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Mulberry Schools Trust and Mercedes-Benz Grand Prix host first Mulberry STEM Academy event for 2021 scholars

- First event for Mulberry STEM Academy took place on Saturday 27 February
- 40 successful scholars joined James Allison and Mercedes F1 team members for virtual event
- Careers talk provides a look inside the team and inspiration for future education choices

In November 2020, the Mulberry Schools Trust announced an innovative partnership with Mercedes-Benz Grand Prix Ltd and the creation of the Mulberry STEM Academy, a Saturday/holiday provision offering an inspirational programme in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) for students aged 7-18 within the Mulberry family of schools and beyond.

Launched by Lewis Hamilton and Toto Wolff through a virtual event from the team's headquarters to students from Mulberry Academy Shoreditch, Mulberry School for Girls and Mulberry UTC, the Mulberry STEM Academy provides a specialised programme for young people who have talent, passion and aptitude in STEM subjects, providing them with extracurricular learning and inspirational experiences through vocational training, study and masterclasses.

Over 100 applications were received from students across the three schools for the 20 places available in Years 10 and 12. A rigorous selection process, with interviews conducted remotely adding to the challenge for the young students, resulted in the selection of the first cohort of STEM scholars to win a place on this year's programme.

On Saturday 27 February, the first exciting event in this year's programme was launched to provoke excitement, curiosity and a sense of community. The 40 successful STEM scholars, along with CEO, Dr Vanessa Ogden, joined the Mercedes F1 team through a virtual event for an inspirational Careers Talk with Technical Director James Allison, Chief People Officer Paul Mills and four of the team's Graduates, who volunteered to be part of the stimulating STEM programme. Several former Mulberry Schools Trust students who are studying Science, Computer Science and Engineering at university also joined the event, alongside members of the Mulberry Schools Trust Board.

Designed to introduce the Mulberry students to the team and inspire them as they set out making decisions on their future education and careers, the groups heard from the team's Graduates about their roles, how their education choices influenced their career paths, and what it is like to work for a World Championship winning Formula One team, taking the opportunity to ask many insightful questions.

The majority of students at the Mulberry Schools Trust are from Black, Asian and minority ethnic and disadvantaged backgrounds, groups which are very under-represented in skilled areas of STEM industries*. Mercedes F1 and Mulberry hope that the establishment of the Mulberry STEM Academy will give students the knowledge, skills, experiences and confidence to move forward into careers in engineering, design and science-based industries, and in turn become the role models of the future for their peers and younger students at the Mulberry Schools Trust.

Dr Vanessa Ogden, CEO of the Mulberry Schools Trust and Headteacher of Mulberry School for Girls continued: “I am delighted with the success of our first event with Mercedes-Benz Grand Prix. Our Mulberry STEM Academy scholars were thrilled to meet the employee graduates, who were all highly aspirational. Imaginations were sparked and ambitions raised, as our students listened to the different educational routes that can lead to a flourishing career in STEM. Our young people deserve the best and we know that exposure to high quality, stimulating events like this will propel them more quickly into exciting futures and desired destinations. We look forward to seeing our students grow in confidence as they progress through the programme over the coming months.”

Paul Mills, Chief People Officer at Mercedes-Benz Grand Prix Ltd concluded: “The first event of our Mulberry STEM Academy programme has been eagerly anticipated and meeting this year’s cohort of students on Saturday was the moment that I most looked forward to since we created the concept last year. I am very grateful to the team at Mulberry who have worked so hard and with such determination, on top of the significant challenges faced by all schools over the past year, to enable us to reach this point so quickly; their efforts have been truly remarkable. Together, we have developed a uniquely exciting curriculum for our scholars, designed to ignite their passion for STEM and build confidence and aspirations for their future education and careers. Although we were not able to meet in person, the enthusiasm and ability of the group shone through, and we were also delighted to be joined by several former Mulberry Schools Trust students who are now studying STEM subjects at university, providing further insight and encouragement. On behalf of everyone at Mercedes F1, we are delighted to have begun our programme and look forward to welcoming and supporting the students over the course of this year. Thank you to all involved in the event from the teachers to the students, our team employees and the Mulberry Schools Trust board for their efforts.”

James Allison, Technical Director commented: “I was honoured to be asked to take part in the first Mulberry STEM Academy event this weekend. Having heard from Toto and Lewis about the eagerness and inquisitive nature of the Mulberry students at the November launch, I was very interested to meet the group for myself and find out what has inspired them to dedicate their Saturdays and holidays to further study. I was not disappointed; the commitment and enthusiasm shown and the insightful questions asked, were inspirational. I have little doubt that all of the students we met on Saturday have bright futures ahead of them, but I hope that today’s presentation will have offered them further encouragement to go on to study STEM subjects at university. I look forward to seeing how the STEM Academy programme develops over the next few months and the progress that the students make as they work alongside and within our team.”

*Engineering UK 2018:

9% are of Black, Asian and minority ethnic background; 12% are women; 24% are from low socio-economic background.

Ends

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About the Mulberry Schools Trust

The Mulberry Schools Trust is a flourishing multi-academy trust set up in 2016 in Tower Hamlets. The family of schools includes Mulberry Academy Shoreditch, Mulberry School for Girls and Mulberry UTC, and it is currently working with the Local Authority and the Department for Education to build a new school in Wapping, Mulberry Academy London Dock. The Trust believes in the power of local partnerships with families, other schools and the communities that it serves.

Mulberry Academy Shoreditch and Mulberry School for Girls are judged 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and Mulberry UTC, a relatively new school, was judged 'Good' earlier this year. Attainment and progress of schools within the Mulberry Schools Trust is significantly above the national average at GCSE and A Level.

The Trust takes great pride in its extensive network of partners, covering all key areas: education, business, community and culture including the University of Cambridge, the Prince's Trust, Barts Health NHS Trust, Bank of America Merrill Lynch, the British Film Institute, the National Theatre and the WOW Foundation. Each of its partnerships contribute to and enrich the curriculum offer for students and form an integral part of the Trust's unique and inspiring learning environment. These strong collaborative partnerships provide students with exceptional opportunities which support and enhance their learning including practical activities, trips, motivational speakers, school visits and mentoring.

Above all, the Trust's partnership activities broaden students' horizons and takes their learning beyond the classroom.

DIGITAL CHANNELS & RESOURCES

Mulberry Schools Trust

Website: www.mulberryschoolstrust.org

Twitter: @MulberryTH

Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula One Team

Media Site: media.mercedesamgf1.com

Website: mercedesamgf1.com

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