



THE ENHANCER

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REPORT DISCRIMINATION

A format for reporting all discrimination against Persons with Disabilities is now available. Such matters can be reported to the Commission's Secretariat at 49 Croal Street, Georgetown.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NCD?

Ratification of UN Convention

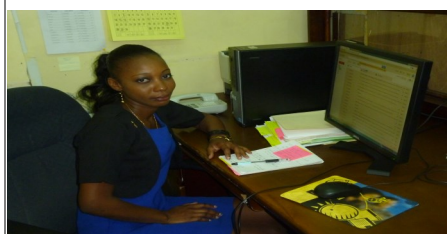
The Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett invited members of the National Commission on Disability (NCD) to inform the latter of the Government of Guyana's decision on the '**Ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**'. This ratification will be done during the upcoming Treaty Event of the United Nations General Assembly in



NCD Team at Meeting with Min. Of Foreign Affairs on July 30, 2014

September, 2014. It must be noted that this process dated back to 2013 when NCD wrote the Hon. Minister Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkette on the same and; Young Voices Guyana members subsequently met with her. The Minister expressed great pleasure in which the Government of Guyana has worked towards this ratification and reiterated that this will now remove previous inaccessible programs available to Persons with Disabilities.

New Staff



Ms. Avonel Corrica—Advocacy & Communication Officer

NCD welcomes another staff into its organization, Ms. Avonel Corrica: Advocacy & Communications Officer who commenced duty on July 1, 2014. Inclusive in her functions are: Community level advocacy, Volunteer coordination, Production of Quarterly Newsletter, Managing the daily activities of the Resource Centre, Supervising the duties of the RC Clerk & Office Asst. ; among others.

NCD Staff participate in Rehab. Orientation

Disability & Rehabilitation Services—Ministry of Health held a two-day Orientation on the 21—22 August, 2014 at Cheddie Jagan Research Centre (Red House) High Street, Kingston. The program focused on orienting Rehabilitation Assistants and Audiology Practitioners have completed eighteen months of training in the aforementioned programs.

NCD's Presentations came from Ms. Avonel Corrica— Advocacy & Communications Officer who presented on Communication and Customer Relations. Mr. Ganesh Singh—Commissioner, presented the Disability Act. Meanwhile, Ms. Simone Poole—Receptionist educated the audience on Disability Etiquette. Other areas of Presentations included The Importance of Data / Record Keeping, Rehabilitation Collection System among others.

A total of 18 Rehabilitation Assistants and 4 Audiology Practitioners are now apart of the Disability & Rehabilitation Services.



Rehab. Assistants & Practitioners on July 21, 2014 Orientation

CarEnTrain 2014 Project Inclusively structured

Mainstreaming Energy Efficiency and Climate Change in Built Environment Training Project included the concerns and suggestions of Persons with Disabilities at a forum held on August 6, 2014 at the Education Lecture Theatre, University of Guyana, Turkeyen Campus.

The National Commission on Disability was represented by Mr. Ganesh Singh—Commissioner and Ms. Sonja Adonis—Deputy Executive Secretary (Ag).

The objectives of the project included; To improve energy security in Caribbean countries and mitigate Climate Change by reducing the consumption of energy, resulting from Urban sprawl, inefficient transportation systems and improving energy efficiency of buildings.

Project Manager—Mrs. Linda Johnson-Bhola posited that participant's concerns and suggestions would be used to formulate policy and implement subsequent change pertinent to the phenomena underscored. Such as, to enhance not only the saving of electricity but also for providing a more effective means of transportation for all citizens.

Some important suggestions from NCD's representatives included:- Making buildings & electrical apparatus more accessible to PWD's, importation of specific transportation for PWD's, the need for appropriate consultation and negotiation with government for a waiver on electricity bills of PWD's among others.

The forum include representatives from Universities, Help & Shelter, Construction arena, Clinical fraternity and the National Commission on Disability.

Visually Impaired Students Outstanding Performance at CSEC

A total of 82.4 percent pass rate was accredited to ten individuals with varying impairments who had written the Caribbean Secondary Examination Council (CSEC) Examination.

