

21ST CENTURY WORKER:



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

Volume 1 No. 1 | January 2014

Our Goals, Our Careers, Our Future



**BISTRO MONET:
"WE LOVE WHAT WE DO"**

**PROFILE OF A
BARBADOS
SPA MANAGER**

**AKEILA BRINGS HOME
SILVER FOR BARBADOS
AT WORLDSKILLS
AMERICAS COMPETITION**

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21st Century Worker: Our Goals, Our Careers, Our Future First Edition

The **21st Century Worker** is a newly launched online magazine that will be published twice a year by the TVET Council, 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.

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, it is my pleasure to introduce this inaugural edition of our new biannual, online magazine the **21st Century Worker: Our Goals, Our Careers, Our Future.**

The launch of this magazine coincides with the official launch of Council's new website which was redeveloped in 2012 and introduced to the organisation's members and stakeholders via a soft launch on December 14th. Monitoring and feedback were completed in June and the website went live in July 2013.

The **21st Century Worker** magazine and the website are intended to serve the purpose of promoting the national TVET vision and the TVET Council's achievements. They will also serve as a forum for sharing best practice information, discussion and analysis of issues and events pertaining to the workforce education and training sector.

The website and this online magazine will also help to brand the Council as the government agency responsible for coordinating and managing Barbados' TVET system and promoting a competitive workforce that is based on competence and productivity.

The **21st Century Worker** will seek to keep its stakeholders and the wider public informed about major activities and achievements in the TVET field on behalf of the TVET Council and its partners (i.e. public sector, private sector and Trade Unions). It will serve as the voice of TVET in Barbados by reporting on workforce training issues in government and the private sector, whether they relate to education and training or training and development.

In each edition you will find stories on important issues from you our key stakeholders, career advice and guidance, international perspectives on TVET and a youth perspective on career and learning choices and experiences. The theme of this inaugural publication is Health and Wellness. Articles will explore plans for meeting the future skills needs of this sector through training, assessing and certifying practitioners to nationally recognised standards.

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

Samantha Jones
Editor

““

The 21st Century Worker magazine and the website are intended to serve the purpose of promoting the national TVET vision and the TVET Council's achievements.

””



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Background

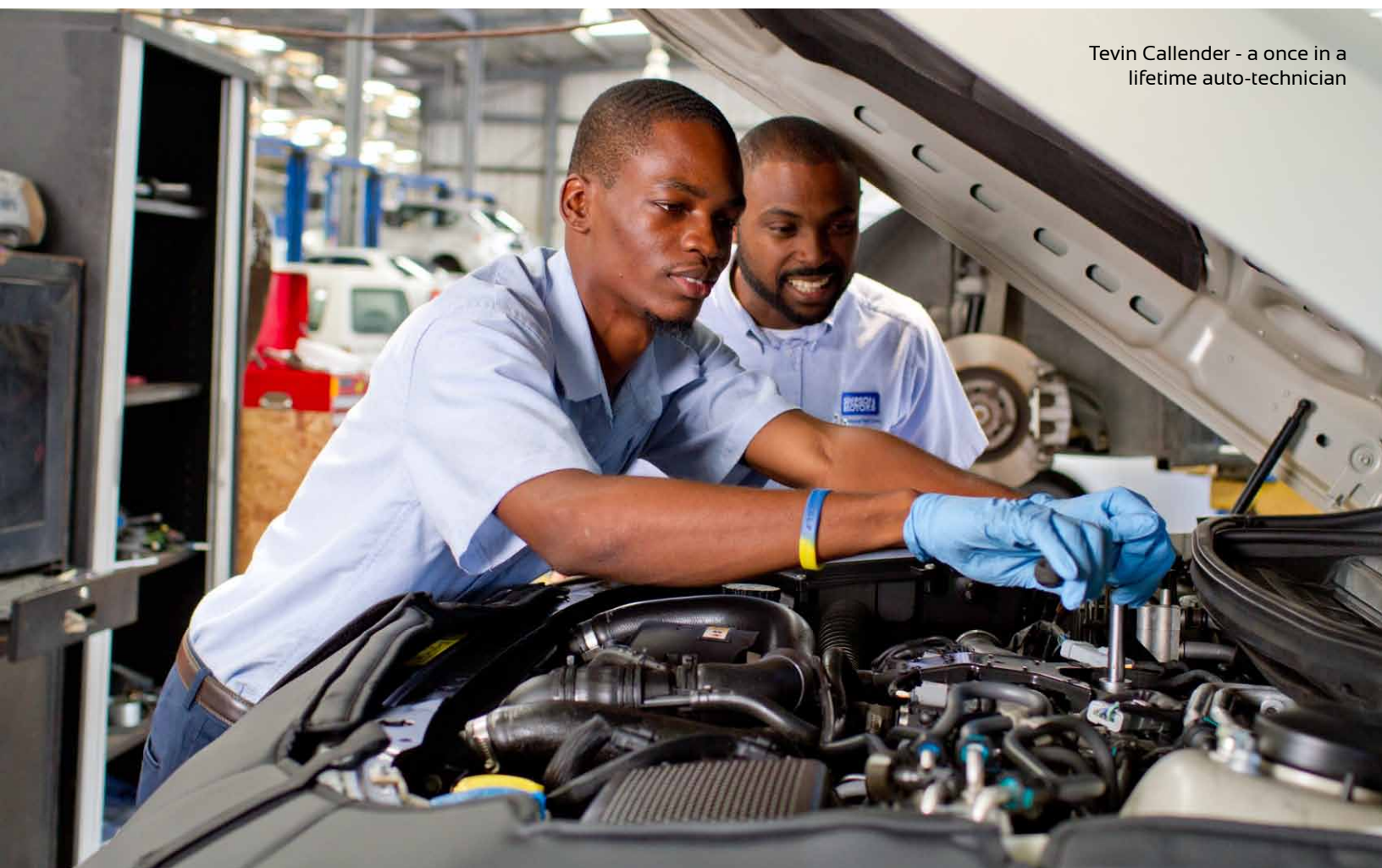
THE WORLDSKILLS BARBADOS COMPETITION

The WorldSkills Barbados Competition is a uniquely modeled, biennial competition, first held in March 2012, which targets students in the 16 – 22 age group enrolled in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions.

