

# 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY WORKER:



Magazine of the Technical  
and Vocational Education  
and Training (TVET) Council

*Our Goals, Our Careers, Our Future*

Volume 2 No. 2 | November 2015



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COLIN HOLLIGAN -  
EXTERNAL VERIFIER

CVQS INSPIRING  
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## 21st Century Worker: Our Goals, Our Careers, Our Future Third Edition 2015/VOL 2 NO.2

This is the third edition of the **21st Century Worker**, a new online magazine that will be published twice a year by the TVET Council Barbados, a statutory corporation established in 1993 under the Ministry of Labour. TVETC's mission is to develop a competent, certified and competitive workforce in Barbados and the region through the promotion and coordination of demand driven technical and vocational education and training. **The 21st Century Worker** promotes the national TVET vision and the TVET Council's achievements. It serves as a forum for sharing best practice information, discussion and analysis of issues and events pertaining to the workforce education and training sector, but, with a human interest focus.

The TVET Council is a tripartite organisation made up of training institutions, employer associations, trade unions and government representatives.

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

On behalf of the TVET Council Barbados, it is my pleasure to present the third edition of our online magazine the **21st Century Worker: Our Goals, Our Careers, Our Future**.

This third issue culminates activities to mark the 20th Anniversary Celebrations of the **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council** – a.k.a TVET Council Barbados. The celebrations, which commenced with a week of activities from November 2 – 7, 2014, included a church service at the St. Cyprians Anglican Church; a lecture entitled “**Repositioning TVET as the Engine for Economic Growth**” which was sponsored by the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development (MLSD) and a Staff Fun Day.

The celebratory activities, which were held under the theme **TVET Council: Celebrating 20 years of Promoting Competence-Based TVET** also included a 20th Anniversary/Christmas Luncheon in December 2014.

The Council also marked its 20th year of existence with a change in address, moving from 8th Avenue, Belleville, St. Michael, where it spent the last two decades to new offices at Hastings House West, Balmoral Gap, Hastings, Christ Church, in August 2015.

Under the 20th anniversary celebrations theme – which complements the magazine’s overall theme of investing in workforce development – this issue of *21st Century Worker* takes a look back at the celebratory activities which marked the Council’s 20th year of existence as well as at the significant areas which have contributed to the achievement of the Council’s mandate of promoting and supporting the development of a national competence-based TVET system. That is, education for the world of work which is expected to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, attitude and work experience to be certified as competent to perform a work role to the standards expected.

The **21st Century Worker** magazine is a forum for the sharing of best practice information, discussion and analysis of issues and events pertaining to the workforce education and training sector but with a human interest focus. It will also serve as a marketing tool which brands the TVET Council (TVETC) as the government agency responsible for coordinating and managing Barbados’ TVET system and promoting a competitive workforce that is based on competence and productivity.

We hope our readers enjoy this third edition and we welcome your comments, ideas and feedback which can be provided at <http://www.tvetcouncil.com.bb/Contact/>.

**Samantha Jones**  
Editor

“*This issue of 21st Century Worker takes a look back at the celebratory activities which marked the Council’s 20th year of existence as well as at the significant areas which have contributed to the achievement of the Council’s mandate of promoting and supporting the development of a national competence-based TVET system.*”





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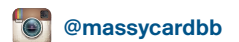


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CVQ Certified! From left to right: Davidson Bellamy, foreman; Kimberly Corbin, course worker 3; David Rowe, course worker 2; Matthew Gilkes, assistant landscape manager and Clarence Payne, senior spray technician.

## CVQS INSPIRING CAREERS

**B**efore Clarence Payne completed his first Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) in Amenity Horticulture, he considered his job to be somewhat mundane.

"I was just coming to work, being assigned a task and doing it. But after doing this CVQ, I understand I have a purpose. There is greater responsibility on me to do excellent, cleaner jobs. It forced me to step up, push higher and go further."

And he has gone further indeed. The 39-year-old senior spray technician, who has been employed at Sandy Lane since 1999, said he is more efficient and competent on the job. In fact, the training has awakened a passion that led Mr. Payne to start a part-time business with his brother called Payne's Landscaping and Maintenance.

"I did a job for a lady, who wanted mold in her garden, but I took the initiative to build some planters for her. She was really impressed so she kept calling us and now recommends us to several persons," he said, adding that CVQs gave him more opportunities for business and career development.

Mr. Payne was among the first people on the island to undertake

the CVQ certification when the Sandy Lane Resort sought to upgrade the skills set of its landscaping team through the Amenity Horticulture Level 1. They later went on to gain Level 2.

His colleague, Matthew Gilkes, was the first person in Barbados to attain NVQ and CVQ certification.

"I was so proud; I never thought I would be the first. I was just going through the paces and then the momentum started to build and I started to get excited so instead of trying to achieve one unit I wanted to get two units done, challenging myself and setting personal goals."

The 56-year-old admitted the assessments became "more intense" as he moved up the educational ladder. But, it was a welcomed challenge which saw him combining theory and practical skills to complete his final project on plant propagation.

Self-development was his motivation.

"I wanted to move to a higher level of horticulture, understanding tropical trees, pests and diseases. The CVQs are a way to promote yourself as it is being used in the Caribbean so you can market yourself throughout the region."

Forty-year-old David Rowe joined Sandy Lane in 1999. Back then, he did mowing, occasionally operating tractors and bobcats. He didn't have much experience in horticulture but the CVQs exposed him to many areas in the field.

"In order to fulfill your units, you had to do a project in an area



CVQ certification led to Clarence Payne starting a part-time business



outside where you worked. I chose spraying and chemical use. That was an eye-opener for me, I learnt how they affect plants, when and what to spray and how to better identify weeds.”

He aspires to be a CVQ assessor, facilitating others and examining their improvements.

“It will give me an opportunity to earn more money but being an assessor also keeps you up to date so you wouldn’t slip back into your old ways.”

Davidson Bellamy also wants to be an assessor after seeing the benefits of becoming “qualified while on the job because it is a work based certification”.

“I use to come to work for just coming to work sake. Now that we did the programme, I feel like I have a purpose. I got to learn about different grasses, how to sod, transfer grass and do things you would normally do in construction,” said the 49-year-old man. He was able to put what he learnt to use when the 2006 World Golf Championship-Barbados World Cup was held at Sandy Lane.

