

# Youth Business

Trinidad & Tobago

2018 ANNUAL REPORT





We are <sup>Youth</sup>Business Trinidad & Tobago





Youth Business Trinidad and Tobago (YBTT) is a not-for-profit established to assist the 18-35 demographic to transition their innovative business ideas into sustainable businesses. Using a three-tiered approach including Learning and Development, Mentorship and Funding.

**www.ybtt.org**

# Corporate Information

Auditors:

Baker Tilly Montano Ramcharitar

Bankers:

Scotiabank Trinidad and Tobago Limited

Member of:

Youth Business International (United Kingdom)

Website: [www.ybtt.org](http://www.ybtt.org)

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Youth  
*Business* Trinidad & Tobago



# Perspectives from the YBTT Chair

DALE LAUGHLIN, CHAIR  
YOUTH BUSINESS TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

I am honoured to report to you on YBTT's progress over the period September 2017 to December 2018.

YBTT has become a valued contributor to the development of youth entrepreneurship and to the strengthening of this country's entrepreneurial eco-system. As each year passes, our work becomes more relevant, urgently needed and impactful. Our primary goal in recent years has been to build capacity, retain dedicated professionals as our team members and provide the strategic leadership and operational excellence required to attract and retain long-term partnerships with our donors, mentors and other key stakeholders. We have executed efficiently; delivered the desired impact; and sustained while further evolving. Yet, the more we do, the more the need expands. This is the global reality. YBTT stands ready to take a leadership role nationally and regionally in supporting and strengthening young entrepreneurs (YE's).

We look back with great satisfaction on our achievements in 2018, a year in which we conquered new

horizons and made substantial progress in key strategic areas. Further I will take this opportunity to share our aspirations and a call to action for 2019.

I know that I speak for my colleagues on the Board when I express deep appreciation to Shedron Collins, our General Manager, and each of the other YBTT team members. We acknowledge their engagement, dedicated service, innovation and teamwork over the last year.

As Chair, it is with sincere gratitude, as well, that I salute the members of YBTT's Board of Directors for their steady commitment, wise counsel, deep resolve and generous support.

## Looking Back at 2018

**Strategic Plan 2018-2020:** We refreshed YBTT's Vision and Mission: "*Taking entrepreneurship to the next level*" by "*Empowering young entrepreneurs to build profitable and sustainable businesses.*" Collaboration, Communication, Adaptability, Results-driven and Customer Satisfaction emerged as the Core Values that would guide our

decisions and actions, supporting us in becoming a results-driven, customer-oriented, future-focused organization. In addition, we created four Strategic Themes or areas for priority focus: Improved financial sustainability; Enhanced stakeholder engagement; Continuous improvement and innovation; and Improved employee engagement.

I outline the progress made in each of these areas, highlighting our key operational achievements to December 31st, 2018:

### ***Improved Financial Sustainability:***

The reality is that YBTT must improve its financial sustainability by establishing multiple revenue streams. This means that every year, in addition to securing continuing funds from long-term donors, we must acquire new donors, increase our self-generated funds and unrestricted income, as well as improve the performance of our loan portfolio.



### **Donors:**

In 2018, multi-year projects were funded by Shell Trinidad and Tobago Limited and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) towards the Youth Entrepreneurship Programme within Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, we received financial support from Republic Bank Limited, First Caribbean International Bank, the Massy Foundation, and The Unit Trust Corporation.

We owe a profound debt of gratitude to both our continuing and new donors. Their generosity makes it possible for us to provide quality, relevant and consistent support to YE's in fulfilment both of our Mission and Vision and our role in this country's social and economic development.

### **Unrestricted Funds:**

In the current economic climate, access to unrestricted funds posed a considerable challenge. In 2018, while sixty-five percent of our unrestricted funds were sourced through corporate donations, we saw an increase in revenue from loan repayment and training activities. In 2019, we will build on the groundwork laid during 2018 and accelerate our progress in this area.

### **Loan Portfolio Performance:**

Our loan portfolio performance improved in 2018 due to the repayment in full of seven loans and improved timeliness of collections. We will

continue to maintain a close focus on loan portfolio performance through adequate resource allocation, thorough application analysis and careful loan approval.

### **Overall Financial Performance:**

Our 2018 Audited Financials, reflect an improved Net Surplus due to an increase in revenue generated as well as the debt forgiveness of an Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) loan granted to YBTT in 2007 that was used to create a revolving fund to provide financial support to young entrepreneurs.

In our last financial year, after meetings with the team at IDB, we secured debt forgiveness of this loan, enabling YBTT to continue to use those funds for further developmental efforts and support for YE's. The removal of this long-term debt has significantly strengthened our balance sheet.

### **Enhanced Stakeholder Engagement:**

Enhanced meaningful and mutually beneficial stakeholder relationships is the most critical requirement for

YBTT's success. In addition to strengthening YBTT's brand nationally, we work closely with each stakeholder group – Entrepreneurs, Donors, Mentors, Youth Business International (Y.B.I), and Government/Media/Academia – to secure their trust, stay relevant and connected to their interests and concerns, co-create opportunities and fulfil our commitments.

