
Accounts & Trustee Report

Samsons Academy

26 November 2021

Prepared by Kirstie Young

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Company Information

Samsons Academy For the year ended 31 March 2021

1. Trustees

Dorian Alexis - Chief Operating Officer

Chris J Duncan - Chair

Johanna Hudson-Lett

Sabrina D'Almelio

Raff Aghera

Yusef Pickstock

Ashley Nahar

Dr. Liana Valerio

Ranjit Thind

Maggie Constable

2. Accountant

Kirstie Young AATQB

3. Registered Charity Number

1181882

4. Registered Office

Unit 1, 1 Shuttleworth Road

Bedford

MK41 0EN

Balance Sheet

Samsons Academy As at 31 March 2021

31 Mar 2021

31 Mar 2020

Assets

Bank		
CAF - Gold Account	10,000	-
CAF Bank	23,577	4,203
Total Bank	33,577	4,203
Current Assets		
Phoenix Fund	(1,198)	-
Total Current Assets	(1,198)	-
Non-current Assets		
Rent Deposit	18,000	-
Total Non-current Assets	18,000	-
Total Assets	50,379	4,203

Liabilities

Current Liabilities		
Accruals	600	-
Directors' Loan Account - Dorian Alexis	5,932	-
NIC Payable	1	-
Rent Accrual	(1)	-
Wages Payable - Payroll	1,531	-
Total Current Liabilities	8,063	-
Non-Current Liabilities		
Loan	28,000	30,000
Loan - Jinny Nutt	18,000	-
Total Non-Current Liabilities	46,000	30,000
Total Liabilities	54,063	30,000
Net Assets	(3,684)	(25,797)

Equity

Current Year Earnings	22,113	(25,797)
Retained Earnings	(25,797)	-
Total Equity	(3,684)	(25,797)

Trustees Report

Samsons Academy For the year ended 31 March 2021

Trustees Report

Samsons Academy
Chief Operating Officers Report
June 2021 to December 2021
the gym with the biggest heart in Bedfordshire.

Trustees @ Samsons Academy

Sabrina D'Almelio Trustee Feb 2019 to Present
Johanna Hudson-Lett Trustee Feb 2019 to Present
Raff Aghera Trustee Feb 2019 to Present
Yusef Pickstock Trustee Feb 2019 to Present
Ashley Nahar Trustee Feb 2019 to Present
Dr. Liana Valerio Trustee Feb 2020 to Present
Ranjit Thind Trustee Aug 2020 to Present
Maggie Constable Trustee Dec 2020 to Present
Chris J Duncan Chair Dec 2020 to Present

Mr Matt Legg Ambassador (Boxer)
Mr Daniel McGowan Ambassador (World Champion Muya Thai)
Mr Daniel J O'Neal Ambassador (Businessman and CH4 SAS Who Dares win Cohort)
Mr Wayne Frew Ambassador (Olympic and Commonwealth Gold Medalist/Gymnast)
Josh Hudson-Lett Youth Ambassador (National/International Ruby Player)
Ava Vidal Ambassador (Presenter, Author and Stand Up Comedian)
Don Broco Ambassadors (Band)

Website www.samsons-academy.org
Facebook @SamsonsAcademyUK
LinkedIn Samsons Academy
Instagram @samsonsacademyuk
Youtube Samsons Academy
Twitter @Samsons_Academy

Address Unit 1, 1 Shuttleworth Road, Elms Farm Industrial Estate, Bedford, Beds MK41 0HS
Telephone 01234 346100
Charity Registration No 1181182
New starters 0
Leavers 0

1. Executive Summary

The Academy is more than a gym, it is a community centre for training for Thai Muay, Mixed Martial Arts, an amateur boxing club affiliated to England Boxing. In the last year it has developed a place where we are working with other voluntary organisations to develop work with local authorities; developing capacity and infrastructure within BAME voluntary organisations. Working with young people has led us to develop relations with their parents which has led to working with voluntary organisations; however exclusively in the African and Caribbean community.