The WorldSkills Barbados Competition is based on the WorldSkills International Competition - a global "skills olympics" - which is held in one of 55 member countries every two years to provide young people enrolled in training institutions the opportunity to compete and demonstrate their excellence in the skilled professions.

The global competition is promoted and managed by WorldSkills International (WSI). WSI is a not-for-profit membership association open to agencies or bodies which have a responsibility for promoting technical and vocational education and training in their respective countries/regions. Started in 1950 in Spain, WSI is the leading global authority for skilled professional development, setting an international standard for excellence. WorldSkills International provides an invaluable means of exchange and comparison of world-class competency standards in the industrial trades and service sectors of the global economy.

Barbados is an Associate Member of the WorldSkills International Association on which it is officially represented by the TVET Council.



Tevin Callender - a once in a lifetime auto-technician

TEVIN'S TACTICAL SKILLS LAND HIM JOB AS AUTO-TECHNICIAN

Tevin Callender has been described as a "once in a lifetime auto-technician".

The 20 year-old apprentice, employed by Simpson Motors in the Luxury Car Division, was recruited after he won the Automotive Technology category of the inaugural WorldSkills Barbados Competition in March 2012. The event was organised by the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council.

He entered the competition in his final year at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic (SJPP) but admitted he was initially hesitant to do so. However, Tevin quickly declared it is a decision he "does not regret".

"Worldskills gave me an opportunity to understand and improve my skills and to get a job at Simpson Motors," he said.

During the contest, Tevin's tactical approach to automotive technology captured the attention of Assistant Workshop Manager of Operations at Simpson Motors, Jahmal Watts, who was also a judge in the competition.

Mr. Watts recalled, "Tevin attacked every challenge... from the beginning and worked through it systematically... not rushed or aggravated... When he came to a stumbling block, he would go back and double check.

Tevin being presented with an award for his first place finish in the Automotive Technology category of the inaugural WorldSkills Barbados Competition, by TVET Council's Deputy Chairman Millicent Small in March 2012.

"WE ARE VERY FORTUNATE TO HAVE HIM ON OUR TEAM"



Tevin Callender



“Tevin is a once in a lifetime sort of technician, you don’t come across technicians who are so well rounded at such a young age.”

He also had the [right] composure, attitude and demeanor. Besides the fact that Tevin won, those things helped [us] in deciding that he would be a very good fit for Simpson Motors.”

In fact, Tevin was such a good fit that after his initial interview, he was offered the post of 2nd year apprentice. His supervisor explained school leavers usually start as 1st year apprentices, but because of Tevin’s skill level, he skipped a year.

“Tevin is a once in a lifetime sort of technician, you don’t come across technicians who are so well rounded at such a young age. It is very rare. He likes to read and loves to understand something before he actually does the task... He is a very fast learner, you can show him something once and you don’t have to work with him again. We are very fortunate to have him on our team,” Mr. Watts said.

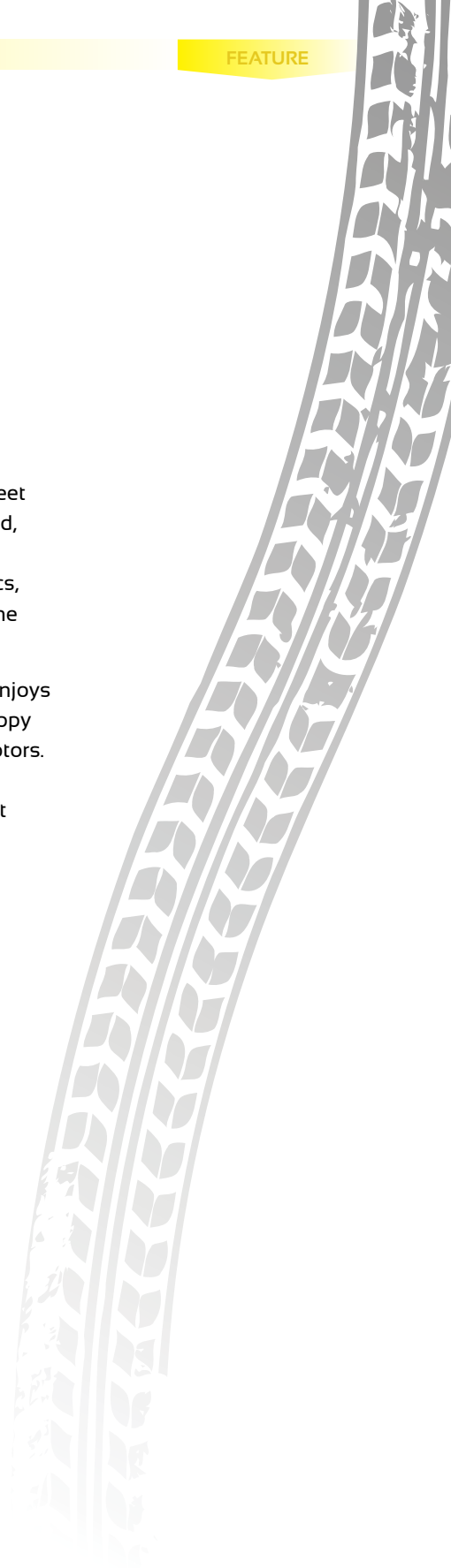
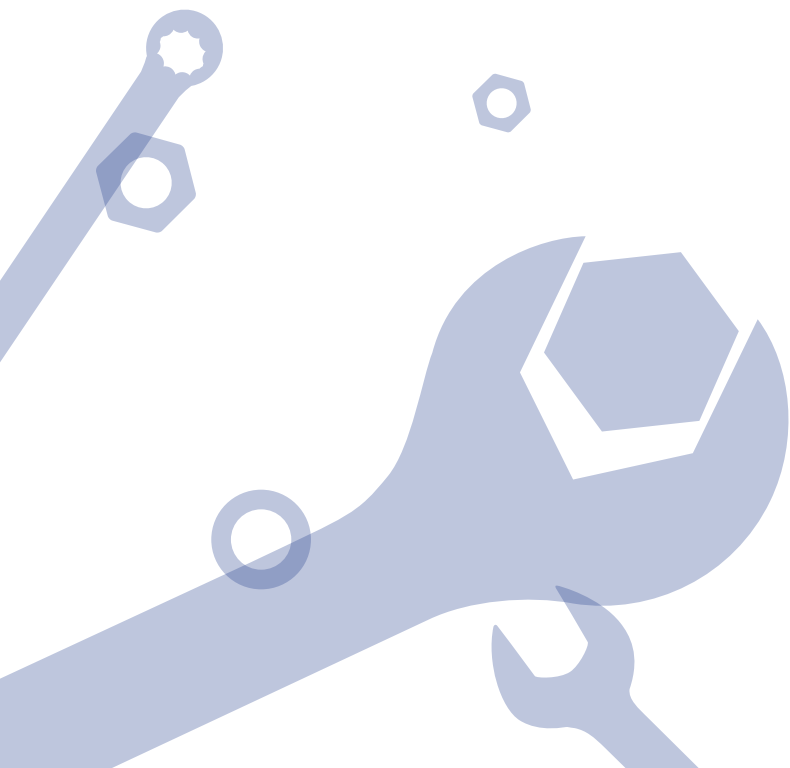
But the 20 year old was quick to point out that his father, a mechanic by profession, played an instrumental role in his career. “...It is not all me, it has to do with how my father raised me in the trade,” adding that SJPP was a good institution with excellent tutors and, “Once you [are] willing to learn, you would learn.”