### **Mentors:**

Our Mentors are a vital component of our beneficiary support programme. The gift of their time, knowledge and experience are an invaluable resource to our YE's. We salute their talent and commitment.





## Perspectives from the YBTT Chair *(Continued)*

### Highlights of our 2018 progress include:

- **Increased digital presence:** We invested in Social Media ads to enhance reach making content creation a joint effort by both staff and the Board. In 2019, we will survey public awareness of stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystem and use this to establish a baseline for measurement of future growth.
- **Accessibility to YE's:** We created a WhatsApp group for quick communication with YE's and conducted focus groups to give them a voice in shaping YBTT's recommendations for the 2019 National Budget.
- **YBI Connection:** We connected with Youth Business International's (YBI) new CEO to welcome her and offer our support for her efforts. In addition, we continue to have quarterly group calls with our Relationship Manager at YBI. We see this as an important initiative towards remaining in alignment with the goals of our international stakeholder, Youth Business International.
- **Involvement at the National Level:** We participated in scoring the National Youth Awards and submitted recommendations on the 2018 - 2019 National Budget to the Minister of Finance.

### Continuous Improvement and Innovation

Enhancing stakeholder engagement and improving financial sustainability are insufficient. We must continuously innovate to improve the impact, relevance and value of our offerings to our YE's and to strengthen our operational processes and procedures.

### We were excited about our progress in 2018:

- **Shell LiveWIRE Project:** YBTT is proud to be the delivery partner for Shell LiveWIRE, an international accelerator programme that provides YE's with the training and customized support they need to scale their businesses and create employment. In our first cohort we focused on eighteen YE's in growth stage start-ups in underdeveloped sectors viz. Recycling and Waste Management; Energy Solutions; and Agriculture and Agro-Processing. The YE's were provided access to investors, export consultation, financial rewards, monthly master classes and peer-to-peer technical advisory groups. It was delightful to support the progress of the YE's and to celebrate with them at their Graduation and Prize-Giving in January 2019. We expect to initiate the second phase of the programme later in the year.
- **Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) 2018:** This year's theme, "Unleashing Excellence Through Competition", attracted 25 partners, 33 events and 2,364 participants in a variety of workshops and activities aligned with the 2018 global themes of Women, Youth Inclusion and Eco-System Connect. Our sponsors for GEW 2018 were Republic Bank Limited, Trinidad and Tobago Unit Trust Corporation, Massy Foundation and TSTT b-mobile.
- **Regional e-Mentoring Platform:** We launched Sky's The Limit, a

collaborative effort with Youth Business Trusts (YBT's) in Barbados and Jamaica as part of the IDB-funded regional Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (YEP). Continuous recruitment, testing and adapting are key to the success of this platform in 2019.

• **Harmonized Regional Curriculum:** A harmonized curriculum was developed under Youth Business Caribbean, synchronizing best practices and learning throughout the region. In November, 11 YE's graduated from our first JumpStart Programme, our Start-Up Training offering. Their business areas include Event Planning, Auto Mechanic Services, Fashion Management, Custom-Made Jewellery, Bee Keeping/Honey Production, and Catering Services.

• **Digital Strategic Plan:** With the support of YBI and Accenture, and also in collaboration with Barbados and Jamaica, we developed a Digital Strategic Plan to increase the efficiency of our eMentoring (Sky's the Limit) and eLearning platforms; our Youth Business Caribbean (YBC) website; distribution of social media responsibility; and streamlining and syncing our Measurement Evaluation And Learning (MEL) Systems.

In 2019, we will add to our continuing initiatives by refocusing on enhancing our connection with and redesigning our offerings to the most vulnerable youth. Further, we will work with our regional YBC partners to conduct YE Follow-up Surveys.

### ***Improved Employee Engagement***

We specify employee engagement separately to emphasize the importance that we place on our employees' well-being, relationships and continuous learning, to our long-term success.

To improve employee engagement, we work in four interrelated areas:

- Enhance staff capacity.
- Improve employee well-being, satisfaction and cohesion.
- Strengthen relationships amongst board members.
- Strengthen relationships between Board and Staff.

### ***I am proud to report on our progress in 2018:***

- We reviewed our Performance Management System to align our review form with the specific requirements of each job and to introduce employee self-assessment of

progress towards agreed performance indicators.

