Historical Three-Peat for York Castle High School at Rita Marley Foundation Public Speaking Competition

The Multi Functional Room at U.W.I Mona’s Main Library, could not contain the numbers who showed up for the 6th Annual Rita Marley Foundation(JA) Public Speaking Competition. EOC clergy, government officials, diplomats, sponsors, parents, teachers, students, media, musicians and the individual whose Foundation organized the event, Dr. Rita Marley. Her first in person appearance at the event. Also present, Grammy nominated musician, Julian Marley.

Following the national anthem, prayers, remarks and musical presentation, master of ceremony Dr. Amina Blackwood Meeks sermoned the dozen budding orators on stage. Each dipped into a glass bowl for a number indicating the order in which he or she would present.
The students articulated their views on the topic, ‘Technological & economic advancement of humankind is paramount. Natural resources must be exploited to achieve that goal.’ Some staunchly defending the moot. While others vehemently opposed. Spectators fixated on orators’ every word. In awe at the breadth and depth of the high schoolers’ presentations. It was certainly a formidable task for judges, Mr. Gregory Simms (Director of Events Management & Production at the Jamaica Cultural Division (JCDC); Mrs. Merlene Heholt (Managing Director Jamaica Fire Equipment); Dr. Kadamawe Knife( U.W.I Mona Lecturer-Director of the Centre for Entrepreneurship Thinking and Practice); Terisa Taylor (UNFPA Youth Consultant/Author); Dr. Kimani Borland(Naturopathic Doctor).

Shawvick Barrett was impressive, poised and fluent. As he voiced “Notwithstanding our success, natural resources must be conserved to ensure good health and long term success. Nationalgeographic.org states that conservation is the act of protecting Earth’s natural resources for current and future generations. As the proverb says, “One han wash di oddah” if we take care of our natural resources, they will take care of us. According to womensnewsnetwork.net, in 2013, gold mining in Venezuela contaminated rivers, thereby poisoning 92% of indigenous women with mercury, resulting in a 5% risk that newborns will have neurological disorders. Can you imagine our babies? We must apply methods like, establishing protected zones to amend our errors, because if we allow our greed to cause us to disregard the conservation of our natural resources, Michael Jackson’s Earth Song will become the national anthem, wherein Michael expresses, “What have we done to the world?”

Conclusively, technological and economic advancement of humankind is paramount as it facilitates the proper funding of public services. Natural resources must be exploited as they can elevate a society into holistic development. Also, natural resources must be conserved to ensure
a sustainable future. As the proverb says, “One han wash di oddah”. Harambe”

While the panel deliberated, the zealous audience was entertained by musicians Julian Marley, Bongo Herman, Grub Cooper, Isha Bel and Papine High School Choir.

The emcee revealed the finalists to enthusiastic cheers of supporters. St. Hugh’s High School’s Reajean Bennett, William Knibb Memorial High School’s Ramona Hastings and York Castle High School’s Shawvick Barrett. They were issued the impromptu topic assigned by sponsor National Council on Reparations (NCR) “Jamaicans have suffered increased ill health due to dietary legacies of slavery and colonialism.” Rosemary Duncan, manager at the Rita Marley Foundation whisked them from the venue, to areas where they were sequestered for 30 minute speech preparation.

All three supported the moot. Each orator was eloquent and confident, voicing concern about slavery's ill effects on our diets. Resulting in various ailments and diseases; however, Shawvick Barrett maintained his lead. Wowing judges who awarded him victory. The third such win for York Castle High School. Reajean Bennett and Ramona Hastings were second and third respectively. Barrett took home the trophy, presented by Dr. Rita Marley, $50,000 cash, Wisynco gift baskets, Bob Marley merchandise, tours of Bob Marley Museum and Devon House Heritage Site.
and gifts from Balloons by Jaki Jade. Bennett and Hastings awarded $25,000 and $15,000 plus other prizes. All other participants received cash and other gift items.

