

Duke of Edinburgh's International Award - Barbados

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

2018 BARBADOS AGM

October 2017 – October 2018

Stephen R. Smith – Chairman of Council

There was little activity of note in November and December.

The 2017 IGE was held in Prague – Czech Republic at end of October, and representing Barbados were Mr. Jamar Odwin and Mr. Fabian Norville. Coming out of this meeting, Jamar was selected by his peers a one of two Emerging Leaders for the Americas Region. Congrats to Jamar as he furthers his Award profile and activities.

The 2017 International Council meeting was held in conjunction with the IGE in Prague, and I attended as an Americas Regional Representative on the IC. The meeting focused on operational issues, especially the proposal to change the age at which participants can start the award. Three key words which best described the pillars of the award in terms of how it is marketed were hotly debated as the International Trustees sought to streamline the process. In a round table discussion I proposed what the process should look like, and was invited by the Chairman to put forward the idea in the general session. This received much support from the general gathering. The Foundation invited me to sit on a review committee at the behest of HRH The Earl of Wessex who also participated. The purpose of that committee was to review the language which best describes the intent of the MOU, and ensure that it was suitable and readily understood by the constituent members of the Award Association. Due to the size of that task which was underestimated from the outset, a follow up teleconferencing meeting was set up to give the committee members more time to prep and make suggestions. Outcomes from that IC meeting are too many to mention here, but are presented in a document called Operational Guidelines 2018 - update for Association - final 180503. It is posted on the OLH.

The Annual Fundraising Golf Tournament was held at The Royal Westmoreland Course with several changes to the faces of the players as shifts in the financial landscape shape the tournament. However, the tournament continues to raise critical funds for the Award.

Upon her ascension to the post of Governor General of Barbados, Dame Sandra Mason was asked to be Patron of the Award, and in March this year Chairman of the Trustees Sir Trevor Carmichael and I were invited to met with the new Governor General at Government House. During the cordial and entertaining meeting Dame Sandra was briefed on the Award, how it affects the fortunes of our youth, and future plans for the Award including our quest for a home. Dame Sandra enthusiastically embraced the program and willingly agreed to be our Patron. She endorsed our efforts to acquire the home for the Award, and promised to fully support the program in the future as a worthwhile program. Her signature is required as the final step to vest Crown lands to us.

NAO ACTIVITIES – 2018 CASC Took place in the Bahamas and as usual the Bajan posse represented with 13 Participants, 4 Trainee Leaders, and 5 Staff. This year the AJ was for Gold Level Participants only.

As part of our Strategic Planning interaction with the Aspire program, key priorities including Branding & Communications; Resource mobilization and Capacity Building and Funding were looked at as we continue to build our knowledge and skills base to the benefit of the Award. Our Operations Manager Miss. Carla Alleyne was the point person in that program, with yours truly assisting.

PARTNERSHIPS – The Award joined with the Min of Culture, Youth & Sports to launch the Parish Ambassadors for 2018. The idea here is to involve the Parish Ambassadors with the program and hopefully gain traction in widening the reach of the Award in various communities.

We continue to partner with the St. John's Ambulance Brigade which provides valuable training in First Aid, along with raising our profile.

The DEIA participated in Dive Fest for the 2nd Year, with enthusiastic participants signing up for the various activities.

The UWI Office of Student Services enthusiastically supported our efforts to establish an award group at the Cave Hill Campus. We were given the opportunity to showcase the Award at the Campus during an open day there, and efforts are ongoing to get the program flourishing on the Campus.

We also participated in National youth Volunteer Day.

RAISING THE PROFILE – The DEIA donated two benches to the Alleyne School as part of our Anniversary Celebrations. The Alleyne School is one of the most used stop-over points on hikes.

Our Annual Church Service was held at St. Mathews Church and saw several participants from various groups attending. It was one of the strongest turn-outs ever. Library donations and painting assistance were done as a give-back to the St. Mathews Primary School.