*“ I use to come to work for just coming to work sake. Now that we did the programme, I feel like I have a purpose.”*

“They wanted a different grass on a certain tee, and we moved grass from one side to the next. It was like moving a mat, that was beautiful, I love the outdoors.”

Kimberly Corbin, the only female in the group, said earning her CVQs expanded her knowledge, making her more assertive and confident on the job. It helped her to understand the purpose behind tasks and their outcomes.

The Level 2 CVQ was difficult causing her to feel as though she would give up. But she did not.

“Before I started, I knew five weeds, now I know about 20. In the long term, I can use this to get a promotion. I like what I do so I would like to stay and grow with the company,” the 34-year-old lass said, adding that she was looking forward to cross-training in other departments and using her skills there.

The employees lauded their employer, Sandy Lane, and specifically their supervisor and CVQ assessor, Colin Holligan, for his support.

| SHAMKOE PILÉ

David Rowe aspires to be a CVQ assessor.



Kimberly Corbin, the lone female of the group, said she hopes to use her CVQ to gain career advancement





Paul Puckerin delivers a presentation to trainees attending a CVQ in Customer Service Level 2 training workshop.

## | TVET more than Hands-On

**T**echnical and vocational education and training (TVET) must be on an equal level with pure academic training.

The concept may seem puzzling, especially as it has often been said that technical and vocational studies are for the “less academically inclined”. But according to Paul Puckerin, Senior Technical Officer of the TVET Council, this is nothing but a myth that needed to be shattered.

“When you think of doctors and dentists, they are high profile vocational professions. There is no way that any doctor can just enter the hospital after having spent five years of theoretical studies. They have to do internships, they have to practice the theories, they have to ensure they have passed a certain number of hours of practical and that is the same principle that exists with plumbing, masonry or cosmetology,” he reasoned.

The Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) validates this type of learning – the merging of theory and practical. “Employers are seeing CVQs as a viable alternative of certification”, he said, insisting that CVQs help to make candidates “a bit more work ready because they have to demonstrate the practices and not just the theoretical knowledge”.

Furthermore, the prominence of CVQs has increased because of the Competency-Based Training Fund (CBTF) - a Government of Barbados/Inter-American Development Bank initiative managed by the TVET Council. Under the programme, employers and training providers team up to provide competency-based training to staff, resulting in CVQ certification.

“It allowed for TVET Council to have a greater profile because it meant that employers had to offer a competence based qualification. And given that our qualifications are competence based, it meant an upsurge in the requests for CVQs and a demand for new ones that we didn’t offer.

“So it saw us writing about 14 new standards for different levels in areas such as Supply Chain Management, Directing and Animation. These are areas that were non-existence when I started in 2009,” he remarked.

The Senior Technical Officer, who recently completed his master’s in Education Leadership, wrote a thesis on the impact that CVQs had on the lives of the island’s first candidates – many of whom didn’t possess qualifications prior to certification. “It was a measure of satisfaction for some employees because



Senior Technical Officer Paul Puckerin (second from right) pictured with the Sandy Lane staff and the TVET Council Barbados representatives at the Sandy Lane Hotel staff awards. Several employees were awarded the CVQ in Amenity Horticulture Level 2.

it was the first time that they saw themselves as having a real qualification in hand. What they liked about it was that it was related to what they did and allowed them to be certified," he recalled.

When asked if on-the-job candidates should benefit from a pay raise after certification, Mr. Puckerin reasoned: "It may not have to be cash but it could be used as a strategy within the workplace to determine how persons move up or along in the process. I think it would be good to recognise CVQs in some form, so other employees could see the importance or advantage of taking on such a qualification."

Nonetheless, he pointed out that CVQs were beneficial for career or business advancement.

"I encourage people to use the CVQ to apply for their CARICOM Skills Certificate... it gives artisans a prime opportunity to expand and explore opportunities for work in the region. Prior to that, to work as a CARICOM Skills Nation, you had to have a degree." Mr. Puckerin believes that scholarships at the bachelors and

masters levels need to be awarded in an effort to transform how people think about TVET.

*“Mr. Puckerin believes that scholarships at the bachelors and masters levels need to be awarded in an effort to transform how people think about TVET.”*

"Beyond the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic there is no other scope for persons to further their education ... I believe government should explore options of providing scholarships in those non-traditional areas, such as animation, automotive technology, cosmetology, beauty therapy, and furniture making, to suggest a few.

He concluded: "Put technical and vocational education and training on an equal footing. To my mind there is no difference but vocational CVQs create employment opportunities, I think the vocational sphere is at an all-time high."

| SHAMKOE PILÉ



Executive Director, TVET Council Barbados, Henderson Eastmond.

## TVET Council Evolves: Charting the way Forward

**B**arbados, like most nations around the globe, recognises the link between effective technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and national growth.

For this reason, 20 years ago the decision was made to establish the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council, which exists, as its Vision Statement outlines: "To be seen as the premier catalyst for workforce development in the region". TVET Council (TVETC) advises the Government of Barbados on policy, coordinates and regulates the discipline of technical and vocational education and training, and develops the necessary standards. TVETC also awards certificates to those who successfully complete training.

Several notable strides have been made during the existence of TVET Council and its Executive Director Henderson Eastmond, who celebrated his fourth year with the organisation on September 4th, highlighted some accomplishments.

"TVETC is well known for awarding the CVQ (Caribbean Vocational Qualification) and NVQ (National Vocational Qualification)."

Employees and self-employed persons can enroll for N/CVQ training through such institutions as the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic or at one of the 50 TVET Council assessment centres throughout the island.

It is a common perception that the training offered is only for "persons who work with their hands" such as tradesmen; but this is not the case. TVET training is also for those who work in retail, tourism, information technology and funeral services, among other professions.

TVETC offers Competence Based Education and Training (CBET) certification designed to train trainers so that they are adequately qualified to instruct those pursuing N/CVQ training.

Financing is even provided so that training becomes a reality for many. The Employment & Training Fund (ETF), which was established to finance staff training and upgrade skills, is funded by the Government of Barbados and managed by TVETC. The Council uses it to provide training grants to companies and it is made available to employers, public and private training institutions, employer associations and trade unions.

Also, from 2014, the Competency Based Training Fund (CBTF) was made available to provide employers with the funds needed to train staff and fulfill the requirements of the Human Resource Development Strategy 2011-2016.

"The CBTF is working well," reports Eastmond.

