



Ministry of Labour
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MEDIA RELEASE

The Minister of Labour lauds the On the Job Programme for its continued contribution to the development of the labour sector and commends Training Providers for supporting the development of young people in Trinidad and Tobago

“The On-The-Job Training (OJT) Programme, has made a significant impact on the youth population and the development of the labour pool in Trinidad and Tobago in its 20 years of existence”. This according to the Minister of Labour, the Honourable Stephen Mc Clashie M.P. as he delivered the feature address at an Awards Ceremony to mark the 20th Anniversary of the OJT Programme. Under the theme **‘*Impacting Lives, Developing the Next Labour Force*’** the ceremony was held at the CLR James Auditorium, Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operatives Studies (CCLCS), Valsayn on Tuesday May 24, 2022.

The Minister of Labour stated that the 20th Anniversary marks twenty (20) years of Government’s investment and support of youth development, twenty (20) years of building our human resource capacity and twenty (20) years of success in achieving our mandate. He added that the Government has achieved much success in its goal towards enhancing the quality of the local labour pool by introducing the On-The-Job Training Programme; the bridge between the classroom and the World of Work and this is made possible with the continued support of a number of training providers across the public and private sectors over the years.

Minister Mc Clashie said *“it is a known fact that the experience gained via the OJT Programme has allowed several trainees to enter the labour market and make significant contributions to the economic landscape of Trinidad and Tobago. In recognising the positive impact of the OJT, the Programme which first began as a six (6) month internship, has been increased to a period of twenty- four (24) months. In addition, over the years there have been marked increases in the placement categories from three (3) to five (5) levels and now includes graduates who are the holders of Master’s Degrees.”*

In her remarks, Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.), Ms. Kevar Williams also commended the Programme for its continued commitment to youth training and development said: *“the OJT Division, was able to successfully weather the turbulent storm of the COVID-19 Pandemic which affected training sessions, placements of new trainees and training provider registrations by adjusting its orientation and trainee engagement to a virtual platform.”* She added, *“since the inception of the OJT Programme, thousands of trainees benefitted from personal as well as career growth, while hundreds of training providers*



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advanced their organisation's developmental goals through the engagement of trained, qualified and skilled OJTs. It was also proudly noted that at least 50% of the staff of the OJT Division were once OJTs themselves."

Director of the OJT Division, Ms. Joann David, expressed appreciation for the commitment and dedication of the staff at the OJT Division, who, in spite of the challenges, presented great tenacity and resilience during the high point of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Ms. David urged training providers, especially in the private sector, to collaborate with the OJT Division in forging a mutually beneficial partnership that will contribute to the growth and development of young graduates, their organisations and to the national economy.

The Award Ceremony recognised trainees (past and current), training providers (employers) and staff of the On-the-Job Training Programme. Minister in the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, the Honourable Adrian Leonce M.P., former Minister of Labour, Mrs. Jennifer Baptiste-Primus, the Executive Director – ACTT, representatives of NTA., YTEPP, UTT, and several other stakeholders were all in attendance.

This OJT Programme was established in April 2002 and provides young nationals of Trinidad and Tobago with the opportunity to gain practical, work experience through a model of workplace learning facilitated by public and private sector organizations in Trinidad and Tobago.

Twenty (20) (past and current) trainees proudly accepted Keys to Excellence Awards in recognition of their outstanding performance, superior dedication and positive attitude on the job throughout their training. A total of twenty (20) training providers, (employers) who are essential to the success and longevity of the OJT Programme, received awards across four (4) classifications: Organisational Excellence and Impact, Organisational Development, Excellence in Practice and Most Outstanding Training Provider.

The final category honoured twenty (20) staff members of the OJT Division who are the heartbeat of the OJT Programme. The Merit Awards were given to staff members in recognition of their exceptional service while the Long Service Awards were presented to staff in recognition of their dedicated and committed service. Ms. Stacy Sobers received the award as the longest serving staff member attached to the OJT Programme, for sixteen (16) years of service.

The Ministry of Labour is tasked with the responsibility to promote Decent Work and Sustainable Employment in Trinidad and Tobago and implores employers in the private sector to partner with the OJT Programme to provide training and job opportunities to the many eager, intelligent and enthusiastic graduates of Trinidad and Tobago.



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