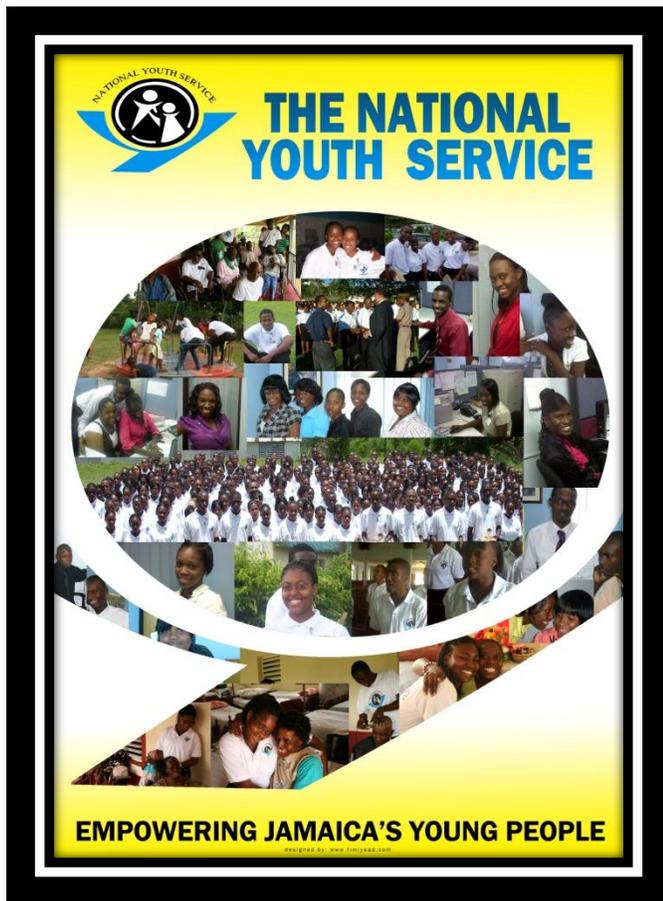


NYS continues to empower the lives of Jamaica's young people for more than 35 years!

2013
The
Gleaner's
Youth Link



In 1973, the Government of Jamaica (GoJ) formed the National Youth Service (NYS) to help with manpower needs in various sectors of the economy as well as to help school leavers develop a sense of nationalism and proper socialisation. According to Mrs. Heather Murray, Principal of the Hampton High School, *"In those days, you served without any travelling been refunded because it was service for the sake of service and it was from service that I learned from those whom I served."* Since then, young people, ages 17 – 24 years, have been equipped with the necessary life coping skills needed to foster their personal and career development as well as enhance their contribution to community and national development.

The programmes offered at the NYS focuses on Volunteerism, Character Development and Work Experience and includes programmes such as the Corps and Summer Programmes.

THE CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

The change in the global environment has re-shaped the strategic framework of the National Youth Service (NYS) and has forced the

organisation to fulfill its mandate through various methodologies. In the past, individuals would have completed NYS programmes harvesting only a certificate of participation. However, in an assessment conducted by Darrell M. Hull, Ph.D., he recommended that the NYS Corps programme should be aligned with the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) standards offered by HEART Trust/NTA, and credit provided to participants when their training matches these standards. As such, in 2010, the NYS undertook a new initiative: to certify participants in their area of training in order to enrich their developmental experience and prepare them for the competitive labour market.

Following this decision, at least 290 National Youth Service (NYS) trainees turned the pages of success, in dealing with the weaknesses which exist in the procurement and distribution of textbooks at high, junior high and all-age schools. In 2011, through the Textbook Management and Support Aides programme was developed to train students in assisting with the management of the textbook process in schools. Participants within the programme have helped the Media Services Unit of the Ministry of Education to collect for redistribution some \$350 million worth of government-issued textbooks, packed in storerooms in schools islandwide. In the same year, the organisation commenced training for their Teacher's Assistant Programme which total of four hundred and twenty eight (428) participants trained to effectively support teachers and administrators in: Special Educational Institutions; The Alternative Secondary Transitional Education Programme Centres (ASTEP); and The E-Learning Centres.