There is another dimension to workforce empowerment being undertaken by TVETC. To ensure the present and future workforce is equipped with the skills needed to function in an increasingly dynamic work environment, TVET Council is utilising Government's Human Resource Development Strategy which is being executed over the period 2011-2016.

Of the strategy, Mr. Eastmond says: "As it relates to entrepreneurship and demand driven education, we are meeting our targets."

The Human Resource Development Strategy was designed to strengthen the long-term sustainability of the nation by enhancing economic competitiveness through the sustained development of our human resources.

Mr. Eastmond highlighted a public education initiative which was recently introduced so that the workforce can maximise the opportunities provided by TVET.

"We embarked on a ten-month programme which saw our Technical Officers making presentations at our training centres to educate people about the ETF and competency based training."



Executive Director Henderson Eastmond delivering the Opening Remarks at the Council's 20th Anniversary Lecture.

There is a public education tool which continually informs the nation's workforce. TVET Council's '21st Century Worker' electronic magazine keeps members of the workforce across the island abreast with developments in education and training.

In the near future, an electronic registration system will be implemented so that students' information can be easily accessed. An ETF database will also be built to store such information as pass rates and application dates. Also, a standards database, with such information as assessment tools, is being planned.

While TVETC's accomplishments are a source of satisfaction for its executive director, he acknowledges there are areas which need to be improved.

"Our regulatory system needs improvement," Mr. Eastmond admits. "Therefore, we are planning to collect data to quality assure, analyse and report to the nation."

Data will be collected on the number of employees who register to complete training, those who complete training, the drop-out rate and how impactful training has been in the workforce.

A research officer will soon be on board at the Council to assist with the collation of this information and in 2017, there will be a review of the information.

Its work is vital to the development of the Barbadian society; yet for TVET Council the way forward is often hampered by obstacles which must be scaled.

*"We have new and emerging industries which need trained personnel, such as health and wellness, creative industries, a pending oil industry."*



(Left to Right) Minister of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development Dr. Esther Byer Suckoo, Manager, Competency-Based Training Fund (CBTF) Anderson Lowe and TVETC's Executive Director Henderson Eastmond attending a CBTF workshop

Training is expensive as up-to-date equipment is needed and many still have the mindset that academic training is superior to technical training.

But despite the existence of such obstacles, Mr. Eastmond stresses: "We are a borrowing country and we need to produce more. So we must cut our expense bill with the help of those who have the required technical training.

"We have new and emerging industries which need trained personnel, such as health and wellness, creative industries, a pending oil industry. Therefore, there is a plan in place so that we know where the jobs are and train accordingly."

TVETC has developed standards for such institutions as Codrington College and the College's Pastoral Care standard is in place there.

The TVETC team will continue to work with educational institutions to develop the necessary standards. Soon there will be news of a partnership with the University of the West Indies' Medical Sciences Faculty and the Faculty of Social Sciences, to develop CVQs.

TVET Council's retired Executive Director Trevor King



Mr. King (right) in attendance at a recent TVET Council staff function

# TVET Council Evolves: Pioneer and Champion

In August 1996, Trevor King pioneered an emerging Government entity born out of the recognition that Barbados' human resources required development.

The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council was formed as a part of a World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) strategy to upgrade workplace efficiency and subsequently improve the economy.

"Therefore, the TVET Council (TVETC) is an engine for growth," said Mr. King, TVETC's first appointed executive director.

During those early days, the staff was small. Mr. King worked with a team comprising Geoffrey Yearwood, manager of the employment and training fund; Cora Richards, finance officer; Gloria Jones, then secretary and later the executive secretary; and Gale Alleyne, general worker.

The former head explained that in order to educate Barbados about the role of TVET certain tools were used.

"We used communications to deliver our messages; utilised role models who spoke about what they achieved because of TVET – for example Donville Inniss, now the Minister of Industry, International Business, Commerce and Small Business Development; and we did – and still do – lots of training."

Expanding on TVETC's training policy, Mr. King said tutors who delivered the Technical and Vocational Education training needed to understand what standards were used in the workplace and therefore also had to be trained.

TVETC's CVQ (Caribbean Vocational Qualification) and NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) certification continue to gain popularity with the increasing pressure for members of the workforce to become certified.

Mr. King said TVETC's mandate was to ensure that persons underwent the relevant training and were competent in the necessary skills and also to guide Government as it developed HR nationally.

Regional alliances have been instrumental in TVETC's development as Mr. King travelled to Jamaica in 1996 to learn from our Caribbean neighbour. Prior to this, Paulette Dunne-

Smith, then manager of HEART (Human Employment and Resource Training Trust) National Training Agency in Jamaica brought the Jamaican experience to Barbados. Robert Gregory, another representative of the Jamaican agency, also helped the TVET Council, by providing information on what the Council needed to put in place, how to set up the necessary systems and developing the standards.

Another alliance was formed with the TTNTA – The Trinidad & Tobago National Training Agency - when that entity launched in 1998.

Further regional strengthening of technical and vocational studies came in 2001 with the formation of CANTA – the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies. Member countries include Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago (the founding members), as well as Antigua, the Bahamas, Belize, Guyana, Montserrat and St. Lucia.

From the outset, TVETC faced such challenges as convincing society, including parents, that technical and vocational training was viable.

"It was seen as being for those who didn't do well academically. So getting acceptance and understanding that the training is not only in joinery and carpentry is an ongoing battle.

"In some instances, persons can find it far more rewarding than academic training."

“*The TVET Council is an engine for growth*”

Mr. King is satisfied with the good relationships formed over the years among TVETC staff, with the Ministry of

Industry, International Business, Commerce and Small Business Development and the private sector; and he sees this as key to TVET's continued growth.

As TVETC continues to evolve, Mr. King's dream is for TVET Council to continue focusing on competency based training and to see a national acceptance of both technical and vocational studies and academics. It is also his hope that CVQ and NVQ certification would be accepted by Government's Personnel Administration Department.

Also on his wish list: "In Germany, there's a system where academic and technical studies are offered each step of the way. I would like to see Barbados adopt this. Students should have academic and technical and vocational training and be given the opportunity to demonstrate their skills."

"Additionally, there should be more training of supervisors so that they will be better equipped to guide," he concluded.

| FAY COOKE-NURSE



Retired Permanent Secretary Shelley Carrington now serves the TVET Council as an External Verifier.



Ms. Carrington, who has a wealth of experience working in the Civil Service, believes: "You cannot improve productivity and not include Barbados' largest employer – the Barbados Government."