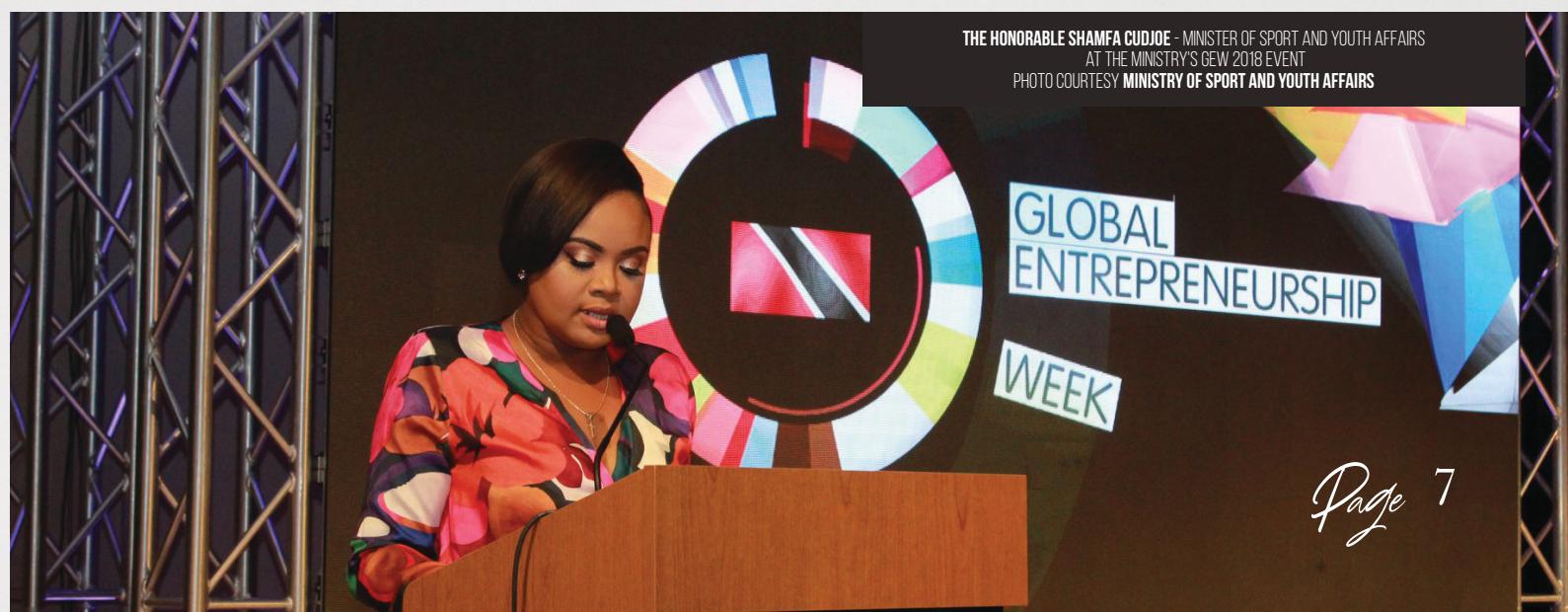
- 100% of staff indicated that they were satisfied with YBTT as an employer.
- 100% of staff indicated that they were satisfied with their relationship with the Board.

### ***Our Mandate Going Forward***

YBTT's mandate, as we move forward, is to stay true to our Mission, Vision and Values as we support, catalyze and empower underserved YE's to succeed. Let our watchwords be Connection, Focus and Agility as we navigate increasingly complex global, regional and local challenges and bring our individual and collective energy and passion to staying relevant to all our stakeholders, co-creating expanded collaborations and partnering to deliver innovative solutions!

As we evolve so will our YE's progress, and, as they do, so will we strengthen and sustain the vital contribution we all make, as partners in the entrepreneurial support ecosystem, to economic diversification and national transformation.

Partner with us! Join YBTT's network of stakeholders as a donor, mentor, advisor, supporter or team member. Together, let us help YE's achieve their entrepreneurial potential!



# *Meet YBTT's Directors*

*YBTT boasts of having a diverse team of professionals at the helm of the organization all possessing unique skill sets required for charting the course for the continuous advancement of youth entrepreneurship in Trinidad and Tobago, and by extension, enhancing the national entrepreneurial eco-system.*

## **Our Directors:**

- |                              |                       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Dale Laughlin (Chair)        | Lara Quentrell-Thomas |
| Colin Hosein (Vice-Chairman) | Marcus Sun Kow        |
| Elaine Greene (Secretary)    | Randall Douglas       |
| Georgina Terry               | Ronald Carter         |
| Gloria Rolington             | Natalie Alcantara     |



# Youth Business Trinidad & Tobago In Action

Over the years, Youth Business Trinidad and Tobago (YBTT) has transitioned into an entity poised to advance the thrust of youth entrepreneurship in Trinidad and Tobago; progress thus far can be described as a work in progress with continuous room for improvement as it relates to the implementation of operational best practices.

Operating with a small and dedicated team coupled with limited financial resources, the organization has served and continues to serve its publics with the highest levels of commitment and professionalism, and has been steadfast in its efforts and journey to strengthen and contribute to the advancement of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Trinidad and Tobago.

Given its uniqueness, YBTT has been identified and branded as the “go-to” organization in Trinidad and Tobago that offers a holistic suite of services aimed at successfully nurturing and growing the young entrepreneurial community particularly those within the 18-35 demographic.

The organization's suite of support services starts with Learning and Development which prepares the mind of the entrepreneur to internalize and grasp new learnings, and to also seize

opportunities. Direct and indirect funding support plays a pivotal role in creating pathways through which young entrepreneurs can access funding aligned to their specific business needs. Volunteer Mentorship Support is also critical towards ensuring that entrepreneurs are effectively guided along their entrepreneurial journey by experienced entrepreneurs and/or experts within various business sectors. Each support service is carefully crafted to ensure smooth navigation by beneficiaries.