And, learning is something the former Lodge School student is still willing to do. Consequently, Simpson Motors enrolled him in a Mercedes and Land Rover training programme.

“It is a series of online courses, I have to meet targets every three months,” Tevin explained, stating this would enhance his career. He revealed he also wanted to study Electronics, a course he believes would help him with the computerized components of his job.

The young, skilled professional, who also enjoys football, rallying and partying, said he is happy with his career and working at Simpson Motors. Encouraging students to “give WorldSkills Barbados a try”, he asserted with a smile, “It could turn out in your favour.”

■ **Shamkoe Pilé**



Background

TVET EMPLOYERS RECOGNITION AWARDS

The TVET Employers Recognition Awards is a biennial national awards competition established in 2011 to acknowledge and celebrate employers that invest in workforce training.

The purpose of the awards is to increase the amount and quality of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) currently provided by employers by encouraging the provision of job attachments and other workforce training opportunities for employees of all ages, in both the private and public sectors.

The TVET Employers Recognition Awards 2011 was aimed at small and medium-sized organizations in the agriculture, manufacturing, tourism/hospitality, personal services, construction and cultural services sectors.

Applicants were judged against the following criteria:

- The extent and quality of workforce training and development undertaken within the applicants' organisations
- The achievements of the organisation, and/or its employees, which are attributed to the training undertaken
- The integration of training into business planning
- The innovation and excellence in training design and delivery.

At the 2011 Awards Ceremony, Bistro Monet won the TVET Employers Recognition Special Award for Investment in Youth Development (Job Attachment).

Technical and Vocational Education and Training is 'education for the world of work'. It includes all programmes, courses, and in particular, practical training that contribute towards the development of the knowledge, technical skills, core skills and attitudes essential to being competitive in today's world of work. Core skills refer to communication, applying and using numbers, information and communication technology, problem solving, working with others and improving one's own learning and performance.

feature on page 11



Bistro Monet Manager Ernest Ottley. Inset: Bistro Monet co-manager Jennifer Bennett is presented with the TVET Employers Recognition Special Award for Investment in Youth Development (Job Attachment) by TVET Council Chairman Dr. Hensley Sobers.

Bistro Monet manager Ernest Ottley (right) supervising two young trainees



BISTRO MONET: "WE LOVE WHAT WE DO"

On a quiet weekday afternoon, Bistro Monet co-managers Ernest Ottley and Jennifer Bennett, stole away from their customers, and the kitchen, to share a well-kept secret: the rustic, Hastings-located restaurant's special niche of catering to culinary students seeking a space for mentorship.

This was not always the case, however. Ernest admits that "we sort of brushed it off and said 'we don't have time for that'. Then we took the plunge because I remembered when I was a trainee years ago in England... we thought it was going to be difficult but it wasn't, you just have to be willing to give some of your time."

That decision has led many culinary arts students to the 13-year-old establishment which, despite its small size and the tough economy, continues to make room for those eager to learn. The managers agreed that, by the time the six-week training has ended, interns have proven their worth in the kitchen, behind the bar and on the restaurant floor - but the business benefits too. "You can get lost if you go to a big business, but with a small

company...[you get] more personal training...Bistro Monet is not just a restaurant, it helps with youth development and that strengthens the sector... it's like a breath of fresh air to teach someone," Jennifer said, encouraging other small businesses to follow suit.

"Training gives us a chance to look at ourselves," Ernest mused, "We're not looking for perfection, we're looking for students who love the industry."

"Training gives us a chance to look at ourselves,"

This passion is crucial for employers as well, as it determines whether a business sinks or swims; and while cutting costs is necessary during these trying economic times, Jennifer maintained that training was still possible. "Even if it means [sending staff] to a community centre [programme], it's cheaper than a consultant and at least the staff will get training...or make a barter for training in exchange for [services your establishment offers]...but don't give up!"

■ **Nikki Hutchinson**

Background

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS SECTOR:

- The international health and wellness industry is projected to grow by US\$27 billion in 2013 and reach the US\$1 trillion mark by 2017
- Much of the growth is expected to be in the area of fortified/ functional products. Products traditionally enjoy much higher profit margins than services
- The industry is facing a “talent crunch” i.e. there is a dearth of skilled talent which highlights the importance of accreditation and quality certifications
- To help address this situation locally, the Barbados Coalition of Service Industries (BCSI) has collaborated with the TVET Council and the Personal Body Health Care Clinic to offer the International Therapeutic Examination Council (ITEC) Level 2 Certificate in Complementary and Alternatives Therapies at a discounted rate to 20 Barbadians who have graduated from the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic’s programmes in the area
- Career opportunities in Health and Wellness can fall into two broad clusters
 - Conventional, medically oriented approaches used to solve problems
 - Integrated, wellness oriented approaches used to improve quality of life
- **Medically oriented approaches include**
 - Medical Tourism
- **Integrated, wellness oriented approaches include**
 - Spa
 - Complementary and Alternative Medicine
 - Healthy Eating/Nutrition and Weight Loss
 - Preventive/Personalised Health
 - Wellness Tourism
 - Workplace Wellness
 - Fitness and Mind-Body
 - Beauty and Anti-Aging

Source: Adapted from the BCSI Study of the Professional Services Sector in Barbados 2013

profile on page 13



PROFILE OF A BARBADOS SPA MANAGER

NAME:

Portia Doyle

AGE:

40

JOB:

Spa Manager, Chakra Spa, Accra Beach Hotel and Spa

LENGTH OF TIME:

2 years

WHY DID YOU GO INTO HEALTH AND WELLNESS?

