

BRITISH AIRWAYS

GGs celebrates

Black History Month 2026

Honouring our people.
Celebrating our past.
Building our future.



DIVERSE TALENT.
STRONGER TOGETHER.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



GGs Celebrates Black History Month at London City Airport

To celebrate Black History Month, GGS recognises and celebrates the invaluable contributions, achievements and experiences of Black colleagues, past and present, within our workplace and across the wider aviation industry.

GGs is proud to be part of a diverse and inclusive community where cultures and experiences come together every day to keep our airport moving and thriving.

Black History Month gives us a great opportunity to celebrate the people and stories that have helped shape the company's diverse structure.

GGs LCY is proud to acknowledge the continued achievements of colleagues of African and African Caribbean Heritage.

BA prides itself on its quest to inspire future generations. From dedicated PSAs to TRMs to supervisors and managers leading behind the scenes, our employees of African and African Caribbean heritage continue to make a significant contribution to the aviation industry and our organisation's success.

This month gives us the opportunity to celebrate and connect. By sharing stories, experiences and achievements,

Black History Month at LCY is a time to celebrate progress, honour those who paved the way before us, and look to a future where everyone has the opportunity to thrive in aviation.

Happy Black History Month!



*Celebrating our heritage. Recognising our contributions.
Inspiring our future.*





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Celebrating our people, Inspiring our future.

Why representation and our stories matter.





On **February 8, 2023**, BA flight 255 made aviation history by operating its **first-ever flight entirely staffed by a Black crew** from London Heathrow (LHR) to Bridgetown, Barbados (BGI).

LHR

LONDON
HEATHROW

BGI

BRIDGETOWN
BARBADOS

The flight was originally scheduled to depart during the UK's celebration of **Black History Month in 2022**, but this was halted due to scheduling conflicts.



The eagerly anticipated flight then took to the skies the next year during **America's celebration of BHM.**



What made this flight special was that the entire operational team, ground staff, airport gate team, dispatchers, and cabin crew were of **African and African-Caribbean heritage.**



The concept came from BA's **BaMe colleague network group** to celebrate colleagues' achievements and acknowledge diverse representation within the airline.



On making history, BA said, "We're proud to have supported our BaMe colleague network group to organise British Airways' first-ever all-black colleague flight, celebrating the contribution our black colleagues make to the airline and highlighting that important representation and role models are to drive greater diversity."



The historic flight **came** just 12 months after American Airlines operated a commemorative all-black flight to celebrate the achievements of the world's first African American female aviator, **Bessie Coleman.**

The flight departed from Dallas Fort Worth International Airport to Phoenix, Sky Harbour International Airport.

**Two airlines. Two historic moments.
One powerful message.**

Black excellence belongs in every corner of aviation.

These flights not only celebrated the achievements of Black aviation professionals but also helped inspire the next generation to see a future for themselves in the skies.



Did you know...

BHM



Oswald Boateng

In 2018, Oswald Boateng made history as the **first Black designer** commissioned by British Airways to reimagine its iconic uniform.

Five years of research, development and design later, the Savile Row tailor unveiled a bold new look which included **jumpsuits for women** and a **bespoke three-piece suit for men**.



David Olubamiwo

David **Olubamiwo** is widely perceived as the **first black pilot** to fly for a commercial airline in the UK, and notably, the first flight he captained was with British Airways.



Caribbean Volunteers

Approximately **16,000 - 20,000** Caribbean men and women volunteered and trained as pilots, navigators, and ground crew for their mother country during WWII.



Errol W. Barrow

Errol W. Barrow enlisted as a RAF Volunteer Reserve, serving as a navigator and later an aircraft man during WWII. He made history by becoming **Barbados's first black Prime Minister**.



Tuskegee Airmen aka Red Tails

Formed in 1941, the Tuskegee Airmen, also known as the Red Tails because of the distinctive crimson tail sections of their fighter planes, were the **first all- Black unit** to serve in the US military.



