

VARQA FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

Inspiring agents of change

www.varqafoundation.org

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A Message from THE BOARD OF VARQA FOUNDATION

Dear Friends,

This Newsletter shares with you exciting news of developments in the Rupununi and the recent training that was undertaken in that region. The Newsletter also shares news of intensive Youth Can Move the World trainings throughout July and August. These trainings will provide a great opportunity to put our ideals into practice and develop Junior Youth groups in a number of communities in Guyana. The Newsletter also says adieu to Misha as he returns to his native Canada to continue his studies. But we also say a very warm welcome to David Welanko a Peace Corps volunteer who will be with us for two years.

We look forward to working with you over the summer.

Warmest greetings,
Varqa Foundation

O MY SERVANT!

Thou art even as a finely tempered sword concealed in the darkness of its sheath and its value hidden from the artificer's knowledge. Wherefore come forth from the sheath of self and desire that thy worth may be made resplendent and manifest unto all the world.

- Baha'u'llah

YOUTH YEAR OF SERVICE

The members of Varqa Foundation would like to express their gratitude to Misha Shodjaee, who served as a teacher at the School of the Nations, Berbice, but at every available moment and school break, assisted with the Varqa projects, especially the Youth Can Move the World programme. His input and dedication contributed greatly to the success of trainings and activities not only in New Amsterdam but in almost every region in which he has travelled and offered service

Varqa Foundation would like to extend a warm welcome to David Welanko, a Peace Corps Volunteer, who is currently serving on the Essequibo Coast. He will be there until May, 2011. If Youth Can Move the World participants and Animators need help in any way, they can contact him through the Regional Coordinator, Abeika Dupan. David, we look forward to your dedicated service for the next two years.

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

Corriverton

The participants in Corriverton continue to meet each Sunday afternoon. Each session includes: YCMTW training for themselves, Children's Classes and a junior youth group. The sessions conclude with reflection and planning for the following week. They have also extended their work into Tagore Memorial School, where they now have a junior youth programme. Forty students participate in the programme and now they have decided to have smaller service groups after school which will be their junior youth group.

Georgetown

On Sunday 7th June 2009 a number of youth participated in a Race Unity devotional gathering and cultural programme at the Georgetown Bahá'í Centre. These youth did the Racism dance and were able to communicate a very clear message about the unity of mankind to the forty persons who attended.

West Bank Demerara

The junior youth from one of the West Bank junior youth groups decided that for a service project they would invite more junior youth to their group, so one afternoon after school they all gathered at the home of the animator, said some prayers from their different religions and set out to invite youth in the neighbourhood. The following week their efforts were rewarded when five new junior youth attended the group and they were very happy to become part of the group.

New Amsterdam

We wish to congratulate the Animators in New Amsterdam; they have established a junior youth group in Angoy's Avenue. Because of the dedicated and committed service of Allison Carew with assistance from Pride, this group has been operating for the past month and when visited on the 6th June, the junior youth expressed the joy they feel in being part of the group.

Rupununi

The Varqa Foundation, in collaboration with the St. Ignatius Secondary School organised a Youth Can Move the World training in the Rupununi, St. Ignatius Village. A team of two was sent to conduct the training (Louisa Mancey and Lomeharshan Lall).

The training commenced on the 19th of May and concluded on the 30th of May. The training started at 3:00 pm and lasted until 6:00 pm each day but in the last week it ended after 7:00 pm. Three components of the YCMTW programme were employed (Study of Ruhi, Social Issues, and Arts). The youth were very cooperative and attentive and easy to work with.

There were in total 23 persons attending the programme. The youth seemed to have enjoyed the training; this was expressed

through several votes of thanks at the Graduation Ceremony and handmade postcards that they gave to the trainers. At the closing ceremony Varqa Foundation, in collaboration with the National Institute Board of the Bahá'ís of Guyana, presented certificates to the 19 youth who completed Ruhi book 1 and covered over five different Social Issues.

Bartica

Youth Can Move the World participants in Bartica are visiting other youth groups and church groups, here's a report from Carol Livan, Manuela Bell and Odellie Roach. Carol reports, "From January to May, the group has visited youth groups in three different churches in Bartica. Some topics discussed were: Abstinence, values, promotion of the arts, drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence and HIV/AIDS/STIs. So far, we are working with a total of 55 youth. With two of the churches, we are conducting junior youth groups and with the other, we have children's classes conducted one Friday of every month. The cooperation from the church leaders is very good since they gave us permission to work with their youth."

East Coast Demerara

The East Coast of Demerara is blooming with activities at Urmila's Institute. Participants are training the youth using Ruhi book one and holding junior youth groups using 'Walking The Straight Path'. The youth also have a dynamic arts programme and especially enjoy the step dance. As for the service, a banner display has been organized for the last week of school where the youth will increase the awareness of their peers about various social issues.

Essequibo

The Essequibo Coast is flourishing with its junior youth groups in 6 schools and activities at the New Opportunity Corps. The friends are using the On the Wings of Words materials and are holding literacy groups in Lima Sands. The same materials are being used in some of the schools for those junior youth who are having reading difficulties. Other YCMTW participants are holding junior youth groups at their own homes.

GRADUATION!

Graduation is soon approaching!

Please be reminded that our Annual Graduation Ceremony is on the 23rd August, 2009. To graduate as a Varqa Animator, participants must attend at least nine training sessions, complete the Junior Youth Animator training and be actively working with a Junior Youth group. For more information, please contact your Regional Coordinator, or the Varqa Coordinators.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

REGIONAL COORDINATORS:

Essequibo – Abeika Dupan- 627-8007
West Demerara- Gordon Roberts- 670-4444
East Coast Demerara- Shelline Misir- 645-9669
New Amsterdam- Pride Ade-Thomas- 333-3085
Corriverton- Anis Ade-Thomas- 689-5533 or 619-5725

NATIONAL COORDINATORS:

Lomeharshan Lall, 644 -1772
Rosheni Takechandra, 649 -1499

INTENSIVE TRAININGS IN JULY - AUGUST 2009

NATIONAL TRAINING

7th - 9th July at Georgetown Bahá'í Centre, Garnette Street

REGIONAL TRAININGS

Berbice:

13th - 23rd July at School of the Nations, Stanleytown
10th - 21st August at Corriverton Civic Centre

Demerara:

West Bank/Coast
13th - 23rd July at Brisport's Residence

East Coast

27th - 31st July at Urmila's Institute

East Bank

27th July - 7th August at Camille's Institute

Georgetown:

20th - 31st July at Georgetown Bahá'í Center, Garnette St.

Essequibo:

27th July - 7th August at School of the Nations, Mainstay

Training session begins at 9am sharp!

See you there!



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