## TVET Council Evolves: Bringing Passion to the Council

**S**helley Carrington is proud to be associated with the institution which is contributing to Barbados' competitiveness – the TVET Council (TVETC).

When Ms. Carrington was first connected with TVETC, it was as the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour as the ministry's representative on TVETC's Board of Directors from 2008 to 2011.

Then she was promoted to Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism before retiring in early 2015 after which she became TVETC's External Verifier (EV), a post she is enjoying immensely.

"I'm glad to be still productive and I like what I do at TVET Council."

TVET Council is charged with two major roles: Advising government on the required training and supporting equipment to ensure the local workforce acquires the skills needed to stay in touch; and providing certification and training trainers to provide the CVQ and NVQ qualifications.

As an EV, Ms. Carrington forms part of the quality assurance mechanism at TVETC where she visits TVETC's centres, assesses whether the centres are ready to provide NVQ/CVQ

training and reports to TVETC.

"I assess the candidates and the teachers to ensure they are ready. Then when the teacher is delivering the NVQ/CVQ, I visit again to assess."

Practicing what she preaches, Ms. Carrington holds certification from TVETC: "I hold a certificate of competence in NVQ Level IV in Assessment."

Such certification has complemented her other qualifications – a Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resources and a Masters Degree in Management.

Over the years, TVETC has developed occupational standards which match international levels. The partnerships built have served the organisation well and such features as the Employment Training Fund (ETF) provide our workforce with funds for training as long as such training is in line with national goals.

Ms. Carrington believes TVETC will continue to build on the legacy created to date. She is confident that TVETC has attracted competent staff members who are able to carry out the necessary work.

She recognises that the reality in any government is that departments are competing for limited resources to carry out their mandates. She therefore advises representatives to be vocal to ensure they obtain the resources required.

TVETC in her opinion must therefore continue to develop and nurture existing partnerships.

To continue to grow, she feels TVETC must continue to communicate what it does and deliver quality training.

As for our national development, she believes Government can benefit from an NVQ/CVQ programme that would see the enhancement of such skills as records management and HR management.

"You cannot improve productivity and not include Barbados' largest employer – the Barbados Government."

| FAY COOKE-NURSE





Flashback: Colin Holligan delivers the feature address at the TVET Council's 20th Anniversary/Christmas Luncheon



Flashback: Colin Holligan is presented with a token of appreciation by Senior Accountant Michelle Haynes following his feature address at the TVET Council's 20th Anniversary/Christmas Luncheon



Sandy Lane Hotel's Assistant Golf Course Superintendent Colin Holligan (back row, left) pictured with fellow staff members - Barbados' first CVQ in Amenity Horticulture Level 2 awardees – as well as Manager, Training and Development Samantha Wilkinson (second row, right) and Senior Technical Officer, TVET Council Barbados, Paul Puckerin (back row, right).

## Colin Charting Career Development

Colin Holligan is one of those persons who possesses an innate yearning to help others strive.

While developing his profession, the First Assistant Golf Course Superintendent assigned to the ultra-exclusive 7,343 yard Green Monkey golf course at the Sandy Lane Hotel, has also help his staff to develop their careers.

Rewind to 2006 when then Director of Golf, Turf and Landscaping, Jimmy Kidd, partnered with the Technical Vocational and Educational Training (TVET) Council to develop Amenity Horticulture occupational standards in an effort to certify golf course workers.

This led to Sandy Lane becoming the first approved National/ Caribbean Vocational Qualification (N/ CVQ) centre on the island. Six employees undertook the pilot programme with each acquiring a National Vocational Qualification in Amenity Horticulture Level 1 (later converted to a CVQ).

"During the pilot project, I conducted the role of an assessor. That was an exciting experience. I saw the CVQ programme as a way to develop staff because it embraced practical learning rather than just academics," Mr. Holligan said.

"The vocational approach was ideal for them," he explained, pointing out that some participants had been employed at Sandy Lane for as much as 25 years with nothing more than on-the-job training.

"One candidate admitted that he came to Sandy Lane with only one certificate, and that was his birth certificate. After completing the Level 1 qualification he started asking about Level 2," he recalled.

The success of that candidate attracted the attention of a former teacher, who, acknowledging the success of the participants, sought to have the programme implemented at his institution. Grantley Adams Secondary School then became the first school

to offer the CVQ in Amenity Horticulture Level 1.

Mr. Holligan, who loves the outdoors, has a Bachelor's of Science in Agricultural Science from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus. The 41-year-old's quest for development led to him becoming a fully certified assessor. Then, he studied to become an Internal Verifier and later advanced to an External Verifier.

Since then, he has been assigned to the Nature Care Centre, Her Majesty's Prisons Dodds, Vernon House, the Princess Margaret School, the IICA Youth Farm Programme and of course, Sandy Lane.

During his assessments, he has been able to witness the positive transformation of participants. Specifically referring to the IICA Youth Farm programme, he said: "I have seen students move from being in that programme for the summer to being employed in the agriculture sector because that is where they wanted to be. Others have gone on to further their studies in agriculture."

Mr. Holligan strongly believed that CVQ certification is a competency-based qualification that can raise the standard of operation within any organisation. In fact, he argued it's "an excellent product" and recommended that other businesses implement it.

"I make this statement after viewing the CVQ programme through the eyes of assessor, an Internal Verifier and External Verifier, a trainer and most of all as an employer.

"Investing in the development of staff is a worthwhile undertaking and the benefits have been seen at Sandy Lane in several ways. The staff turnover on the golf course is very low and this reduces the need for us to be constantly training new persons in this specialised area. Our staff is motivated and the morale is very high with persons often inquiring about what is coming next.

"What I like most about this, is that it empowers candidates, especially those who had no certification. I am happy to be a part of this," Mr. Holligan stated.

\*Please see also Page 29

| SHAMIKOE PILÉ



Dr. Hassan Ndahi, Senior Specialist Skills and Employment with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Caribbean Office.

## Craftsmen of our Fate

The history of the Caribbean is a dynamic one, with many countries in the region, including Barbados, having evolved from crop-based economies and skills-based citizenry to centres of commerce and tourism, with emphasis on finance and academia. While this evolution is regarded as a positive sign of development, recent challenges have revealed that taking a second look at our skills-based past could help us become better craftsmen of our fate.

