**Nomination for Movement to Work Social Mobility Awards: Rising Star Award**

**Rising Star Award** – an individual who graduated 12+ months from a Movement to Work placement that has made a real difference within your organisation or gone on to make a positive impact elsewhere

**Your Name**

Sharon Braithwaite

**Your Title**

Movement to Work & Education Services Lead

**Your Company**
BAE Systems plc

**Company Size**

89,600 people in 40 countries worldwide, with over 34,100 employees in the UK.

**Your Email**

sharon.braithwaite@baesystems.com

**Nominee’s name**

Yaamin Nanlawala

**Nominee title**

Engineering Aerospace Degree Apprentice

**Nominee’s E mail**

yaamin.nanlawala@baesystems.com

**Nomination Category**

Rising Star Award

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**Why do you believe this person (or organisation) should be celebrated for their work and success in making a difference to young people? Where possible, make specific reference to challenges posed by COVID-19 and how these were overcome:**

Yaamin joined BAE Systems Engineering Degree Apprenticeship programme in 2019 following a Movement to Work (MtW) placement in engineering. During the MtW programme Yaamin showed true dedication, a willingness to learn, was intelligent and bright, with enthusiasm and a positive attitude. These initial excellent characteristics remain within his style, commitment and approach today.

Growing up Yaamin was encouraged by his family to pursue a career in law, but for Yaamin Engineering was his true ambition. Despite this ambition Yaamin enrolled and completed his first year at university studying law, however, Yaamin chose not continue his Degree and in the ensuing months following his departure from university Yaamin found himself enrolled on the MtW Get into engineering programme. Up until this point a career in Engineering had always seemed too far out of reach and in Yaamin’s own words this was the “*spring board he needed*.”

Yaamin admits that presenting and speaking to new people is something that he struggles with, and describes himself when in formal scenarios as “*freezing*”. Although Yaamin has not let this hold him back or distract him when he actively pursues opportunities to push himself outside of his comfort zone for the betterment of others and himself.

We strongly believe there are many examples, we have highlighted some below, when Yaamin has challenged and pushed himself that clearly demonstrate excellence and brought about impactful and positive change for his community, himself, and for our company.

We have confidence and believe Yaamin is a true and committed person, who is dedicated to his vocation. He demonstrates a style and approach that goes above and beyond the norm which is welcomed by this peers and people he comes into contact. We believe Yaamin is an absolute **Rising Star** and offer the following examples:

**Inspiring others on the Movement to Work journey:**

Yaamin is passionate about inspiring young people to follow their dreams and aspirations to work in engineering despite his lack of engineering role models in school. He openly talks about his journey into engineering and his overriding messages centre on his perspective that there is not one right path to take; his maturity describes how it is ok to fail, learn, change paths or go in a different direction.

As well as working conscientiously in his studies Yaamin has been keen to support future trainees from MtW. He has done this through meeting and presenting to future cohorts of MtW trainees on placement with us. His presentations to the MtW group received high praise from the trainees and mentors alike. He is a true and outstanding MtW role model and ambassador.

BAE Systems Air MtW Alumni network – Yaamin has volunteered to develop and organise the network, this involves the organisation of materials (presentations, evaluations, tracking attendance/ feedback/ guest speakers) and planning of future network sessions. He is working alongside myself and the network chair (an ex MtW trainee) to develop this network and provide an internal opportunity for those who joined BAE Systems through MtW a space to network, share and develop as a group and as individuals.

**Facing his fear:**

Based on Yaamin’s dedication to his apprenticeship and knowing what a positive force Yaamin is, despite his fear of public speaking (which he is constantly searching for opportunities to do to quell and master) I invited Yaamin to represent BAE Systems at our Warton site on 26th March to meet the *Prime Minister Rt Hon Boris Johnson and our CEO Dr Charles Woodburn.* We have over 700 apprentices in Air and Yaamin was one of three apprentices chosen. Yaamin jumped at the opportunity and offered to meet another apprentice outside the site to show them where to go as, due to COVID-19 they had not ventured onto site before. Yaamin spent a full day preparing for the visit on site, with very early start times and late finishes. He met the PM, our CEO and MD, he said it was “*the best day*”. He conquered his fears and talked to the PM directly about his experiences of the MTW programme and how it had helped him on his current path. Find below a quote from David Leach, Chief of Staff, BAE Systems and person in charge of the visit by the PM.

*“Yaamin recently supported a visit by the Prime Minister Rt Hon Boris Johnson and our CEO Dr Charles Woodburn to our Air Sector Warton Site. As part of the visit Yaamin engaged in a conversation with the PM and CEO regarding his time and experience in BAE Systems, through which he was a fantastic ambassador for not only the company but also displayed exemplary personal conduct. He spoke with immense passion about his time in the company but also the Movement to Work programme such that it prompted genuine interest from the PM and a request for more information on the programme and BAE Systems involvement, which we have duly provided the PMs office*.”

