

# OC OF THE MONTH

June 2018



## ALESHA WHITE (GH 2009)

**A LEVELS:** MATHEMATICS, FRENCH AND GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

**UNIVERSITY:** UNIVERSITY OF EXETER, BA (HONS) ECONOMICS AND ECONOMETRICS

**HIGHGATE**

## 1. Tell us about yourself – where do you currently work, and how did you get into that?

At the time of writing this, I am transitioning from looking after Strategic Projects and Insights at a FinTech 'scale-up' in London called DueDil; to being full-time Co-Founder/Co-CEO of my own company (Hero Contacts Ltd. Trading name TBC).

I started out my career within financial services at a company called Bloomberg working on their trade desk. After a couple of years, I decided I wanted to get to know the 'Silicon Roundabout' start-up scene and moved to a fantastic company that I love called DueDil which was being reported in the press as "the Bloomberg of private company information".

## 2. What are some of your proudest achievements since graduating?

Since graduating university, my three proudest achievements have been:

1. Committing to constantly be contributing to the community (e.g. working at a homeless residential shelter and giving free mathematics tutoring at The Access Project).
2. Starting my own business.
3. Pushing myself with adventure sports such as paragliding, flying, skydiving and skiing.

## 3. What advice would you give someone who is looking to follow a similar career path?

If considering a career within FinTech/start-ups, do consider starting off at a large multi-national company first. This helps in two ways:

1. The social network you're able to easily build at a large company ends up paying dividends later on when you're working at a company with a smaller head-count
2. You get a feel for how larger companies operate and how you can grow with or help scale a small start-up.

## 4. Which A Level subjects did you choose at Highgate, and do you have any advice for pupils currently choosing A Levels?

Mathematics, French and Government & Politics.

My advice would be to really push yourself to study mathematics. As someone without a natural flair for the subject, it was a very conscious decision to really apply myself to studying it at A-level and not fall into "maths just isn't for me" trap. Given the calibre of the department at Highgate, do try to push yourself and study mathematics - it has a sneaky way of creeping up on you later on in life.

## 5. Where did you go to University? What did you study? Do you have any advice for pupils currently thinking about University options?

I studied at Exeter University for a BA in economics and econometrics (econometrics is a mathematical/statistical branch of economics).

Everyone will say this, but with good reason, study something you love! I truly hated the economics part of my degree and it became 4 years of pure, unadulterated torture.

6. Did your time at Highgate help you? If so, how?

My time at Highgate helped me enormously, especially with soft skills. Taking part in presentations in lunchtime societies and regional French debates especially helped build my confidence in presenting to an audience and constructing strong arguments.

7. In three words, how would you describe Highgate?

Stimulating, intense, happy.

8. What is your strongest memory of Highgate?

On a weekly basis, trying to get out of games afternoon, inevitably failing and having to do fencing (the least strenuous activity) with my high-heels on.

9. What drives you?

Trying to do the right thing and trying to make my lovely parents proud

10. What's next?

A funding round for my company and a puppy.