This theory is supported by Dr. Hassan Ndahi, who has noted that technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is the engine for economic development in many industrialised countries. Dr. Ndahi, the Senior Specialist, Skills and Employability with the International Labour Organisation Office for the Caribbean, observed that, while achieving higher levels of TVET in the Caribbean will be challenging, it is not impossible.

He stressed that the characteristics of an ideal TVET system included making provision for persons with disabilities and being dynamic in assessment of labour market needs in order to replace obsolete programmes. However, Dr. Ndahi maintained that the most crucial element to TVET's success was independent funding and management of the system by TVET professionals.

"You must be funded through multiple sources, which means

at any point in time, the system should not be completely out of funding. Even during economic downturns, you should be able to meet at least 70 per cent of the funding," he revealed. Elaborating further on the traits of a successful TVET system, the Skills and Employability Specialist highlighted the need for "...adequate resources for staff, students and non-teaching staff [and] constant professional development activities for teachers."

"A good TVET system must have qualified teachers that understand the methodology and psychology of teaching TVET," Dr. Ndahi observed.

Reflecting on TVET's advancement in the Caribbean, the expert acknowledged the strides made but highlighted areas which hindered Barbados and its regional counterparts from meeting the mark established by best practice nations, such as Malaysia and Singapore.

"If we look at Barbados and compare it to Malaysia, both have training funds, so Barbados has made good progress [in that regard]...there's also a regional TVET policy...so that is progress," he said, referencing the revised CARICOM Regional TVET Strategy for Workforce Development and Economic Competiveness 2014 and the Barbados Human Resource Strategy 2011-2016.

"However," he continued, "they have not made progress with the development of TVET teachers...and providing adequate teacher resources and facilities, resources in the classroom...because of inadequate funding."

# Celebrating 20 Years: ANNIVERSARY LECTURE

Repositioning TVET as the  
Engine for Economic Growth



Flashback: Dr. Hassan Ndahi is presented with a token of appreciation by TVET Council's Administrative Officer Shirleen Inniss at the conclusion of the 20th Anniversary Lecture. Looking on is Executive Director Henderson Eastmond

In essence, Dr. Ndahi said, the region as a collective would only receive a passing grade. Another missing link, he said, was administrative and financial autonomy for training institutions which would allow programmes to be developed and sustained.

"If you give institutions the autonomy to sit down and design and implement what they are good at implementing and there is adequate funding, they can reach a high level in a quick period of time...so they do

not have to go to the Ministry of Education for every little thing ... [autonomy would mean] that stakeholders can hold them accountable to failures ...it's like you have a hospital and there's somebody else somewhere telling the doctors what to do, what medication to prescribe, without seeing the patient...

"So in an institution, you have teachers who are trained, you have good administrators but still they have no authority to take decisions. In order to see a quick change, give them financial and administrative autonomy and you'll see a quick turnaround," Dr. Ndahi stated, adding that continuity of TVET programmes – regardless of changes in ministerial or political administration – was also essential to their survival.

He also identified the need for greater recognition of technical and vocational training and education. This was made more

salient in light of the 2010 CARICOM Study of Youth in the Caribbean, which revealed that education in the region did not adequately prepare young people for work, with access to quality TVET suggested as one of the solutions to this dilemma.

"There has to be a change in the mindset of people [and to achieve this], the only thing you can do is what I mentioned earlier - to create a good TVET system. Once you have good equipment, good classrooms, adequate teaching materials, resources, state-of- the-art equipment, young people will gravitate to those programmes...[currently] when they go into those programmes all they see is outdated equipment...even

their cell phones are more advanced than the equipment in the classroom...we need to change the image."

*Dr. Ndahi was the guest speaker at TVET Council Barbados' 20th Anniversary Lecture. He discussed **Repositioning TVET as the Engine for Economic Growth**.*

| NEKAELIA HUTCHINSON-HOLDER

TVET Council's board members, staff and guests who included former staff members, Minister of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development Dr. Esther Byer Suckoo, Chairman Dr. Hensley Sobers and Executive Director Henderson Eastmond joined in worship at the St. Cyprians Anglican Church



# Spotlight on TVETC's 20th Anniversary Celebrations

Patrons in attendance at the 20th Anniversary Lecture and the subsequent cocktail reception held at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre (LESC).



TVET Council's board members, staff and specially invited guests in attendance at the 20th Anniversary/Christmas Luncheon



Staff Fun Day: TVET Council's staff enjoyed each other's company during a fun-filled island tour and luncheon





Officials and guests in attendance at the CBTF's Class of 2015 Graduation Ceremony for National/Caribbean Vocational Qualification (N/CVQ) awardees



Some of the N/CVQ graduates at the CBTF's Class of 2015 Graduation Ceremony

## CBTF - Changing Barbados' Training Focus

**H**ow is competence measured? Is it determined by the years served in a particular capacity? Or can it be verified by passing a test?

In its literal sense, competence is the ability to do something successfully or efficiently. Based on this definition, the aforementioned methods would not serve as accurate benchmarks. Instead, competence must be proven or demonstrated and it was this challenge which the Competency-Based Training Fund (CBTF) undertook in 2014.

"The CBTF's mandate is to support the Barbados Government's Human Resource Development Strategy, with an emphasis on improving the effectiveness of technical and vocational education and training (TVET)," CBTF Manager, Anderson Lowe, explained. "To that end, the CBTF has focused on funding employer-driven projects which will directly benefit workers by improving their skills and qualifications."

While the CBTF caters to projects of all kinds, its areas of special interest are manufacturing, agriculture, hospitality, health & wellness, creative industries and alternative energy. With three calls for proposals issued and 106 proposals received since April 2014, the Fund continues to make its mark across multiple industries. Various sectors have responded positively to the training opportunity.

To date, 25 proposals (almost double the initial target of 14) have been funded to the tune of BBD \$14 million and 4000 participants are expected to benefit from the CBTF by the time it has concluded in November 2016.

"Some 14 standards have been developed and 13 industries are participating in the Fund. In addition, our first batch of trainees has now been certified. We are well on the way to achieving our deliverables under the Skills for the Future programme,"

Mr. Lowe said, referencing the Barbados Government initiative (funded by the Inter-American Development Bank) which features the CBTF as a component.