During the vote of thanks, Rosemary Duncan expressed profound thanks to schools, sponsors, volunteers, musicians, media and others who contributed to the event’s major success. The Foundation also accepted an early sponsorship offer for next year's event. Professor Verene Shepherd, Director at the Centre of Reparation Research (CRR) took to the podium to pledge provision of a larger venue, for the ever growing oratorical competition.
Here are the Winning Presentations that Wowed the Astute Judges

Impromptu Speech

by Shawvick Barrett, York Castle High School, 1st place, Rita Marley Foundation(JA) 6th Annual Public Speaking Competition

Topic: ‘Jamaicans Have Suffered Increased Ill Health Due to Dietary Legacies of Slavery & Colonialism

Adjudicators, guests and fellow speakers good afternoon. We are gathered to probe the topic, ‘Jamaicans have suffered increased Ill Health Due to Dietary Legacies of Slavery and Colonialism’. Firstly, slavery can be defined as an institution of forced ownership usually involving the extraction of labour from another group of people. Colonialism refers to a period in which one nation is owned by another supreme nation. I disagree that slavery and colonialism are the causes for ill health in Jamaicans today because:

In slavery, the enslaved dismantled poor eating cycles by retaining their culture and by providing for themselves. Colonialism could not whitewash African efforts to live a better life.

Jamaicans have suffered psychologically due to mental dietary legacies of the periods of slavery and colonialism.
Firstly, the enslaved dismantled the cycles of oppression by providing for themselves. Undoubtedly, rations were insufficient compared to the number of slaves but whatever deficiencies were observed, the slaves provided this through the farming of fruits and vegetables or by rearing livestock. Had it not been for this the current statistics would have been worse. We should not leave out of the discussion that the slaves worked hard to give their descendants a better life and a healthier culture. They had the determination to succeed. For example, the story is told of Sharper, a slave in Barbados who was a fisherman to his backra master. He would sell some of his catch or keep some to balance or make up for the deficiencies in his slave diet. It is through skillful means such as these that enabled our black ancestors to survive. So then, they should not be blamed for an issue to which they eventually overcame.

Secondly, Colonialism could not whitewash African efforts to live a better life. In this period we were told that we were barbaric and other discriminative terms were used towards us. Still, the mindset that this system gave to us, which was to accept poor living conditions, did not remain. In this period, many blacks engaged in trade, partner or boxhand, owned shops among other means to develop their lives. Not only did the physical environment change, but the slaves made the change by pursuing a more wholesome and healthier life. Culinary practices, such as mixing vegetables in dishes high in ground provision, became a part of our culture. Enculturation, which is the incorporation of a dominant culture into a smaller one, occurred of course between Jamaica and England, but no matter how much we accepted their lifestyle principles, the slaves still maintained their culture which involved participating in physical activities and eating a mixture of foods. This means then, that the poor dietary practices from the earlier years of slavery became more diluted as the African ancestry grew and this must be taken into consideration.

Thirdly, indeed Jamaicans have suffered, but it is as a result of the psychological legacies of slavery and colonialism. Now we want to be like others. We are now more open to following trends. Skin bleaching has become more rampant for example, but let me tell you today that the color of our skin is not a symbol of oppression, but a sign of victory. So whenever you see your child or someone else being targeted because of the colour of their skin, tell them that there is power in your strong black melanin. Slavery and colonialism cannot be blamed. It is our current mental slavery that needs to be blamed. We are disregarding our wholesome culture to adopt others. Martin Luther King and Marcus Garvey fought for this and now we must believe it. Our ill health is our fault.

Conclusively, the enslaved dismantled the cycles of oppression by providing for themselves. Colonialism could not whitewash African efforts to live a better life. Thirdly, indeed Jamaicans have suffered, but it is as a result of the psychological legacies of slavery an colonialism. So finally, win lose or draw I am grateful for this opportunity because I want to implore you all to believe that there is victory in our identity and power in our strong black melanin. Harambe
Preliminary Speech by Shawvick Barrett, 1st place:

Mankombu Swaminathan, Father of Economic Ecology, once posited, “If conservation of natural resources goes wrong, nothing will go right.”