David Leach MEng (Hons) CEng MRAeS,Chief of Staff, BAE Systems

**Excelling in Engineering:**

The following statement has been written by Rebecca Gallagher, Engineering Lead and Chris Thomas, Apprentice and Skills Coach BAE Systems

*“Yaamin strives to continually develop himself both personally and professionally and has received nothing but positive feedback from his Skills Coach and Placement Managers. All of whom have commented on Yaamin’s personable and professional behaviour, enthusiasm to learn and develop and willingness to look for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities.*

*Yaamin is significantly ahead in his Diploma work and the evidence that is produced at the end of each placement is always extremely detailed, conscientiously written and reflective of how he has developed technically and personally, as well as identifying how he can continue to develop further. Yaamin continues to receive positive appraisals and high scores in his placement feedback forms.*

*Yaamin is always looking at ways to develop technically, through seeking out opportunities within placements but also through identifying appropriate technical training opportunities, some of which include; Open learn, Proquis, Autodesk, ELLA. As part of his apprenticeship, Yaamin is also studying towards a degree of which he is achieving consistently high scores – the latest of those being 100% in CAD and 93.3% in Analytical Methods.*

*Yaamin is always keen to support and volunteer for extra-curricular activities, an example of this being the Movement to Work 2021 CEO summit Case Study, where Yaamin detailed his Movement to Work experience and what inspired him to join the programme and subsequently the BAE Systems EDAS apprenticeship, offered shared experiences and details on how and why to get involved. Further to this, Yaamin is looking to further his CPD by looking to sign up as a STEM Ambassador.*

*Overall, Yaamin is a very hard working and conscientious individual, who is keen to develop himself and others. He is exceeding expectations in all areas of his apprenticeship and is continually self-reflecting on how he can improve, develop and progress as an Engineer.”*

**Supporting his community in times of crisis: Yaamin’s own words**

During the pandemic I took the opportunity to volunteer in my local community to provide essential support to those that were struggling during this challenging time. Over the previous eighteen months since the pandemic first hit, it was clear to see the struggles that some members of my community were under to provide the basics necessities for their families. The idea of helping to provide some form of comfort to those needing it most, gave me a greater sense of purpose to get involved and try my upmost best to help in some way. Gaining support from Bolton Food Aid and sponsorship from a family run business, Right Care NW Ltd, I have been able to operate on the “front Line” and help deliver over 1,500 food parcels to the most vulnerable in the Bolton area to date. This involved spending time organising and carrying out contactless deliveries to those who were not able to collect from the collection point. Alongside this, I also spent time speaking with individuals to try and tackle the stigma surrounding food aid - particularly within the younger community. I wanted to emphasise the importance of accessing the support available to them; and that by making use of the available help and support during challenging times such as the pandemic is a positive step and not an admission of defeat.

Despite it being a relatively new initiative which launched in late 2020, the response was immense! With the support provided by community champions of Morrisons, Tesco, FareShare along with countless donations from the local community, we were able to continually support countless families with basic provisions and non-perishables across the community in just the first 10 weeks. Furthermore, I am looking to continue in my efforts on building these relationships over the coming year through a variety of initiatives. This will help to further strengthen the relationships built thus far, all of which has played a monumental role to help consistently distribute food parcels on a regular basis through the pandemic.

**Questions and Answers : Yaamin’s own words**

**What have you enjoyed most about your journey with BAE Systems?**

My fascination for aviation began at a very young age, and it is my innate curiosity for flight which is what steered me towards a career in aerospace. I am extremely fortunate to now be working in the industry and in such a diverse role where I have ample opportunity to work with individuals and projects from across all areas of the business. This not only ensures that no day is like any other, but the day-to-day challenges that this comes with is constant adventure and incredibly invigorating.

To date, my journey as an Engineering Apprentice at BAE Systems has far exceeded all my expectations. The time I have spent on my placements have given me exposure to a wide array of learning experiences that academic studies alone would not have been able to provide. Although I have always regarded myself as an ambitious and conscientious individual; by regularly setting myself personal goals, I have been able to embolden myself further to approach all opportunities with even greater determination. With this in mind, what I have enjoyed most is the way in which my placements have given me a broad overview across the engineering lifecycle, whilst being able to demonstrate the key fundamentals required to make a project successful.

Over the last 12 months, I have also taken a leading role in the Movement to Work Alumni network at BAE Systems. This has primarily been focussed on providing an internal opportunity for employees who have joined via a similar path to me with a space to network, share and develop as a group and as individuals. The world of work can seem daunting, and it was for me which I why I want to share my experiences and offer my support to young aspiring individuals who have joined the business, and help them develop their skills and confidence as they start on their journey.

The memorable experiences and opportunities presented to me to date have all been truly inspiring and have been made possible by taking the leap and participating in the ‘Get into Engineering’ programme with Movement to Work. I am now very excited for the future, as I continue to strive for personal development and career progression within the company over the coming years.

