

Appendix 1 – Sir Howard Bernstein Development Fund Case Study



Mariajacky arrived in the UK from Uganda when she was 7 years old, living and attending school in east Manchester with her family. It quickly became obvious that she was a studious and intelligent student. Mariajacky experienced some difficult personal and family circumstances that meant she had to return to Uganda half way through her secondary education and attend a boarding school. This was a shock and a hard transition. In 2016 she was delighted to be able to return to the UK. In her final year of high school, Mariajacky became estranged from her family and was supported by her school, social services and Centre Point to move into supported accommodation. This put her under extreme financial pressure, meaning she needed to take on a part time job at KFC, whilst studying full time.

During her GCSE exam period, Mariajacky attended the Ariana Grande concert at the Arena on 22nd May 2017. Fortunately she was physically unharmed as a result of the attack, but had experienced an extremely traumatic event at an already stressful time in her life. Despite this she made it to school the following day as she was focussed on her pending exams and her plans for A Level study at sixth form college. Mariajacky says that the experience made her more determined as she felt lucky to be alive.

Despite her experiences and disruptions to her education, she went on to achieve 6 A*s, 2 As and 1 B in her GCSEs and went on to study Maths, Physics and Economics A Levels. She continued to be a hardworking student, giving up her part time job to focus on her academic studies and to work towards her ambition of progressing to university. She was encouraged to apply to Cambridge and received a conditional offer needing 2 A* and 1A to take up the offer.

Mariajacky was being supported by her college, ex-school and Church but was still experiencing severe financial hardship which was impacting on her studies. At this point she was referred to **We Love Manchester Charity**. The charity was delighted to provide financial support under the **Manchester's Rising Stars Fund**. This paid for a much needed laptop and her travel to college and the library, easing the financial pressure in her final months of A Level study and in the run up to exams, and allowing her to avoid returning to casual work at the expense of her studies.

Mariajacky continued to study day and night and incredibly achieved 2 A's and 1 C in her final exams. She is an inspirational young woman who has overcome adversity to achieve her goals, and is indeed a Rising Star! Mariajacky has just embarked on her

next chapter at Leeds University where she will be studying BSc Aviation Technology with Pilot Studies. We Love Manchester provided a further **Manchester's Rising Stars** grant to help fund her university essentials such as text books and her all-important Pilot uniform!

We wish her all the best at University and beyond, and are proud to be a part of her future success.