday programmes; residential trips; music and dance sessions; and accredited training.

Many young people recruited through the Positive Futures programme have gone on to play a key role as volunteers - such as the FURD futsal team which is organised by Sandro Vasheklidze (centre of back row) and Mukhtar Mohammed (centre of front row). Contact Simon Hycalth for more information.

'That's why football is called the beautiful game'

In 2000, 3 Asian teenagers approached FURD to ask for help in setting up a football team. Sharrow United was born, and entered a local league in August 2000. After overcoming many challenges, in 2010 the club won promotion to the Premier Division of the Meadowhall Sunday League. As they celebrate their tenth anniversary, one of the founders, Asim Shazad, reflects upon the club's progress.

How did Sharrow United first come about?

Me and some friends were playing in local leagues and we encountered some problems of intimidation. We approached FURD about setting up our own team - I was 15 at the time and we couldn't do all the paperwork but FURD supported us and helped us start out.

What were the ambitions for the club?

At the start, it was really difficult to deal with the abuse we got because we were predominantly Asian. In those days we couldn't see past the next game and just came out battling to prove we can play football. There are stereotypes such as 'Asians can't play football,' so to begin it was all about trying to prove that we could play good football and wanting to be taken seriously.

What things have changed the most over the years?

We are a lot more disciplined now. We used to get wound up easily but we've learnt to handle pressure. Nowadays opponents show more respect for us and acknowledge our talents. Everyone wants to beat us - but we consider that a great compliment.

What have been the proudest achievements for you and the club?

Forming the team was our proudest moment. It's not just about playing football - there are lots of different cultures, races and religions within the team, all brought together through Sharrow United. No one cares about who is what - everyone wants to just enjoy football and that's why football is called the 'beautiful game'. The atmosphere at this club is special.

What advice would you give to young talented Asian kids who want to get involved in football?

Be proactive and make people notice players out there but it is important to be confident and pursue your dream of playing football.