"...More than 1,600 persons have signed up for training, 380 persons have been assessed, and 212 have received a National or Caribbean Vocational Qualification (N/CVQ) in their specific area of concentration," the CBTF Manager stated. The 212 certified persons, who formed the CBTF Class of 2015, represented the Barbados Coalition of Service Industries, Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association, Barbados Port Inc., Guardian General Insurance, Rayside Construction Ltd., Williams Industries Ltd. and The Nature Care Group (which saw 71 employees graduate with an NVQ in Amenity Horticulture).

While the CBTF model may appear counterintuitive given Barbados' traditional classroom teaching model, using demonstration instead of regurgitation, it has placed participants in good stead.

"The assessment process for CBTF beneficiaries encompasses on-the-job evaluation, as well as the compilation of a portfolio of evidence to support competence in their occupational area. Those persons who complete the assessment process and are deemed 'competent' are eligible for certification by the TVET Council," explained Liaison Officer Andrea Austin. Adapting to a non-traditional assessment approach is not the only challenge however, the liaison officer noted that "training and assessment schedules can vary by industry, occupation and level of qualification".

"Bear in mind, too, that the majority of the participants maintain a full-time work schedule while learning and that some industries must conduct training activity outside of their busy periods," she said.

Despite these challenges, the CBTF has proven itself to be a worthwhile undertaking for participants. One of the requirements for funding is that the proposed training be mapped to local, regional or international occupational



CBTF Manager, Anderson Lowe, in discussion with a participant at a CBTF workshop

standards, such as N/CVQs.

"Participating employers have not only made good use of existing occupational standards, but have also commissioned the development of new standards tailored to their specific needs," Ms. Austin said.

support in the upskilling of a segment of the workforce, the hope is that the participating businesses experience increased productivity and efficiency and contribute to raising Barbados' profile as an international product and service provider. At the same time, the intention is to empower the certified beneficiaries to continue to develop professionally in Barbados and beyond..." he said.

Mr. Lowe added that an anticipated part of the Fund's legacy would be an increased appreciation for TVET and the benefits it can provide. He added that he also expected that "the TVET Council's Employer Training Fund will maintain CBTF's momentum and best practices".

Mr Lowe revealed that a fourth cycle is under consideration and the CBTF Management Unit "stands ready to launch". The CBTF Manager also expressed his thanks, and that of the CBTF Management Unit, to all stakeholders.

| NEKAELIA HUTCHINSON-HOLDER

The Fund's existence has also resulted in the development of new standards and an improved TVET support system, which has seen an increase in the number of training centres, trainers, assessors and verifiers. "Existing standards have also been subject to review and have been brought in line with current best practices in their respective industries. We continue to work with the TVET Council to streamline their registration, assessment and certification processes to provide positive experiences for all TVET students," Ms. Austin noted.

The nature of the CBTF has led to the formation of a close partnership between the Fund and the TVET Council, which serves as the awarding body for N/CVQs locally. "Participants can contact the Council to determine whether there is an existing standard which coincides with their desired area of concentration," the Liaison Officer explained. "Where no standard exists, they can work directly with the Council to commission the development of a standard which meets their needs." The standard development process involves determining the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are integral to a particular occupation. The information is then used to create an occupational standard, with levels ranging from one (entry level) to four (degree level), which is approved and issued for use by the TVET Council.

Even as the CBTF draws to a close, it is evident that its effect will endure as its manager acknowledged that the national impact of the "ambitious programme" was one that "will surely resonate" within TVET and the wider business and consumer communities.

"The Fund is focused on improving the effectiveness of technical and vocational education and training through the support of demand-driven training. By lending financial

*"I thought the training would have been challenging, but it turned out to be the best thing that could have happened. It makes me feel very important and good to be certified and better equipped to do my job. It has helped me a lot."*

**Marcellus Louis**  
Docker, Barbados Port Inc.



## Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) Stevedoring Foundation Skills - Level 1

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  - Performing pre-rigging testing and inspection

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## CVQs: Expanding the Regional Qualifications Landscape

Dr. Hamilton Jemmott, Measurement and Evaluation Officer with the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC)

The TVET Council has long been tasked with the development of raising the bar for competence-based education and training in Barbados. However this growth has been taken a step further through the development of Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQs).

Like its counterpart - the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) - the CVQ is also based on occupational standards developed in collaboration with employers and practitioners with expertise in an occupational area. However, as the regional equivalent of NVQs, CVQs are based on occupational standards that have been approved by CARICOM for regional use with regards to education, training, assessment and certification of a person's work-based knowledge and skills.

The CVQ, seen as a tool to facilitate the free movement of skilled persons in the region, not only caters to those already in the workforce, but those about to enter the working world. While technical and vocational education and training is often

seen as independent from traditional studies, CVQs (which may be divided into two categories – stand alone and integrated) present an opportunity for cohesion by incorporating TVET modules into Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) and Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE) subjects.

Dr. Hamilton Jemmott, Measurement and Evaluation Officer with the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), explained that “stand alone” CVQs are taken by students as a single

*“Students pursuing the stand alone CVQ qualifications could receive full certification once they had demonstrated competence in all mandatory units.”*

qualification in which students undertake all of the units of a Regional Occupational Standard. These stand alone qualifications have no bearing on CSEC or CAPE examinations taken by students... ‘integrated’ CVQs [are] based on the Caribbean

Examinations Council taking the decision to integrate units from Regional Occupational Standards (ROS) into the school-based assessment (SBA) of certain CSEC and CAPE subjects. “In this case,” he continued, “units from the ROS were mapped





Dr. Jemmott (third from left) in discussion with TVET Council's Executive Director Henderson Eastmond (left) and staff members Senior Technical Officer Dawn Gill (second from left) and Technical Officer Elvina Rollins following the conclusion of a CVQ sensitization meeting

against the content from certain CSEC and CAPE syllabi. Those units that supported the theoretical content of the syllabi were incorporated into the SBA. The intention is to provide students with authentic work training experiences to help prepare them for the world of work."

Dr. Jemmott noted that offering CVQs increased opportunities for students, as those "pursuing the CSEC and CAPE integrated approaches benefit from the CSEC and CAPE qualifications ... [receive] unit recognition [and are] exposed to authentic work experiences during training". He added that students pursuing the stand alone CVQ qualifications could receive full certification once they had demonstrated competence in all mandatory units. "If students do not complete all units of the occupational area, they are awarded unit certification for those units successfully completed," he disclosed.

The year 2017 will mark two decades since the CARICOM Secretariat and regional TVET institutions gathered to launch the CVQ and the endeavour continues to grow from strength to strength.

"The interest in CVQs has been encouraging," Dr. Jemmott revealed.