Honourable adjudicators, guests, supporters and fellow speakers, good morning. We are gathered to examine the motion, “Technological and economic advancement of humankind is paramount. Natural resources must be exploited to achieve that goal.” Before we begin, let us define five crucial terms. Firstly, according to endurogroup.ca, technological advancement is the generation of information or the discovery of knowledge that advances the understanding of technology. Secondly, economic advancement is defined by brittanica.com as the process by which a nation’s wealth increases over time. However, these terms can be conjoined within the context of today’s motion. Thirdly, the Oxford dictionary defines paramount to mean, more important than anything else. Fourthly, the Collins online dictionary states that natural resources are all the land, forests, energy sources and minerals existing naturally in a place that can be used by people. Finally, the Merriam-Webster dictionary explains that to be exploited means, to be used for someone’s advantage. Therefore, we can reiterate the moot by saying, “The process by which a nation’s wealth increases with the use of technology is central. All substances existing naturally must be used for our advantage to achieve that goal.” I stand in solidarity with the motion based on these three main points:

‘Technological and Economic Advancement of Humankind is Paramount. Natural Resources Must be Exploited to Achieve that Goal.’

We sailing in the same boat
We rocking up the same stream
Technological and economic advancement of humankind is paramount as it fosters the provision of efficient public services. Natural resources must be exploited as they are the building blocks of society. Natural resources must be conserved to ensure good health and long term success.

Firstly, technological and economic advancement of humankind is paramount as it fosters the provision of efficient public services. Capital and technology are the winds of change as they work together increasing sustainable revenue for countries. When countries involve technology in the process of increasing productivity, income can be generated to fund services like, education and healthcare. For instance, last year the government introduced digital technology in the agricultural sector. This boosted exports in agricultural products such as mangoes. Consequently, our economy grew by 0.6% for the third quarter of 2019, as released by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica. As a hybrid of this, the government was able to allocate an additional 1 billion dollars to develop the health system’s resistance to the devastating effects of dengue fever in November 2019. For a developing nation with a growing population, steady income is needed to provide the necessary resources to foster the wellbeing of citizens.

Secondly, natural resources must be exploited as they are the building blocks of society. Besides providing all our basic needs, the discovery of more natural resources is key in elevating a people. Let us recall China for a quintessential view. China metamorphosed from an impoverished country in the 1970s, to the world’s second largest economy. According to the World Bank, China’s use of its land, and export in minerals such as aluminum and lead, have led to its annual economic growth rate of 2.5%. Subsequently, the living conditions and employment opportunities for Chinese nationals have improved drastically. China’s story depicts that if we exploit our natural resources wisely, we can ensure a better life for ourselves and our children.

Thirdly, notwithstanding our success, natural resources must be conserved to ensure good health and long term success. Nationalgeographic.org states that conservation is the act of protecting Earth’s natural resources for current and future generations. As the proverb says, “One han wash di oddah” if we take care of our natural resources, they will take care of us. According to womensnewsnetwork.net, in 2013, gold mining in Venezuela contaminated rivers, thereby poisoning 92% of indigenous women with mercury, resulting in a 5% risk that newborns will have neurological disorders. Can you imagine our babies? We must apply methods like, establishing protected zones to amend our errors, because if we allow our greed to cause us to disregard the conservation of our natural resources, Michael Jackson’s Earth Song will become the national anthem, wherein Michael expresses, “What have we done to the world?”
Conclusively, technological and economic advancement of humankind is paramount as it facilitates the proper funding of public services. Natural resources must be exploited as they can elevate a society into holistic development. Also, natural resources must be conserved to ensure a sustainable future. As the proverb says, “One han wash di oddah”. Harambe

Honourable Olivia Grange Cd Mp
Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport

Salutations....

