



**GUEST SPEAKER**

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**MANAGING DIRECTOR**

**JAMAICA SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND**

**FOR**

**Closing Ceremony**

**Clarendon Chamber of Commerce Youth Workshop 2014**

**Date: Thursday, December 11, 2014**

***Hotel Versailles, 42 Longbridge Road, May Pen, Clarendon***

## Salutations

- Hon. Noel Arscott, Minister of Local Government and Member of Parliament, South West Clarendon
- Ambassador Jesus Orus Bagena Head of Cooperation European Union
- His Worship the Mayor Scean Barnswell, Mayor of May Pen
- Hon. William Shagoury, O.D. JP, Custos Rotulorum for the parish of May Pen
- Dr. Winston Dawes, President Clarendon Chamber of Commerce
- Ms Heather Christian, Workshop Coordinator
- Pastor Anthony Wallace, Four Paths United Church
- Workshop Participants
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Afternoon everyone,

Thank you for that kind introduction and thank you for inviting me to address you today. It is with a sense of distinct pleasure that I join you on this very special occasion. I won't be too long, but I want if you can remember one thing it should be you have made "the first step to a better life".

Let me first offer heartiest congratulations to the 30 young people who decided to participate in this programme.

This initiative is significantly aligned to the basic mandate and purpose of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), which was established over eighteen years ago by the Government of Jamaica in response to the need to develop solutions that would impact positively on the lives of marginalized communities. The Fund mobilizes resources and channels these to community based socio economic

infrastructure and social services projects. Through a national partnership between central and local government, communities and private and public organisations. The JSIF portfolio strongly supports the Government of Jamaica's strategic priorities to 2015/2016, in the four priority areas.

- Job creation and economic growth
- Improved security and safety
- Human capital development and
- Effective social inclusion

Today is a wonderful day for you to put your journey in perspective.

I know some of you have faced challenges throughout your life but I am here to let you know that there is no life without challenges and that often, it is how we respond to these challenges that make or break us. Many persons have risen to positions of success because of their drive and

determination to overcome the hurdles and challenges that confront them.

Consider for a moment the situation of Steve Jobs, the creator of Apple products such as the iPhone, who feared school because he was bullied. It was not until his fourth grade teacher bribed him with candy and money as a reward to do his work that he became interested in his lessons.

Note as well that someone, in this case his teacher, saw something in him and encouraged him to work and to dream.

The journey that lies before you will be defined not only by the power of your mind and your intellect, but equally by the power of your dreams and the determination to realise those dreams.

Through this workshop, many of you would have identified in yourselves new talents; so, I want each of you to look at what you have learnt over the period and how you are going to use that which you have learnt to advance your lives. You may decide to go back to school or to become your own boss after being exposed to business and entrepreneurial skills which are especially vital given our economic climate, that choice is yours. By this workshop you are better able to make that choice.

We know that this is just a start and hope that you will take these skills to improve your situations. We implore you to apply lessons learnt in such areas as dispute resolution strategies, anger management and conflict resolution in your daily lives and to share the lessons with those around you as well.

We want to also say that all the organisations that have partnered for the successful implementation of this project are counting on you as well as cheering for your success.

Equally we call on your family and friends to offer support to you in your endeavours and remember that you are not alone and you should seek help if you are unsure about your next step.

We congratulate the Clarendon Chamber of Commerce for taking that lead and commend The Four Paths United Church, The Four Paths Community Centre Committee, The Central Jamaica Social Development Initiative, The National Youth Service, Rural Agricultural Development Authority and of course the Jamaica Social Investment Fund's PRP funded by the EU for their endorsement and cooperation.

You should be very, very proud of yourselves at this point.

Graduation is one of those steps in life that signifies a coming of age - the beginning of a new era phase of life.

Well, the coming times will be exciting, they will be trying but the outcome and results will all be dependent on you and your determination. Remember this is a stepping stone and so

The activities of the workshop are the seed which we have planted.

You have the responsibility to water and prune it.

I charge you to go forth and be a positive example in your community. Remember to dream, and know, that when dreaming is combined with hard work nothing is impossible.

Best of luck in all your future endeavours.