
For Immediate Release

Diversity UK honours leading equality campaigner Elaine Sihera

15th November 2018, London: Diversity UK yesterday honoured writer & sociologist Elaine Sihera with a Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition for her outstanding contribution to equality and inclusion in Britain. *"Brought up in poverty in Jamaica in the sixties, with a father who didn't want girls, only boys", Elaine initially carved out a career as a senior education manager in a British secondary school before going on to found a magazine and a multicultural training business. Today, she is a shining example of the power of confidence and positivity as a motivational speaker.*

Chairman of Diversity UK, Dilip Joshi MBE said *"Elaine is an inspirational equality pioneer who has forged a path for many of the Windrush generation children and their families to follow. Her courage in pursuing independent higher education; founding a national magazine and then moving on to write 4 books and over 3000 articles on the power of positivity and confidence shows that even in the darkest hours, it is possible to triumph. She has shown that education and the doors it can open are vital if you want to succeed in life and I am doubly pleased that she is such a shining example to young girls everywhere. I am delighted to honour her resilience in overcoming challenges with dignity and pride with this Lifetime Achievement Award"*.

The presentation of the Lifetime Achievement Award took place on Wednesday 14th November 2018 at Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP in London at the annual Diversity UK Paul Stephenson Lecture, which is named in honour of the social worker who, in 1963, led the boycott of the Bristol Omnibus Company for discrimination that eventually paved the way for the Race Relations Act of 1965. Previous recipients of the award include Dr Stephenson himself; Simon Woolley, Co-Founder & Director of Operation Black Vote (OBV) and entrepreneur Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones, among others.

The award was presented by Dilip Joshi MBE, Chair of Diversity UK; Rita Hunt, Trustee of Diversity UK and Lopa Patel MBE, Founder & CEO of Diversity UK, alongside Anil Bhanot OBE, Chair of the Ethnic Minority Foundation and Indraj Mangat, Partner, Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP, who are co-sponsors of the lecture.

In her acceptance speech, Elaine said *"I was rather surprised, and honoured, to be invited to give the Paul Stephenson Lecture, but even more amazed at this public recognition. I do not see myself in such glowing terms, because I enjoy my work immensely, while striving to make a difference in my own way. Thus to have my achievements acknowledged in such a generous and elevated way seems rather surreal. Sincere, heartfelt thanks to everyone at Diversity UK for this wonderful accolade, and I hope I will still be doing justice to it for many years to come!"*

Ends.

Hi-res images are available from this link:

<https://goo.gl/P6eRNK>

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Notes for Editors:

About Elaine Sihera

A writer, sociologist, Cambridge postgraduate, Open University doctor, and a leading achiever in the British Black community, Elaine Sihera is an outstanding example of the power of confidence and positivity. Someone who succeeds despite living with a life-threatening illness.

*"Brought up in poverty in Jamaica in the sixties, with a father who didn't want girls, only boys", she first made her mark as a senior education manager in a British secondary school, where she dramatically improved attendance and performance in her year group, then as an education editor of *The Voice* newspaper, and later managing editor of a magazine she created, *New Impact*, which promoted, and advised on multicultural and training issues across the UK.*

Since then, her prolific writing on emotional health, career development, relationships and personal confidence that includes publishing 4 books and over 3000 articles, has also made her a columnist, expert commentator on TV and radio, a leading specialist in empowerment and diversity inclusion, and one of the most quoted British women on the Internet.

Her many 'firsts' include being the first Black graduate of the Open University, a presenter of the first Diversity Lecture at the House of Commons, and a keynote speaker at UNESCO's Global Women's Leadership Conference in Paris. She was also the first Black woman to own a national magazine, and the only woman to be awarded two National Training Awards by the Department of Trade and Industry. Founder of both the *British Diversity Awards*, which helped to pioneer effective diversity management in many UK establishments, and the *Windrush Achievement Awards*, that recognised the outstanding contributions of minorities.

In 2018, Elaine was honoured by the Open University with a doctorate for her *'exceptional contribution to education and culture, and protecting and enriching Britain's diversity landscape.'*

About Diversity UK

Diversity UK is a think tank to research, advocate and promote ideas for improving diversity and inclusion in Britain. It is an evidence-based initiative that seeks to influence policy, enhance civic engagement and improve the perception of the minority ethnic community in Britain. Diversity UK delivers its objectives by undertaking research, facilitating debates, hosting roundtable meetings and producing white papers.

Founded in 2012, Diversity UK is a registered charity (No: 1155189) in England & Wales run by Mr Dilip Joshi MBE as Chair; Ms Rita Hunt as Trustee and Mrs Lopa Patel MBE as CEO. Diversity UK is run as a membership organisation with a database of over 1500 senior UK BAME professionals.

For further information visit <https://diversityuk.org/>

About the Diversity UK Chairman's Award

The Diversity UK Chairman's Award for Lifetime Achievement is presented by the Chair of Diversity UK, Mr Dilip Joshi MBE, and is bestowed upon those who have contributed significantly to the improvement of equality and inclusion in Britain and those who have had an outstanding impact in championing entrepreneurship and enhancing the economic participation of the UK's BAME communities, particularly in technology industries.

Previous recipients of the Diversity Chairman's Award for Lifetime Achievement are:

- **Mr Dinesh Dhamija**, Founder of ebookers, for technology & entrepreneurship (2015)
- **Dr Paul Stephenson OBE** for dedication to equality and inclusion (2016)
- **Mr Shankar Narayanan**, Head of UK & Ireland at TCS, for enterprise technology (2016)
- **Professor Shafi Ahmed** for innovative use of technology in medicine (2017)
- **Mr Simon Woolley** for his work on race equality and inclusion at Operation Black Vote (2017)
- **Mr Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones** for championship of inclusive entrepreneurship (2017)
- **Ms Monica Kalia**, Co-Founder of Neyber, for outstanding contribution to FinTech (2018)

About The Ethnic Minority Foundation

The Ethnic Minority Foundation (EMF) is a national registered charity created in 1999. It is an independent organisation that seeks to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice in society, and address the growing inequalities in the world system. EMF's social justice programme has sought to tackle some of the most difficult issues facing societies today. It has worked to try and protect children from exploitation; safeguard the rights of women and other vulnerable groups; tackle poverty and seek social applications for new technologies. Currently most of its work is focused on social enterprises and providing services and opportunities to local communities.

For further information, visit www.emfoundation.org.uk

About Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP

As a global top 15 law practice, Eversheds Sutherland provides legal advice and solutions to a global client base ranging from small and mid-sized businesses to the largest multinationals. Clients describe us as creative and well-versed in cutting edge legal work – we listen well in order to understand how and where we can be most effective and add the greatest value.

Diversity and inclusion for us refers to the similarities and differences that exist between people. This includes not only race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and gender identity but also social and educational background, nationality, marital status and family or care responsibilities. It acknowledges that most individuals do not belong to a single identity group but, in most cases, to several. For us appreciating diversity means demonstrably valuing and respecting our people, our clients and our community for all identity groups. We pride ourselves on developing an inclusive high performance culture where our clients, people and communities can thrive.

For further information, visit www.eversheds-sutherland.com