The re-opening of the academy in June went according to the plan..... Classes have resumed for the boxing academy as well as they Muay Thai fighters. Social distancing is still being maintained when in the classroom environment, however many of the young people that are coming in to participate in activities or projects are all within the same 'bubble'.

It has been a very strange time and are now in our 3rd/4th year as a fully recognised charity with the UK Charity Commission. We have qualified coaches teaching students to box in competitions, as well as selection for the Olympics and Commonwealth. We also focus our attention on the health and well-being of the community. We also have instructors working for Samsons Academy who are World Champions in their own rights who support the academy and run classes throughout the week and over the weekends. Using the ethos of combat sports, we are helping to improve the lives of those that might be socially excluded. We offer a welcoming and inclusive

environment for all the community to learn boxing regardless of ability as well as Muay Thai, Yoga, Pilates, Boxercise, K1, Kick Boxing and other forms of combative sports. We are promoting community cohesion across barriers of age, gender, race, sexual orientation and religion etc. We are here to offer the chance of change. Samsons Academy is a support network and a base for training and

Trustees Report

self-growth. We are community focused organisation working in partnership with professionals and other agencies such as Faces Bedford, Bedfordshire Probation Service, Youth Offending Service, Aspire, Bedford Prison, Meaningful Education, SSG, Amicus Trust, Bedford Borough Council plus others.

We also support young adults and some older adults who are living with mental health issues. The facilities enable them to exercise and train at their own pace. This in turn releases endorphins which can give a boost in self-confidence and self-esteem. We have succeeded with funding to run programmes where counsellors are on hand to support people over the phone. This is a service we wish to be an on-going service.

It has made a difference to many lives especially in light of the pandemic which has had an adverse effect on many lives. We need our programmes to run throughout the entire year to give those living with mental health issues a fighting chance in developing the skills required to live with and combat these issues.

The Academy and its Objectives

Our objectives this year

On completion, the centre it will be fit for purpose, designed to cater for the community such as from children to Senior Citizens. We will be able to offer services for people with varying patterns of need such as, people with mental health issues, learning and physical disabilities and our community group partners who need to 'hot desk'. In all the centre will have a heated yoga room, kitchen, changing rooms, disabled toilets, cardio area, soft surface area for senior citizens, a classroom, therapy rooms and mezzanine and hot-desk areas. This will allow us to expand our social education sessions, work with our various partners and develop into an environment where members of our community can feel safe, listened to and increase the participation of people from communities deemed as hard to reach therefore enhancing public interaction.

As well as enhancing our current services, we will be able to provide new programs including supporting more young people during their transitional stages as well as those who have been affected by Acute Childhood Experiences (ACE). We will also increase the number of people who access our counselling and coaching service. Food served in the kitchen will be a high standard, balanced and culturally sensitive for varying palates and dietary needs.

While the full lockdown was in full force we had to maintain communication via telephone. This resulted in members running out of date or credit on their phones. This also made them even more vulnerable to on-line predators. People with learning disabilities are more prone to fall victim to grooming and cuckooing.

Our current programmes include;

- Time2Train
- Resolution
- AllSorts LGBTQIA+
- It's Ok Not to Be Ok!
- A Band of Brothers, Men Heal
- The Gap (My Endz) Youth Endowment Fund
- Boxing & Self Defence Camp
- Knives Down Gloves Up (Summer Camp with the OPCC)
- 100 Men Mentor
- Young Entrepreneur Programme
- SIA & Employability

2.0 Charity Objectives of the Organisation

Our main objectives this year is

2.2 Impact

An Impact Study was carried out with all our providers over the past 10 months. The findings showed that we are still hitting our target audience and why felt that we were working affectively with the right communities. Since the last COO Report a vast amount of activity has been taking place. We have been working with Grand Union Housing Association on several satellite schemes one of which will be based in Clifton, Central Beds. We have been gifted a small flat that will accommodate one counselling therapist during the week as well as an art/therapist who will use different mediums to work with people living in the vicinity. We are meeting the team from

2.3 Achievements and Performance

Over the past 18 months we have managed to work with over 400 young people over different projects. Covid 19 has seriously prohibited the majority of work we do at the Academy. We have seen several lockdowns hamper the start of three courses and not being allowed to have any young people or older adults at the academy. We have introduced social distancing measures at the time when we were permitted to have any cohort attend the Academy, however with strict guidelines from the Department of Health and Environmental Health stating it was not safe to open during a pandemic we have remained closed.