Collaborating with stakeholders both within the public and private sector has been extremely rewarding and productive, as we firmly believe that the growth and evolution of Trinidad and Tobago's entrepreneurial ecosystem is only possible through strong partnerships with like-minded individuals and/or organizations. In fact, in addition to being one of our strategic themes, stakeholder engagement has always been at the core of YBTT's success.

Consistently evaluating the success of our programs is high on the agenda, as we're able to not only identify and modify gaps, but to also ensure, that the necessary systems and business models are implemented. YBTT's evaluation mechanisms are pegged to the

international model used by Youth Business International which focuses largely on monitoring each of the businesses supported on an ongoing basis, to assist in determining whether they are succeeding and/or growing, and if not, what additional support and/or intervention is required.

Our evaluation methods include but are not limited to Bi-Annual Surveys, Monitoring and Evaluation Learning Systems for projects, and close interactions with our entrepreneurs, which in most instances, are extended beyond their needs; hence the production of this annual report which is deemed as a portal through which the stories behind not only the success, but also the journey of our entrepreneurs can be shared.

As we dive deeper into 2019, we'd continue to maintain our approach of employing best practices aimed at strengthening our brand as the first point of contact for young entrepreneurs.

**Shedron Collins  
General Manager**



our next steps

# Looking Ahead

PASSION LED US HERE



Entrepreneurial ecosystems globally are affected by multiple challenges and so, the work done by stakeholders in contributing towards the advancement of entrepreneurial development, becomes more multi-faceted in continuously seeking innovative solutions to satisfy the demands of the

young entrepreneurial community.

The velocity of these changes compels organizations such as YBTT, to continuously ensure that the necessary checks and balances are in place, as it seeks to remain relevant in its quest to effectively support the young entrepreneurs. In so doing, a number of initiatives have been undertaken:

**REGIONAL DIGITAL STRATEGY**  
**SKY'S THE LIMIT PLATFORM**  
**JUMPSTART PROGRAMME**  
**SHELL LIVEWIRE**



PHOTO COURTESY ACCENTURE

# Regional Digital Strategy

Optimizing the benefits of digitization was the thinking behind the development of a Digital Strategy for three (3) organizations within Youth Business Caribbean (YBC) – Youth Business Trinidad & Tobago; Barbados Youth Business Trust and Jamaica Youth Business Trust. The strategy focuses on each individual organization's digital roadmap over the next two (2) years, with initiatives that each organization would undertake based on their own needs and goals as well as those specific to their respective entrepreneurial community. This initiative is also aimed at ensuring that young entrepreneurs remain current in a digital environment that is continuously evolving.

YBC'S  
DIGITAL  
VISION IS  
CENTERED  
AROUND THE  
ENTREPRENEURIAL  
EXPERIENCE.

THE MISSION DEMONSTRATES HOW  
DIGITIZATION CAN SUPPORT THIS  
VISION AND ENABLE SUSTAINABILITY AND  
EMPOWERMENT



# Sky's The Limit Platform



Developed by YBUSA, a member of Youth Business International, the Sky's The Limit Platform currently serves close to 10,000 registered entrepreneurs and volunteers. In November 2017, Accenture approved a grant to expand the platform globally to members in the wider YBI network; a few YBI members were identified as potential candidates to pilot the platform internationally, and after some exploratory conversations and internal trials, four (4) members were identified to launch in 2018:

**VIRGIN START UP (UK)**

**FATE FOUNDATION (NIGERIA)**

**TECHNOSERVE (SOUTH AFRICA)**

**YOUTH BUSINESS CARIBBEAN (JAMAICA,  
BARBADOS AND TRINIDAD & TOBAGO)**

## HOW IT ALL WORKS!

JOIN THE  
COMMUNITY!

01

Register and complete  
your Profile (As much  
details as possible)

02

Attend a screening  
interview and online  
orientation training

03

Explore the community  
and await confirmation of  
membership

04

Start messaging to find a  
match and then start  
building your mentor-  
mentee relationship!



## Sharing the STL Experience

In describing her experience as a Volunteer Mentor on the STL Platform, Pearl Yatali Gonzales admits that though the registration process was easy, identifying a mentee through the profile was a bit challenging. She recalls "I was unable to seek out the needs of a mentee as that part was not too clear." In comparing STL to the traditional mode of mentorship Pearl stated "traditional meet-ups possess an element of building trust that might be missing from an STL relationship." She further stated that the STL navigation is not that simple because of the missing personality element. Nevertheless, Pearl considers STL as effective particularly in relation to the matching process which she describes as timely.

According to Pearl, "the STL platform affords mentors/advisors a great level of independence in setting up meetings with mentees more in control with less YBTT supervision." This approach allows for the mentor/mentee responsibility to be effectively transferred. In looking ahead, Pearl recommends that the platform should allow for mentees to have greater control over the management of their developmental needs as opposed to the traditional approach to mentorship where the mentor seems to be wiser. In summary, Pearl believes that the platform allows for equitable engagement for both mentors and mentees.