I always had a passion for the Beauty Industry and I always wanted to be a cosmetologist.

HOW DID YOU ENTER THE PROFESSION?

My parents couldn't afford the tuition when I was 16 – 17 years old so I went to work as a waitress, moving from there to being a cashier at a gas station, then a store manager and later a restaurant supervisor. I married and had four children during that time but I never lost sight of my dream. During my travels overseas I saw that nail technicians and nail salons were a popular, viable business opportunity. It wasn't popular in Barbados at the time so I saw it as a niche area to get into.

WHERE DID YOU TRAIN?

I wanted to be internationally certified because a lot of the local and regional spas are internationally owned and they wanted internationally recognized certification. Such certification showed the level and quality of training you would have received. I was in a good job by then, I could afford to study and I had a plan. I cleared all my debt and began saving towards my goal of becoming a nail technician. I enrolled in the Academy of Health and Beauty in Florida.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

I decided while in Florida to train as an aesthetician (i.e. skin care) because I wanted to be multi-skilled and not limit myself to one area. I enrolled in the Florida College of Natural Health. By the time I finished the skin care programme I had additional certificates in paramedical aesthetics, chemical peels, laser therapy, semi-permanent make up and camouflage make up. I also travelled to the United States Virgin Islands and did a 3-month internship on a cruise ship.

HOW DID YOU BEGIN YOUR CAREER?

I started my own full-service mobile business since I got no positive responses to my applications. I also worked with Royal Westmoreland as a contract therapist on a call basis providing treatments, massages, facials, manicures and pedicures. I also operated a nail station out of Divi Southwinds. I later opened a Day Spa also offering full service. A position subsequently arose at Sandy Lane Hotel for a full-time massage and beauty therapist, which I held for 3 years.



Chakra Spa

**WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ISSUES IN YOUR LINE OF WORK?**

I developed repetitive strain injuries and had to reduce my workload. This is one of the dangers of being a massage therapist. Technically a therapist shouldn't do more than 3 or 4 massages a day. That is why it is good to be multi-skilled so that you can mix up the variety of treatments you do. I left my job because of the repetitive strain condition and focused on my business where I could control the workload. The market started to get saturated around 2005 plus there was the problem of people confusing massage therapy with exotic massage.

HOW DID YOU REACH WHERE YOU ARE TODAY?

I was offered the full-time position of Senior Therapist at the Royal Westmoreland after working with them as a contract therapist for 7 years. Seven months later I accepted an offer to work in the British Virgin Islands as a massage and beauty therapist where I worked for 4 years. I returned to Barbados in 2011 and successfully applied to Accra for the position of Spa Manager.

WHAT DO YOU VALUE THE MOST ABOUT YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

The benefit of having such an extensive and in-depth working experience in my field means I have an appreciation for the skills sets necessary. You are able to acquire staff not only based on certification but also on the practical skills necessary to fulfill the guests' needs. When you know the standard it allows you to defend your position if there is a complaint and you know you have followed the standard. As leader it allows me to pitch in and work alongside my staff and also to provide training.

HOW DOES TRAINING CONTRIBUTE TO CHAKRA'S OPERATIONS?

Chakra offers such services as East Indian treatments, pedicures with massage chairs which massage your back while the pedicure is being done and specialized services. The therapists are trained annually with international trainers, leading to internationally recognized certification. It helps to keep us up to date on what is trending in the industry and to stay on top. It also helps to educate the guests and clients about what is trending and what are the benefits of new products and treatments. ■



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SPOTLIGHT ON TVET ACHIEVEMENTS

The TVET Council'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.** Throughout the past year, the following programmes and events which included the TVET Employers Recognition Awards 2013, the Youth in Agriculture Farm Programme and the WorldSkills Barbados Competition 2014 Launch, contributed greatly to bringing the Council much closer to the achievement of that mission.



A) Services Sector, Financial Services winner - CGM Gallagher Insurance Brokers (Barbados) Limited - HR Manager, General Services, Karissa Beharry-Shepherd and Vice President, Property and Casualty, Michael Tomlin accept the award from Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister Senator Darcy Boyce.

B) Productive Sector, Agriculture winner - Nature Care - Managing Director, Russell Corrie (centre) and General Manager, Nature Care Barbados, Rodney Yarde accept the award from Minister Senator Darcy Boyce.

C) Special Award for Investment in Youth Development - Job Attachments winner: Barbados Port Inc. - Divisional Manager, HR and Industrial Relations, Curtis Smith accepts the award from Minister of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development Senator Dr. Esther Byer Suckoo

D) The Spirit of TVET Special Award for Investment in Youth Development winner: Monnis Farms - Marketing Manager, Warren Greenidge and Manager Jannis Greenidge accept the award from Minister of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development Senator Dr. Esther Byer Suckoo.

E) Services Sector, Retail winner: Barbados Port Inc. - (L-R) HR Manager, Peter Carrington and Divisional Manager, HR and Industrial Relations, Curtis Smith accept the award from Minister Senator Darcy Boyce.

F) Services Sector, Tourism/Hospitality winner - The Courtyard by Marriott - Guest Care Manager, Deidre Greene, accepts the award from Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister Senator Darcy Boyce.

G) Winners at the TVET Employers Recognition Awards 2013 Ceremony pictured with Minister of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development Dr. Esther Byer Suckoo (front row fourth from left), Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister Senator Darcy Boyce (front row, fifth from left), project coordinator Technical Officer Andrea Harding-Waithe (back row, fourth from left), TVET Council's Executive Director Henderson Eastmond (back row, fifth from left) and the Council's Chairman Dr. Hensley Sobers (back row, sixth from left).



H) WorldSkills Barbados 2014 Launch: CEO, Williams Industries Ltd. delivers the feature address at the October 2nd 2013 function which took place at Courtyard by Marriott Bridgetown.