The Guyana Society for the Blind (GSB) released the results of the top performers in a Press Conference held on August 13, 2014 at its headquarters on High Street.

Ms. Rosemarie Ramitt, 18 secured five grade ones of the total subjects written. While Ms. Odessa Blair, 36 secured five grade twos.

Meanwhile, Mr. Vishal Mohabir, secured three grade ones, one grade two and one grade four.

The other seven students who also wrote the examination were Muesa Haynes, Leroy Phillip, Anthony Robinson, Diane Singh, Douglas Tika, Roy Stewart and Laurel Lewis; who also is physically impaired.

Preparations for the Examination were done through an 18-month training programme in which classes were conducted at the Guyana Society for the Blind

Headquarters.

The maximum subjects were five per student and included; English A, Social Studies, Principles of Business, Office Administration and Human & Social Biology.

Imparting of information on subject areas was done via the Job Access with Speech (JAWS) software. Under the One Laptop Per Family (OLPF) Programme, the visually impaired were taught how to use the software.

Mr. Ganesh Singh, Co-ordinator of the CSEC Programme applauded the students and teachers; and commended their dedication to the programme despite the many challenges such as; limited resources, funding among others.



GSB President Cecil Morris (second from left), CSEC Prog. Co-ordinator Ganesh Singh, teachers & top students

Comments and future plans of visually impaired top CSEC students

The first place top student was Ms. Rosemary Ramitt who joyfully stated "When the



Rosemary Ramitt

programme started, I decided that I will do it because I have never written CXC before. I thank my teachers, Ganesh Mr. Morris and the "Blind Society" for providing me with

this opportunity. I accomplished five grade ones. When I heard this I screamed. I thank everyone for their support". Ramitt posited that her next academic goal is to attend Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) to major in English at the Secondary level.

Meanwhile, second place top performer was Ms. Odessa Blair whose sentiments were "Right now I am speechless but I'm happy to achieve these grades through the 'Society'. It has been challenging but I was successful. I thank the teachers, especially Ganesh and the Ministry of Education for affording us this



Odessa Blair

opportunity. I am happy for the other students as well".

Blair plans to attend the University of Guyana to pursue a Degree in Social Work.

The gratitude of third place top performer Mr. Vishal Mohabir accentuated "At first CXC was just a dream for me. I was struggling in school because of my disability, so I was unable to finish. I thank the teachers

At the 'Society' because of them CXC is now a reality for me". Similarly, Mohabir plans on pursuing studies at the University of Guyana in the field of Social Work.



Vishal Mohsbir

Open Doors Centre Graduation

The Open Doors Vocational Training Centre held its Seventh graduation Ceremony on Wednesday July 2, 2014. The exercise took place at the Love and Faith World Outreach Ministries Church located on Duncan Street, Sophia.

Fifteen trainees graduated after successfully completing vocational skills training in the following courses:- Informational Technology, Carpentry / Joinery, Garment Construction / Craft and Electronics / Electrical

Guest Speaker Ms. Penelope Harris, Principal of Carnegie School of Home Economics urged the graduates; who are now equipped with tools necessary for the world of work to "Be a door opener rather than a gate keeper".

Other thoughts of encouragement also came from Electronics teacher at the Centre, Mr. Ewart Cummings who implored the graduates to use their skills wisely and be good representatives of the Centre.

Enrollment

Professional training classes commence in September.

Uplift Application Forms from: The Open Doors Centre (Health Centre Compound) "C" Field Sophia

Or

The Director of Rehabilitation Office, 49 Croal Street, G/T

Or

Call tel.#: 219-2738 /219-2753



Graduates from Open Doors Centre

Turning Waste into Worth Project

The New Foundation Initiative in collaboration with "Bravo Arts" is involved in a recycling project entitled "Turning Waste Into Worth".

The program teaches you how to turn waste into worth and create words and images through Art & Craft.

These include recycling plastic bottles and producing garbage bins, vases made from recycle telephone wire and other ornament.

Classes are held at the

Lot "M" Hadfield Street, Wortmanville, Georgetown on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 A.M. to 01:00 P.M. & 03:00 to 05:00 P.M.

Program Cost is FREE.

Persons with disabilities are encouraged to enroll.

