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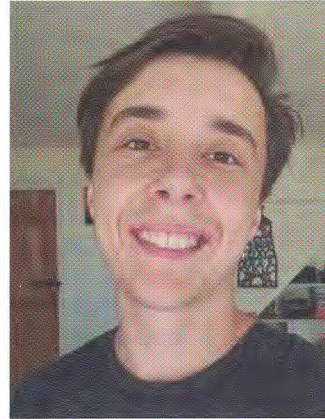
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From the Editor
SHAHID NAQVI



Conversations that give cause for optimism

As we say goodbye to 2021, one of the things that gives cause for optimism in the future is the amount of important conversations that have taken place this year. They may have been awkward and clumsy at times – even heated – but at least they were had.

Conversations about race, 'white privilege' and 'white supremacy'. About gender fluidity, puberty blockers and 'transitioning'. Of the sexualisation of youth, 'rape culture', male entitlement and violence against women.

All of these topics feature in this edition. They force us to confront our own prejudices, ignorance and the power dynamics and imbalances within society.

Being able to see the world through the eyes of others and having empathy is a core skill of social work. That, coupled with the profession's focus on social justice and ethics, makes it the right space to hold such conversations. Ultimately, they are fuelled by concern for people's rights and wellbeing and wanting to make the world a better place.

Our cover photo this month is of England's Social Worker of the Year Vivian Okeze-Tirado who sums up social work's motivation beautifully: "I just want to help people, really," she says.

Could there be a better mantra for 2022 and beyond?

BASW
Wellesley House, 37 Waterloo Street,
Birmingham B2 5PP
Tel: 0121 622 3911 www.basw.co.uk

Editor
Shahid Naqvi
Email: shahid.naqvi@basw.co.uk
07747 845098

Production assistant
Susan Hatton
Email: s.hatton@basw.co.uk

Editorial Advisory Board
Daniel Keeler and Laura Davis (co-chairs),
Yvonne Boyle, Lindsay Giddings,
Sumayya Hanson, Bill Stone, Nicola
Sylvester, Tim Parkinson, Emma Taylor-
Hill, Sally Parker (adviser)

Advertising
David Nelmes, Winterburn Media Ltd
Tel: 01309 690063
Email: david@winterburnmedia.co.uk

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