

Community

Griffith: More varied summer camps this year

MINISTER OF YOUTH, Sport and Community Empowerment, Charles Griffith thinks the activities on offer at this year's national summer camps will be significantly more diverse and practical than ever before.

Speaking from his office at the Ministry's headquarters at Haggatt Hall last Friday, Griffith said that after careful consideration, the ministry recognised the importance of greatly diversifying the portfolio of activities available since the inception of the camps in 1996.

"In times before, many of the activities at the national camps would have consisted of various types of arts and craft. We found it important to implement activities that would not only be more age appropriate for young people around the age of 15, but we also wanted to make sure we could hold their interest.

"We are aware of the current climate in the country as it pertains to the younger population and we therefore see it imperative to incorporate life skills in terms of conflict resolution, decision-making and team building at the core of everything because we see the importance of imparting these concepts on our youth," he said.

Griffith also emphasised the camps are not for babysitting, but more so to provide a structured, safe environment that will impact the lives of the young campers over five weeks.

The camps, which were in existence from 1996, will run from July 22 to August 23, operating from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. from Mondays to Fridays at 46 locations islandwide.

Youth Commissioner and National Camps programme coordinator Carolyn Garnes spoke in detail about the new activities at this year's camps.

"There are 47 camps and within those camps, two will cover digital media, 13 will cover summer arts which will see facilitators come into the camps to teach hair braiding, nail technology, dance and drama. We will also be looking to take those campers to NIFCA this year and we will be having a showcase later down.

Inter-camp meet

"We are also doing an athletic inter-camp meet and also introducing them to the field of robotics. Because the age range of the campers are ages four to 15, art and craft will still be available for the much younger members of the camp. Here at the ministry, our national camps programme is targeting around 3 500 young people and this is excluding the enrolment at the National Sports Council camp," she said.

Garnes added that they were looking for members of the public to offer themselves as volunteers to assist at the camps.

"We want to bring back volunteerism as a way



MINISTER OF YOUTH, Sport and Community Empowerment Charles Griffith says the ministry recognised the importance of diversifying the portfolio of activities available at the national summer camps. (FP)

of giving back. We have had students from the University of the West Indies, Barbados Community College and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute who have given back hours through working with the camps, so at the moment we have training going on for all of our camp staff," said Garnes.

Additionally, for the first time in the national summer camp's history, all camp staff will be issued with identification for the purpose of safety, security and the peace of mind of parents.

The Ministry of Education is also partnering with the Ministry of Youth and Sports through their summer nutrition programme, which will ensure all campers are adequately fed for the duration of the camp.

Chefette Restaurants is also on board and will be offering all campers tours of their facilities. (DG)

Queen's College rewards first formers

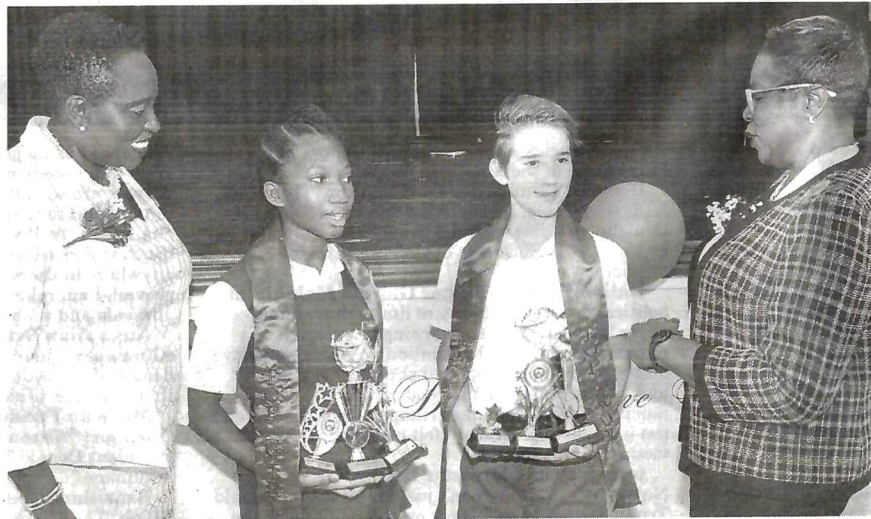
FIRST FORM STUDENTS at Queen's College were recognised for overall achievements when the school held its first annual First Form awards ceremony last Wednesday.

Roger Scott, the first form year head, explained that they encouraged the new intakes to aim for excellence and they did not disappoint.

'Culture of excellence'

"When we embarked on this journey in September 2023 we encouraged our students to pursue excellence in all that they would undertake. We asked these students to embrace the school's ethos and culture of excellence in the pursuit of their academic and sporting accomplishments," Scott said.

"Maslow's theory of human development places self-actualisation at the top of human needs. It is with this in mind that we are encouraging our students



TOP GIRL DANA E WICKHAM (second left) and top boy Benjamin Bowyer with principal Michelle Maxwell (right) and director of personal and business banking at CIBC Caribbean Michelle Whitelaw (left). (Picture by Jameel Springer.)

in this first-year cohort to continue to dream, believe and achieve."

Scott said the 158 students did well and must be lauded for their dedication

and commitment.

"I am happy to report that they have excelled in extra-

curricular activities as well with several of them on the victorious chess team. Our boys are in the Under-14 football semi-final and our first form girls will be heading to the Garfield Sobers Gymnasium to compete in the final of the First Form Inter-School Netball Competition. This is evidence that they are well-rounded students," he said, as he announced that all of the students had earned their promotion to second form.

The girls won the netball title.

Also in attendance at the ceremony were principal Michelle Maxwell, deputy principal Dr Charmaine Foster and representatives of sponsors; Michelle Whitelaw, director of personal and business banking at CIBC Caribbean and Natasha Small, group chief financial officer with Goddard Enterprises. (MB)