"The number of candidates entered, the number of territories participating and the number of occupational areas undertaken have been increasing each year," he said.

| NEKAELIA HUTCHINSON-HOLDER



Jelani Hunte, winner of the Youth Farm Programme 2015, Most Promising Youth Farmer Award



Reuben Wiltshire, winner of the Most Outstanding Candidate Award

# The Future of Barbados' Agriculture Sector In Good Hands!

Food security is a must for all countries!

And, it is particularly crucial for island nations like Barbados to have an adequate supply that is able to sustain the population at all times, particularly in the event of challenges like droughts, shipping disruptions and economic instability.

However, we in Barbados have little to fear as several young persons are well on their way to ensuring that we have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet our dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Not only are they exploring the various areas that they can contribute toward the growth of our agricultural sector, but many of them have identified niche areas where they will start their careers.

Who are these brave young souls that have dared to go into an area which many have shunned for years? They are the young farmers who have passed through the Youth in Agriculture Farm Programme, which is a collaborative effort organised by the

TVET Council, the Inter American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) Office in Barbados, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation and the Ministry of Agriculture.

Some of the latest graduates from this programme explained why agriculture was so special to them, how the programme helped them and why they chose to enter the sector, in spite

“ *There needs to be more programmes like Youth in Agriculture to encourage young people to see the benefits in farming.* ”

of warnings to “go to school and get some certificates so you don’t have to work on somebody’s farm”.

Jelani Hunte, a young agripreneur was quick to point out his love for agriculture. The Lodge School student is tiny in stature but large in his ideas to take animal husbandry and livestock production to another level.

He explained that he had been working in agriculture for the past five years and reared ducks, sheep, goats, guinea birds and peacocks in addition to other livestock. The winner of the Most Promising Youth Farmer Award credits the Youth in Agriculture Farm Programme with expanding his knowledge of



Reshawn Barker, winner of Spirit of Youth Farm Award



Daphanie Richards, winner of the Youth Farm Leadership Award

farming. According to him, he earned a Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) Level 1 certification in Amenity Horticulture, which has prepared him to “go out into the working world and help me build my own enterprise”.

Jelani said there needed to be more programmes like Youth in Agriculture to encourage young people to see the benefits in farming.

He advised: “I would tell them everybody has to eat. I don’t think they know where the food is coming from...so I would encourage the young people to get into agriculture - there are many different aspects of agriculture. Not only farming in the hot sun with smelly animals but in the office,” he pointed out.

This innovative young man, who hoped to become a largescale livestock producer and manager, has plans to continue his education at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and then at the University of the West Indies’ St Augustine Campus in Trinidad.

Winner of the prize for Most Outstanding Candidate, Rueben Wiltshire, is keen to begin a career in animal husbandry. This St. George Secondary School student explained that he loved working with animals from the time he was very young. “My next door neighbour had a small farm dealing with pigs and she used to wake up at 5:00 or 4:00 a.m. to go wash out the pens so I used to jump out of bed and run outside – if the door was locked I would jump through the window and run outside in the yard to watch her do her thing,” he recalled.

He found the programme an inspiration and one in which he would love to see more youth involved. His plan is to work in the rearing of animals with his father, whom he also credits for encouraging him to get involved in farming.

Another graduate, Reshawn Barker, admitted that he didn’t expect much from what he assumed would be a “boring” programme, but was pleasantly surprised by how much fun learning various aspects of agriculture could be. He is the proud recipient of The Spirit of Youth Farm Award.

The aspiring chef praised the programme as one that is extremely beneficial and prepared him for work in agriculture and other fields. He admitted that he was among those warned not to enter the agricultural field, but has since come to view this option as a viable career. He said that his aspiration was to own a restaurant one day as well as a farm providing the produce for that restaurant.

The 2015 Youth Farm Programme was unique as for the first time it welcomed participants from another island. One of the students Daphanie Richards, who hails from Antigua and Barbuda, was the lone female in the programme. She noted that this distinction was not without its challenges, but the process had made her more confident in her abilities to work in agriculture. Daphanie won the Youth Farm Leader Award and is interested in pursuing a career in aquaponics.

The Youth Farm programme was first initiated in 2012. One hundred and thirty nine students completed the intensive course of study over the years with 94 obtaining full Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQs) in Amenity Horticulture.

| KIM RAMSAY-MOORE

# The Winding Road to Building a Career



TVET Council's Senior Technical Officer  
(Quality Assurance) Paul Puckerin

The year was 1988 and the excitement of leaving the Princess Margaret Secondary School to pursue further education was tinged with uncertainty for me. It was a time when, having only

achieved four CXC's, I wondered whether this would have been sufficient to gain a place to pursue higher education or if I needed to return to school for an additional year. The fields of agriculture and education have always been my passion but the Barbados Community College (BCC) at that time did not provide a career path in either.

Fortunately I gained acceptance at the BCC and opted to be part of the inaugural group of students who not only undertook 'A' levels but for the first time received dual certification through the associate degree programme. Mine was in history and geography. Still a profession in agriculture or education beckoned. In 1990 I was drawn to a newspaper advertisement by the Organization of American States (OAS) Scholarship to study agriculture.

The roller coaster ride began when I was notified that indeed, I had won the scholarship to Venezuela to pursue the Associate Degree in Farm Management. I felt like a lottery winner as the path to one of my life's dreams opened up.

That I had to learn a new language, adapt to a new culture and appreciate different customs were the least of my worries. My driving force was knowing I would be successful and within six month of landing in Venezuela I developed a sound working knowledge of Spanish. This period was one of great anticipation as I left the comfort of home and family for three years in a world of uncertainty where social unrest was the norm.

I overcame the obstacles, graduated and went on to gain experience as a supervisor in poultry farming for two years. This vocational experience as I now know it to be was what prepared me immensely for what was to come in my later career undertakings. The programme had promoted the importance of having the right balance of academic and practical. On my return to Barbados I was fortunate to gain employment based on the studies and worked for five years with the then Barbados Feed Limited first as a field officer, providing technical support

to farmers. I was promoted to farm manager of one of the largest poultry farms at the time.

Adventure and the need to be challenged have always been a part of my nature and so I switched to my second love, education and returned to my alma mater for two years. From there it was the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic where I paused for eight years as an instructor in the Division of Agriculture. This leg of my journey allowed me to mold, engaged and transform the minds of enterprising agriculturalists. To enrich their studies I coordinated several field trips, attachments and educational tours that complemented the theory.

