

## Questions posed to the Black Members Committee on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020

### *• What is the BMC, and where does it sit in the Bectu structure?*

The Black Members Subcommittee is one of four equality committees (Women, LGBT, Disability) that comprise members of the various divisions that make up the Bectu sector. That includes LPD, RPD, BBC, IB, A&E, BT and Digital. It is a subcommittee of the sector executive committee.

### *• How many reps are there, how are they elected?*

There are 11 members. Eight are elected by their respective divisions at their AGM and the committee is allowed to co-opt a further three. Because of how popular the committee is, last year we put a call out to branches re co-opting the three members. These are selected by ballot by the BMSC committee members.

### *• What does it do? Past campaigns, lobbying, etc*

A few examples:

#### Theatre Diversity Action Plan

We believe that a key way to drive change is for productions and companies to publish their equality monitoring data as it makes them accountable for their hiring decisions. BECTU led the entertainment unions in successfully campaigning for the Arts Council to release diversity data to publicly funded theatre. Once this data was published it showed that BAME representation was poor so we developed the [Theatre Diversity Action Plan](#). This easy step-by-step plan aims to help theatres increase BAME diversity by examining their recruiting practices and getting opportunities to a wider talent pool of BAME workers. 131 theatres signed up to our plan across England, Scotland and Wales including nearly all the West End theatres.

Additionally, the committee set up a [partnership last year with the Dept for Work and Pensions](#) and the Job Centres in London (and later Cardiff), invited the theatres to send their vacancies to the job centres which circulated them to the entire London job centres network encouraging unemployed BAME workers to apply, and people really did start getting jobs in West End theatres.

#### Black Hair & Make Up

- The BMSC developed a [program](#) with Equity to deal with the issue of Black actors not getting their hair & make-up done to the same standard as their white colleagues. This led to a training program where professional make up artists were trained, with professional Black actors as models, to improve their professional skills in this area. The program is continuing to be run by BECTU and is in great demand and it was recently repeated by Screen Skills.

#### Move On Up

- We believe that one way to help increase BAME representation in our industries is to assist employers to find BAME professionals to hire, which removes the excuse that they can't find any, and assist BAME professionals to make these contacts. Move On Up is a successful scheme that has been [running from 2003](#) that gives professional BAME workers the opportunity to have one to one interviews with executives and heads of department in film & TV. First run at the TUC Congress Hall, over the 10 events 6,000 meetings were set up between 2,000 BAME professionals and 800 executives from across broadcasting and film that has resulted in workers getting jobs and furthering their careers. Specialist MOU events have also taken place focusing on News and Radio. [Regional MOU events have taken place in Manchester](#). We helped the Professional Footballers Association adapt our model for their purposes.

### **Project Diamond**

- Also on transparency we have been campaigning to make [Project Diamond](#) (the broadcasters' equality monitoring initiative) publish equality monitoring data for their individual productions. Lobbying has taken place to government, broadcasters and PACT to release programme level data so that the union can see which programmes are doing good and bad at BAME diversity. [We formed a cross union alliance with Equity, NUJ, Musicians Union and the Writer's Guild](#) in pressurising Creative Diversity Network and the broadcasters in releasing this data and implementing change, as done with the Arts Council and theatre. The BBC has begun to do so.

### **Setting employment targets**

- We believe that in addition to transparency with equality monitoring, employers should set targets for employing more BAME workers. With camera branch we are looking at asking camera dept hirers to do this particularly when hiring on short shoots, where it is standard practice to try our new people. This would enable BAME professionals to prove their competence and make new contacts with people they'd never worked with before, and hopefully this would lead to employment on more and better productions.

### **BECTU/PACT Film/Drama agreement negotiations**

- We have proposed a major diversity agreement for the signatories to the PACT-BECTU Major Motion Picture Agreement which would commit them to having development programmes for HoDs and grades below HoD, work to increase BAME employment on their productions, share their equality monitoring data with the union and work constructively with the union.

### **Tackling Racism At Work**

- We have developed Racism At Work campaign that is planned to involve the other FEU unions and to tackle overt and covert discrimination within the industry.

### **Zoom On Up**

- We are developing an evolution of Move On Up that involves BAME professionals meeting TV/Film executives in one to one meetings via Zoom.

### **BMSC Network**

- Creating a wider BMSC Network. We hope that the BMSC Network will enable more people to link up with the BMSC, and its activities whilst also making them aware of the support for them within the union, and enable the BMSC to report on progress.

Basically, we're not a talking shop. We have achieved results in the past and have got a reputation for challenging the industry to level the playing field for BAME workers.

#### ***• How can our Branch members get involved with the BMC individually?***

The black members' committee members represent the members of their divisions as well as drawing upon their own experiences as BAME professionals. If you want to get on to the BMSC, the best way would be to stand for election at your next divisional AGM. Another way is to respond for the next call out for co-opted members and get elected by the BMSC.

We hope that the BMSC Network will provide a way to link up, however we are very happy to have discussions with members to enable them to feed into the campaigns and hear what others are doing.

#### ***• How can the BMC help the Costume Branch form an effective campaign?***

The way that this is happening with other branches is to work out what issues there are in that department, what the branch would like to do and then discuss how the branch might want to address the issues.

We could start with discussing how are people hired in costume and wardrobe and how under-represented BAME workers are, and what other issues you are aware of that you would like to address.