***"The STL platform provided me with the opportunity to explain myself as I had the freedom to build my profile."***

- **Rebecca Mooliesingh – STL Mentee**

Immediately upon signing on to the STL platform in September 2018, Rebecca described it as user-friendly; in comparing STL benefits to traditional mentorship, she discovered that STL allows for developing the user profile and to also explain what is being sought. According to Rebecca "STL allows for building on the features of the entrepreneurs as opposed to the traditional approach which leaves room for personal judgments." Rebecca affirmed that the Sky's-The-Limit platform is more authentic and objective in terms of the matching process as she was able to fully explain herself in relation to her specific mentorship needs. For Rebecca, receiving feedback through the STL platform was an awesome experience. Rebecca is making an urgent call to other young entrepreneurs to register and experience a unique approach to mentorship which not only negates the need for a physical mentor-mentee engagement, but is also cost and time saving.

*"One of the greatest benefits offered by STL is the ability to create regional integration of volunteer mentors and mentees; currently, a match has developed with a Volunteer Mentor from Trinidad and Tobago and a Mentee from Barbados, and based on feedback, more inter-regional pairings are expected."*

*Byron Bharat – Mentorship Co-ordinator, YBTT*





## JUMPSTART Your Business

*"In developing the JumpStart training, we recognized the importance of focusing on the entrepreneur and aiding in their entrepreneurial journey. As such, we have developed a curriculum that is delivered by passionate trainers and advisors, equipping you to grow and develop your business."*

*Jonathan Khan – Training Support Officer, YBTT*

### **Effectuation**

With effectuation, entrepreneurs are allowed to understand themselves and the network that is available to support them in developing business ideas.

### **Design Thinking**

This principle allowed participants to develop their product/service with the end user in mind. They were also exposed to a practical field test where they engaged with a wide range of stakeholders to solicit feedback that informed the approach for moving forward with their business idea.

### **Business Model Canvas**

Participants utilized nine (9) building blocks of the business canvas which helped to link previous theories and interactions with customers to develop their canvas and map out business processes and structure. Advisory support from mentors were also provided to act as a scrutiny board for ideas and developing reality check points.

JumpStart was birthed following individual Pajé workshops conducted on three (3) member countries within Youth Business Caribbean – Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados and Jamaica. Through on-going communication, it was discovered that there were a number of synergies emanating from this workshop which further resulted in the hosting of a regional Pajé workshop in Jamaica in November 2017. (Pajé is the community's spiritual leader, taking on the role of a guide or guru to help community members overcome their obstacles and confront their challenges). The core of JumpStart comprises Effectuation, Design Thinking and the Business Model Canvas.

## *Sharing the JumpStart Success*

The first cohort produced **eleven (11) young graduates** operating within a diverse range of businesses including Event Planning, Auto Mechanic Services, Fashion Management, Custom-Made Jewellery, Bee Keeping and Honey Production and Catering Services. YBTT remains committed to working with all the graduates to ensure that their entrepreneurial journey is successful.



ANTONYA GULSTON, JUMPSTART GRADUATE

*“I gained lots of confidence and sharing a space with like-minded entrepreneurs also enhanced my networking capabilities. JumpStart is a life-changing program with positive trickle-down effects for young entrepreneurs.”*

*Antonya Gulston – Hospitality & Culinary Expert, JumpStart graduate*

Antonya Gulston always had a passion and thirst to contribute to the hospitality industry; she was officially trained at the Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute. She describes her stint at the TTHTI as extremely rewarding as she was able to establish connections with business partners who are able to assist in her navigation as a young entrepreneur. Trading as Johanna's Hospitality and Event Planning Services, Antonya provides an array of services ranging from catering and event coordination to the provision of service ambassadors as well as online and offline menu consultations.

Describing her pre-JumpStart experience, *“I was all over the place with different ideas circling in my head and no clear focus; wanting to do a lot but fearful and nervous. Thankfully my fears dissipated with the fantastic learnings offered by the JumpStart program. I gained lots of confidence and sharing a space with like-minded entrepreneurs also enhanced my networking capabilities. JumpStart is a life-changing program with positive trickle-down effects for young entrepreneurs.”* Antonya boasts of operating a full-time business which started as a hobby three (3) years ago supported by a business partner and continuously growing. Antonya's entrepreneurial prowess sees her diversifying her business within the next two (2) years.





STEPHEN ANAN, JUMPSTART GRADUATE ATTENDING TO A CUSTOMER

***“The learnings offered by JumpStart made me think harder and become more progressive in the way I transact business; I feel more assured of myself and would recommend this program to all young entrepreneurs.”***

*Stephen Anan – Owner, Nutech Electronics; Jumpstart graduate*

Trading as Nutech Electronics established just over eighteen (18) months, Stephen Anan describes his motivations as being self-sufficient and driven by independence. He admits that before he was introduced to the JumpStart program his brain was scattered, ***“I was guessing and had no proper record-keeping arrangements in place; I was not focused and involved in too many unnecessary things that did not help my business.”*** Graduating from the JumpStart program saw major improvements to his business including proper market testing, research, proper record-keeping and registration of the business.

Feedback from customers have also been positive. He asserted, ***“the learnings offered by JumpStart, made me think harder and become more progressive in the way I transact business; I feel more assured of myself and would recommend this program to all young entrepreneurs. What is offered in the program would help participants become more confident and empowered to navigate their entrepreneurial journey successfully.”*** As Stephen’s entrepreneurial prowess continues to evolve, he is working on increasing sales, customer base as well as create employment.



