

The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited

Capacity Building Graduation

Steelband/Tassa/PYC

Date: Saturday May 21, 2016

Time: 6:30 .m.

Roystonia Community Centre, Couva

There is no shortage of goodwill here in Trinidad and Tobago, of civic mindedness, of optimism, of a desire to make our tiny part of the world a better place. In every community you will find cultural, social, and religious groups who envision a better T&T.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we at NGC also share this vision, and that is why we conduct such a vibrant Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme. We continue to channel our energies into a range of positive investments, including:

- Children's institutions such as Police Youth Clubs;
- Cultural development, especially the national instrument, the steelpan and the arts where we are the title sponsor of the NGC Bocas Lit Fest and NGC Sanfest;
- Sponsorships of sporting activities especially cricket, track and field and basketball.

Over the years we have noticed the capabilities which reside within each one of these individuals and thought it best to capitalise on this. This programme enables everyone to grow and develop their skills in various areas which can then be applied to the day to day operations of the organisation and their lives. I refer to skills like book-keeping, project management, human resource management, conflict resolution, and more.

In the absence of this training, many groups struggled to cope, and, unfortunately, some underperformed, while others fell apart. This is why NGC took the decision to offer Capacity Building Workshops to some of the organisations with which it had a close working relationship. Executive members of these organisations benefited from several modules of this training, and it is clear that the experience is being translated into more efficiently run organisations.

In this Leadership and Team Building module, training was offered to the four Police Youth Clubs under our sponsorship, namely La Brea, Couva, Laventille Road and Penal. We also invited three steelbands: the NGC La Brea Nightingales, NGC Couva Joylanders, and the Gonzales Sheikers. Of course, we can't leave out another of our favourite instruments, the Tassa drum. NGC Sweet Tassa from Princes Town and NGC Show Stoppers from Couva, also

participated in a similar programme with a specific focus on development of management skills.

What does this ultimately mean for these groups? It means that their leaders will return to the task refreshed and energised, with the new knowledge, understanding and experience necessary to transform their organisations from the inside. They have been given the tools they need to translate their passion into practical applications.

We expect to see these groups move forward with more zeal, knowing that they are better equipped to face and surmount the many challenges. Eventually, we hope to see these groups become more independent, more autonomous, and more self-sustaining. This, I am sure, is the goal of every sponsor.

And what does it mean for our communities? It means that these groups, who are so intrinsic to our society, will be enabled and emboldened to reach further and do more for their people. Community groups, whether they be social, sporting or cultural, are soldiers at the forefront of our battle against social decline. And if each of these groups can make a difference in their own small way, within their communities, then this is all they need to prove to us that our efforts have not been in vain but worthwhile.

So to the graduates here today, I want to congratulate you on the enthusiasm you have shown over the course of the programme. I know it hasn't been easy giving up all that time, but I am sure you will agree it was worth every moment. Your participation is voluntary, and this alone tells me that you are here out of love for your art, your group and your community.

And that little bit of love can go a long way, indeed.

I thank you.