Lilian Bader

Born in Liverpool, Bader volunteered for the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1941, qualifying as an instrument repairer. Bader is credited as being **one of the first women to serve with a skilled trade in the RAF**.



GGs REMEMBERS:

BESSIE COLEMAN

The first black woman who took to the sky as a pilot.

A DREAM TAKES FLIGHT

Bessie Coleman had a dream.

She wanted to take to the skies and fly a plane. Born in 1892 in Waxahachie, Texas, her fascination with aviation began early. She heard stories of fighter pilots returning from the First World War and became captivated by the possibilities of flying an aircraft. But in 1920s America, two things stood firmly in her way: she was Black, and she was a woman. Laws and social attitudes restricted the lives, careers and ambitions of both African Americans and women.



BARRIERS IN HER WAY

Bessie applied to flight schools across America, determined to turn her dream into reality; she was rejected constantly because of her race and gender. If America would not teach her to fly, she would go somewhere that would. Determined to follow her dream, Coleman learned French and travelled to France. Here, obstacles facing her progression in aviation were less prevalent, and she finally found a flight school willing to train her.



SO SHE WENT FURTHER

Bessie learned French and travelled to France, where she found a flight school willing to train her.



HER DREAM BECAME A REALITY

In 1921, she achieved what no Black woman had achieved before: she earned an international pilot's licence from the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale.



A SENSATION AT HOME

Armed with her new licence, she returned to the United States and quickly became a sensation as a stunt pilot. She thrilled audiences with spectacular aerial manoeuvres, captivating crowds with her fearlessness and challenging the conventions of a society that had repeatedly told her where she did — and did not — belong.



MORE THAN JUST HERSELF

Bessie's ambition was never simply about herself. She refused to perform at air shows that segregated Black audiences, using her growing fame to challenge the discrimination of the time. She also dreamed of establishing a flight school for Black aviators, believing that the emerging world of aviation could create opportunities for African Americans and women.



A TRAGIC END

In 1926, at just 34 years old, Bessie's dreams were cut short. She died during a test flight in Jacksonville, Florida.



BUT HER STORY LIVES ON

Bessie Coleman became a symbol of courage, determination and possibility. At a time when racism and sexism could silence even the most ambitious voices, she refused to be grounded. She did more than learn to fly. She challenged the limits placed upon her and, in doing so, helped expand the possibilities for those who followed.



BESSIE COLEMAN: A PIONEER, A HISTORY-MAKER
AND A WOMAN WHO PROVED THAT THE SKY WAS NEVER THE LIMIT.

BRITISH AIRWAYS



Below the Wing → BHM

Celebrating some of the talent and dedication that keeps GGS LCY running smoothly everyday.



Meet

Kelson Ferreira



Role:

Customer Service Manager



Length of Service:

4 years



Can you give a brief description of how you started in the aviation industry?

Aviation has always been part of my life. My granddad was a pilot, which sparked my interest in the industry from an early age. I went on to study Airport and Airline Management at university and, while studying, began working at Heathrow with several airlines.

After completing my degree, I explored opportunities in other industries, but aviation was where my passion truly was. I returned to the industry and joined Sky Handling at LCY before moving on to Menzies Aviation and Gatwick Ground Services, where I manage the BA CityFlyer operation.



Describe a typical day?

A typical day involves managing different departments to ensure the operation runs as smoothly as possible. We aim to make every customer's experience unique when travelling through the airport. Most people choose a career in aviation because every day is different. The job can be the same, but the situation will always be different, and every day you get to meet new people.



What are the highlights of your role?

Liaising with different stakeholders to ensure the operation runs smoothly, and working as a team to get passengers to their destination.



How important is it to see reflections of you in the world of aviation?

My own connection with aviation began with my grandfather. Seeing him in such an important role inspired me. This ultimately influenced my decision to study Airport and Airline Management.



What advice would you give to the next generation who would like to start a career in aviation?

Be willing to learn from your everyday experiences in the industry and always remember to put yourself in the passenger's shoes. Always be honest, and don't be scared to take the next steps in your career. A "no" doesn't mean you should stop trying.



