

Sector Spotlight

The voluntary and community sector relies on the talent and dedication of volunteers. Spark caught up with three dedicated locals and found out what inspires them.

ADENIKE OJO

**HACKNEY
LAW CENTRE**
www.hclc.org.uk



What inspired you to volunteer at the Hackney Law Centre?

I've worked in the corporate sector for several years and I wanted to take some time to give back to the community and sharpen my skills before returning. I also felt that volunteering in Hackney would enable me to feel the heartbeat of the community.

Could you tell us about your role?

I work on the telephone helping the general public with legal problems and I also staff the face to face drop in clinic.

What have been the highlights of volunteering at Hackney Law Centre?

Having the opportunity to work with supervisors who are passionate about their work and seeing a case progress which can potentially change an individual's life.

Do you feel that the austerity cuts are hitting the VCS and vulnerable people too hard?

I think the real issue is encouraging those in the community to support those who are vulnerable because doing small things for others can make a great impact.

What do you do when you're not at the Law Centre – hobbies, family etc?

I am part of the British Nigeria Law Forum (BNLF), I volunteer for the International Law Book Facility (ILBF), and I also volunteer at a soup kitchen in Stoke Newington once a week. I enjoy reading and I am part of a book club, I write poetry in my spare time and I am doing Zumba religiously every morning!

THERESE DESTOUCHES

HACKNEY
www.vchackney.org



What inspired you to volunteer?

I wanted to learn admin skills and thought that volunteering would be a way of getting hands on experience while helping others.

Could you tell us about your role?

My role involves talking to people about volunteering, promoting the volunteer programme, data entry and making and receiving calls to and from potential volunteers.

What have been the highlights of volunteering?

Meeting people, giving them advice and seeing the progress they make as a result. Also the feeling of appreciation, in particular when I receive certificates from the volunteer programme to celebrate my hard work.

Do you feel that volunteering can help a person's career?

Yes, definitely, as volunteering improves confidence, develops hands on experience and gives work/life structure. Also, it is a good way for someone to try out a role if they are considering a career change.

Can you give an example of a time when your volunteering has helped others?

I gave advice to a close friend who wanted to develop her skills in sewing. We matched her to a role that was so perfect for her that her confidence has increased to the level where she is now considering starting her own business.

What do you do in your spare time?

I am currently studying an IT course with Learn Direct. I also like socialising with friends, going to restaurants and dancing.