

VARQA FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

Inspiring agents of change

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A Message from THE BOARD OF VARQA FOUNDATION

Dear Friends,

We are delighted to share with you this Newsletter. Recent events throughout the world have illustrated the uncertainties of these times. We see how people are losing faith in financial institutions that appeared to offer security. Many people are going through very difficult times and see an uncertain future for themselves. This makes the work of the Youth Can Move the World programme all the more important as we work together to give young people a sense of direction and the realisation that the future is in their hands. This newsletter includes some uplifting stories of the work young people are doing on this programme throughout the country. We eagerly look forward to continue working with you over the coming months.

Warmest greetings,
Brian O'Toole
Varqa Foundation

O Lord! Strengthen these fragile seedlings that each one may become a fruitful tree, verdant and flourishing. Render these souls victorious through the potency of Thy celestial hosts, that they may be able to crush the forces of error and ignorance and to unfurl the standard of fellowship and guidance amidst the people; that they may, even as the reviving breaths of the spring, refresh and quicken the trees of human souls and like unto vernal showers make the meads of that region green and fertile.

—Abdu'l-Bahá

MEDIA WORKSHOPS

Varqa Foundation in collaboration with Youth Media Guyana, executed two workshops in Video Production; one in Berbice and the other in Essequibo. These workshops were aimed at training participants to make simple one minute videos, to express their feelings about social issues that affect them. All together 40 participants attended. They examined how issues such as racism, drug abuse, courtesy, love, respect and protection of the environment could be expressed in video format.



Children's Class in New Amsterdam



Youth training in Industry



Children's Class from Industry performing at children's conference in Georgetown



Children's Class in Essequibo

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

Corriverton

Feedback from the Corriverton YCMTW coordinator, Anis Ade-Thomas:

"Youth Can Move the World, is there any other programme where youth can feel appreciated for what they do?"

When this programme was introduced to the youth in Corriverton, we couldn't have wanted better. Like I said before in the first regional training, "It's our home away from home," and "It's our Second home." Youth in Corriverton, are participating in activities such as children's classes, junior youth groups and study circles. The 'SEARS' Youth Group believes that this is a programme all youth should participate in."

Every Sunday the youth in Corriverton would meet at Keith's bottom house to study together and to see how to be of service to the community.

The youth (Anis, Keith, Cindy, Shalina, Andy and Keifer) are currently walking the path of service.

Georgetown

The Form Three students of School of the Nations, Georgetown are facilitating the junior youth programme in school and the second week of January, 09 they organized service projects. Some cleaned the canteen area, while some maintained cleanliness in the classroom. Others assisted the Prep A students to read and read stories to the students in the Special Unit.

The students proudly reported these acts of service and shared the joy it brought them; they look forward to more opportunities to be able to serve as a group.

West Coast Demerara

Melissa Singh, a Youth Can Move the World animator, who resides in Cornelia Ida village, decided that she needed to do something for her community. She went house to house inviting youth in her community to her home to start a youth group. On Sunday the 15th February, 09 seven youth showed up at her house. They studied issues from the YCMTW manual and engaged in artistic activities. On the 1st March, 09 three new youth came, and after an intense discussion on drugs and alcohol abuse the youth made an anti-smoking poster. One of the girls, whose mom smokes, decided to take it home and put it in her house.

New Amsterdam

The Angoy's Avenue area, in Stanleytown, Berbice comes alive every Saturday morning with laughter and joy and happiness when Asha, Bibi, Alisha, Abbas, Vicky, Pride and Misha gather 25+ gems from that area and hold a regular children's class. In these classes they teach them quotations from the Holy Writings, sing songs, play games, colour pictures relating to the quotations and read them stories.

This class started off with only one teacher, but because of the joy the children leave with, four youth from that community volunteered to help with it and two youth from another community also travel there and offer their service.

JUNIOR YOUTH PROGRAMME

"Among the young ones in the community are those known as junior youth, who fall between the ages of, say, 12 and 15. They represent a special group with special needs as they are somewhat in between childhood and youth when many changes are occurring within them. Creative attention must be devoted to involving them in programmes of activity that will engage their interests, mold their capacities for teaching and service, and involve them in social interaction with older youth. The employment of the arts in various forms can be of great value in such activity"

There are currently 22 junior youth groups with 480 participants. These groups are animated by 11 trained junior youth animators, if you would like to be of service and assist with these activities or start your own group, please contact Rosheni on 649-1499.

GRADUATION!

We will be having our annual graduation ceremony in August, 09. Persons who have attended nine training sessions and have completed the first book in the Ruhi institute will receive a certificate. Persons who have completed the 5th book in the sequence will graduate as a Junior Youth Animator, while persons who have completed the entire sequence will graduate as a Varqa Animator and would be asked by Varqa Foundation to attend future training sessions to serve as a facilitator or tutor, but with all of the above requirements the service component must be present, it is the most important part of this programme.

This is very exciting news because everyone has the opportunity to receive a token or certificate in appreciation for the efforts made to voluntarily serve mankind. Your achievements and hard work are invaluable and we urge you to attend the intensive trainings, so you can be trained and please make an effort to participate in the activities in your communities. If you need help contact your regional coordinator or you can call Rosheni on 649-1499

SERVICE OPPORTUNITY IN BERBICE

There are 8 junior youth participating in the children's class held in Angoy's Avenue. Those junior youth should have been in a junior youth group but there's no available trained animator. If you would like to offer your service in that area please contact Pride Ade-Thomas or Misha at 333-3085.



Junior Youth Group from Sophia



Junior Youth from Diamond, E.B.D.



Junior Youth Group in Corriverton



Children's Class in New Amsterdam

CONTACT INFORMATION

REGIONAL COORDINATORS

Essequibo Coast: Abeka Dupan, 627 - 8007

West Coast and West Bank Demerara: Gordon Roberts, 670 - 4444

Georgetown and East Bank Demerara: Anil Singh, 673 - 3605

East Coast Demerara: Shelline Misir, 645 - 9669

East Berbice: Pride Ade-Thomas, 694 - 6858

Corriverton, Upper Berbice: Anis Ade-Thomas, 689 - 5533

NATIONAL COORDINATORS

Lomeharshan Lall, 644 -1772

Rosheni Takechandra, 649 -1499

UPCOMING DATES

COMING UP IN MARCH

Berbice:

14th March at School of the Nations, Stanleytown

Essequibo:

14th March, 2009 at School of the Nations, Mainstay

Demerara:

22nd March at Georgetown Baha'i Center, Garnette St.

INTENSIVE TRAININGS IN APRIL

Essequibo:

14th – 18th April at School of the Nations, Mainstay

Demerara:

14th – 18th April at Georgetown Baha'i Center, Garnette St.

Berbice:

4th – 9th April at School of the Nations, Stanleytown

Training session begins at 9am sharp!

See you there!

FUNDED BY

Unity Foundation
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the Government of
Luxembourg



YCMTW Animators at a conference in
Georgetown



YCMTW participants from Berbice and
Essequibo



Georgetown Conference



Georgetown Conference



Working with children in Cumming's Lodge