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Celebrating some of the talent and dedication that keeps GGS LCY running smoothly every day.

Meet Fabio Costa



Role:

Customer Service Duty Supervisor



Length of Service:

3 years



Can you give a brief description of how you started in the aviation industry?

Where do I start? My aviation journey began almost 10 years ago when I joined as a Passenger Service Agent. I progressed into a TRM role. I already had some aviation knowledge from university, along with management experience from previous roles, so I was keen to challenge myself and keep developing. I'm now a Customer Service Duty Supervisor for over three years. Looking back, it's been an incredible journey, and I'm proud of how far I've come and everything I've learned along the way.



Describe a typical day at the airport?

There really is no such thing as a typical day! You can arrive expecting a calm shift and suddenly find yourself dealing with something completely different.

Passenger numbers don't always tell you how busy you're going to be. On another day, the terminal might appear quiet. A medical emergency, customer complaint or operational issue can quickly change everything. You learn to expect the unexpected and stay calm under pressure and adapt quickly. Even after almost 10 years, aviation still surprise me.



What are the highlights of your role?

One of my biggest highlights was being invited to support the start-up of our Dublin operation with our partners at Aer Lingus, representing our operation in Ireland and helping to manage both the landside and airside operations. Being trusted with that responsibility was a great experience and showed me just how many different opportunities an aviation career can offer.



How important is it to see reflections of yourself in the world of aviation?

Seeing people who look like you and come from similar backgrounds can give you a genuine sense that you belong and that opportunities are open to you too.

When I first started in aviation, the industry felt very different. There were times when you could experience discrimination. Over the years, I've seen aviation become much more diverse and inclusive. Now, I feel there is a much stronger sense of belonging.

Aviation brings together people from every part of the world, so I think it's important that the people working within the industry reflect that diversity too.



What advice would you give to the next generation who would like to start a career in aviation?

Working in aviation is about much more than having a passion for aircraft and flying. There are amazing moments—hearing the roar of an aircraft starting up, being close to these incredible machines, and seeing unforgettable sunrises and sunsets across the airfield never really get old.

My advice is to come into aviation with an open mind, be willing to learn, care about people, and embrace every opportunity that comes your way. You never know where your first role might eventually take you.

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Celebrating some of the talent and dedication that keeps GGS LCY running smoothly every day.

Meet

Derrick Docherty



Role:

Duty Supervisor



Length of Service:

2 years



Can you give me a brief description of how you started in the aviation industry?

My journey actually started in aviation retail. I did a course, then started working in Duty Free. That gave me my first taste of the airport environment, and from there I moved over to working for the airlines. It's been a journey of learning, growing and taking opportunities when they've come my way — and 13 years later, I'm still here.



What does a typical day at the airport look like?

It can be crazy! But that's also what makes it exciting. No two days are ever the same. There's always something new happening, something different to deal with or a new challenge to overcome. You never really know what the day is going to bring, and I think that's part of what makes working at an airport so unique.



What are the highlights of your role?

For me, it's being able to help people. Working in aviation also means being surrounded by people from so many different backgrounds. I really enjoy learning about and understanding different languages and cultures. You meet people from all walks of life, and there's always an opportunity to learn something from somebody else.



How important is it to see reflections of you represented in aviation?

It's very important. My generation faced different challenges, and getting to where I am today hasn't always been easy. That's why I'm proud of what I've achieved and how far I've progressed in aviation.

Representation matters because when the next generation sees people who look like them progressing and succeeding, they can see that it's achievable for them too. If somebody can look at my journey and think, "this is what I want to do" then that means a lot to me.



What advice would you give to the next generation hoping to start a career in aviation?

Never give up. Keep going, and prove to yourself that you can do it. You might hear "no" more than once, but you only need that one person to recognise your potential and give you an opportunity. When that chance comes, take it. Keep believing in yourself, keep pushing forward and don't let rejection make you stop trying.