EXTENDING THE AWARD – We continue to look towards Sub-licensing arrangements as a way of extending the Award, and such an agreement has been drafted and is expected to be signed with the Girl Guides in the near future. This will be similar to that signed with the Boy Scouts last year.

I am happy to report that we have just presented the first batches of awards to participants who pursued the program through the sub-licensing arrangement with Barbados Cadet Corps. About 15 participants received their awards at the closing ceremony for the annual Regional Cadet Corps Camp at Paragon. In the first of what we hope will be many award presentation ceremonies held jointly with the Cadet Corps and the DEIA Barbados, a further 77 Awards were presented. The BDF was well represented at the presentation ceremony and the Cadets Commandant Lt. Col. Errol Brathwaite expressed the desire to see the program continue with the Cadets.

Co-branding is being explored as a way of incentivizing cooperation with various entities to bring greater recognition to the Award.

ASURING THE QUALITY – In January a training exercise was conducted by Maj. David Clarke. This focused on the running of the AJ Section and the training of new leaders.

Caution fee for rentals was implemented as a way of safe-guarding the Awards assets, and a \$20 fee for assessments was implemented by the Expedition Assessment Panel to help offset the costs of providing the service

GOING FORWARD

The next year looks to be quite exciting for the DEIA - Barbados, and should I be asked to stay on as Chairman, I intend to preside over taking the Award forward in a new and engaging direction. The Strategic Plan is due for a review and this should engage the new Council soonest.

This Chair and the Operations Manager are planning to engage the Ministry of Education in dialogue aimed at establishing Award Centres at several Schools across the island. This will hopefully see the program being officially endorsed and supported by the Ministry, with stronger support from the principals who may feel more sure-footed in adopting the program. This will hopefully provide branding opportunities on the school premises, and stronger recognition from the PTAs. We have already met with the new Minister of Youth, and should we get buy-in as part of the national Youth Policy, tying Youth and Education together with the Award should place us in a strong position to get support and swell our numbers. This means our Award Leaders numbers must also swell to accommodate.

I have proposed a new direction for the Council to examine in this regard. I am proposing that Dukers at large identify strong, respected persons in the communities to be approached directly with a view to train and induct them as Award Leaders. I have already gotten buy-in from one such potential Leader, and a suitable sign may be placed on their residence for identification as an award leader. Good for branding too.

Our quest to acquire a home for the Award continues to be advanced within the Ministry of Housing after being stalled and disrupted mainly by the last election. The process is now about 80% completed, with all the technical issues and permissions in place. The technical officer informs me that the process from here on out, though seemingly complex and long-winded, can be completed by end of October once all parties act as required. A Cabinet Paper has been written and is set to be reviewed by the Minister before ascending to the Prime Ministers desk, onto Cabinet and then to Parliament for proclamation. It then goes to the GG for signature. The former farm has been sub-divided and redrawn for our use, and contains by ad measurement some four acres of land with several buildings in a prime area. It is the vision of this Chair to return this farm to productivity and a youth centre, experimenting in sustainable aquaculture and fish farming, while providing training opportunities for participants. We hope to get assistance from leaders in these fields, and it is hoped that the farm will in time become a central component in our moving towards a more self-sustaining platform in terms of financing.

This Chair continues to work on getting a vehicle for the Award. One has been identified, and I await the return of the CEO and owner from a business trip on Monday for a follow-up discussion which I hope will bear fruit. There is a Plan B if that fails.

Between the farm acquisition, the vehicle, and the resulting major PR which it will attract, the profile of the Award will be raised significantly, and I believe further financing will be triggered as a result. We are yet to write the funding proposal as invited by the Maria Holder Foundation Trust, as the documentation central to the process is not yet available. This will change with the acquisition of the property, since this is the major focus of the funding request as discussed.

The annual Bring-a-fren-an-come hike takes place October 28th at Nicholas Abbey, and permission has been given by the owners for us to assemble at Cherry Tree Hill for the Start & Finish.

The 2018 International Forum and IC Meeting take place in Accra, Ghana at end of October, and myself and Carla Alleyne are due to attend. Jamar Odwin is also expected to attend as an Emerging Leader.

Ends