



**MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SMALL AND
MICRO ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT**

Press Release

**Young minds becoming business wise
Junior Co-operatives formed within 12 Secondary Schools**

Learning how to start a business is an essential process for anyone with plans of becoming an entrepreneur. Venturing into business activity takes not only time and money but requires an understanding of the role of business in society, employing the right business skills and knowledge in order to take risks. Whilst many business owners acquire such knowledge in their adult lives, business operation can be taught to young persons who have dreams of one day becoming artistes, photographers, graphic designers, shopkeepers or any profession that will grant them their economic independence.

Impacting over 10.6 million students in 403,000 classrooms, the Junior Achievers Programme of Trinidad and Tobago has been able to engender an entrepreneurial spirit among the nation's youth through its collaboration with Secondary Schools. This programme acts as a business incubator which exposes students to the essentials of business development through the operation and management of their very own business enterprises conducted at the Junior Achievers institutions throughout Trinidad.

Hence, the Co-operative Development Division of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development partnered with the Junior Achievement Programme of Trinidad and Tobago to introduce the Junior Co-operative Enterprise Programme within twelve Secondary Schools in the eastern and southern districts of Trinidad.

At its launch, on January 15, held at the Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies, over 200 students from the various schools demonstrated their support for this new business initiative, aimed at providing them, our upcoming leaders, with the jumpstart to plan and manage their future.

The programme mainly focuses on the formation of Junior Co-operatives which is intended to inculcate the values, principles and practices of savings and investment amongst students not only through their active involvement in business projects but also through their membership in Credit Unions which will be made available to each Secondary School under this programme.

As a project of the Junior Co-operative, the Junior Co-operative Enterprise Programme will run from January to May and will be managed by twenty (20) fourth form Students. It is envisioned however that the activities of the Junior Co-operative will continue throughout the school year with the election of a new board and Junior Co-operative Enterprise Programme committee the following year.

In essence, the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development marks this entrepreneurial programme as the first of many to be implemented in Secondary Schools throughout Trinidad and in the future, extended to Tobago. It acknowledges that such initiatives will assist in harnessing the innovative spirit and business potential of our nation's youth, grooming them into better decision makers whilst fostering the development of future entrepreneurs.

The twelve schools in which Junior Co-operatives were formed are:

1. Arima Government Secondary School
2. Bon Air High School
3. Coryal Secondary School
4. Guayaguayare Secondary School
5. Iere High School
6. Mayaro Secondary School
7. Rio Claro East Secondary School
8. Shiva Boys College
9. St. Benedicts College
10. St Stephens College
11. Vessigny High School
12. Waterloo High School

Regards

Communications Unit

Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development

Tel: 625-8478 ext 1208, 1212 Fax: 623-1404.