

**The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited**  
**Graduation — NGC Couva Joylanders Music Literacy Programme**

**Saturday December 14th**

**NGC Couva Joylanders Pan Theatre,  
Railway Road, Couva**

**SALUTATIONS**

Good afternoon.

If there is one thing Trinbagonians are territorial about, it is their neighbourhood pan side, and as an integral part of the Couva community, we at NGC have always thought of the NGC Couva Joylanders as OUR neighbourhood pan side. Over the years, we've enjoyed a long relationship, which has included the refurbishment of this very pan yard, and corporate support during national competitions.

The Couva Joylanders were one of the first steelbands to make us aware of the importance of music literacy for their members. Gone are the days when it was enough to simply pick out some tunes on the pan. Steelbands are facing competition, both global and foreign, and musical literacy is a vital ingredient for success.

But what is especially significant about our sponsorship of this programme is that it merges so neatly with another of our projects, the sponsorship of the Couva Police Youth Club. Some members of this Club are among the 18 participants to be exposed to the course, and the 15 who are graduating today.

Just recently, NGC supported a capacity building workshop to help equip volunteers working with youth groups, including this club, with the skills to successfully manage the group. These skills included communication, planning, budgeting and leadership. Thus, as we enhance the capacity of the leaders, we have also embraced the opportunity to provide the young members with a different set of skills.

We see the involvement of these young people as yet another avenue for their overall development, and as far as activities go, you can hardly do better than music. It has been established that an education in music teaches vital life skills, such as patience, teamwork, and self discipline. Furthermore, children who are exposed to music develop greater reasoning and problem-solving skills, which translate into better overall academic performance, and greater self esteem. I'm sure you will agree with me that this is probably the primary goal of a youth group such as this.

As always, NGC welcomes its responsibilities as a corporate entity to aid, and in some circumstances, drive national development. But it is particularly satisfying when our involvement has such a direct positive impact on young people, who have such fulfilling lives ahead of them.

This is just one more way in which we are able to fulfil our purpose, which is to create value for all citizens of T&T.

Teachers, administrators, and organisers of the NGC Couva Joylanders, continue to do a great job. Graduates, congratulations to you all. I look forward to hearing you show off what you can do.

Thank you.