Allow me to say how thrilled I am to be invited to participate once again in this very important Public Speaking Competition (now in its sixth year of staging) by the Rita Marley Foundation. This year is particularly significant, of course, as Jamaica and the world celebrate the 75th earth-strong of one of our foremost cultural icons – the Hon. Robert Nesta Marley OM.

I would also like to commend my sister and matriarch of the Marley family, Dr. Rita Marley, for this gesture of support for the development of our young people. The promotion of public speaking is one of the many ways that we can assist in the holistic development of our young people and prepare them for life in a global village. And who better to do this than Bob and Rita Marley and the Marley family, based on their command of the global scenario over many years of performances in the major arenas of the world long before globalisation was even conceptualised.

Today I want also to pay maximum respect to the students from the participating schools. We congratulate them for their oratory skills, their display of research and their command of language. Not many of us have the confidence to engage in public discourse and, as such, we commend these students and their teachers. This competition will benefit them greatly as they advance to whatever future careers or prospects they embrace going forward.

Ladies and gentlemen, students, - it is fitting that the Rita Marley Foundation would embark upon this unique way of celebrating Bob Marley’s earth-strong. Many would expect them to singularly engage in music production and promotion aimed, perhaps, at unearthing the next Reggae superstar to follow in the footsteps of the legend. Yet, conversely, the Rita Marley Foundation, led by the matriarch herself, has chosen to celebrate the man who was Bob Marley through public speaking with its trappings of language usage, formulation of ideas, passion, creative delivery, and dynamic self-presentation. This is because all this represents the essence of the man. He was a thought leader, a great influencer and that is his great gift to you sons and daughters of our soil... this work must continue!
You see, within the mystique of the phenomenon that Bob Marley represented to the world was his articulation of a world view in which the oppressed people of the world would be able to confront and triumph over their oppressors. In Marley’s world view, the world and its systems of oppression, which included the enslave ent and continued devaluation of African people, was decried through his use of the metaphor of an evil Babylon. In this scenario, Babylon was the evil system that dehumanised and sought to destroy those who were seen as others. In this regard, the quest of the oppressed was to chant down and destroy the evil Babylon system and replace it with a spiritual uprising of the people based on the encouragement of the oppressed to “get up, stand up for their rights”.

Throughout his career and supported by Sister Rita Marley and the other two members of the I Threes, Sister Marcia Griffiths and Sister Judy Mowatt. This Marley movement came to epitomise the triumph of the poor and oppressed over the evil ruling class and systems. Whether through his discussion of the “arms made strong by the power of the Almighty” or the need to “emancipate (oneself) from mental slavery” combined with the assurance that “none but ourselves can free our mind” or even through evoking mental images by way of such album titles as Exodus and Uprising, it was ultimately about Redemption. The prolific Rita Marley encourages us to work together for the advancement of humankind - Harambe!

It is not by chance that the Marleys’ music became the philosophy that underpinned many liberation struggles of the African continent and empowerment of its Diaspora. It was indeed by design that Marley’s world view captured the attention of oppressed people everywhere, regardless of class or race. It was not by accident that this philosophy and thinking lent fervent support to the campaign for the release of Nelson Mandela and the toppling of the system of apartheid in South Africa. In the end, it was not surprising that Marley was central to every theme and act of liberation globally and its concomitant projects of self-determination, self-revaluation and self-redemption.

Today, as we confront a new world with looming inadequacies and global insecurities in which might is often seen as right and technology may be used to retard rather than promote human development, Marley’s legacy beckons the new generation of artists to engage new philosophies and world views as the platform on which to build their lyrics. Today, we need our artists to lead the way in promoting new ways of coming together, new concepts of family that will reject the violence and crime we experience daily and promote ONE LOVE.

