

The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited

Address by Charmaine Mohamed

Manager, Corporate Communications

Launch of Waiting for Wings

by

Debbie Jacob

The Paper Based Book Shop,

Normandie Hotel

St Ann's, Port of Spain

October 24, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

(SALUTATIONS)

Good evening.

As a state company, The National Gas Company uses all of its resources to advance the goals and aspirations of our nation. To further national development, we use our infrastructure, expertise, experience and manpower. To bolster the country's economic security, we contribute our financial stability. But when it comes to our Corporate Social Responsibility programme, we rely on another endowment, one which is slightly less common in the world of business – our hearts.

NGC's Corporate Social Responsibility programme is geared towards building links with our neighbours, and strengthening the communities in which we all live and work. We have initiated or supported programmes that help prepare citizens, especially young people, for sustainable employment. We teach natural gas safety and community emergency response. We support the development of sport, micro-business, and the arts.

This year we sponsored the NGC Bocas Lit Fest because of our belief that books are paramount as stories chronicle who we are and where we are at and going as a nation.

And, in all this flurry of activity, it could have been easy to overlook the forgotten ones, those who were born into lives of neglect, hardship, misunderstanding and despair. Those like the residents of the Youth Training

Centre, young boys who have run afoul of the law, or are enduring circumstances beyond their control.

At NGC, we strive to remember the forgotten, and to teach the weak how to be strong. One of these ways is through sport. This year, NGC has taken its successful Right on Track youth track and field and basketball programme to the Youth Training Centre (YTC). To date, the NGC Right on Track caravan has made three visits to YTC. Of note, NGC refurbished the gym at the facility in 2012.

For those of you who might not be aware, the NGC Right on Track programme was originally conceptualized and founded by our former Head, Community Relations and Olympic Gold Medallist, Hasely Crawford. The aim of Right on Track is twofold: first, to identify athletic talent among the nation's children, so that it can be nurtured from a young age. Second, to teach confidence, respect, obedience and teamwork. I think you can see why such a programme would be a welcome addition to the curriculum at YTC.

But apart from the development of healthy bodies and attitudes, we recognize that it is also important for these young men to improve their life skills. Ms. Debbie Jacob has spent many years giving of her time to prepare the young residents of YTC for their CXC English examinations. I don't think I have to tell you how important literacy and basic education are to a young person determined to have a life after YTC and to earn an honest livelihood.

It is in support of Ms. Jacob's efforts that we have agreed to sponsor this evening's launch of *Waiting for Wings*, which chronicles Ms. Jacob's experiences working with these young men. We hope that this book will inspire more people like her to give of their time and hearts to young people who are in need of the most help.

As a company with an agenda of national development, we congratulate a kindred spirit, Ms. Jacob, on her courage, perseverance and heart. Thank you for all you have done, now, and in the future.

Good evening to you all.