



Farzana Begum

2017 Eagle at Bank of America Merrill Lynch

Throughout my school years, I excelled in traditional subjects such as science, maths and english, and was encouraged to focus on these. Being a 'gifted and talented' student growing up in Tower Hamlets, I was told to work hard and I would be able to make something of myself – although what that 'something' would look like was a mystery to me.

It was only at university that I was introduced to a broader range of subjects and was suddenly able to learn about something I had a genuine interest in. I was overwhelmed with choice and decided to study Criminology - I must admit that I was, in part, motivated by my love for crime documentaries. Throughout my studies, I was taken aback by the inherent injustice present within our society and the impact this can have on individuals and their futures.

Upon graduating in 2017, with no idea of what career path I wanted to take, I started my job search. I applied for a number of graduate schemes and came across the Eagles programme within CSR. I was so amazed that this field even existed!

The programme provides a great opportunity for graduates from disadvantaged backgrounds to get their foot in the door of major corporate organisations and really kick start their careers. Through this scheme, I secured a placement in the ESG team at Bank of America Merrill Lynch and then joined Macfarlanes at the beginning of 2019.

Inclusion & CSR is something I have a genuine passion for. Corporate organisations are well placed to leverage resources to help address the inequalities within society. I feel very privileged to have made my passion a career and I hope to use this opportunity to bring about meaningful, sustainable change.