



# 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?

### Ministerial Meetings

Representatives of the National Commission on Disability (NCD) met with two Ministers of the new Administration.

On July 22, 2015 newly appointed Honorable Minister of Education Dr. Rupert Roopnarine engaged the Commission's team on key areas such as:-

- The educational component in the Disability Act, 2010.
- Continued collaboration with the Ministry of Education and NCD in a more structured way and;
- Sensitization training sessions for key officials of the Ministry; among others.

Ms. Vidushi Persaud, Vice Chairperson-NCD highlighted the educational responsibilities of the Ministry according to the Disability Act, 2010 and also suggested some pertinent measures the Ministry can take into consideration to improve the educational system for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). Meanwhile, Mrs. Evelyn Hamilton, Chairperson-NCD highlighted the need for alternative means of administering Examinations country wide to include PWDs. Additionally, Ms. Hamilton explained the need for a comprehensive Data Base of PWDs in Guyana and possible career paths for teachers in Special Education.

On August 6, 2015 the Honorable Minister of Social Protection Ms. Volda Lawrence met with the Commission's representatives at her Lot 357 Lamaha & East Streets, Georgetown Office.

Matters discussed included:-

- Registration of PWDs & Public Assistance.
- Skills Training & Recruitment of PWDs
- Disability Etiquette
- Access to buildings; among others

It was noted that the Ministry of Social

Protection had already written to the Ministry of Public Infrastructure indicating that, all new and existing buildings that are for public use should be equipped with necessary access for the elder as well as Persons with Disabilities.

The Minister of Social Protection also indicated that, the Ministry would be willing to support the Commission in the creation of a Poster regarding Disability Etiquette that will be placed in Ministries and other Public organizations. This will foster awareness, as the Ministry collaborate with the Commission in working to improve the lives of Persons with Disabilities.

NCD was represented by Mrs. Evelyn Hamilton-Chairperson, Ms. Vidushi Persaud-Vice Chairperson, Mr. Ganesh Singh, Mr. Colin Ault & Mr. Prandatt Basdeo-Commissioners, Ms. Beverly Pile-Executive Secretary, Ms. Zoan Williams-Deputy Executive Secretary & Ms.

Avonel Corrica-Advocacy/Comm. Officer.

### Utilization of Disability Fund

The National Commission on Disability (NCD) met with representatives from Disable People's Organizations (DPOs) and Disable People's Network (PDNs) in Guyana on September 15, 2015 at the National Library, Church & Main Streets, South Cummingsburg G/T, Conference Room.

The meeting engaged participants in areas that would increase the utilization of the

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## **Comments & Future Plans of Visually Impaired top CSEC students**

The first place top student in this years' CSEC Examinations; written by Visually Impaired students, **Alwyn Adams**, 36 was overjoyed with his results and stated that Human & Social Biology was the most challenging subject for him but he is still satisfied with the Grade Two he received. Adams' future plans is to pursue studies at the University of Guyana. He secured three Grade Ones and two Grade Twos.

Meanwhile, second place top performer **Guillian Layne** 41, who secured three Grade Ones and one Grade Two explained her next move is to return to the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) ; where she once studied Early Childhood. Unfortunately, she was unable to complete the programme because lecturers at that time felt she was incompetent because of her disability. Her happy facial expression accompanied teary eyes since; she was successful in attaining passes in all her subject areas written at this year CSEC Examinations.

**Ceion Rollox**, 18 who captured third place in the top performers realm said, "I like to talk and be in the spot light, and this is a big achievement for me. So I'm going for it, and will pursue my Degree in Communication at the University of Guyana". Rollox secured two Grade Ones, two Grade Twos and one Grade Three.



## **Continuous Outstanding Performance of Visually Impaired Students at CSEC Examination**

Visually Impaired students continue to perform exceptionally at the Caribbean Secondary Examinations Council (CSEC) Examinations.