I) WorldSkills Barbados 2012 Flashback: (left - right) Winners Sadé Atkins, Tevin Callender, Clesita Moore, Danika Haynes and Natasha Murrell captured gold in their respective categories of Culinary Arts, Automotive Technology, Hairdressing, Beauty Therapy and Fashion Technology.

J) The TVET Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Barbados Coalition of Service Industries (BCSI) in 2013.

K) The TVET Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City and Guilds Caribbean Office in 2013.

L) Youth in Agriculture Farm Programme: The 2013 Awardees are shown here with (fourth from left) Damien Hinds, Programme Assistant with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), displaying their NVQ in Amenity Horticulture Level 1 certificates.

M) WorldSkills Barbados 2014 Launch: Fashion for the Big and Beautiful was on display.

N) WorldSkills Americas 2012: Barbados' representative Areila Chapman (right), who won a silver medal in the Ladies and Men's Hairdressing category, accepts her silver medal certificate from Minister of Labour Senator Dr. Esther Byer Suckoo.

O) Youth in Agriculture Farm Programme: NVQ in Amenity Horticulture Level 1 Awardees from the Darryl Jordan Secondary School (i.e. formerly St. Lucy Secondary) display their certificates. Also pictured is Teacher Timothy Kellman (right).

P) Youth in Agriculture Farm Programme Awards Ceremony 2013

Akeila Brings Home Silver For Barbados at WorldSkills Americas Competition



Akeila Chapman celebrating her silver medal win in the Hairdressing category of the WorldSkills Barbados Competition 2012

AKEILA CHAPMAN, BARBADOS' sole representative at the WorldSkills Americas competition which took place in Sao Paulo, Brazil, November 14 – 18, 2012, won the silver medal in the Ladies and Men's Hairdressing category. Barbados came second behind the gold medal winner who represented the host country Brazil.

The official results were as follows:

1. Brazil - 551.00 points - GOLD
2. Barbados - 493.00 points - SILVER
3. Guatemala - 478.00 points - TIE BRONZE
4. Dominican Republic - 477.00 TIE BRONZE

El Salvador, the other competing country in the Hairdressing category, also had only one competitor in the event. Jamaica was the only other CARICOM country to compete in the WorldSkills Americas Competition with a total of four (4) competitors. Jamaica ranked tenth (10) overall out of the nineteen (19) countries which competed in a total of 35 skill areas.

Akeila was the Barbados Vocational Training Board's (BVTB) silver medallist in the Hairdressing category of the WorldSkills Barbados Competition coordinated by the TVET Council in March 2012. A graduate of BVTB's three-year Cosmetology Apprenticeship programme, she also copped the second highest marks for the overall competition. Her BVTB teammate Clesita Moore came first but was unable to compete in the Brazil round because she was outside the age-range allowed in the competition. Akeila was accompanied by her Coach/ BVTB Demonstrator, Ms. Wendy Bishop and TVET Council's Technical Officer Marlyn Rawlins who was Barbados' Technical Delegate to the competition.

Barbados' silver medallist at the WorldSkills returned home to a special welcome from family, friends and government officials. Akeila and her coach, Wendy Bishop, were greeted at the Grantley Adams International Airport by her mother Loretta Chapman and other family members, as well as Director of



WorldSkills Americas 2012: Barbados' representative Akeila Chapman, who won a silver medal in the Ladies and Men's Hairdressing category, accepts her Best of Nation award.



Akeila Chapman (left) shows off her Best of Nation trophy as she and her coach Wendy Bishop pose for photographs.

Training at the Barbados Vocational Training Board (BVTB), Henderson Thompson and Executive Director of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council Henderson Eastmond.

A beaming Akeila said she felt 'great' about her silver medal, adding that she was confident she would place. "After my first two modules, I was very comfortable because I knew I had to place either first or second. I tried very hard for first place...but the next time I am going for the gold," she said.

Describing her experience in Brazil as "quite good", she also encouraged more young Barbadians to learn a skill. "For 2014, WorldSkills Americas will be in Bogota, Colombia, and I am looking forward to more Barbadians, who are learning a skill, coming and taking part in the event," she added.

■ Samantha Jones



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Regional Perspective

Updating the 1990 Regional TVET Strategy

By Dr. Hamilton Jemmott



Dr. Hamilton Jemmott,
Assistant Registrar, CXC

The first regional TVET strategy produced in 1990 was a response to demands of globalisation and Trade Liberalization while attempting to strengthen regional integration. Additionally, the creation of regional organisations and mechanisms to better facilitate training, assessment and certification of the workforce in TVET to international standards became a necessity. Some twenty years later the first TVET strategy had outlived its usefulness and needed to be revised to take account of twenty-first century demands, which incorporate not only technological changes, but also the movement of workers across the Caribbean. In achieving this, any TVET policy and strategy needed to be cognizant of the type of individual required to be able to move across the Caribbean to ply his trade/labour in an efficient and effective manner to improve his and the region's economic competitiveness.

As the new regional TVET strategy puts it, "sustainable economic prosperity can be achieved through the creation of a globally competitive regional workforce enabled by a market responsive education system". The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) being cognizant of these requirements developed its own TVET policy which centres on using its current suite of certifications to forge the development of the "ideal Caribbean person". This policy rightly recognises and show cases the knowledge, skills and attributes that the ideal Caribbean person should possess and seeks to show how each individual can be considered based on their abilities.

One of the most recent additions to the CXC suite of certifications is the CVQ. These are competence-based certificates awarded to individuals who have successfully undergone assessment against regionally approved standards and have been deemed competent. In this regard, this makes CVQs the ideal qualifications for students pursuing skills based programmes.


Since its inception in 2007, nine thousand one hundred and thirty-five (9,135) candidates from six Caribbean countries have registered for CVQs in 51 occupational standards. Of this number, two thousand three hundred and eighty-seven (2,387) certificates have been issued and five thousand eight hundred and forty-four (5,844) awards were made. As we move forward with the CVQ programme more territories and schools are expressing interest and some have already indicated occupational areas they wish to pursue while others had pre-readiness audits completed. Generally, feedback from the various territories suggests that response to the CVQ programme is increasing. It is therefore anticipated that with on-going promotion activities and further buy-in from private and public sector employers we will see employers' job advertisements seeking employees who possess CVQ qualifications along with the traditional qualifications.