We have in this time managed to secure a working relationship with the Royal Navy and Grand Union Housing, one of the largest housing associations in the UK. We had planned to start two courses which involved the Royal Navy and GUH but this was not possible. However we are looking into the potential of hosting certain courses on-line in the future.

Samsons Academy has been shortlisted as one of 17 nominations for the National Lottery Good Causes 'Project of the Year' Award 2021. The winner will be determined by a public vote via the National Lottery website and a Twitter hashtag count. Winners receive £3000 and a National Lottery trophy.

3 Summary of the main activities undertaken for the benefit to the public in relation to these objectives.

- Violence Exploitation Reduction Unit/Bedfordshire Police

Trustees Report

3.1 we have recently received notification from Kim Lamb Head of the VERU that we are to continue to receive funding. At present we haven't put in for any funds to run any of the course at the Academy.

A Band of Brothers 'Men Heal'
It's Ok Not To Be Ok
Youth Endowment Fund Bedford Borough Council
Knives Down Gloves Up /OPCC

- **RESOLUTION Dying to Belong**

3.3 This is ran over a 12 week period where we work with young people who have been involved in youth and gang criminality. The work we carry out is with young people between the ages of 13 to 21 years of age who have been or at risk of grooming to gang fraternity and cuckooing/county lines. We have Youth Engagement Officers and 3 Therapists/Counsellors plus two tutors who are assigned to deliver RESOLUTION. We then support them to reintegrate and use the skills they have learned over the 12 weeks in everyday life. They are also supported in applying for college placements and employment.

- **AllSorts**

3.4 This is a relatively new course to the Academy which has been running since January 2021. The team within the Academy had noticed more young people approaching them with issues around gender and the support they were able to access for themselves and some of their friends. We have ran several pilots in the past where some of the young people had expressed there were no services which gave them a Safe Space something more than a youth club. When we received funding from The Metro LGBTQIA+ Fund we ran AllSorts in February 2021 to the end of March 2021. This involves access to career support services from the qualified JNC Youth Worker, The Youth Engagement Team, in-house therapists/Counsellors and the Personal Trainers. A safe space is supported where they can talk about issues and problems they are encountering either at school/college or in the workplace. They discuss issues they feel are impacting on them at home with their families and support when looking into Higher Education. This project has been nominated for the National Lottery Good Causes 'Project of the Year' Awards 2021.

- **It's Ok Not To Be Ok! (On-line Support Group)**

3.5 With the pandemic being more entrenched in our lives many are finding it difficult to cope with everyday life. The data we had collected from the on-line and telephone befriending service showed us that we had to see if we could run a support service for the largest group that came top of the information collected. With support from the Harpur Trust, we have been able to support a Men only service where males from the age of 15 who are or have talked about self injurious behaviour, suicide ideas or feelings of being lost/aimless or afraid for their own safety. The project looks at what our own ideas of what we consider masculine or manly. It examines how we are men can support other men in times of crisis or adversity. It gives men a safe space where they can discuss what gives them the biggest fears and what increases their anxieties and stresses. This group is supported by two facilitators or Project Facilitator, two Therapists when the numbers exceed 10 cohort. All personnel who work on this project are ASSIST trained and recognise the signs of suicide or if someone is at serious risk of self harm.

- **Stand Together Befriending Service**

3.6 Befriending Service, this has been a conjoint scheme with another organisation in Bedfordshire called LOWD. We have been delivering food parcels with a small fund which was received by LOWD from the Phoenix Fund/Global World Fund and National Lottery Fund. The overall fund was for £10k, £1,470 was allocated for the Food and Parcel fund with a further £1,450 allocated for the befriending service.