Results from the second batch of Visually Impaired students showed an Eighty percent 80 % pass rate .

The Guyana Society for the Blind (GSB) released the results on August 18, 2015 at a Press Conference at its High Street, Headquarters. A total of twelve (12) students participated in ten months preparation for the examination in subject areas such as; English A, Office Administration, Caribbean History, Principles of Business, Human and Social Biology and Social Studies.

Top student Alwyn Adams, 38 secured three Grade One passes in Principles of Business, Office Administration and English A. and Grade Two passes in Human and Social Biology and Social Studies.

Meanwhile, second place top performer Guillian Layne, 41 who secured Grade One passes in Principles of Business, Office



**Top Performers from left: Alwyn Adams, Guillian Layne, Ceion Rollox and Douglas Tika**

Administration and English A; along with Grade Two pass in Social Studies.

Ceion Rollox, 18 was third in the top performers league with Grade One passes in Principles of Business and Social Studies as well as; Grade Two passes in Office Administration and English A and a Grade Three pass in

Human and Social Biology. Meanwhile, Douglas Tika who obtained Grade Three passes in Caribbean History, Social Studies and Office Administration was the fourth top performer.

Other visually impaired students who wrote the

2015 Examinations were: Alwyn Adams, Stacey Greaves, Musa Haynes

Leroy Phillips, Colin Robinson, Teshawn Rodney, Diane Singh and Desmond Fraser.

Project Coordinator of the Guyana Society of the Blind (GSB) Ganesh Singh stated that even though the pass rate this year had dropped to 80 % in comparison to last years' 84 %, GSB is still proud of the achievements of its second batch. Singh added that the third batch will be apart of strict measures that the society will be putting in place in an effort to increase future pass rate.

Meanwhile, **Douglas Tika**, 26 who secured three Grade Three passes; though disappointed expressed satisfaction highlighted that he will be attending the University of Guyana to pursue studies in either Communication or Physical Therapy.

## **Utilization of Disability Fund**

(con't)

Twenty Million Dollars (20,000,000) Disability Fund. These included: Allowing DPOs & DPNs representatives to highlight challenges in applying for the Disability fund, queries about the Application

process and criteria, the development of a zoning schedule by NCD to offer support to DPOs & DPNs access to funding; among others

The \$20,000,000 Disability Fund was made available by the former administration in 2012, to the disability community for income generating projects.



## NCD Participates at Ministry of Social Protection National Conference

Representatives of the National Commission on Disability (NCD) on August 27, 2015 attended the National Conference to formulate a Gender and Development Policy at the Arthur Chung Convention Centre, Liliendaal.

Held under the theme, "Equal Rights for All - Be Good to People", the Conferences' Welcome and Opening Remarks were done by Ms. Lorene Baird—Permanent Secretary: Ministry of Social Protection who highlighted the impetus of the consultation is to develop a National Gender Policy that will be able to better address gender and equality. Ms. Baird added that the Social Protection Ministry will value the contributions and discussions of participants over the two days period of consultations.

Meanwhile, speaking at the historical event was Mr. Jean Ricot Dorneus—Country Representative: Organization of American States (OAS). According to Mr. Dorneus, the issue of Gender is not restricted to Guyana, the Caribbean or developing countries but to developed countries as well. He added that the OAS has been in the forefront in the equality agenda, leading an inspiring progress in the Americas and the rest of the world.

The opening day of consultations also heard from United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Resident Representative Ms. Khadija Musa who emphasized that when policies are developed

should also ensure that these are monitored and implemented. Ms. Musa also said, "I will continue to work on social cohesion and development policies of this nature". She added that to provide opportunities and good policies and a nurturing environment, Guyanese first have to work together and appreciate the different cultures of their country.

Meanwhile, the Honourable Minister of Social Protection Ms. Volda Lawrence in her statement, highlighted the importance to include a Gender Perspective in the Ministry's Agenda that will promote programs to understand internal perspectives to achieve gender equality. Sighting that one of the main objectives of the Policy is the Promotion of behavioural change.

