



## Unemployed Youth Get Training

Fri, Jul 26, 2019

Photo Credit: API

**Some 92 unemployed young people are currently engaged in a training programme entitled 'The 2019 Youth Employability Skills Programme'.**



The programme, funded by the Mustique Charitable Foundation (MCF), commenced on July 15 at the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Community College (SVGCC) Division of Technical and Vocational Education (DTVE), Armos Vale, and will culminate on August 23.

According to Dean of the Division of Technical and Vocational Education Osborne Bowens who addressed an opening ceremony, at the SVGCC Division of Technical and Vocational Education on Thursday, July 11th, 2019, funding for this year's programme amounted to over EC \$200 000, of which, approximately \$2,500 will be expended on each individual.

Participants, Bowen said, will be exposed to, among other areas, numeracy, cost estimation and entrepreneurship.

A section of persons – including participants – at the opening ceremony of the 2019 Youth Employability Skills Programme.

The Dean disclosed that 92 persons were selected for this year's programme, from an application list that numbered 400.

Director of the SVGCC Nigel Scott said the DVTE has, over the years, provided training to persons who did not matriculate for College. In the past, persons with 3 O' Levels were allowed entrance. Now persons with 7/8 O' Levels are applying for entry, making it even harder for persons with fewer subjects to gain entry, he explained.

It was, Scott said, a case now when the population no longer thought of technical education as being the domain of persons "who do not have the brain for academics."

He urged the participants to apply themselves and to do well on their various attachments as this can lead to future employment.

Project Director of the Mustique Charitable Foundation Dularie Malcolm assured the participants that the Foundation believed in them, and that every penny spent to implement the programme was worth it. "We believe in you all", Malcolm affirmed, adding, "Last year, there was a 98% success rate ... this year, we are going to have 100% completion."

Minister of Education St. Clair Prince, said he was impressed with the programme since its establishment, and that any initiative that supports the development of the youth should be embraced.

The Minister commended Dean Bowens and all the agencies involved with the training. He also recognised the work of past Project Director of the Mustique Trust Lavinia Gunn, and current Project Director Dularie Malcolm.

Prince noted that a significant number of participants in last year's batch have been employed. He noted that TVET provides an alternative pathway for young people and alluded to completed designs for a technical institute in Marriaqua.

Minister with responsibility for Youth Frederick Stephenson expressed gratitude to the Mustique Charitable Foundation for affording the youths in St. Vincent and the Grenadines the opportunity to learn a skill. According to Minister Stephenson, the OECS Secretariat will partner with the Department for International Development (DFID) United Kingdom on a project that will train around 6000 young people across member states, of which, St. Vincent and the Grenadines will be allotted approximately 2500 spaces. The project should commence in September this year or early next year, Minister Stephenson said.

He also referenced the coming on stream of a Call Centre in September which will provide up to 1500 jobs for young persons. (Source: API)

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