Registration

Contact Rev. Kenzena Romao—Coordinator on Telephone #: 226-0556 Monday, Wednesday or Friday between the hours of 10:00 A.M.—03:00 P.M.



David Rose's Special Needs School receives bus—MOE

The Ministry of Education donated a bus to the David Rose Special Needs School on Tuesday September 23rd, 2014. The 15 seated bus would replace the 30 year old one in travelling arrangements for student of the mentioned school who lives on the East Coast of Demerara. Monday September 29th will be the commencement of such operation.

Present at the handing over ceremony at the school was the Hon. Minister of Education Priya Manikchand, Chief Planning Officer- Ms. Evelyn Hamilton, National Coordinator of Curriculum - Ms. Savvie Hopkinson, Manager of Open Doors Centre - Mr. Arthur Lewis, Head of Unit for the Blind & Visually Impaired - Mr. Haslyn Richards and Head Mistress of David Rose's Special Needs School Ms. Dionne McKenzie and teachers.

According to the Head Teacher, a request was made some three years ago through the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security. However, that was not the Ministry in which such assistance could have been materialized. Nonetheless, Ms. Manikchand ensured that the Ministry of Education conduct subsequent follow ups and made this necessity a reality. Ms. McKenzie added that she is very thankful and happy that the transportation woes of children who live on the East Coast of Demerara and attends the school will be reduced.



MOH—National TB Program in collaboration with NCD

National Commission on Disability

49 Croal Street, Stabroek,
Georgetown

Phone: 226-4566

Email: ncd101297@gmail.com

SEND US YOUR STORIES!

We believe in sharing information between all Disability organizations and other concerned parties, and we are happy to publish all relevant stories in The Enhancer. If you have any stories you would like us to write about, please contact NCD Secretariat at the above number and e-mail address.



The Ministry of Health—National Tuberculosis Program hosted a sensitization session for Persons with Disabilities in Region 6 on September 12, 2014 at 2 Winkle Road New Amsterdam, Berbice.

The session had a total of thirteen participants who eagerly sought clarifications of various misconceptions about Tuberculosis. Disabilities ranging from physically challenged to sensory and hearing impairments were catered for. The facilitators were Ms. Reshana Daniels—Social Worker and Ms. Rubina Daniels—TB Outreach Worker of Region 6. There was also a Sign Language Interpreter: Mr. Sean Thomas of Region 4 who ensured Deaf participants interaction. Some of the topics discussed were:

- What is TB disease?
- Signs and symptoms of the disease.
- TB Treatment & Prevention



Sign Language interpreter & participants on Sept. 12, 2014

The International Day

International Day of Persons with Disabilities is celebrated annually in the month of December. Celebrations for 2014 would be under the theme “Sustainable Development: The Promise of Technology”. With the focus on technology components include: -

- Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Responses
- Creating Enabling Working Environment and;
- Disability-Inclusive Sustainable Development Goals

The National Commission on Disabilities would be hosting a week of activities in observance of the International Day from December 1–7, 2014.

The annual observance of International Day of Persons with Disabilities was proclaimed in 1992, by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 47/3. The observance of this Day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for dignity, rights and well-being of Persons with Disabilities. Further, it also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of Persons with Disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

Ratification of UN Convention

Guyana became the latest country to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is widely regarded as the first international human rights treaty of the twenty-first century and one of the first to be ratified. The Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett on September 16, 2014 signed for Guyana in this regard at the 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

“The 150th ratification is evidence of the commitment by the international community to promote and protect

the human rights of persons with disabilities,” said Maria Soledad Cisternas Reyes on behalf of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which monitors how States implement the Convention.

The Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) posited that, “disability rights world wide have reached a major milestone” with the ratification.

A key message from PWD’s is that there should be “*nothing about us without us*”, Ms. Cisternas stated.

According to the UN, Persons with disabilities are also disproportionately rep-

resented among the world’s poorest, and lack equal access to basic resources such as education, employment, healthcare and legal support systems.

Ms. Cisternas, who chairs the CRPD also highlighted this Convention though in force for only six years has been ratified across all regions and cultures and is on the way to becoming universally recognized. Those states yet to ratify were urged to do so.