



# #6 "Qué Pasa?" #99

*a mouthpiece for the youth*

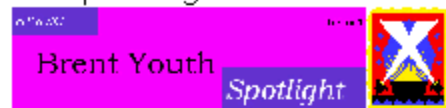
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## Highlighting an entrepreneur: Henri Appiah

incorporating



**From the hot grills, through McDonald's management ladder, to owning three restaurants...**

"He's actually one of my role models," says McDonald's Southern Region Communications Officer Bienosa Ebite during her speech at the BTWSC Brent Youth Spotlight (BYS) ceremony (see back page). One can easily see why. Ghanaian-born Henri Appiah left school at 16, determined to make his mark in the restaurant business. Twenty-five years on, he owns three McDonald's franchises in Brent, including the Wembley restaurant where he began his career in the food trade.

Appiah's success story shows that working at McDonald's need not be just about sewing burgers. It can lead into management, and indeed, franchise-holding.

BTWSC is about raising aspirations. It's important for young people, particularly those from black and ethnic minority backgrounds, to see that there are successful black entrepreneurs, and that this is something they can aspire to. Appiah tells the story of how it took years for some of the local black youth to believe that he, a black person, actually owned the restaurant. Sad, but true!

For those who only associate McDonald's with junk food, there are healthy alternatives. There's the Salads Plus menu, fresh fruit and yoghurt, Evian water and Minute Maid fruit juice. Those who had the fruit juice at the BYC ceremony would no doubt testify to its premium quality.

Also, if you order a regular meal, you can swap French fries for a side salad, and a fizzy drink for fruit juice. Either one counts as one '5-A-Day fruit & veg' portion.



Marc Wadsworth interviewing Henri Appiah

### Marc Wadsworth's Q&A at the BYC ceremony

**Q. What is the secret of going from a 16 year old part-time worker to the owner of three franchises?**

A. Perseverance and self-belief.

**Q. Is it true that success is 90% perspiration, in other words hard work, and 10% inspiration?**

A. Yes, definitely. I left school when I was 16. I started working at McDonald's on a part-time basis. I stuck it out. I just kept believing in myself, and twenty-five years later, here I am. For anybody out there, as long as you believe in what you're doing, and you believe in yourself, then you can achieve anything you want.

### Interview by BYC delegation at McDonald's Brent Park

**Q. As a 16 year old black man seeking employment at McDonald's, how did you feel when you were told there wasn't any vacancy, then later that a job was available?**

A. To be quite honest, I don't know that I was quite aware of the difficulties of being black and asking for a job. It's a lot different now. So that never really entered my mind. I was just a little confused as to why one minute I was being told there was a vacancy, and the next minute, I was being told there wasn't. All I can put it down to is that the individual at the time was either in a hurry, or wasn't interested. The funny thing is that he was a black guy, as well. Maybe he just thought, 'I haven't got the time to deal with this young kid.'



weren't a lot of young black kids working at McDonald's. It was a unique face, because you made friends very quickly.

**Q. Can you give us an idea of the day-to-day running of a McDonald's franchise?**

A. On a typical day, I go in the morning, check my post, have a quick walk around the restaurant to see that everything is in relatively good condition, and pay my bills. If there's a piece of equipment that's not working, I investigate to see if I can fix it first, before I call an engineer. At lunch time, if I get the opportunity, I go out on the floor and work side by side with people, making sure standards are being kept. It's talking, encouraging, and educating.

This morning, I got a phone call saying half the kitchen lights and the air conditioning in Wembley weren't working. So we couldn't open the store. We called an electrician. Because I've been there a long time, I know the sort of things to look out for. Whilst he was coming, I went upstairs and found that a trip switch had gone. We got it working and I saved myself a call out. No one day is the same. There's always a different challenge.

**Q. So it didn't do anything to your self-esteem?**

A. No. I just went to my friend, and we went to another manager, and he was more accommodating. So I wasn't aware of being black and it being a difficulty. I'm more aware now. When I started, McDonald's had only been in this country since 1977/78, so there