

CXC important in lives of Caribbean people

Says Education Ministry's Permanent Secretary

By Vanessa Narine

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From left, CXC official, Mr. Anthony Alleyne, Mr. Clement Derrell, Mr. Earl Welch, Mrs. Juliet Persico and Mrs. Anna Benjamin, with CXC official Mrs. Maureen Grazette and Permanent Secretary, Mr. Pulandar Kandhi.

“The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) has been one of the most important institutions in the lives of the Caribbean people.”

This was according to Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Mr. Pulandar Kandhi, at the last Thursday's CXC Awards Presentation.

The event was a celebration of the 30 years of the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate, more popularly known as CSEC, examinations offerings.

In 1979, examinations in English A, Caribbean History, Geography, Integrated Science, and Mathematics were all offered at the CSEC level.

Since 1979 was the year in which CXC was made available to the students in the Caribbean for the very first time' the class of 1979 was honored.

The persons being honoured have been placed in a special category called the Class of '79 and 120 persons from the Caribbean have been inducted into this class.

From Guyana there were six persons from the Class of '79 who were recipients of awards.

Among these are Mrs. Belle Tyndall, a member of the English Subject Panel;

* Mrs. Gwendolyn Pope, who was a member of the marking team for Mathematics in 1979, and has served in that capacity continuously to date, and

* Mr. Clement Derrell, the an examiner in Mathematics in 1979. Presently he is a member of the Examining Committee for Mathematics and is Chief Examiner for Mathematics at the Guyana Marking Centre.

There were also two presentations of posthumous awards to:

* Mrs. Greta Welch, who was a member of the Geography subject panel in 1979. Her widower, Mr. Earl Welch, received the award on her behalf; and

* Mr. Joel Benjamin, a member of Caribbean History Subject Panel whose award was given to his widow Mrs. Anna Benjamin.

And while she did not satisfy the original criteria for the Class of '79, CXC made a decision to bestow on Mrs. Juliet Persico an honorary membership to the Class of '79, because of her valuable contributions to CXC.

In 1979 Persico was an Assistant CXC Local Registrar in the Ministry of Education and has served continuously. Today, she is the CXC Local Registrar and has served in other capacities at CXC, including membership of the Sub-Committee of the School Examinations Committee (known as SUBSEC), and membership on the Final Awards Committee (known as FAC).



A section of the gathering for the CXC Awards Presentation.

The Permanent Secretary asserted that these individuals have contributed significantly to the growth and success of CXC and CSEC.

To highlight this growth and success, he pointed out that for the 2009 CSEC exams, a total of 150,000 students across the Caribbean sat the examinations.

Advancing

Kandhi reiterated that the Council is indeed an important institution in the Caribbean Region.

To this end the ministry official explained that steps were being taken by the Council to further advance the integration of the Region.

A case in point was the fact that the General Certificate of Education (GEC) was no longer being offered in public schools across the country.

“Rather, the GEC exams students are being encouraged to sit Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE),” he posited.

Kandhi said this venture will add to the efforts being made to create a paradigm shift for the future.

“We have arrived,” the Permanent Secretary said. “We will be focused on the future by offering products at the cutting edge that will gear our youth for life, work and higher education.”

He stated that the awards ceremony ushered in a second generation of reforms and development.

“We have to grow with time and remain at the cutting edge of quality. We must have and maintain our relevance in a developing world to arm our children for better in the future,” he posited.

In this regard, he reflected that CXC has come a long way on the foundation of dedicated efforts exerted by the class of '79.

Appreciation

Kandhi said, “When we look at where CXC was, where we are, and where we want to be, we can only acknowledge that honouring our pioneers is fitting.”

In response to the honour, Mrs. Juliet Persico addressed the gathering on behalf of the other recipients.

As she expressed gratitude, Persico underscored that there was much hard work to get the council to where it is presently and only by continuing along the same path will CXC advance to higher heights.

“When our sojourns began we did not envisage this point,” she said.

However, she further explained that getting the first CSEC online was a result of countless pre-tests, timely disbursement of materials for the first school based assessment (SBA), script marking practices, and intense campaigning to engender public awareness.

She proudly pointed out that since then, vision, dedication and sacrifice have made CXC the success story it is today.

Persico made clear that this success will continue through the efforts of dedicated individuals who get their satisfaction from the knowledge that they are contributing to national and global development.