**What skills have you developed since being on the programme?**

Although I am still at such an early stage of my career at BAE Systems, the development of my skills accompanied by my achievements and accomplishments have surpassed all of my wildest expectations. Transferring the theoretical knowledge attained from the ‘Get in to Engineering’ programme to my professional work has allowed me to diversify my experiences, and in doing so I have been able to regularly challenge myself and acquire a range of new skills. By definition engineering is a detail-orientated profession, and so accuracy and precision are two attributes which I have been able to develop, both of which are now utilised on a daily basis. Harnessing the knowledge gained from all areas of my Aerospace Engineering Degree and using the experiences attained during placements has also equipped me with the tools necessary for critical reasoning on everyday tasks; and this makes certain they are executed to the highest of standards. Aside from this, I would say that having an inquisitive and outward-looking approach by being receptive to a wide variety of ideas from more than one perspective, has allowed me to embrace various possibilities and opportunities in my profession. In doing so, I am now able to think critically and more rationally when working to achieve a set of deliverables.

**Have you been on outward bound, and if so, what was your experience like?**

Outward Bound was an enthralling experience and one which I participated in during my first year on the engineering apprenticeship scheme. The week long adventure was fixated on cultivating a range of skills and behaviours, and subsequently helping to develop methods to address the challenges that could be faced in a workplace environment. A broad array of activities were geared towards building team skills, colleague relationships and practising key business roles in a safe setting. These activities ranged from raft building and orienteering, to mountain rescue exercises with presentations and reflection periods. These allowed time to analyse areas for improvement, as well as highlighting areas of achievement with particular emphasis placed on how they could be carried over in to the business.

Whilst I learnt a great deal from participating in the activities, I found that the time spent reflecting, alongside these shared experiences with my peers, brought a deeper level of knowledge, understanding, and motivation to me. Combining the encountered practical experiences with facilitated, challenging discussions helped to build resilience and confidence. The lessons that I took from the week were carried over in to the workplace and by embedding the behavioural changes, I have been able to facilitate positive change to my day-to-day tasks. Through physical and mental challenges, the Outward Bound experience provided a pathway for me to grow beyond my personal comfort zones, and in doing so I have created memories which will last a lifetime.

**How did you manage during the pandemic? How have you adjusted to working at home?**

Despite working remotely for most of my time at BAE Systems, I have been surprised by the level of responsibility and trust given to me, all of which has allowed me to bring new ideas to the projects I have been given the opportunity to work on. This has invariably allowed me to step outside my comfort zone to think creatively, whilst being able to explore all avenues of engagement with the latest technologies and developments in the industry. Working full time on a flexible schedule in an environment of my choice has been new to me, but I have found that it has given me a greater sense of control over the organisation of my workload. This has proved to be invaluable when it has come to attending to the needs of my personal life, and managing all aspects of my academic studies.

Having said this, the last 18 months has been a huge learning curve where I have had to adapt and make changes to ensure that remote working is both productive and fulfilling. To that end, I have taken some measures which include splitting my day into 90 minute chunks without any distractions, before taking short recovery breaks. I have found this to be highly effective, as by taking some time to reflect and rejuvenate my mind has often given me a different perspective, whilst also helping to undo any mental blocks that I may have had.

**What have been some of the biggest challenges?**

The confidence barrier bad been an impediment which I felt I have always struggled to address, particularly when interacting and presenting in front of a large audiences and unfamiliar faces. Although I have always endeavoured to prevent this from holding me back, I was at times hesitant to push myself outside of my comfort zone when actively pursuing opportunities. In a sense, the Covid-19 pandemic has allowed me to work on this by helping me to develop a range of effective strategies and techniques to manage my nerves. I quickly learned that maintaining a positive mind-set, having greater trust and a general sense of belief in my abilities has been vital to curtailing the barriers I once had with self-confidence.

Employing these techniques have taught me how to harness my nervousness and bring it under control, and by doing so this gives me all the confidence that I need to clearly convey and express my thoughts when engaging in-front of a large audience, whether that be it virtual or in face-to-face environment. From struggling to present to a small group of people at the start of my journey before the Movement to Work Programme in 2019. I now feel comfortable any time that I am asked to present and deliver key messages to stakeholders on projects in my day-to-day job as an apprentice.

This has left me with feeling an overwhelming sense of pride on how far I came from just a few years ago, when confidence was a major hurdle that I was struggling to circumvent. Not only did ‘Get into Engineering’ programme provide me with the tools to grow both on personal and professional level, better preparing me for the world of work in aerospace; confronting my struggles head-on has allowed me to maximise my opportunities in a career to which I feel more connected to and one that gives me a sense of purpose.

**What would you say to anyone thinking of joining a Movement to Work programme?**

The overriding message that I would try to express to individuals who are seeking work placement opportunities, and one I would try to convey to past, present, and future Movement to Work participants would centre on my belief that there is not one right path to take. Provided you have the drive, enthusiasm, and willingness to learn; there is nothing that can hold you back from finding and developing your passion in a career of your choice.