## Fusion of Entrepreneurship & Relationship

What started as a hobby six (6) months ago for Rianna De Castro has now grown into a full-time business. “**Spinkles and Dough**” offers a wide variety of vegan specialties from sweet to savoury! Rianna’s motivations emerged from her mother, a baker for many years – who once operated a family bakery. “**For many years, I worked in the marketing field but left my job to assist my husband in managing his business.**” Rianna was also a science student who did not have a business background, but through observation of Jonathan’s business, she learnt some skills. Her biggest takeaways from the JumpStart program was the internal and external activities which provided opportunities for continuous networking and engagement among the participants.

Supporting the goals of each other’s business is at the helm of their entrepreneurial aspirations. As Rianna puts it “**Without Jonathan I cannot survive as I depend on his support heavily; because of his flexibility, he can assist with deliveries and the same obtains when he is busy with repairs, I assist with the purchase of automotive parts and also work late nights.**” For this young couple, the key to success is flexibility and understanding! Looking ahead within the next two (2) years, this dynamic duo’s eyes are set on establishing a family bakery and an auto clinic.

Jonathan described himself as a science student who had very little knowledge about business. However, after completing the program, Jonathan boasts of reaching higher levels of business growth. “**JumpStart helped tremendously in improving my record-keeping skills which were poor. I also learnt new marketing strategies that can enhance the brand of my business.**” He also introduced new customer service strategies which saw a leap in his customer base. “**I am convinced that my business is now heading in the right direction ...thanks to Jumpstart.**”

It is a common view that strong family relationships strengthen businesses thereby creating greater value and sustainability. Since its existence, YBTT has been part of this type of experience... most recent is husband and wife team **Jonathan Joseph** and **Rianna De Castro** both of whom are graduates of the 2018 JumpStart Programme who have been able to successfully blend the synergies of both businesses for the greater good of their relationship.



JONATHAN JOSEPH AND RIANNA DE CASTRO, JUMPSTART GRADUATES

**“Without Jonathan I cannot survive as I depend on his support heavily; because of his flexibility, he can assist with deliveries and the same obtains when he is busy with repairs, I assist with the purchase of automotive parts and also work late nights.”** - Jonathan Joseph & Rianna De Castro (Husband & Wife)

This husband and wife team is determined to not only build successful businesses but also a strong legacy that transcends across the entrepreneurial landscape. Trading as “**Auto Legion**” for the past eight (8) years, Jonathan admitted, “**My Dad was a mechanic and this is where my love for the automotive field started which has me highly motivated.**”

# Shell LiveWIRE

## An Entrepreneurial Gem

Shell LiveWIRE is a Royal Dutch Shell Social Investment Programme which enables young people to start their own business and create employment. Originally launched in 1982 in Scotland, the programme has since benefited 9.2 million young entrepreneurs in the last 35 years. Shell LiveWIRE programmes are currently operating in 15 countries including Oman, Brazil, Nigeria, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. The programme provides budding young entrepreneurs with access to the essential business knowledge and customized support they need to transform their enterprising ideas into viable and sustainable businesses. Youth Business Trinidad and Tobago (YBTT) is the delivery partner for the programme in Trinidad and Tobago.



In partnership with



*"Each entrepreneur participating in the Shell LiveWIRE programme has garnered a different experience. For some, it has catalyzed their ability to better structure and formalize their business through learning about business and financial planning.*

*For others, it has allowed them to expand their vision towards exporting or receiving the guidance and support of an investor. For others still, the programme has allowed for a complete pivoting of their business towards a fresh, new outlook and redefined self-leadership. For those entrepreneurs with strong businesses, the lessons learnt through the programme have shown them how to expand upon an already existing solid foundation and how to utilize the networking opportunities and connections made, to accelerate their business."*

Danielle Morong – Project Co-ordinator, Impact, YBTT



# *What's Involved*

Shell LiveWIRE is an accelerator programme that supports growth stage start-ups in under-developed sectors; the sectors identified are Recycling and Waste Management; Energy Solutions and Agriculture and Agro-Processing with special emphasis on the role which digital solutions play in enhancing the performance delivery of these sectors. Over a seven-month period, entrepreneurs received training and were also supported to grow their businesses through access to investors, export consultation, financial rewards, monthly master classes and peer-to-peer technical advisory groups (sector circles). Upon completion of the programme, entrepreneurs can access cohort networking opportunities.

## Programme Insights

Emanating from a short-listing process, eighteen (18) entrepreneurs were selected as Cohort 1 of the Shell LiveWIRE National Programme; they represented four (4) main industries – **Agro Food Processing** (production of dark chocolates, processing of frozen tubers – cassava and sweet potato, creation of smoothie cubes, processed cocoa and sun-dried products, honey and honey-based products, Greek yogurt, natural herbal teas and natural soaps and body products); **Agri Business** which includes crop production of hydroponically grown lettuce, peppers and rabbits and farm-to-table delivery of produce; **Energy Solutions** in smart technologies, alternative energy solutions for homes and businesses, and artificial hydropower plant production and **Recycling and Waste Management** through the creation of upcycled vinyl record clocks and education-centered environmental composting services and products.

