

Keynote Speakers



Hope Virgo Author of Stand Tall Little Girl and Mental Health Campaigner / Public Speaker @HopeVirgo

As the Author of Stand Tall Little Girl, and an international leading advocate for people with eating disorders, Hope helps young people and employers to deal with the rising tide of mental health issues which affect one in four people and costs employers between £33-£42 billion annually. Hope is also a recognised media spokesperson, having appeared on various platforms including BBC Newsnight, Victoria Derbyshire, Good Morning Britain, Sky News and BBC News. On 17th November 2007, Hope's world changed forever. She was admitted to a mental health hospital barely recognizable and forced to leave her family and friends, the hospital became her home. Over the next year, at her lowest ebb, Hope faced the biggest challenge of her life. She had to find the courage to beat her anorexia.



Luciana Berger Labour and Co-operative Member of Parliament for Liverpool Wavertree

Luciana is the Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Liverpool Wavertree. She was first elected to Parliament in 2010. She is a member of the House of Commons Health Select Committee, a Vice Chair of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and an advisory board member to the Money and Mental Health and Policy Institute.

Luciana has long been calling for increased awareness, parity of esteem and improvement of mental health services. She led a campaign calling on the government to expand employers' responsibility to include Mental Health First Aiders and was successful in amending a bill to introduce 'breathing space' for those in a mental health crisis who are struggling with serious debt.



Geoff McDonald Co-founder Minds@work, former Global VP of HR, Unilever

Previously the Global Vice President Human Resources, Talent, Marketing, Communications, Sustainability & Water at Unilever. Geoff is now a global advocate, campaigner and consultant in addressing the stigma of mental ill-health in the workplace, with a reputation for energizing and inspiring you and your people to take action in creating workplaces that enhance the lives of people with health and purpose at the core. He is a Co-Founder of the Minds@Work network, with over 1,400 members, which endeavours to inspire and equip individuals to break the stigma of mental health within their organizations. currently an Adviser to the 'United For Global Mental Health' campaign and has been appointed to the Advisory Board of the City Mental Health Alliance. Geoff is a Patron of the International Stress Management Association and a Member of the Prince's Trust Youth Opportunity Taskforce.



Eva Crossan Jory NUS Vice President (Welfare)

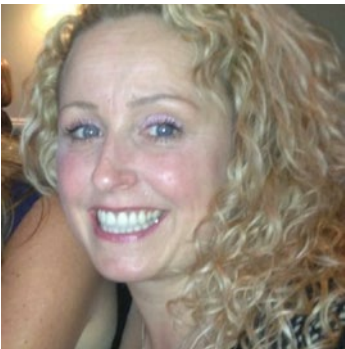
I attended Goldsmiths University of London and studied Art & History of Art. Whilst there I got involved in my students' union which led me to become President of Goldsmiths SU. I became NUS Vice President Welfare in 2018 and was re-elected in May this year. I lead on campaigns within NUS to do with mental health, housing, health & the NHS, and faith. I also support the work for international students. My priorities for year will be campaigning for better funding and the re- introduction of NHS bursaries for nurses, midwives and other allied health students. I'll be campaigning to cut and cap the cost of rent UK wide and while helping students better understand their tenants' rights and lobbying for better mental health provisions in universities, colleges and society as a whole. This includes working hard to ensure services are joined up and they are culturally competent.



Jonny Jacob

Finance Director Marks & Spencer's, Strategy & Transformation,
Mental Health Advocate

Jonny is Head of Finance team at M&S Foods. Prior to this, Jonny led Strategy and Transformation for pladis UK&I. At pladis, Jonny was the Executive Board sponsor and led the Mental Health initiative, which turned into the national "Let's Talk" partnership between McVitie's and mental health charity, Mind. Jonny's passion for breaking down the stigma of Mental Health in the workplace and using the power of big business, will see him attend the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Goalkeepers Summit this Autumn, where he has been recognised for his work on the Global Sustainability Health & Wellbeing goal.



Melissa Breedon

Welfare/Safeguarding Team - Nescot College

Melissa has had a rich and varied career. Starting as a dance and drama teacher after schooling at the Italia Conti Academy, she has arrived at her current role of safeguarding and mentoring officer at Nescot further education college in Epsom via bank management, living in Spain, pawn broking and firefighting. Melissa brings all that experience plus her own personal insight from raising three children to her role with a big splash of passion, humour which when mixed together, more often than not enables her to get on the wavelength of her students. She is particularly keen that young adults find their resilience and their own solutions to taking hold of their life opportunities in order to develop confidence and independence



Stephen Buckley

Head of Information at Mind

Stephen is Head of Information at Mind the mental health charity. He is responsible for the delivery and growth of Mind's information and support services, such as Mind's helplines and digital peer support service. He also represents Mind on various NHS and Public Health England programmes and initiatives where he advocates for the interests of people with mental health problems, and is Mind's expert spokesperson on mental health problems and their treatments.



Nicola Johnson & Nils Jorgenson

HR Business Partners at Canon UK

As HR Business Partners at Canon UK, Nicola and Nils hold key responsibilities for the attraction and development of the future generations with the organisation. They are passionate about creating a working environment that is productive whilst at the same time supportive, allowing all employees the opportunity and environment to develop to their full potential. Nicola's expertise in people development enables her to connect with individuals and coach them through key stages of their career journey. Nils advises and guides employees and their management teams to ensure the correct support and guidance is available when required. In partnership with Mental Health First Aid UK, Nicola and Nils are both part of Canon's Mental Health Champion's network with Nicola taking responsibility for the provision of Mental Health First Aid across the company.