- **The Gap**

3.7 The Gap project, funded by Bedford Borough Council via the Youth Endowment Fund, focussed on provided workshops that bridged the gaps between the older and younger generations. This included providing training in producing a docu-film with LimeLight TV for our participants aged 16-18, and create your own brand workshops for children aged 8-14 years. COO, Dorian Alexis and Project Lead, Anita Powell, arranged for specialists to come to the Samsons Academy site to give training to our participants on how to use industry standard equipment, team work skills and creative practice opportunities. An outcome of this project include an audio visual document of conversations between our participants and archive footage donated by LOWD to create a docu-film titled 'Our Endz', which can be found on our YouTube page. In addition, our younger participants were able to design, print and keep their own T-Shirts with assistance from Alessia Palavacini Rospigliosi, whilst learning vital self-employment skills such as, creating a brand image and effective merchandising.

- **Boxing & Self Defence Camp**

3.8 Our boxing coaches, Avi Kalyan and Amun Kalyan, ran a series of Boxing & Self Defence classes for participants aged 10 - 16 years. This initially had a cost of £10 per person, but with funding from the Police Crime Commissioner, Festus Akinbusoye, and the Bedfordshire Police Community Cohesion team, we were able to offer these sessions at no cost to our participants. Sessions ran twice per week throughout the summer and refreshments were provided by Samsons Academy.

- **Time2Train**

Tutor, Aiden Strawbridge, ran a cohort of Time2Train for a participant referred by one of our Counsellors from Meaningful Education, Clare Copplestone. The participant completed the course with no issues and has now enrolled in further education through college.

4. Leadership and Management

4.1 Dorian Alexis is the COO of the charity since it began in 2014 one registered in 2017. Dorian is dedicated to all of the service users and their families. He has forged partnerships with many other organisations and has played an integral part in breaking down barriers for the local authorities when working with communities who are termed as 'hard to reach'

Trustees Report

He has a vast range of skills, knowledge and experience working with people with a primary mental health diagnosis, or those with a learning disability. He spent 20 years working in the NHS and then 5 years with the YMCA in Sussex and three years with the Elton John Foundation Hospital Sussex Beacon Hospital for people living with HIV and AIDS. He has a proven track record in service delivery and policy writing which he carried out for the Department of Health and IMHAP, Institute of Mental Health Act Practitioners. He was also the London lead on CPA (Care Programming Approach) and Serious Untoward Incidents for all London NHS Hospitals.

4.2 Pauline Stepney has worked as part of the Senior Management Team for the past two years. She is a qualified JNC Qualified and Community Development/Outreach Worker and oversees all youth engagement services within Bedfordshire. Pauline also supports the Big and Grants team as she has a proven track record in securing and managing the application process, she also ensures that the information provided is current with what the aims and objectives of the charity are. She also supervises all the youth engagement team and Deputises when the COO is on other projects.

4.3 Caroline-Faye Allan is the freelance Grants and Bids Consultant for Samsons Academy where she specialises in trusts and foundations applications and bids to statutory funders. She currently works at Teach First as Fundraising Operations Manager, helping to build a fair education for all. She previously worked at the Royal Foundation of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, supporting their Highnesses to realise their philanthropic ambitions on projects as diverse as Early Years, Heads Together, United for Wildlife and the Earthshot Prize. In addition she spent 9 happy years at Great Ormond Street Hospital Charity where she worked as a Fundraising Research Manager, supporting the work of the major gift team to raise in excess of £10 million per year towards the hospitals most urgent capital development needs and groundbreaking paediatric research projects.

4.4 Sam Nutt is the Director of Performance at Samsons Academy Charity. Sam setup the charity alongside Dorian Alexis in 2017. He is been a fully qualified fitness instructor for over 20yrs and now a level 1 England Boxing coach at Bedfordshire elite boxing club. I've worked alongside the YMCA and lots of other youth projects from 1 to 1 mentoring and group sessions of which have been very successful. One of my skills I believe I can work with young adults from all backgrounds. I don't consider the cohort we work with to be 'hard to reach' as no young person is hard to reach if you use the right methods when engaging with them. I ran a successful football team in Milton Keynes for young people who were considered hard to reach and had almost 100% attendance from all players over several seasons. I also oversee the Probation and Prison service "Through the Gates" when prisoners are prepared for release. We work with them whilst they are serving the end of their sentences and getting ready for outside life again. Mentoring is a difficult process to successfully achieve when you have no relationship or understanding with the people you work with.

