

FLANKER DIGEST

OFF TO PARLIAMENT

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By Dalton Foster

Mikhail McLeod, chairperson for the Youth Crime Watch of Flanker and Keirn Thomas, president of the Flanker Community Youth Club are among the group youth preparing for the Sixth National Youth Parliament (NYP). While Mikhail is making her debut appearance, this is Keirn's second year participating in the NYP.



The National Youth Parliament programme is one of the activities that are held to commemorate National Youth Month in Jamaica. The programme strives to give youngsters an opportunity to have their voices heard on issues affecting them and the wider community that they are a part of. The NYP also allows youth from across the country to interact and develop an appreciation for the legislature and governance structures that govern us as a nation.

A total of 87 youth, representing all aspects of Jamaican life and from all parishes in Jamaica have begun training on the rudiments of parliamentary procedure, argument development, research and public speaking.



The youth have prepared arguments on three broad areas of interest: crime and violence, environmental protection and on human sexuality and prostitution. It is expected that these arguments will be honed over the next two weeks to become the position papers that will be presented by a final 60 youth in a special sitting of Parliament at Gordon House on November 10, 2008.

All the best guys and continue to make us proud.

Flanker Peace and Justice Centre recognized by JA-STYLE

By Kimberly Bailey

The Flanker Peace and Justice Centre (FPJC) was among the distinguished group of Community Based Organizations recognized for their contribution to the improvement of adolescent reproductive health in Jamaica by implementing holistic approaches to achieve solutions. The cross-cutting themes included HIV/AIDS, violence prevention, parenting and life skills.



Dir of the FPJC, Marilyn Nash with award

At the 'Closing Out Ceremony' of the Jamaica Solution to Healthy Lifestyle and Empowerment Project better known as JA-STYLE on October 16, 2008, a number of organizations – including schools, pharmacies, government ministries, NGO's and CBO's, private sector entities,

and other state entities – gathered in Kingston to pay homage to the JA-STYLE project. Over the last three years JA-STYLE has contributed significantly to expanding adolescents' access to quality health care through youth friendly service.

JA-STYLE has also made an impressive impact on the youth policy environment by empowering young people through the creation of vibrant youth advocacy networks. Through hard work in communities, including some of the most violent, JA-STYLE has managed to reach over 18,000 youth and caregivers.

The FPJC worked with the JA-STYLE project from the beginning and has the enviable record of being characterized as one of the most sustainable CBO's to have interacted with the project. Many of the initiatives introduced by the project are now consolidated in the programme offerings of the FPJC. The healthy lifestyle curriculum and the parenting curriculum are two such programmes. The community marching band and the sporting groups also benefited from the JA-STYLE intervention.

We would like to thank JA-STYLE as we seek to sustain and strengthen adolescent involvement in all stages of our programmes.

Our GSAT Aspirants

By Michael Foster

The Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT) takes spotlight as we continue to feature the work of the Flanker Peace and Justice Centre. The GSAT session has three basic components: revision and practice; reading; and the computer based GO-GSAT program. Classes are held from Monday to Saturday and follow a strict routine that requires the students to be focused at all times. The

sessions adhere closely to the prescribed subject matters of Mathematics, Language Arts, Social Studies, Sciences, and Communication Task.

Twenty students from the Flanker Primary and Junior High School are currently enrolled in the GSAT programme and are showing much improvement over their initial entry diagnostic scores. This improvement is in part due to the encouragement and support that come from the parents. Parents are crucial to the overall performance of the students, and as such are required to meet regularly with the teachers to discuss their child's progress.



Members of the GSAT group pose for the camera

The GSAT can also be nerve wrecking for most students. When asked about their feelings, their comments usually differ with responses ranging from devastated, nervous and depressing to tranquil and elated. These feelings, at times, determine the outcome of their performance on the exams. In this regard, the Centre brings in counselors to talk with the students and parents to help alleviate fears.

We applaud the Centre and its volunteers for their usual hard work and commitment. There is no doubt that all the students and the community will be better off for their effort. Good luck to all the students, and continue to work hard as you make yourself, your family and your community proud.

FOGO demoted to Senior League

By Dwayne Gardiner

An unfortunate series of events have resulted in FOGO United's demotion

to the Senior League for the 2008-09 football season.

From the beginning of the 2007-08 season it was clear that there was an overall collapse of the club structure that had been integral to the team's success in the 2006-07 season. The absence of a defined management and coaching team reaped little commitment from the players. Infrequent team meetings, inadequate team supplies and poor turn out at training sessions are just some of the issues that plagued the team throughout the season.

Poor performance on the field of play saw FOGO placing bottom of the top eight teams that would remain in the Western Confederation League. All things being equal, this means that FOGO would have been spared relegation, even if they were hanging on by a thread.

However, as fate would have it all things were not equal. Seba United's failure to maintain its spot in the National Premier League meant that a space had to be provided for them in the Western Confederation League. The lowest placed team in the top eight would therefore have to give up their spot to accommodate Seba. As a result, FOGO was the unfortunate casualty.



FOGO in training last season

With the team now preparing for another stint in the Senior League, I want to encourage all the stakeholders to get together and iron out the kinks that have hindered its progress. The community is always ready to support FOGO and awaits the return of the glory days.

Youth Crime Watch Jamaica Makes Administrative Transition

A changing of the guard was sounded on Friday October 10, 2008, when the former national director of the YCWJ, Fabian Brown, handed over the organisation's books and effects to the new administration, represented at the event by national administrator, Marlon Moore.

Mr. Brown is the YCWJ's founding director and we thank him for having brought the organisation through its infancy, to where it is today, poised to contribute meaningfully to the reduction and alleviation of the nation's crime problem, under the new leadership. We wish him well on his new ventures, even as he is set to continue his relationship with the YCWJ, in an advisory capacity.

The new administration is led by Flanker's own Allan Bernard, national chairman, with support from Latoya West; Pauline Lewis Gregory; Alfred Palmer – deputy chairman and a member of the previous administration; along with Marlon Moore.



Former YCWJ director, Fabian Brown (left) hands over documents to Marlon Moore, new national administrator.

Flanker Digest is a monthly publication with the aim of reporting on the issues and activities in the community. It is a free newsletter edited and compiled by the Youth Crime Watch of Flanker under the auspices of the Flanker Peace and Justice Centre.