The successes achieved thus far with the CVQ in secondary schools have been the result of collaborative effort on the part of CXC, the National Training Agencies (NTAs), the Ministries of Education as the local registrars and the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA). Awarding CVQs requires that CXC work alongside the NTAs whose responsibilities in the process include the provision of facilities audits, training of internal and external verifiers, managing the portfolio building and completion processes and monitoring the performance of the institution.

To achieve readiness for the world of work, individuals must be equipped with the skills and knowledge to enable them to meet the emerging requirements of jobs. In this regard, a good grasp of occupation-specific skills, knowledge and attributes assists in work readiness and demonstrates to Caribbean-wide employers we are work ready. ■

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"I believe it is imperative to have proof of knowledge and skills"

YOUTH VOICE

The Winding Road to Building a Career

By Dario Walcott - Technical Officer, TVET Council



Dario Walcott

Completing my secondary and tertiary education was an extremely long and exhausting process. Exhausting, but very important.

I believe it is imperative to have proof of knowledge and skills; that is, certification. It makes a person more marketable and it is advantageous with regards to acquiring employment. However, learning does not only come through structured educational systems. I learned valuable lessons through church and youth groups as well as playing on numerous sporting teams. These groups taught me teamwork, discipline, respect for others and the ability to communicate with diverse groups. I also believe these experiences honed my leadership skills.

When I was younger I wanted to be a meteorologist - I still watch the weather news attentively at every available opportunity and map the weather systems during the Atlantic Hurricane Season - but I think the structure at secondary school caused me to be drawn into the accounting field. It was really a process of elimination. I was not very proficient in the science subjects and even worse at the few technical subjects that were offered.

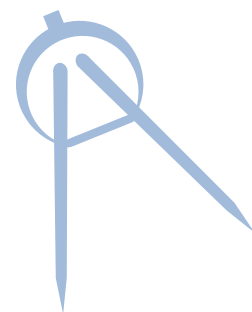
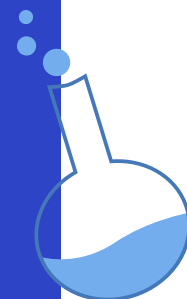
Therefore the result was simple, the only other reasonable option left was business courses. And I say reasonable, because I was thinking about ease in finding a job and getting paid well, advice I would give to any young person. I have not received the opportunity to enter my desired choice of career as yet but these lessons so far have definitely aided my competence in my current job as well as my

ability to manage conflict in the workplace. The course of study that I have completed so far has been influenced by the direction of the career I have decided to pursue. However, in order to be a master of my field, I need to continue my studies and gain the necessary professional qualifications.

"I believe it is imperative to have proof of knowledge and skills"

I recall the day I received the news that I was going to be working at the TVET Council. As happy as I was to have gained employment, that quickly turned into nervous energy. Even though I did an entire degree in Accounting, I still lacked confidence that I would be competent. I knew that I had not gained any practical experience and passing a few tests was not good enough. However, through listening and having a good trainer, I learned quickly on the job.

Academia only tells you what to expect at work but to experience it is a whole different point of view. It is evident why specialists in particular fields have to do internship or be employed in the field in order to be considered as such. ■



The TVET Council: Promoting Workforce Development

By Henderson Eastmond, Executive Director, TVET Council



The Role of the TVET Council

The role of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council is to establish standards and qualifications for Barbados' technical and vocational education and training system as mandated by the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Act, 1993-II of the Laws of Barbados. The main functions of the TVET Council are to:

- Advise the Minister of Labour on policy relating to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET);
- Coordinate TVET at the tertiary level;
- Make grants or loans for the support and provision of TVET through the Employment and Training Fund (ETF);
- Establish occupational standards for TVET;
- Establish training priorities, tests, qualifications and accreditation;
- Award National and Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (N/CVQs).

Services Offered by the Council

The TVET Council works with employers to make sure that there is enough competent manpower in occupations in all areas of economic activity in Barbados.

To this end, the Council is engaged in a number of activities including:

- Promotion of competence-based (i.e. standards-based) TVET as the key to individual, organisational and international competitiveness;
- The development of a National Training Plan to identify the knowledge and skills needed to guide the investment in workforce training;
- Provision of grants through the Employment and Training Fund (ETF) for the training and retraining of workers, the unemployed, retrenched workers and self-employed persons;
- Establishment of a framework of occupational standards and competence-based certification, i.e., the National and Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (N/CVQs).

What is a Competency Based Education and Training Curriculum?

Although there is much debate among writers as to the definition of competence and competency, Hodge & Harris (2012, p 155) eloquently outline that 'performance or competency-based approaches to teaching and learning require explicit statements of what a curriculum is intended to achieve, and employ these statements in a systematic way to prime learners for their role in the learning process, guide curriculum design, structure pedagogy and furnish assessment criteria...' in defining Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET).

Sudsomboon (2007, p 4) illustrates in the table following the differences between a disciplined-based (academic) and a competency-based curriculum design.

Disciplined-Based	Competency-based
Content	Outcomes
Objectives	Competencies
Norm-referenced grade	Criterion referenced grade
Teacher centred	Objective assessment
Passive Learning	Learner centred
Pedagogy	Androgogy
Summative evaluation	Formative formulation
Instructional delivery	Learner performance
Knowledge/theory focus	Skills/performance focus
Structural/process focus	Outcomes focus
Assessed by counting	Assessed by performance
Exposed to specific content for pre-assigned time	Time and sequenced derived by assessment

This comparison shows that competency-based education and training must be aligned to occupational standards which have been developed by the relevant industry experts; the training must be focused on outcomes; performance must be the major source of evidence in the assessment; predefined mastery levels must be set before the assessment process begins; and progression through the programme is based on the mastery of competence demonstrated and not completion time. In the implementation of Competency-Based Education, Training and Assessment (CBETA), the Council has been involved in a number of activities.

Standards Development and Validation

The Council has developed a number of standards, some which have not yet been passed through the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA) and CARICOM and remain as National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). Others have already gone that route along with others developed by other National Training Agencies (NTAs) in the region and are thus Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQs). It must be noted that the CVQ is one of the qualifications designated to facilitate the free movement of skilled labour in the region. A number of these standards have been validated for local use. The Council is in the process of responding to the current skills needs and is in the process of developing standards for the alternative energy sector. The Council has also developed standards for trainers, which should be of importance to all trainers including those in the civil service, and this one is called Training and Development Level 4 CVQ. The standards registered by the Council cut across all of the sectors of the economy.