Continuous professional development has been and continues to be one of my hallmarks. Hence along the way I earned my degree in Spanish and Management, completed teacher training and became certified as a Turf Grass Specialist and a Level IV Assessor.

The next stop was the TVET Council where I joined as Technical Officer before being promoted to Senior Technical Officer. These opportunities allowed me to have a fuller appreciation of competence education and training, a concept that I was able to bring alive during the many interactions and training of persons both locally and regionally. My quest for continuous development saw me completing several short courses as well as a Masters in Educational Leadership.

The aforementioned have laid a strong foundation for my next two-year stop, that of TVET Coordinator for the Cayman Island.

I would not change the journey I have travelled on my career path as each step became a building block for the next phase. It is important to note however that for one to enter the field and have the same measure of satisfaction the following pointers are vital:

- Be prepared to deal with the unexpected quickly and move along
  - Change only what you have control over
  - When faced with obstacles remember the road map you are on and allow no one or situation to deter you.
  - Make sure that you make time for yourself and others while ensuring that you continually develop professionally.
- My ultimate dream/goal/aspiration is to lead an educational institution delivering timely, relevant and life changing experiences for those who work or are educated within its precincts.

| Paul Puckerin

A portrait of Colin Holligan, a Black man with a short haircut, wearing a dark suit jacket, a red shirt, and a striped tie. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a neutral expression.

# A Day in the Life of: Colin Holligan - External Verifier (EV)

The function and responsibilities of an External Verifier:

## 1 HOW LONG HAVE YOU SERVED AS AN EXTERNAL VERIFIER?

- *I have served as an EV for the past five years.*

## 2 WHAT OCCUPATIONAL AREAS ARE YOU ASSIGNED?

- *I am currently assigned to the amenity horticulture and crop production occupational areas. I am an Assistant Superintendent on the Green Monkey Golf Course at Sandy Lane. This involves me managing a team of employees who maintain this golf course.*

## 3. WHAT ARE THE KEY FUNCTIONS OF AN EXTERNAL VERIFIER?

- *My key functions include: centre approval for offering specific qualifications, site assessments to determine adequacy of a site for assessment to be conducted, review of candidate's evidence to confirm assessor and internal verifier determinations on candidate's competence, recommendations for candidate certification, validation of new standards and reviewing and making recommendations on existing standards.*

## 4. WHAT DOES THE ROLE ENTAIL ON A DAILY BASIS?

- *My role entails interacting with the council and my assigned centres and providing information to both entities in a timely manner.*

## 5. EXPLAIN THE KEY TASKS YOU HAVE TO PERFORM – BOTH TECHNICAL AND OTHERWISE?

- *Key task include conducting centre visits mainly to review candidate evidence to confirm that the evidence requirements are met and to identify any existing gaps. This is followed by completing a report on the visit and submitting it to the council so that they can then give feedback to the centre. Once all evidence in up to standard and gaps are filled then I would recommend that candidates receive certification in the occupation area.*

## 6. WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT YOUR ROLE AS EXTERNAL VERIFIER?

- *The most important thing about in my role as External Verifier is to ensure that the quality assurance in the assessment process is always maintained.*

## 7. WHAT BENEFITS DO YOU SEE TO DEVELOPING OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS ON WHICH TO BASE ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION?

- *The use of occupational standards allows for people who have been working in an occupation for an extended period to be certified in that area. They may not have had formal training in the area however they would have acquired the requisite skills, attitudes and knowledge while on the job.*
- *Occupational standards once appropriately prepared, provide a benchmark for employers to gauge their employees performance. These standards clearly outlines what an employee should be capable of doing as well as what they should know. An employer upon reviewing the standards and assessing their employees' performance and knowledge base, are then able to implement the requisite training for their staff.*

*I have seen persons become more engaged and enthusiastic about their jobs after being certified.*

## 8. HOW DID YOU ENTER THIS FIELD ?

- *I entered the Amenity Horticulture field 20-plus years ago at the Sandy Lane Hotel as a part time employee on the golf course. After completing my studies in agriculture at UWI St. Augustine in 2000 I returned to Sandy Lane and joined the management team on the golf course. We then got involved in the Amenity Horticulture NVQ in 2005 and I became an assessor during that time. After completing my assessor certification in 2009 the Council needed additional EVs because other centres were offering the Amenity Horticulture NVQ and I was asked if I would be interested in becoming an EV and I accepted.*

## 9. WHAT ARE YOUR LONG TERM GOALS OR AIMS, CAREER WISE?

- *My long term goal as an EV is to see all interested persons working in amenity horticulture occupational area certified in this CVQ. My goal is also to make the acronyms NVQ and CVQ as common and familiar as CXC or GCE.*

## 10. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PERSONS INTERESTED IN BECOMING AN EXTERNAL VERIFIER?

- *I would advise potential EVs to first obtain some experience as an assessor before they seek to become an EV. This has helped me in a tremendous way because it now allows me to see the assessment and certification process from different perspectives and it makes my role as an EV easier.*

## 11. ANY OTHER COMMENTS?

- *I would like to see job notices read that a candidate having an NVQ or CVQ in an occupational area would be an asset when applying for a position.*

| Colin Holligan

# TVET Council Offices Relocated To Hastings

The TVET Council Barbados opened its new offices in Hastings House West, Balmoral Gap, Hastings, Christ Church on September 1, 2015.

Minister of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development Dr. Esther Byer Suckoo officially declared the offices open in a small ceremony at the new location on August 31st.

While stressing the need for the improvement of skills among the workforce in order to boost productivity, the Minister said: "Education has been very important in the early decades of our development, especially our post-independence development. Education has taken us to this stage, but vocational training is really where we need to take our country to the next stage." She added: "We talk a lot about productivity and we talk a lot about a lack of productivity. When workers are skilled in the

work they want to do, employers get the best out of them. This is where our TVET Council comes in, helping persons to acquire the skills to give of their best. Education and training are separate but they are complementary, they both speak to the preparation and development of the workforce."

Minister Byer Suckoo told the audience, which included Executive Director of the TVET Council Henderson Eastmond, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the TVET Council Dr. Hensley Sobers and several members of staff that the policies pursued by the local TVET Council was part of an international policy of standardizing education and training.

| Samantha Jones





“ Education has taken us to this stage, but vocational training is really where we need to take our country to the next stage. ”



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