In closing, on this the 75th earth-strong of Bob Marley, I must implore that you the new generation of young people reject the philosophies that divide and destroy each other and engage, rather, a philosophy of familial support and togetherness. Let your words be words filled with hope and aspiration for a generation who has the real possibility of changing the way the world views and determines life and livity. Let substance be your goal even as you reject the cosmetic and superficial and, ultimately, do it for the love – love of God, love of people, especially the poor and vulnerable, love of self and love of country.

Let Dr Rita Marley’s incredible vision, strength, beauty, life of service and sterling example, bring you to Harambe.

You are all winners. God bless you all.
Ladies and Gentlemen

I use this opportunity to acknowledge the Rita Marley Foundation for its investment in the mental intellectual and social development of our Jamaican students, through the National Public Speaking and Essay Competitions.

I commend Rita Marley who, like a never-drying fountain, continue to pour out and empty herself to the Jamaican people through our children. We at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, thank you for your vision; for translating this vision into positive action and for sticking to the course. We applaud your unstinting commitment and selflessness.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Information is proud to be associated with both competitions and look forward to both their staging and outcomes.
This year’s theme for the National Public Speaking competition is timely and provides a welcome opportunity for our students to reflect on the So much trouble in the world, because they are both the victims and the villains of much of the violent troubles in this country.

Despite the trouble however, there is a natural mystic flowing through the air and if watch very closely and listen very carefully, you will see and hear: The mystic is that despite all that is going on around us, we still have young men and women who are positively bold enough, smart enough, committed enough, prepared enough to use this platform to engage in a productive and inspiring activity – a platform which promotes positive values and attitudes.

Despite the so much trouble in the world, we still have five young men with the moral courage to risk being labelled ‘effeminate,’ ‘nerd,’ ‘gay’ participating in a competition, which showcases refined examples of language and speech patterns. Your participation - from preparation to the finals - is an indication of a high degree of self-discipline and self-worth. I admire, approve and applaud you.

I also applaud you teachers, who have prepared and empowered these young people to become excellent models of communication in Jamaica. Irrespective of what we want to say, wherever we go, whatever we do and irrespective of how affluent we may be, our ability to engender confidence and trust in others will gauged by our ability to communicate efficiently and effectively, especially through the use of the English Language. This is a life skill that you, teachers have taught these youth.

But this is not just about language and good communication skills. This is also about honing your critical thinking skills. In doing your research, evaluating and sifting your sources, discerning biases, organizing your thoughts, you are engaging in high order critical thinking skills. I want to urge you not to be mechanistic in your approach to this competition: In other words, don’t just mouth words and recite a speech because someone drilled you through constant practice to become perfect at it; but reflect on the issues you have researched and are articulating; think about the solutions you proffer in your presentations and start acting upon them. Let them seep into your consciousness and transform your mindset, attitude and behaviour, like a natural mystic.

Finally, all of you will not be placed in the top three; but that doesn’t mean you have not succeeded and achieved anything from this competition. Use this as an opportunity for self-reflection on how you can improve on what you would have done. Don’t let the fact that you
have not been placed first define or defile you, your future or your place in this world. Be gracious even in defeat. Don’t allow your manuscript to smell of your medicine. William-Knibb-High-School-&-Beverley-Lashley,-CEO-National-Library-of-Jamaica

For those who will be placed in the top three, I say to you: be humble in your success and achievements. Don’t go sailing on an ego trip. Don’t go resting on your laurels. Use this achievement as a springboard for other achievements.

On behalf of the Ministry of Education Youth and Information, I endorse this competition and wish all of you the best in all your endeavours.