The two days Consultations



**NCD's Information Desk on August 27th, 2015**

also included Exhibits from various Non-Governmental Organizations, Governmental Agencies, Small Business Entrepreneurs; among others.

The National Commission on Disability displayed items such as; Registration Forms, Disability Act, 2010,

cups, key rings & pens with important messages regarding Disability, brochures, among others. These were subsequently distributed to some participants.

### Other Exhibits



### New Staff



**Ms. Letita August—Office Assistant**

The National Commission on Disability welcomes another staff into its organization, **Ms. Letita August: Office Assistant (Part-time)** who commenced duty on September 1, 2015. Inclusive in her functions are: receive, sort and distribution of Mails, assist with event planning, photocopying etc.

### **President gives Feature Address at National Conference**



**President David Granger on August 27th, 2015**

His Excellency, President David Granger gave the Feature Address at the Ministry of Social Protection two days National Conference that was held on the 27th and 28th August, 2015 at the Arthur Chung Convention Centre, Liliendaal.

President Granger highlighted five pillars which the government will be addressing namely:-

- Equality of women in Politics
- Eradicating extreme Poverty
- Providing jobs for more women
- The elimination of violence against women and;
- Access to education for women in Guyana.

According to the Head of State, equality for women is essential if everyone is to benefit from the resources in Guyana. With regards to eradicating extreme poverty, such reduction ought to be a means to improve the lives of women generally.

Further, women must

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## **President gives Feature Address at National Conference**

### **National Commission on Disability**

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#### **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 addresses.



be provided with greater opportunities if they are to live out of poverty. In order to provide more jobs for women, the President stated that Employment Centres will be developed throughout the regions of Guyana. Additionally, tax rebates will be made available for Day Care Centres and such facilities; so women can work and their children be safely taken care of. According to the Head of State, "We want happy women—happy women would head happy households". With regards to the elimination of violence against women, the President explained that Domestic Violence has no respect for race, class and strata as such; this is more likely as a result of cultural inter-play of social power and psychological imbalance. Therefore, a Policy must be formulated to address such issues. Emphasizing the need for access to education for women in Guyana, the President asserted that the government will work on improving girls access to Primary and Secondary education.

Further, Government wants to ensure school dropouts can have access to Remedial Programs.

In closing, the President reiterated that over the next five years, the Government will remain committed to achieving full equality for all. Since, "Women deserve a good life".

Consultation sessions over the two days period were under the following categories:-

- Gender in Governance
- Gender in Education & Training
- Gender in Productive Resource & Employment
- Gender Based Violence
- Gender in Health
- Gender in Security and:
- Gender in Agriculture & Manufacturing

The Ministry of Social Protection is expected to garner pertinent information from these sessions to craft a Policy that will ensure Gender Equality in Guyana.

Sign Language interpretation was done by Mr. Sean Thomas –Interpreter to inform the deaf population .

## **International Week of the Deaf**

International Week of the Deaf (IWD) was first launched in 1958 in Rome, Italy. There has since been a global celebration of this observance every last week in September . This year, IWD was observed under the theme- **"With Sign Language Rights, Our Children Can!"** from **September 21—27, 2015**. During this observance, there is global advocacy to raise awareness about the deaf community at the individual , community and governmental levels.

As stipulated in Article 24 Section 3b of the United NATIONS Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Governments are obligated to facilitate the learning of sign language and the promotion of linguistic identity of the deaf community (World Federation of the Deaf).

The Deaf Association of Guyana (DAG) in its seventh year observance held a cultural performance at the National Cultural

Centre on Sunday 27th September, 2015 at 17:00 Hrs. entitled **"Louder than Words"**. Other activities in the weeks observance Included the Customary March by members of the deaf community, outreaches; among others.

