

Rosita Snagg reflects on CYP diploma

Growing up in the rural community of Stubbs in St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) in the early seventies was a tremendous challenge. It was an era packed with youth bubbling over with enthusiasm to do youth work and to develop a sense of belonging to a group. It was the period when volunteerism was at its best and youth organizations flourished.

I was no different from the other youth in my community and as a teacher; it was easy to become a member of an organization/club. I served in several capacities in both secular and faith (church) based groups. However, the need for formal training in youth development was constantly on my agenda. I made use of whatever opportunities (mostly local and offered by the National Youth Council) were available. It was my involvement in youth groups and the knowledge that I had gathered and used as a resource person that led me to become involved in the work of the Commonwealth Youth Programme Caribbean Centre. I attended several local and regional training workshops offered by the institution. I later completed the certificate course in Youth Work. However, my thirst for knowledge was never quenched and so when the opportunity for doing the Diploma Course in Youth Work arose in the early 80's, I grabbed it with outstretched



hands. Not realizing at that time that participating in the Diploma Course would become one of the better decisions I made career-wise.

My teaching career expanded because I was able to work with the student nurses at the School of Nursing, the police recruits in training, in addition to establishing a counseling programme at my school and coordinating the delivery of the CYP Certificate course and the Pan Commonwealth Diploma in Youth Development Work to subsequent batches of students.

The Diploma course along with my qualifications on teaching gave me full exemption from a Bachelor's degree in International Community Economic Development (ICED) at the University of Southern New Hampshire, USA. I therefore pursued studies in the Master's Programme.

Upon completing the Master's programme I continued my stint as the Local Coordinator of the Diploma Course in Youth Development Work. My career opportunities soared; besides heading the Department of Youth Affairs, I served as the Director of Social Development for seven (7) years before assuming the post of Acting Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Mobilization, Social Development and Local Government.

Diploma in Youth in Development Work Reflections from the Caribbean



CYP/UWI diploma very useful

by Carol Alma Bodden
Honours graduate



"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2: 15 (KJV)
My diploma experience has made this Scripture come alive in me and I have found it of great value both in my personal life and my work with young people. No longer is it business as usual for me; as this learning will be demonstrated in my work. The experience has also taught me that what good work God (Our heavenly Father) has begun in our lives, He will see it to completion.

At the beginning of the course I thought I would never see the end as there was so many obstacles in my way. Almost losing my father who is diagnosed with cancer, to the visit of hurricane Ivan in which my parents lost their house, my

husband having to face court charges for a dispute with a young man and the departure of our Country Co-ordinator (Ms. Dorian Lennon) our pillar of strength who was always there encouraging us to press on. The thought of being left alone was difficult to handle Thanks be to God I stuck in there and so I can say that I can do all things through Christ who gives us the strength. Although Miss Lennon returned to Jamaica, she continued to offer support via telephone and the Internet.

This Diploma is very useful to anyone in any setting working with young people as it brings meaning to your work. I can and will recommend it to all youth workers. You begin to see what you are really supposed to be doing for young people in this age of development. I also believe anyone working with young people should grasp the opportunity to better equip themselves through courses such as this as our young people today are being exposed to more issues than we had to go through. As facilitators we need to be equipped to help them or they will lose their great potential and society will have more problems to handle.

The problems I faced were in researching information in my country. It was like pulling teeth, not many people in the respective positions wanted to share with you. Another

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problem was at the beginning of the course, trying to come to grips with writing a Learning Journal and being told that we had to do all activities.

However I soon got the hang of it and the activities, the minimum of which was done, were of great value as they helped to reinforce what we had learnt.

Director of Social Services reflects on Standards Workshop

by Earle Fulforde



may say so." He stated that the CYP had a very strong presence in the Turks and Caicos Islands when programs were jointly run which included, the Duke of Edinburgh program and many others. He went on to say that the standardization of youth work throughout the region is the right approach that the Commonwealth head office is taking, especially at a time when Regional Integration is at the forefront and fresh in our minds. He noted that the problems faced by young people today may be at a higher degree in neighboring islands but they are similar. It is therefore a must that we adopt similar solutions and practices because even though we are separated by water, we are joined together by our culture and practices. "I find the standards and competencies very comprehensive and a handy tool that can be referred to when the need arises."

In closing Mr. Fulford applauded the work of the CYP and said the following: "The CYP has played a pivotal role in developing youth work throughout the Caribbean. There are a number of past diplomats (graduands of the CYP diploma in youth work course) of CYP's residential programs in many Caribbean Islands including the Turks and Caicos Islands, I urge you to seek them out and continue using them for the benefit of young people. I would also like to commend CYP for continuous involvement in these islands even when Governments did not take it on seriously. I wish to thank past Directors of Youth for their vision that has paved the way for our successors.

Mr. Earle Fulford, Deputy Director of Social Services was a participant as well as one of the core group leaders. Mr. Fulford has been involved in youth work since 1978 up to the present day. He first got his start in youth work while working with the Youth Department which was apart of the then Social Welfare department. Mr. Fulford was the first Turks and Caicos Islander to study and pass the one year Youth in Community Development Diploma course given by the Commonwealth Youth Program.

When asked how he found the workshop, Mr. Fulford stated that it was very informative and educational. He said that it made him reflect on days when he was directly involved in CYP programs. "The workshop was timely, and a little overdue if I

A challenging and rewarding journey

By Sandra Phillip Hodge - BVI



Getting Started

When I heard about the Commonwealth Youth Programme's Diploma Course in Youth Work two years ago, the programme was already in progress and I had to move

fast to enroll and catch up with the studies. I must acknowledge the encouragement and assistance I got from the Country Coordinator for the BVI students, Ms. Arlene Smith who assured me it was not too late to join the programme, and remained consistently supportive throughout the duration of the programme.

The Deal

At first I was very excited to get started and get on with the programme. The module subjects were all interesting and my mind was ready to take it all in. I must admit that I have an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. I like to learn new things. I do believe in life enrichment activities that stimulate the mind and broaden one's perspectives on issues that are of human interest and in this case, national concern. Being able to practice reflective thinking through the Learning Journals as part of the course work served to connect the experiences of working

with young people over the years in various capacities, the issues that society agonize about, the concerns of young people themselves, and the way that governments and other authoritative bodies approach these issues.

The wide scope of the study areas, taking material from all over the Commonwealth world, and the fact that all participating Caribbean countries could interact through the UWIDITE system contributed to the fun element of the learning experience. The structure of the tutoring sessions being flexible to accommodate working students, the project assignments that involved teamwork, the multiple choice exam papers all made the overall experience not so daunting for us as mature adults who had been out of school for so long. Had it not been for the support and conscientious facilitating of the University of the West Indies and the Commonwealth Youth Programme officials taking this into consideration, the experience could have been less rewarding.

The Challenges

For me, this was a real test of fortitude, not because of the work itself, but because of the other competing factors in my domestic and working life during the second half of the course, particularly. At one point I was so far behind that I didn't think I could get it all in before the final grading. But as I mentioned at the beginning, the Country Coordinator really pushed for us, to get extensions of deadlines and we couldn't ask for more support than that. I appreciate every opportunity that was extended to me to complete this training and set the exams accordingly.