Selected LiveWIREs were exposed to a myriad of entrepreneurial components of the programme aimed at infusing greater levels of business sustainability and

opportunities along Shell's value chain. Participants were introduced to key focus areas of the programme through a series of workshops and master classes facilitated by renowned experts; they were also exposed to technical focus segments, which allowed them to identify and build upon important business principles such as Business Planning, Market Research, Supply Chain Entry and Investor Readiness, Financing the Business and Financial Forecasting. They were challenged to analyze their current leadership skills and best practices in which small businesses can develop and manage their team as they continue to grow successfully. A Demo and Pitch Day also formed part of the LiveWIRE experience with participants being provided with an exhibition booth to display their products and services, as well as an opportunity to pitch their businesses to a panel of judges. The first cohort of the Shell LiveWIRE National Programme graduated at the end of January 2019, in a ceremony that offered additional incentives of three (3) Spark Prizes.



## *Additional Resources*

At the core of the Shell LiveWIRE programme, is the creation of an entrepreneurial community immersed in versatility and complemented by high levels of business acumen; it is with this in mind that participants were challenged to develop an innovative marketing plan through the launch of the “**Innovation in Marketing Competition**” in December 2018. Incorporating both an online and physical marketing campaigns, marketing plans were based on an indepth analysis of customer segmentation, target profiles, content strategy, and measure of success. Another major benefit of the programme, was **Access To Funding Support (Investor Readiness and Loan Financing)** also launched in December 2018, introduced all Shell LiveWIRE participants to local angel investors that provided opportunities for investment and mentorship.

*Stacy Seeteram - Caribbean Cure Limited*

### **Winner of the Grand Pitch Prize**

*“I am extremely honoured and humbled to have come out as the grand prize winner of the programme and feel like the takeaways have been immense personally, and for our company.”*



*Shenelle Hills-Fife - De Jeunesse Bath & Body Products Limited*

### **Winner of the Class Vote Prize**

*“Winning class vote was very surprising! I honestly had no idea or even thought that I might have won so I was very happy to know that I had the class’ support. It really means a lot to me because I had really wanted to get some equipment for my business to help my quality increase even more and because of the prize I am now able to do that.”*



## *Snippets of LiveWIRE Success*

The LiveWIRE participants all expressed their satisfaction with the program through different types of testimonies:

Satira Bajnath - Indigenous Flavours Limited

### ***Finalist in innovation in marketing competition***

*"I'm hoping to build brand awareness and increase in sales which is always a positive. And I am also expecting to have an increased knowledge base of social media marketing as I have never fully implemented any social media marketing plan for a consistent period."*



Joel Stapleton - Smartwave Caribbean Limited

### ***Beneficiary of one-on-one export consultancy***

*"It's been very fruitful. For us the advice is very applicable and fits within our present mandate. Very well worth it; it's also very encouraging for us as there is someone close to guide us when we begin exporting soon."*



## **Highlighting Success**

Twenty-two year old LiveWIRE Graduate Simon Neptune is determined to bask in the sunshine of his entrepreneurial prowess. It all began in 2013 during his stint as an Engineering student at the University of Trinidad and Tobago - "I have always wanted to create technology that is different; I became captivated in one of my Physics classes when I had to complete a project involving hydro power and what happened next is history." Winning the i2i competition in 2015 peaked Simon's motivation as his network increased immediately and his business was born. He is a strong proponent of personal development which he also believes would be a huge asset to his success as an entrepreneur at that point.

Simon's experience in the LiveWIRE programme proved to be one of his biggest life-changing moments! A beaming Simon admitted "when the program was advertised, I didn't apply as I thought I would not be a good fit; however, I was encouraged by Entrepreneurial Consultant, Inshan Meahjohn to apply and what happened next was just an amazing experience!" Simon boasts that the learnings and insights gained from the program improved his communication with his customers as well as provided greater knowledge in understanding the difference between technology and products. Understanding the value of networking was another major takeaway for Simon.



***"When the program was advertised, I didn't apply as I thought I would not be a good fit; what happened next was an amazing experience."*** - Simon Neptune –

*Neptune's Blue Energy*

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Having a creative flair coupled with a passion for event management was always at the top of Natthoya's entrepreneurial agenda. As she puts it "my entrepreneurial journey began in 2016 with the establishment of my company, '**For The Record**' – a company that focuses on recycling records." The business started off as a creative idea that promotes the preservation of the sentimental value of records as opposed to discarding and burning, which contributes to environmental pollution and improper waste pollution. '**For The Record**' also provides a unique opportunity for persons to enjoy that binal era.

Shell LiveWIRE proved to be an interesting and timely intervention – According to Natthoya "From the moment the program was advertised, I saw an opportunity to grow my business and to learn more about the world of business as well as connect with like-minded entrepreneurs." She admits that the program affords varying perspectives that improved her navigation along the entrepreneurial ecosystem. "My biggest takeaways were the marketing, and access to capital and investment components which provided me with important lessons on preparing and understanding what attracts investors."