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Below the Wing → BHM

Celebrating some of the Black voices, talent and dedication that help keep GGS LCY running smoothly every day.



Meet

Patrizia Margotti



Role:

Tumaround Manager BACF



Length of Service:

2 years



Can you give me a brief description of how you started in the aviation Industry?

I started my career in aviation when I was 18, and it was my first job. At that age, I didn't necessarily know where the career would take me, but I quickly realised that I really enjoyed working in such a busy and diverse environment. Over the years, I've gained a lot of experience and grown both personally and professionally. Aviation has given me the opportunity to meet people from many different backgrounds and cultures, which I really value.



Can you describe a typical day at the airport?

Every day is different, which is one of the things I enjoy most about working at an airport. There's always something happening, and you're working with people from so many different backgrounds and cultures. My day can be busy and challenging, but it's also very rewarding. You have to be adaptable, communicate well and be ready to deal with whatever comes your way.



What are the highlights of your role?

One of the biggest highlights is the people I get to work with. Aviation is such a multicultural industry, and you meet people from all over the world. I also enjoy the responsibility that comes with my role and knowing that the work I do contributes to keeping everything running smoothly. Seeing myself grow professionally and being able to inspire others has also been important to me.



How important is it to see reflections of you in the world of aviation?

For me, it's extremely important. I'm half Ethiopian and half Italian, so I've grown up with two different cultures and perspectives. Representation matters because when you see people who share aspects of your background succeeding in an industry, it can make you feel that there is a place for you too.



What advice would you give to the next generation who would to start a career in aviation?

My advice would be to go for it and don't be afraid to put yourself forward. Aviation is a huge industry, and there are so many different career paths beyond what people might initially think of.



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Celebrating some of the talent and dedication that keeps GGS LCY running smoothly every day.

Meet Sion Thomas



Role:

Turnaround Manager



Length of Service:

7 years



Can you give a brief description of how you started in the aviation industry?

I've always been interested in aviation. Growing up, I wanted to be a pilot. I was working in retail when I saw a job role open at LCY for Manzi's Aviation. At the time, I wasn't sure which company I'd be working for, and I was so happy to find out it was BA, I started as a PSA, moved to Operations in 2022, and I am now a Turnaround Manager.



Describe a typical day at the airport?

A typical day for me is arriving at our operations office, catching up with colleagues, and preparing the paperwork for four or five flights I'll be handling that day.

From there, I meet each inbound aircraft and coordinate the turnaround. That means getting passengers off safely and efficiently, organising refuelling, cleaning and catering, liaising with the flight crew, and then getting the next passengers on board.

If there are any issues with the flight, it's my job to keep the Ops department, gate and ground staff, flight crew and supervisors informed. Once everything is finished, I close the flight and sign the legal documents, making sure the info on my paperwork matches what's in the system.

It's a busy role, but that's what makes it exciting — you're constantly coordinating people and tasks to get each aircraft turned around safely, accurately and on time.



What are the highlights of your role?

One of the biggest highlights is working with such a great team. I enjoy the fast-paced environment and the challenge of coordinating so many different people and tasks. Every day is different, and there's a real sense of achievement when a turnaround goes smoothly and the aircraft departs on time. I also love being part of an international, multicultural team—you meet people from all over the world and it's rewarding to see how we all work together to keep things running.



How important is it to see reflections of you in the world of aviation?

It's really important to me. As a Jamaican, it means a lot to see people from different backgrounds succeeding in aviation. Representation shows that there's a place for everyone in this industry and it can inspire others to follow their dreams, no matter where they come from.



What advice would you give to the next generation who would to start a career in aviation?

My advice would be to go for it. Be curious, work hard, and don't be afraid to start in an entry-level role. Aviation has so many different career paths, and you can learn and grow within the industry. Surround yourself with positive people, stay open-minded, and always be willing to learn.

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Meet

Daniela Correia Goncalves



Role:

cSA / Departure Lounge Agent



Length of Service:

5 years



What inspired you to start a career in aviation?

