



BDA

Volunteer Corner

Michele Rae has had a varied volunteering career with the BDA and is now a Trustee of the General and Education Trust

Volunteer name: **Michele Rae FBDA**

Place of work: **NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHSGGC), Scotland**

Position: **NHSGGC Professional Lead, Dietetics**

BDA volunteer role: **Trustee, General and Education Trust**

Q How did you get started volunteering with the BDA, and why?

A I cannot recall any time in the past 32 years when I have not volunteered with the BDA in a variety of roles. My inspiration came from Edith Elliot (former BDA Chair). I completed my dietetic practice placement in Nottingham in 1990 and soon after qualifying as a dietitian my volunteer journey started. To me, being part of our professional body in an active way is part of my way of working and contributing to the science and practice of dietetics.

Q Briefly describe your BDA volunteer role(s).

A A great start for anyone new to the profession is to be involved with BDA branch work, and that was where my 'apprenticeship' began. That provided a good training ground to spread my wings, and soon after I joined BDA national committees and moved into a BDA council role. Chairing the former conference scientific programmes committee and then finance committee allowed me to experience the internal runnings of the BDA and influence the prudent financial governance of the distribution of membership fees to ensure best value. Having financial oversight, balancing effective collaboration and partnerships developed my interest to apply for my current volunteer role as a Trustee for the General and Education Trust (GET).

Q What's the best thing/s about volunteering for the BDA?

A There is such power in any individual giving up your time, there is no one way to volunteer with the BDA. We all care about people, the environment, inequalities and many more issues. Tell the BDA what you can and like doing and work with the BDA to pick an opportunity and go for it! The best thing about volunteering for the BDA GET is not only do you see the applications, you also see the end product when funding is awarded. That makes a difference to the people we serve, and that's the best thing about volunteering.

Q What didn't you know about the BDA before you started volunteering?

A Before my volunteer roles with the BDA, I knew nothing about the grant giving charity GET. The GET was established to advance the education and other purposes related to the science of dietetics. The trust funds awards to recognise the great work carried out by BDA members. More recently, the trust has funded leadership programmes to help members grow and develop their leadership skills to support career and leadership roles. Did you know that the BDA carefully archived materials from 1936 and that this now sits with the Wellcome Trust to make it more publicly available? I didn't know that either.

Q Would you encourage other members to volunteer for the BDA?

A Without doubt, I encourage all BDA members to volunteer for the BDA. Not only does it help you grow, but it also provides inspiration for you to hear and share ideas with your colleagues. Volunteering is one of the most rewarding things you can do. Not only do you meet inspirational, like-minded professionals, you also learn valuable new skills. What's more, volunteering with the BDA builds long-lasting professional relationships and for me many have become firm friends.

WANT TO VOLUNTEER?

Check out our volunteer opportunities online: bda.uk.com/news-campaigns/get-involved/volunteers.html and look out for vacancies in our Members' Monthly e-zine.