Harambe

And no matter what they do
And no matter what they say
All a Jah Jah children a go harambe
The Rita Marley Foundation (JA) scholarship, in honour of former teacher Claudette King, was presented to Davior Stewart, for the period 2020-2023. A student at St. Peter & Paul Preparatory School, Kingston. We wholeheartedly thank Ms. Stephanie Marley, director, for this initiative. Harambe
Alpha & Omega Home for the Aged: A sanctuary for Elders

The Rita Marley Foundation (Ghana) is focused on its mission to provide healthcare education and services for elders, in the town of Konkonuru. Seniors gather, once weekly, in the peaceful sanctuary of the Rita Marley Foundation's Alpha & Omega Home for the Aged, to discuss issues that impact them.
Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!!!

Ginormous
Congratulations
to our Champion,
York Castle High School's
Shawvick Barrett

Immense Thanks to Sponsors:
- Leeds Family (Las Vegas, U.S.A)
- Mrs. Merlene Heholt (Jamaica Fire Equipment)
- National Council on Reparations (NCR)
- Wisynco Group (Freshhh, Tru Juice, Cran Wata, Wata)
- Xers Trucking Ltd
- Balloons By Jaki Jade
- Spanish Court Hotel
- Devon House Heritage Site
- Caribbean Cream(Kremi)
- Suzie's Bakery
- Tastee Jamaica
- The Stationery Centre
- Vikings Production

Media: PBC(TV Coverage), Loop Jamaica (Video & Online Broadcast), Gleaner Jamaica Nationwide News Network 90FM-Talking History with Professor Verene Shepherd & At Your Service with Mr. Vernon Derby, Bess 100FM- Sister Mitzie Williams

Salute to 2nd place
St. Hugh’s High School
Reajcen Bennett (right)

Cheers to 3rd place
William Knibb Memorial High School
Ramona Hastings (left)

A World of Thanks For A Supa Dupa Public Speaking Competition
Dr the Hon. Alferita Constantia 'Rita' Marley, Directors & The Rita Marley Foundation(UA) wholeheartedly thank all individuals and organizations who contributed to the huge success of 6th Annual Public Speaking Competition.

Ethiopan Orthodox Church(EOC), Dr. Amina Blackwood-Meeks (Master of Ceremony), Brother Everald Hemmings (Suratfuel, Dr. Kadamaew Knife(Judge), Dr. Kimani Borland(Judge), Mr. Gregory Simms(Judge), Mrs. Merlene Heholt(Judge), Mrs. Teresa Taylor(Judge), Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Ms Jo-Anne Archibald, Principal Director on Culture & Creative Industries Policy Division, Mrs. Dorrett Campbelle, Deputy Chief Education Officer(Ministry of Education, Youth & Information), Embassy of Cuba on Jamaica, Ms. Beverley Lastley, CEO-National Library of Jamaica, Ms. Donisha Prendergast ( Film Makers Storyteller, Activist) Julian Marley (Musician), Bongo Herman(Percussionist), Papine High School Choir, Ashley 'Grub' Cooper(Musician), Isha Bel(Musician), Afaya Pollack(Winner, 2019 Song Writing Competition), Staff at U.W.I Mona, Maon Library-Ms. Calarina Smith, Mr Cedric Palmer, Da Rock Promotions, Mr. Charles Ferguson (photographer), Ushers(Humble, Javeena Campbell, York Castle High School students), Volunteers(EOC & staff at U.W.I Mona Main Library) and Rosemary Duncan.

We applaud the semi finalists:
JeanClaude Walters-Dunn
Wolmer's Boys' High School

WendyAnn Ivey
St. George's College

Crystal Borosingh
St. Catherine High School

Romain Kemar Ivey
Jamaica College

Don't feel no way Harambe
A so Jah Jah say Harambe
Member Gong say Harambe

Lori-Ann McLawrence
Wolmer's Girls' High School

David Hamilton
Ardenne High School

Jahkoria Josiah
Papine High School

Britney Ellis
Westwood High School

Sedonia Llewlyn (not pictured)
Marcus Garvey Technical High School

Harambe
March 2020 - June 2020

16
Stay Strong and Stand United

Please click here to watch message