I've always loved the buzz of airports and travelling. Even from a young age, there was something about the airport atmosphere that excited me, so pursuing a career in aviation felt like a natural fit.



What does a typical day at LCY look like?

Every day brings something different. I help plan and allocate our agents, keep a close eye on flights for any delays or clashes, and support passengers with flight changes, disruptions and general enquiries. It's all about staying organised, thinking ahead and helping things run as smoothly as possible.



What do you enjoy most about your role?

I really enjoy the planning and problem-solving side of the job. I like bringing everything together, making sure people are in the right place at the right time and finding solutions when challenges come up.



How important is it to see yourself represented in aviation?

Representation really matters. It's important to see diversity across all areas and roles within an airport. When people from different backgrounds can see themselves reflected throughout the industry, it shows that aviation is a place where everyone can belong and succeed.



What advice would you give the next generation looking to start a career in aviation?

Don't put limits on yourself. Be open to opportunities, keep pushing yourself — you might be surprised by just how far you can go.



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Meet Ebiesan “Ebie” Oyejola



Role:

CSA / Departure Lounge Agent



Length of Service:

3 years



Tell us a little about your role.

I'm a Customer Service Agent in the Departure Lounge at London City Airport. I'm there to help passengers throughout their journey — from flight information and boarding to delays and those unexpected moments when things don't quite go to plan.



What does a typical day at LCY look like?

No two days are ever the same! I'll start by checking the day's flights and any delays or changes, then it's all about the passengers. Whether I'm answering questions, making announcements or working with different teams, we're all focused on keeping things moving smoothly.



What do you enjoy most about your role?

Definitely the people. I meet passengers from all walks of life every day, and I love being able to make their journey that little bit easier — especially when things don't go to plan.



How important is it to see yourself represented in aviation?

It's so important. Seeing Black people represented in aviation shows the next generation that there's a place for them here too. This industry is full of different opportunities and career paths — sometimes you just need to see someone like you doing it to know that you can too.



What advice would you give the next generation looking to start a career in aviation?

Just go for it! Don't be afraid to start somewhere and work your way up. Ask questions, and always be willing to learn. Most importantly, don't let the fact that you may not see many people who look like you stop you from pursuing the career you want.

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Celebrating some of the talent and dedication that keeps GGS LCY running smoothly every day.



Meet Olivia Als



Role:
GGS Trainer / PSA



Length of Service:
5 years



Can you give a brief description of your role:

I'm a Line Trainer at GGS, I help train staff in the terminal and also in the classroom.



Describe a typical day at the airport?

There is no typical day in an airport, everyday is different! That's what's interesting about the job. Some days will be quiet, and you will do your usual check in and boarding, and during disruptions you can look at your step count at the end of the day and realise you've done a half marathon at work (good for getting your step count in!)



What do you enjoy most about your job?

What I enjoy about my job the most is seeing the progress people make from when they start the job and how they've progressed as they gain experience. It's encouraging to see how they've grown with your help but also how they've pushed themselves to learn.

I also end up learning new things myself from all of the people I train because everyone is different and you learn new or quirky ways to deal with situations that you may have never thought of before. Everyday is a learning opportunity.



How important is it to see reflections of you in roles like yours in the world of aviation?

It's great to see people like me in the world of aviation. It shows that we can do anything that we set our mind to.

Also you get to meet different people across the diaspora and learn about our similarities but also our differences! I love food, so if you see me, make sure you share all of your recipes or best places to eat your food from home!



What advice would you give to a young person of colour who would like to embark in a career in aviation?

Just be yourself! Aviation is such a diverse and international industry! It's always interesting to meet and speak to people from different backgrounds and with different experiences. Oh! And make sure you practice waking up for the early starts!



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Meet

Shakira Narcisse - Clervil



Role:

Front of House Trainer & PSA



Length of Service:

3 Years



Can you give a brief description of how you started in the aviation industry?

I previously worked in the television and film industry but decided to take a break and explore something different. I had always envisioned working in aviation because of its fast-paced nature. I came across a job advert and decided to apply. I've been working in aviation ever since.



