

# Exceptional young women honoured with award



## **Eleanor Marx spent her life fighting for equality and social justice and these young women make a fantastic contribution**

Lewisham's exceptional young women will be honoured with a new award from GMB Union.

The first ever Eleanor Marx Schools Awards will be presented by GMB's national president, Lewisham's MP's plus the Mayor of Lewisham at the council chambers on the 31st January. [See note 1 for event details]

GMB union, which represents workers across Lewisham, has established the Eleanor Marx Schools Award to honour the role of young women in Lewisham and to celebrate the contribution they make to



the borough, their communities, schools and families.

Eleanor Marx helped found GMB union at the turn of the last century.

“Eleanor would have been a champion for every single one of them so it's important we keep her memory and legacy alive by celebrating the contribution that young women are making in the present day.”

### **Barbara Plant, GMB National President**

She was a dedicated social justice campaigner and feminist and lived out her last days at number 7 Jews Walk, Sydenham.

It is in the spirit of Eleanor Marx's legacy that the GMB have founded this award for young women.

The judging panel, made up of Lewisham's women MP's Janet Daby, Ellie Reeves, Vicky Foxcroft and GMB's national president Barbara Plant (herself an ex-Sydenham girls student) will decide on the winner of the award.

The young women will be chosen on the basis of either; demonstrating a commitment to improving the lives of others / showing a commitment to equalities and / or has overcome adversity to achieve something special. The young women have all been nominated by their school.



**Barbara Plant, GMB National President, said:**

"As a former Lewisham school student, Lewisham school teaching assistant and now as the National President of GMB Union I believe it is essential that we honour the young women of our borough and what better way to do that than through the legacy of one of Lewisham's heroines.

"Eleanor Marx spent her life fighting for equality and social justice and I know there are young women across our borough who make fantastic contributions to their communities, schools and families often in challenging circumstances.

"Eleanor would have been a champion for every single one of them so it's important we keep her memory and legacy alive by celebrating the contribution that young women are making in the present



day."

**Mayor of Lewisham Damien Egan said:**

"I am proud to be supporting the GMB's Eleanor Marx Schools Awards.

"Eleanor made Lewisham her home and was a dedicated trade unionist, socialist and feminist.

"She was an inspiring woman and her contribution to the fight for social justice has been unfairly forgotten.

"But Eleanor's legacy can live on through the incredible young women being nominated for this award.

"It is so important that we honour the role they play in changing the lives of those around them and the contribution they make to their local communities."

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