The N/CVQ Expansion Programme

The Council implemented an N/CVQ expansion programme from April 1 2012 until March 31, 2013. During this period, officers from the Council visited about fifty-five (55) business houses to promote both the N/CVQ qualifications as well as the Employment and Training Fund (ETF). The ETF derives its monies from the 1 % Training Levy (0.5 % - employer and 0.5 % - employee) which is collected through the National Insurance contributions. Training grants are given to employers and registered training institutions who apply to train staff. Besides contributing to the Levy, the training must, where possible, be aligned to the occupational standards; have a curriculum and, if aligned to the standards, be assessed for certification. To date, TVET Council has expanded its operations in terms of N/CVQ Assessment Centres. The Council currently has 21 approved Centres, 13 of which are fully operational and delivering various qualifications.

Curriculum Development

The Council recognises that there is a shortage of curriculum development personnel at the training institutions in Barbados. Trainers, teachers, instructors and demonstrators are accustomed to teaching from a developed curriculum rather than developing a curriculum from the standards. This has been one of the inhibitors of implementing the standards. The Council has therefore acquired the capacity to develop curriculum from the standards and is currently engaged in a pilot to develop three curricula (Carpentry Level 1, Electrical Installation Level 1 and Plumbing Level 1) this year. Curriculum development expansion will take place in the following years.

Prior Learning and Assessment Recognition (PLAR)

The Council has also recognised that there are many uncertified workers in the workforce who through experience are competent. In an effort to certify these workers, the Council has acquired the capacity to carry out Prior Learning and Assessment Recognition (PLAR) functions to certify workers already in the workforce. PLAR is a process that involves the identification, documentation and assessment of prior learning. It is a process by which individuals can gain credit towards NVQs and CVQs, based on the evidence from past experience - work as well as formal and non-formal learning situations - gained in a skill over a period of time. These experiences may result from either formal learning such as in training institutions, workshops, seminars, conferences and work experience (paid or voluntary) or in an informal environment such as self-directed study and research. The Council is in the final stages of developing the procedures to pilot PLAR services in early 2014 in Customer Service level 2, Carpentry Level 2 and Amenity Horticulture Level 1. The Council intends to expand this service in the near future

Training in CBET and Assessment

To support the implementation of the standards the Council offers training in CBET methodology, Assessor training and Internal and External Verifier training. It is important to note that the council has recently restructured its CBET methodology course so that graduates from this course will not only earn the CBET methodology certificate but will earn unit certification from the Training and Development Level 4 CVQ and the Assessor Level 4 CVQ. These programmes are open to the public through evening workshops and the Council facilitates institutions requiring a special day programme.

The Competency-Based Training Fund (CBTF)

To support the Human Resource Development Strategy (2011-2016), the Government of Barbados has acquired funding from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for the Skills for the Future Programme. One component of this programme is the setting up of the CBTF. The aim of this fund is to make training in Barbados demand driven or employer driven and outcomes-based. The CBTF will fund joint proposals originating from employers and training institutions. The winning proposals will be selected on a competitive basis unlike the ETF; must lead to certification; must be competency-based; and must have sustainability for continued training even after the project has ended. To date, the Council has selected the managerial staff for the CBTF's Management Unit and is in the process of selecting the junior staff. The Council expects to launch the fund early in 2014.

Regional Thrust

The Council is part of a regional network of National Training Agencies and is involved in building capacity in other Caribbean islands. We hold the view that the CVQ is a Regional qualification. The acceptance of the qualification in one island will assist in the acceptance of the qualification in another island and eventually across the region. The Council was involved last year in the training of assessors and verifiers in St. Vincent, St. Kitts and Grenada. The Council will also be partnering with Dunn, Pierre, Barnett & Associates Limited to certify Assessor training on the CARICOM Trade and Competitive Project. This project is funded by Canadian Investment and Development Agency (CIDA) through the CARICOM Secretariat.

Conclusion

The Council is thus very clear on its mandate. The Council recognises that a country's economic fortune is tied to the quality of its education and training provision. In these tough economic times, it is imperative that we pay more attention to our TVET system so that we can produce the types of graduates with the necessary skills to provide the human resources necessary to reshape and re-energise Barbados' economy. ■

DOES BARBADOS' EDUCATION SYSTEM PREPARE STUDENTS TO BE ENTREPRENEURS?

By Samantha Jones



“When TVET is integrated into general education rather than presented as the option for excluding students from a general education, it gains a legitimacy that is appealing to many students who have an interest in technical and technological subjects and who want a career in those areas.”

(Key Components of the Revised CARICOM Regional TVET Strategy 2012)

BIRTHDAYS ARE usually a time for reflection and retooling in preparation for going forward. And as Barbados celebrated 47 years of Independence last year, it presented an opportune time to consider the above question as a means of focusing attention on education for the world of work. Also known as, to those of us in the discipline, technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

An often quoted perspective by regional stakeholders in the TVET field is “education makes you trainable and training makes you employable”. This means simply that there is no escaping the building blocks of a sound general education: communication and literacy (include strong comprehension skills here), numeracy, use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills, teamwork skills, problem solving skills and developing a learning attitude. The foundation upon which successful vocational and technical training occurs is still to some extent the ‘three Rs’. The same could be said for any entrepreneurship education.

One of the successes of Barbados’ education system has been the fact that nearly 100 percent of our young people have the opportunity to access the primary and secondary education system, no matter what one may think of its quality. For some countries that fact alone is an impossibility. However, some might argue today what is becoming a failure of our education system is we can no longer honestly assert that nearly 100 per cent of our graduates of the primary and secondary education system are literate.

This is a worry because it is almost impossible to successfully access education and training at any of our post secondary institutions – whether Barbados Vocational Training Board (BVTB), Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic (SJPP), Barbados Community College (BCC) or the University of the West Indies (UWI) – without the ability to read and comprehend fully.

Does Barbados’ education system prepare students for entrepreneurship? I contend that without a minimum standard of literacy, communication and comprehension skills for each graduating student of our secondary schools it might be difficult to argue “yes”.

The Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council – TVET Council (TVETC) – the government agency mandated to coordinate the national TVET system at the post secondary level, its regional counterparts in the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA) and the other stakeholders in the TVET system have been engaged in recent times in a review and revision of the 1990 CARICOM Regional TVET Strategy. The regional TVET strategy - which has been renamed the Revised CARICOM Regional TVET Strategy for Workforce Development and Economic Competitiveness – was first developed in 1990 in response to the global recession in the late 1980s.

A key recommendation of the 1990 Regional TVET Strategy was that the modern 21st Century worker should be exposed to a sound general education incorporating literacy, numeracy, technological skills and soft skills. Two key components in the revised strategy are that:

All TVET programmes be converted to a standards-based, or competence-based, approach, and, TVET and general education be integrated.

While it is still being debated whether or not entrepreneurship can be taught – and based on the successes of the local Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES) some would argue ‘yes it can’ – one thing is clear. For entrepreneurship education, or any education for the world of work, to be successful it must be firmly grounded on a foundation of literacy, communication, comprehension skills, numeracy and soft skills. ■

YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE: SUCCESS STORIES

Young people in agriculture' may seem like a contradiction, but for the past two summers, teenagers have been heading for the hills as part of the Inter American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture's (IICA) Youth Farm Programme.

Conducted in collaboration with the **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council**, the Programme gives top agricultural studies students the opportunity to hone their skills, while earning a **National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in Amenity Horticulture Level 1**. Mario Sealy and Adrianna Scott Brathwaite participated in the inaugural 2012 programme and have

continued their agricultural pursuits, with 18-year-old Adrianna undertaking a Diploma in Agriculture at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, and Sealy enjoying a career with one of the island's most prestigious golf courses. While acknowledging that his hard work was paying off, the 19-year-old Grantley Adams Memorial School alumnus admitted that his achievements were not his alone.

"I must thank my parents and Ryan Barrow, my agriculture teacher at school, who told me about the programme. I told him I didn't know if I wanted to go into it, but ...in the end I realised it was a really good," Mario noted.

"A programme like this would encourage young people to do something, instead of just sitting down at home doing nothing...a lot of people can succeed in agriculture."



Mario enjoys his job as a turf care worker with the Sandy Lane Hotel.

Adrianna was also hesitant when she first heard about the eight-week initiative, but said she realised that being chosen was a privilege, as she only adopted agricultural studies in her final year at St. George Secondary School. "A programme like this would encourage young people to do something, instead of just sitting down at home doing nothing...a lot of people can succeed in agriculture."

And success has been the name of the game for Mario, who now boasts a wealth of knowledge in animal husbandry and ornamental horticulture - a discipline which led to his current vocation as a turf care worker with Sandy Lane Hotel. Crediting Colin Holligan, one of the Programme assessors and a Golf Course Superintendent at Sandy Lane, for his success, Mario explained: "One day we [the students] asked him if there were any jobs up there. He said yes [and said that he] would pick someone that is a good worker. And in the end, I was the one," he said modestly.

Both students are also budding entrepreneurs. Adrianna revealed: "I've started my own backyard gardening and selling things, it's going pretty good," she said. "Now I'm getting some more chickens, to eventually sell ... Nowadays, you can't get a job easily, so you have to try things on your own, which is what I'm doing," she remarked, adding that young people needed to take – and make – their destiny with their own hands.

Mario agreed; he, too, is an entrepreneur, with a recently upgraded, home-based layer hen operation. "I only started with eight chickens, to try out, but I realised I was selling a dozen [eggs] at a time, and people wanted more," he said, noting that he looked forward to eventually seeing his product on supermarket shelves. He added that the lucrative side of the industry was often overlooked because "young people of today believe agriculture is too hard".

"I believe they're afraid to step forward and show themselves. It's not that they can't get it done, it's their mindset, you have to have a positive mindset and be willing [to work] and think big," he advised, adding that self-employment – as a main earner or additional income – was the way to go. When asked about his next steps, Mario responded that he is 'hungry' for success: "I know it's not over as yet, God has a lot in store for me... there might be a couple obstacles, but I won't stop."

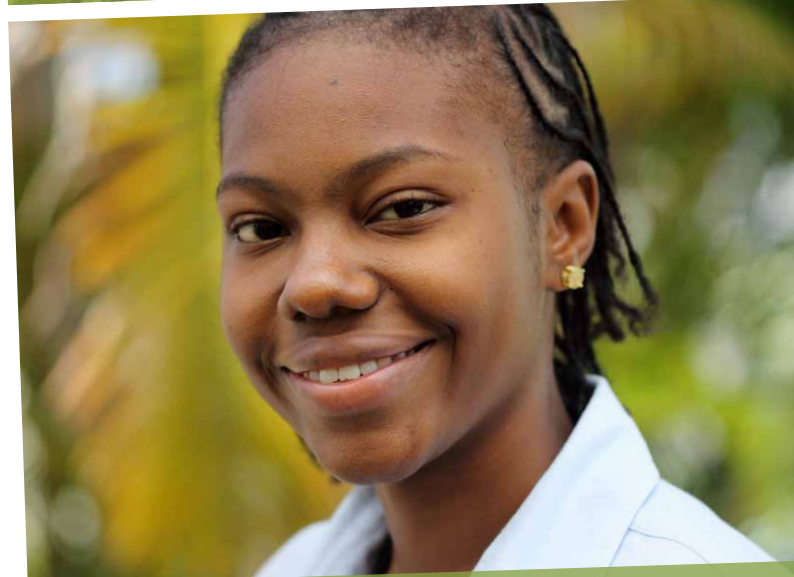
■ Nikki Hutchinson



Mario Sealy



Adrianna is undertaking a Diploma in Agriculture at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic.



Adrianna Scott Brathwaite



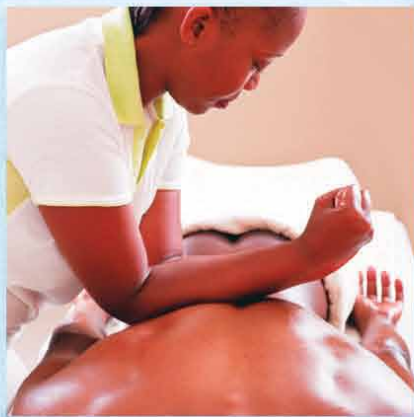
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