Describe a typical day at the airport.

It's important to be adaptable, as no two days are the same. In the blink of an eye, things can go from being very quiet to extremely busy. There are days when the role can be challenging; however, there are also days that are incredibly fulfilling.



What are the highlights of your role?

The highlights of my role are onboarding new staff and supporting them as they develop their skills and confidence. It's particularly rewarding to see their confidence grow when they are signed off and able to work independently.



How important is it to see reflections of you in the world of aviation?

Aviation is such a diverse industry, and I think that should be reflected across all areas and roles within the sector and at every level. For me, it's about helping people see that there is a place for them in aviation, and that there are opportunities to build a career and progress within the industry.



What advice would you give the next generation who would like to start a career in aviation?

Be optimistic, always push yourself, and look for opportunities to learn and grow. Don't be afraid to step outside your comfort zone and make the most of every opportunity that comes your way.

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Below the Wing → BHM

Celebrating some of the talent and dedication that keeps GGS LCY running smoothly every day.



Meet Natasha Williams-Fuller



Role:

Passenger Service Agent



Length of Service:

4.5 years



What do you love about your role?

What I love about my job as a Passenger Service Agent is that no two days are the same. After 4 and a half years in the role, I've had the opportunity to meet people of all different backgrounds. I love being able to make a difference to someone's travel experience, whether that's helping a passenger who needs extra support or resolving an issue.



How important is it to see reflections of you in the world of aviation?

Seeing different backgrounds represented in aviation is important to me because it creates a sense of belonging and shows that everyone can have a career in the industry. After 4.5 years as a Passenger Service Agent, I'm proud to be part of a diverse team that makes passengers feel welcome.

Meet Ali Ali



Role:

Passenger Service



Length of Service:

3 years



What do you love about your role?

I love being the first friendly face people meet on their journey. Every day I meet passengers from all over the world, and I get to help them at moments that really matter, whether that's a family reunion, a first trip abroad, or a nervous flyer who needs reassurance. Being Somali, I grew up understanding how much family and connection mean, so helping people get to the ones they love is special to me. I also enjoy being part of such a diverse team and using my language skills and cultural knowledge to help customers feel understood and welcome.



How important is it to see reflections of you in the world of aviation?

It's really important. Representation shows people what's possible. When a young Black person, or someone from the Somali community, sees someone like them in a BA uniform, it tells them aviation is a career open to them too. It also helps customers feel seen and comfortable. I hope that by being visible in my role, I can inspire others from my community to follow their own path in this industry.



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Celebrating some of the talent and dedication that keeps GGS LCY running smoothly every day.



Meet Leanne Legister



Role:

Passenger Service Agent



Length of Service:

7 months



What do you love about your role?

What I love most about my role is the opportunity to interact with passengers from all walks of life. I really enjoy meeting new people and hearing about the journeys they are on, whether it's their very first journey or their 100th. Every passenger has a different story, and I love being able to play a small part in making their experience a positive and memorable one. I also really enjoy the diversity that comes with working in aviation. Every day I meet people from different cultures, backgrounds and countries.

For me, it's not just about the role itself; it's about the people I meet, the connections I make and the experiences I gain along the way.



How important is it to see reflections of you in the world of aviation?

It is incredibly important to me to see people who look like me represented within the world of aviation. As a Black woman of Jamaican descent, aviation wasn't necessarily an industry that I saw people from my background entering or progressing in when I was growing up.

It shows that there is a place for us within the industry and that opportunities are there for us to pursue. It also helps to challenge the idea that certain careers or industries are not accessible to people from certain backgrounds.

Meet Oladele Afolabi



Role:

Passenger Service



Length of Service:

1.5 years



1. What do you love about your role?

What I love most about my role is the complete sense of job satisfaction it gives me. Over the last 28 years, I have had the opportunity to work across many areas of aviation, including as a Cargo Executive, Turnaround Coordinator, Duty Manager, Airport Station Manager, and now as a PSA at GGS.

