

Volunteer Case Study: Temitope Muraina

Temitope was a student on law placement from Nigeria and came to the Haven as part of the Commonwealth programme. She learnt first hand about the devastating effects domestic violence can have on a person.

'I saw women who had lost so much self confidence from the years, months, or weeks of abuse and as a result that they could not make eye contact while talking'.

She considered the internship opportunity at The Haven as one of a lifetime and knew she would benefit greatly from her experience.

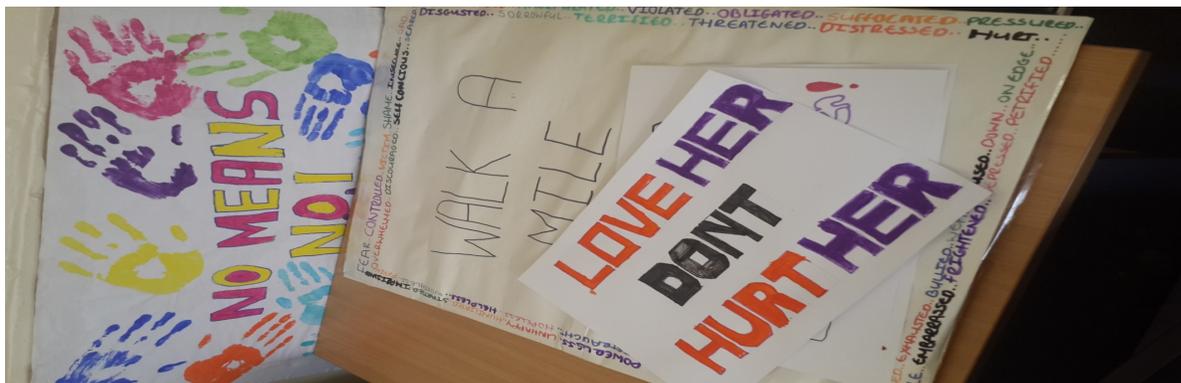
Temitope has previous experience of working in a law firm and did not know what to expect. She was very impressed by the work being done. She was particularly impressed by the quality of care and accommodation in the refuge.

During her placement she stayed at Pearl House. This helped Temitope to connect with the women in refuge and made her experience more real. After speaking to the women she concluded that the most common reason for them not leaving an abusive relationship sooner was money. The women were not financially secure and this hindered them from leaving the abusive relationship. Secondly was their lack of confidence, the perpetrator had successfully shredded all their confidence and the women could not imagine what it would be like leaving the perpetrator as it became 'normal' behavior to them.

Temitope was given the opportunity to work in every department to learn about all aspects of the Haven. She enjoyed the options and guidance drop in sessions the most primarily because they involved handling the women's cases directly.

'I enjoyed seeing the look of relief and hope on the faces of some of the women who came in looking nervous and scared. I learnt that from these sessions, helping the women relax and feel as comfortable as possible is the key to getting them to open up and talk freely about their situation'.

Temitope also enjoyed the fun things which included attending henna classes and attending fundraising events like Walk a mile.



The volunteering increased Temitope's confidence and communication skills with others. She had always wanted to start a blog and after her experience at the Haven her first one was titled 'As strong As a Woman'.

During Temitope's final week at the Haven, she had the opportunity to attend a presentation by an organisation working in conjunction on an international project with the Haven in Uzbekistan.

'The most vital lesson I took away from this presentation was that anything is possible as long as you put your heart into it and you are passionate about it. Uzbekistan is miles away from the United Kingdom and English is not their official language, but together we found a way to create a partnership that saw incredible results'.



'I have always had the dream of working for an NGO and my experience at the Haven has brought me one step closer to fulfilling this dream.

I was so impressed by the work of The Haven. The Haven has been a refuge for victims of domestic violence and I feel honored to have had the opportunity to learn at The Haven. I would be glad to return there to learn more if the opportunity arises'.

Case study by Baljeet Farmah, Senior PR and Communications Manager