4.5 Bridie Gibbs is the Digital Media Officer at Samsons Academy, responsible for updating the website, managing social media accounts and leading the advertising campaign for the National Lottery Awards. Bridie is a freelancer in the arts, charity and media industries and works with a number of local Bedford based organisations offering support with administration, online and project work. Bridie has a PGCE from Coventry University in Secondary Education specialising Media Studies and ICT, and a degree in Performing Arts from De Montfort University.

The charity has 9 trustees who have a range of skills they can bring to the table in support of our work. We have Trustees from all disciplines ranging from Structural Engineering, Law, Accountancy, Housing/Young Peoples Housing, Medicine, Young People and Advertising/PR.

We will be advertising for 2 new Community Engagement Officer posts in the near future.

5. Partnership Working

We are part of a strategic partnership which consists of voluntary organisations who placed in community hubs focusing on specific areas of need such as; housing, employment, health and well-being, youth work, social, leisure, cultural events, education and community safety.

Our partners include

- Legacy Of Windrush Descendants (LOWD)
- Bedford YMCA
- Miracle Church of God In Christ (MCOGIC)
- Grand Union Housing
- Minority Ethnic Network in The Eastern Region (MENTER)
- Bedford Retired Caribbean Nurses
- Bedford African Caribbean Senior Citizens
- Return MK
- In Pursuit Of Happiness CIC Yorkshire
- The Pearl Thomson Learning Hub
- Bedfordshire African and Caribbean Network
- Just Purple Events
- Amicus Housing Trust
- Pimento Community CIC
- Meaningful Education CIC
- Therapy With...
- Wixams Academy
- Bedford College of Higher Education
- Queens Park Orchard Community
- Faces Charity Bedford
- University of Bedfordshire
- The ROYAL NAVY
- VERU & PCC Bedford (Violence Exploitation and Reduction Unit/Police Crime Commissioners Office)

Trustees Report

Our work will support some of the most vulnerable in society with issues such as debt and housing matters, unemployment, claiming welfare benefits to help break the long-term cycle of poverty, isolation, deprivation, lack of opportunity, poor diet and health problems, home schooling of children, particularly those with vulnerabilities and health problem. We believe that due to the loss of one to one face to face contact with will have implications for the black community and their families; increased unemployment, increases in anxiety and depression, increased isolation leading to increased mental health issues. These factors are likely to get worse if early intervention is not put in place.

We are working with our partners to develop and facilitate events such as Breaking The Cycle event creating an environment for young people to facilitate sessions and workshops on areas which affect the most; Around the World In Eighty Yards - a festival where participants can share their similarities and embrace their differences this includes people with different abilities, cultures and customs; The Caribbean festival, National Windrush Day and Stephen Lawrence Day. As mentioned earlier we are part of a Local Authority initiative title 'The Round table' where we work with our elected Mayor on the hubs within our Strategic partnership, we are partners with the East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) Recovery College and help deliver monthly topics for their service users. The portfolio holder for Public Health has recently invited us to work with them on inequalities within the health service. We have also been contacted by Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group who which to work with some of our partners about improving services.

6 Polices on Charity Reservers

6.1 At present the Academy does not have any reserves, the first two years rent was covered by the three investors Dorian Alexis (£94,500) Sam Nutt (£44,000) Jemma Salfarlie-Courtney (£30,000).

The funds were used to secure the building and carry out the first stages of development and to cover the initial rent and legal fees. So far all three investors have not received any remuneration for their investments or taken a full years salary. This they have agreed to be offset until 2020.

6.2. Budget and fundraising plan

Currently around 70% of our revenue income comes from grants and bids, due to Covid we have been unable to run the majority of the usual classes as they have deemed it unsafe to have too many people in the same space and we need to consider social distancing. Our plan is to develop a space where our partners can hire. We also have a diversity training programme, catering service which the diversity programme can be delivered on-line or in the teaching room which is designed to accommodate social distancing.

Kind Regards

DORIAN NR ALEXIS
Chief Operating Officer