Each role has allowed me to grow, make a positive impact, and contribute to the success of the team. I always give my best, and I take great pride in being a strong team player with a deep understanding of the importance of time management in aviation.



2. How important is it to see reflections of you in the world of aviation?

It is very important to see people like me represented in aviation. Having built my career over 28 years across airline operations, I believe that seeing people with different backgrounds succeeding in the industry can inspire others to see what is possible for them too.

I am proud of the journey I have had and the impact I have been able to make throughout my career. Representation gives the next generation something to identify with and shows them that, with dedication, teamwork, and a willingness to keep developing, there is a place for them in aviation.



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Celebrating some of the talent and dedication that keeps GGS LCY running smoothly every day.

Meet Vanessa Sholoye



Role:

Passenger Service Agent



Length of Service:

3.5 years



What do you love about this role?

What I love most about working in aviation is the people. As a former cabin crew member, I had the opportunity to meet people from all walks of life. Whether it was welcoming someone on board, helping a nervous passenger, or simply making someone's journey a little more enjoyable, I loved being able to make a difference.

Now, as a PSA, that passion for helping people continues. Having experienced both sides of the journey has given me a real appreciation, care and dedication that goes into getting passengers safely and comfortably to their destination.



How important is it to see reflections of you in the world of aviation?

As someone of Nigerian heritage who was born and raised in the UK, seeing people who look like me and share similar backgrounds represented in aviation is incredibly important.

Growing up, you don't always see yourself reflected in certain careers or positions, and that can sometimes affect what you believe is possible for you. Representation helps to change that. When you see someone who looks like you succeeding in this industry.

Meet Tiahama Radcliffe



Role:

Passenger Service Agent



Length of Service:

2 years



What do you love about your role as a Passenger Service Agent?

I really enjoy making someone's journey a little easier. Airports can sometimes be stressful, so being the person who can reassure a passenger, solve a problem, or simply welcome them with a smile is really rewarding. I also love the fast-paced environment and the teamwork involved. There's a real sense of achievement when everyone works together to get a flight away safely and on time.



2. How important is it to see reflections of you in the world of aviation?

It's very important to me. Seeing people who look like me shows that there is a place for us in this industry. Representation can have a bigger impact than people realise and I think aviation is at its best when the people working within it reflect the diversity of the passengers we serve. I also hope that simply by doing my job and continuing to progress, I can be that positive representation for someone else.

BRITISH AIRWAYS

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Celebrating some of the talent and dedication that keeps GGS LCY running smoothly every day.

Meet Elisa Matumona



Role:

Customer Service Agent (Check-in)



Length of Service:

2 years



What do you love most about your role?

I love being the very first face people see when they arrive and the last one they speak to as they leave. As a Check-in Agent, I get to be part of the start of every journey. Whether it's welcoming someone home or sending them off to something new, I get to make that moment count. After 5 years at Heathrow and now 2 here at LCY, that feeling never fades it's such a privilege to connect with people from all over the world, every single day.



How important is it to see reflections of yourself in the world of aviation?

It means everything. When I started out, I didn't always see many people who looked like me in these roles, but being here now, and seeing others like me thriving, sends a clear message: we belong here. Representation isn't just about being seen it's about showing the next generation that they too can be the first face someone sees at the airport. The sky has no colour and neither should opportunity. We're not just working in aviation we're paving the way for those coming after us.

Meet Precious Raphael



Role:

Passenger Service Agent



Length of Service:

2 years and 4 months



What do you love most about role?

I enjoy meeting and interacting with people from different backgrounds and cultures. Making a difference; I enjoy being one of the first people customers interact with and helping create a positive first impression of British Airways.



How important is it to see reflections of yourself in the world of aviation?

I also think representation can make customers feel more comfortable and welcome because aviation is such a diverse industry, with people travelling from all over the world. For me it's important not only to see representation, but also to be part of it myself. I'd like to be someone that another young Black woman can look at and think, I can see myself doing that too.