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Also, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the NYS also trained participants in becoming Community Health Aides (CHA) and Environmental Health Workers (EHW), from thirteen parishes.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Providing valuable work experience to the participants of the NYS is a key function of the organisation. Through the Corps Programme and the NYS Summer Programme (formally the National Summer Employment Programme), thousands of participants engaged in work experience islandwide. To expand its reach, in 2013, the NYS embarked on a pilot project called, the NYS Graduate Work Experience Project (GWEP), which, as the name depicts, provides valuable work experience to graduates from University islandwide. When asked what has been the impact of the programme on the lives of the interns, Ms. Dania-Kaye Waugh, graduate of the University of the West Indies and a current GWEP intern stated, *"Programmes like these should be incorporated in both government and private sector organisation as youths such as myself are being equipped to deal with the professional phase of my life. I am definitely learning the ins and out of office dynamics."* She further informed that certain discipline regarding work skills and ethics are being instilled in her life and that she is grateful for the NYS to have conceptualize such a project.



*Dania-Kaye Waugh, GWEP Intern at the NYS –
Office management*

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

In an effort to promote values of discipline, democracy, citizenship and co-operation, participants not only benefits from work experience and certification but from exposure to life coping skills through the NYS Personal Development curriculum. This curriculum, developed by the NYS, focuses on Self Development, Conflict Management, Family Life Management, Career Development and Civics. Another avenue through which the organistaion promoted values of discipline, democracy, citizenship and co-operation is through Mentor Training.

THE NYS AND YOUTHS WITH DISABILITIES



*Mr Roshane Foster,
Corps Programme
Disability: cerebral palsy*

"I am proud to be a participant of an organisation that respects my disability and open doors for me to get the work experience that I probably would not have received outside of the programme. Thank you NYS!"- Roshane Foster

NYS engages young people from the community of persons with disabilities through its annual Summer Programme and the new NYS Camp Empowerment. Camp Empowerment will begin in August 2013 and provide young people with Mild Intellectual Disability (MID) the opportunity to develop the personal development, workplace and voluntary skills needed to function effectively in society. Speaking at this year's Summer Programme orientation session, Michial Rhone informed the media that she too was grateful to the NYS for awarding her the opportunity to engage in valuable work experience, *"I am not worried about*

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the location in which I will be placed because I know that despite my disability, I am able to adjust to any situation I am placed in. I must thank the NYS though because there are not a lot of organisations that would take an individual with spina bifida (split spine)."

VOLUNTEERISM

The National Youth Service's foundation is on volunteerism, one that teaches youth the act of humility and service to others. NYS has and will continue to provide assistance to projects nationally and internationally annually.



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The National Youth Service (NYS) has, in the last academic year alone, offered more than \$40 million in tuition assistance to students who participate in their Corps programme. Every year, NYS assists tertiary students who participated in and completed the programme to pay their tuition. Between 2011 - 2013, a total of 1,447 youths were paid 20 per cent of their full tuition. Through partnership with organizations such as the National Commercial Bank (NCB), the NYS also sponsors payments of up to two (2) CXC's once a participant successfully completes the Corps Programme.

In summary, the National Youth Service (NYS) has and will continue to empower the lives of Jamaica's young people. With its focus embedded in the programme offerings of the organisation, the NYS will continue to facilitate the growth of young people who are constructive in social and cultural relations and productive in wealth creation.

"The NYS trains us up to standard where other organisation can then take us and work with us as potential employees. I am happy I was a part of the NYS and I would recommend it to anyone."

- Major Brian Lundy, Pilot, Jamaica Defense Force

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NAME OF PROGRAMME

* All programmes are designed around Volunteerism, Character Development and Work Experience.

	Duration	Character Development	Work Experience	Volunteerism
Corps Programme	7 months to 2 years	✓	✓	✓
NYS Summer Programme	3 weeks in July or August	✓	✓	✓
Financial Assistance Programme	Available to individuals who completed the Corps Programme	-	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tertiary Studies ○ CXC payments 				
Volunteerism Programme	Available all year round	✓	✓	✓
Camp Empowerment (MID)	2 weeks	✓	✓	✓
Summer Enrichment Camp	2 weeks			
Mentor Training	1 – 2 days	✓	-	-
Graduate Work Experience Project (GWEP)	6 months	✓	✓	✓