***"My biggest takeaways were the marketing, and the access to capital and investment components which provided me with important lessons on preparing and understanding what attracts investors."*** - Natthoya Baptiste – For The Record Limited

# Reminiscing on Global Entrepreneurship Week 2018

Global Entrepreneurship Week is an entrepreneurial staple that the world looks forward to every November. The GEW brand, positioned as the world's largest celebration of innovators and job creators who launch start-ups, bring ideas to life and drive economic growth, continues to evolve into a larger entrepreneurial template that is strongly aligned to YBTT's vision - "**Taking Entrepreneurship to the Next Level.**" Proudly holding the reigns as GEW Local Host for Trinidad and Tobago for the past eight (8) years, YBTT continues to enjoy success at galvanizing a wide cross-section of stakeholders comprising mainly entrepreneurs to host events as part of the annual GEW commemoration.

Themed "Unleashing Excellence Through Competition", the Trinidad and Tobago commemoration of GEW 2018 produced a total of **25 partners, 33 events and 2,364 participants**. All events were hosted around the global themes of **Women, Youth, Inclusion and Eco-System Connect** by committed stakeholders who held hands with YBTT; they included AMCHAM, Pump International, Power 102FM, NineBreaker Limited, The DocuCentre Limited, Intellectual Property Office, Carific Coaching & Consulting Limited, CHOICE HR Limited, National Secondary Schools' Entrepreneurship Competition (NSSEC), Monivan Digital Marketing Solutions, T&T Chamber of Industry and Commerce, COSTAATT, CARIRI, Share Home Caribbean/Department of Management Studies/UWI/Institute of Service and Quality Management, Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, We Say Y.E.S. Organization, Cash Flow

Club, Our Moving Table, The League of ExtraOrdinary Entrepreneurs, Sharisse Hosein, Shell LiveWIRE Programme, Bead Café and the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT).

Youths also formed a major part of last year's celebration with their participation in the "**Youth Empowerment Through Entrepreneurship Competition**" which resulted in eight (8) submissions ranging from the development of a **Bio-Gradable Waste Management System** to an On-Line Tutoring Service. Copping the first prize was 14-year old Shivani Rampersad of ASJA Girls' College, Barrackpore, whose idea of a **Pets' Emergency Health Service** was creatively designed to fill a gap that has been overlooked for many years. **Ezbreezy** – an app invented by **11-year old** Zarya Raisa Dwarkah of Naparima Girls' High School caught the judges nod to capture the 2nd

prize; this app consists of a database of parent aides equipped to assist parents in getting their tasks completed quickly. **13-year old** S. Muzayyah Hosein of ASJA Boys' College, eased his way into 3rd place with his **EduShareTT App** which allows students and teachers to share notes amongst each other.

Competition sponsors were **Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business** who awarded the 1st prize winner with **100% full scholarship** into the Entrepreneurship Programme (Summer 2019); **TSTT bmobile** offered \$3,500 (1st prize); \$2,500 (2nd prize) and \$2,000 (3rd prize). **Les Bourgeois Gourmet Services Limited** provided **FREE** catering services for the prize-giving function.



## "Unleashing Excellence Through Competition"



PHOTO FROM GEW YOUTH AWARDS



# Global Entrepreneurship Week

## Trinidad & Tobago



**"Entrepreneurship thrives best in an environment and/or within a platform that provides a sense of freedom that allows entrepreneurs and like-minded stakeholders to demonstrate the highest levels of innovation and creativity. Global Entrepreneurship Week has proven to that ideal."**

Sandrine Rattan – Project Co-ordinator, Stakeholder Relations & Communications, YBTT





Republic Bank



GEW 2018  
Sponsors -  
**Thank You!**

Commemorating Global Entrepreneurship Week can never be successful without the kind support of corporate Trinidad and Tobago. Over the years, YBTT has been fortunate to receive sponsorship from organizations committed to both youth development as well as contributing towards the advancement of the entrepreneurial landscape using GEW as their template, and so, the Board, Management and Staff extend heartfelt thanks and appreciation to **Republic Bank Limited, Trinidad and Tobago**, **Unit Trust Corporation, Massy Foundation** and **TSTT bmobile**.



# Showcasing YBTT Donors

Achieving the mission and vision of YBTT can't be successful in unison as a myriad of resources must be pooled together to ensure that the organization's beneficiaries – **young entrepreneurs (18-35)** are developed and nurtured in an environment that allows them to both establish and expand their business enterprises sustainably. Through their corporate social responsibility which is embedded within a mandate that supports the cause of youth development at multiple levels, organizations have held hands with YBTT throughout its existence to ensure its success.

These include **Shell Trinidad and Tobago**, **Caribbean Development Bank**, **Tropical Shipping Limited**, **Docucentre Limited**, **Republic Bank Limited**, **Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business**, **Trinidad and Tobago Unit Trust Corporation**, **Chaguanas Pharmacy**, **Massy Foundation**, **United Way**, **TSTT bmobile**, **National Enterprises Limited** and **First Caribbean National Bank**. In-kind sponsorship also played a pivotal role in the organization's development...included here are **Agricultural Development Bank**, **YTEPP**, **Chaguanas Borough Corporation**, **Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce**, **Port-of-Spain City Corporation**, **San Fernando City Corporation** and **Les Gourmet Catering Services**.



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