GGG REMEMBERS:

SERGEANT WILLIAM ROBINSON CLARKE

THE FIRST BLACK PILOT TO FLY WITH THE RAF

Unlike America, the United Kingdom offered no official colour bar when recruiting men to serve King & country during the 1st & Second World Wars. However, the British armed forces at that time arguably operated an unwritten policy that excluded black men in certain roles. But one young man refused to let prejudice and racism stop him from succeeding in aviation within the British Armed Forces and was determined to take to the skies.

That man was William Robinson Clarke.



1895

EARLY LIFE IN JAMAICA

Born in Jamaica in 1895, Clarke was ambitious from an early age. Fascinated by machinery, he trained as a mechanic, and his first history-making achievement was becoming one of the first men of colour on the island to learn to drive.



1914

ANSWERING THE CALL

Then, in 1914, the First World War erupted. Britain called upon men across its Empire to serve King and Country. At just 19 years old, Clarke answered the call. He paid his own way to England and joined the Royal Flying Corps — the forerunner of the Royal Air Force.



FROM MECHANIC TO PILOT

Initially, Clarke served as an air mechanic, putting his mechanical skills to work. But simply being close to aircraft was not enough. Clarke wanted to fly. At a time when racial prejudice placed enormous restrictions on the roles available to Black and brown servicemen, Clarke refused to accept that being a pilot was beyond his reach.



1916

EARNING HIS WINGS

In 1916, his determination paid off. He was accepted for pilot training and, against the odds, earned his wings. William Robinson Clarke had again made history. He became the first Black volunteer in the British armed forces to qualify as a pilot and was promoted to Sergeant.



ON OPERATIONS

Clarke was posted to No. 4 Squadron, flying R.E.8 reconnaissance aircraft over the Western Front. His missions were far from routine. He flew over enemy territory gathering vital intelligence while facing the constant threat of German fighter aircraft.



1917

TRAGEDY AND COURAGE

Near Ypres, Clarke's aircraft came under attack. He was shot in the back and seriously wounded. Despite his injuries, and while drifting in and out of consciousness, Clarke somehow managed to keep control of the aircraft and fly it back towards the safety of the British lines.



1919

HONOURABLY DISCHARGED

His injuries became too severe for him to continue to serve and as a result of his injuries he was deemed unfit to fly. Clarke was honourably discharged in 1919 and awarded the Silver War Badge for wounds received during his service.



LIFE AFTER SERVICE

He eventually returned to Jamaica, where he remained active in the veterans' community and eventually became Life President of the Jamaican branch of the Royal Air Forces Association.



1981

A LASTING LEGACY

William Robinson Clarke died in Kingston in 1981, aged 85. His story is one of courage, determination and quiet defiance. He confronted prejudice, took to the skies and made history. More than a century later, his achievement remains a reminder that sometimes the greatest barrier is believing you do not belong.

“Sergeant William Robinson Clarke refused to accept that barrier.

He earned his wings. He made history.

And he helped pave the way for those who followed.”



CELEBRATING
OUR HERITAGE.



RECOGNISING
OUR CONTRIBUTIONS.



INSPIRING
OUR FUTURE.



Celebrating Our People, Inspiring Our Future

Aviation connects people, cultures and communities, and the diversity of the people behind every journey is one of our greatest strengths at **GGSLCY**.

Representation matters. Seeing people from similar backgrounds succeed and progress in aviation can inspire others to believe that **there is a place for them too.**

By sharing these stories, we celebrate how far we have come while inspiring the next generation to recognise the opportunities available to them across our industry.

Black History Month at GGS LCY is also an opportunity to honour the pioneering aviators who broke barriers and paved the way for future generations to take to the skies.

Most importantly, it is about creating a sense of **belonging, recognition and pride**, while saying thank you for the valuable contributions and achievements that our African and African Caribbean colleagues continue to make every day.

**Celebrating our history. Recognising our people.
Inspiring our future.**

**CELEBRATING
OUR PAST.
INSPIRING
OUR FUTURE.**

