

Malala Yousafzai Tackles Gender Inequality at World Merit Day

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12 Flares

Malala Yousafzai, the iconic teenage education activist delivered a rousing speech to a packed BT Convention Centre in Liverpool today (24th July) for World Merit Day, the ‘What Matters?’ Conference and Concert.

With a dedication to raising awareness and campaigning for equal education rights for all, Malala also took the opportunity to appeal for gender equality.

Speaking at World Merit Day, ‘What Matters?’ Conference and Concert, Malala said; “Education can be the change. In the past, the Masai tribe would make men warriors if they killed a lion. Thanks to changed minds and cultures, when a boy or girl in the Masai tribe gets a degree or an education, they then become Masai warriors. Change in our culture can happen thanks to education.”

Malala was joined on stage for an informal Q&A session with Sir Ken Robinson, international advisor of education in the arts. Sir Ken’s signature humorous delivery whilst discussing his radical views of the current worldwide education system was one the highlights of the World Merit Day, ‘What Matters?’ Conference and Concert. Malala revealed her father Ziauddin Yousafzai, the United Nations special advisor on global education, is a huge fan of Sir Ken’s work and an avid viewer of his TED talk, the most watched TED in history – ‘How schools kill creativity’.

Issue of Equality...

Malala and Sir Ken’s informal Q&A was well received with Malala commenting on the issue of equality; “I have this concept that I think people consider women to be weaker than men when looking at their bodies. We don’t have big muscles as men have, nor the stronger bodies. But women are strong in their contributions towards

society. I believe in equality and justice so men and women should be treated equally.”

TV presenter, motivational speaker and acid attack survivor Katie Piper delivered an emotional speech about courage and resilience. Chair of the Hillsborough Family Support Group, Margaret Aspinall, received a standing ovation for her strong words on the plight of those still fighting for truth and justice after the Hillsborough disaster, 25 years ago.

Climate Change...

Other highlights of the day included Felix Finkbeiner, the 16 year old eco superhero from Germany who had the crowd on their feet with appreciation for his efforts in the fight against climate change. In the last seven years, his organisation Plant-for-the-Planet has inspired children all over the world to plant over 13 billion trees. His own brand of fair trade confectionary, Change Chocolate, is carbon neutral and has been taken into the International Space Centre by astronauts.

An uplifting music concert ended the day with performances by SPACE, Nikki Belle, V3, Mic Lowry and Ellis C and Jack. Speaking about World Merit Day, CEO of World Merit, Chris Arnold commented; “World Merit, as a global connective community, was proud to host the first ever World Merit Day in the city in which it was founded. Our radically inclusive community connects Millennials globally beyond beliefs and borders. It was a magnificent feeling bringing so many young people together to hear the world’s finest inspirational speakers. This truly transformative day will certainly motivate those in attendance to make positive changes in their lives, in their communities and ultimately across the world.”

World Merit...

Founded in 2012, World Merit has quickly grown an online community of over 100,000 individuals in almost every country in the world. With a digital reach of over 30 million people worldwide, attendees of World Merit Day were invited to connect with the worldmerit.org online community to continue the momentum of inspiration and motivation after the event.

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