

The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited – National Heroes Project

As a state entity NGC has always supported the preservation of our national identity and heritage, built a strong cultural identity and impacted many communities through varying initiatives, with a view to building value for the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

We acknowledge our greatest wealth is our people. To know our heroes is to know ourselves: our values, our collective history, who we are, and what makes us as Trinbagonians, great. A hero is someone who inspires, who is a role model, who has achieved something great, whose behavior we endeavour to emulate.

However, there is the *national* hero – a different category of individual who goes above and beyond; an individual who has made significant positive contributions to the growth and development of society, and represents all of us. Recognising our heroes is an acknowledgement of who we are as a people. We are not waiting for the rest of the world to validate our heroes. This is the reason for the NGC National Heroes Project.

The National Heroes Project provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the contribution which our national heroes have made to Trinidad and Tobago. It is important to recognize the impact of their life achievements on our national landscape. Trinidad and Tobago's social fabric has been influenced by exemplars in the field of sport; education; arts and culture, who have increased the visibility and prestige of the country at both the national and international levels. They sometimes remain largely unrecognized, and in other cases, where their accomplishments are noted, the details of their accomplishments and challenges remain relatively unknown.

Today, there is a lack of positive role models to inspire the youth of our nation. NGC, as a leader and innovator in the field of corporate social responsibility, is honoured to spearhead a sustainable programme of social intervention that celebrates our national heroes and highlights positive role models for our youth. Our younger generation will know of our national heroes; achievements and they will have models whom they can emulate. The Project's ultimate goal is to preserve and honour our national legacy, disseminate positive attributes and messages of our heroes and thereby encourage pride in our accomplishment, national unity and social cohesion.

NGC has committed to make this an annual project which will seek to recognize the other great national icons, to ensure that our people are knowledgeable and proud of the contribution made by these individuals. The project involves a curation of the lives and accomplishments of our indigenous heroes, chronicled and preserved, and from which we can produce biographies of their lives and contributions to our society. The legacies of these national heroes will live on and be filtered into our schools and libraries so that future generations will have access to our heroes' stories.

In 2017, Mr. Hasely Crawford was identified by NGC as the inaugural honouree, being Trinidad and Tobago's first Olympic Gold Medallist. Mr. Crawford has made a significant contribution to the society given his Olympic triumph and subsequent pursuits in national track and field development during his tenure as Head of Community Relations at NGC.

The late Pat Bishop – Trinity Cross-holder, historian, educator, artist and musician – has been identified as the upcoming honouree for 2018. Pat Bishop was Musical Director of the Lydian Singers, which was sponsored by NGC from 1991 to 2014, as a result of which lasting relationships were forged among NGC, Pat and the choir. The 2018 programme will seek to preserve, promote, and sustain the legacy of Pat Bishop for future generations in the spheres of art, literature and music through public education, art and musical appreciation.