

Chairman's Report 2020

Extending the Award

For the calendar year 2019 the Award was able to record 252 new entrants. This number does include persons moving on to a new Award level. So far, for this year numbers have been much lower as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Between Jan and Oct 52 persons started. Even with the pandemic there remain prospects for growth. Online training was done for new Barbados Defence Force Officers who will be assigned to the Cadets

The units at Parkinson Memorial and Princess Margaret Secondary Schools started well. But the impact of the pandemic has been quite difficult.

Raising the Profile

It has not been all difficulties over the last year. The Award received a grant of \$10,000.00 from the Aspire Foundation. This will be used specifically to support promotion. It is being deployed to purchase new banners including those to be placed at the headquarters of our sub-licensed organisations. Funds are also available for giving 'dukers' prizes at School prize-giving events.

In November 2019 44 persons received Bronze & Silver Awards at the national presentation. While there was no presentation in 2020, 6 Bronze Awards were handed out at the Scouts and Guides Joint Founders Day Serving in March.

Additionally 6 Bronze Awards were presented to Parish Ambassadors in February. Five of them have continued on to the Silver level.

Participants in Barbados got some global recognition on the UNs twitter account when they took part in the beach clean ups in October. This was part of activities for Global Act4SDGs week, 2020.

Assuring the Quality

A number of efforts have been completed or started in the 2019/2020 to guarantee that the Award's local programme is meeting both local and international standards. We are now certified by the Aspire Foundation and working to be recognized through accreditation by the Probation Department.

The latter will help to allow interested youth from the department to know that taking part in the award is a useful option.

The adventurous journey section is one of the riskiest aspects of the programme.

To help ensure that participants are operating at a high standard. The Expedition

panel started developing guidance materials for Award leaders, With the reduced face-to-face interaction caused by the pandemic that has been transformed in digital training modules. You will hear more about this later.

Research is integral to maintaining good quality and adapting. Barbados was one of the countries featured in the CASC Participants Satisfaction Survey report published by the International Award Foundation. Looking outward the Operations Manager has started the preliminary work to examine how the programme is delivered in the Sub-licensed organisations. This work will be completed by summer 2021.

As a locally registered charity, the Award is constantly checking to make sure that it is meeting the requisite legal regulations. Most recently the chairman attended an information session on financial compliance as it relates to money laundering. Documents logged with CAIPO have been updated and the financial statement include a balance sheet as required in the charities act. Council members spent many hours revising and drafting policies with which many of you will be familiar. These were implemented as a first step in preparation to the license re-validation set for 2021. They also serve to put systems in place to protect our volunteers and

participants. This is a critical feature as we continue to show ourselves as a programme of choice for youth.

The Council took the decision to revise some aspects of the Constitution over the course of the year. This was driven by a desire to have greater continuity in the Council membership and to give members the space they would need to get familiar with the Award's management and execute work without the pressure of just one year to get major works done.

Elected members will not serve for two years rather than one. The conditions for terminating membership were clarified. As you can see, age, criminal misconduct, financial standing, being of sound mind and death will be cause for a members removal. The hosting of the AGM was reviewed to position the Award not to have a new Chairman installed just days before a regional or international meeting, as has happened in the past. You will also see here how a member's attendance at meetings can be a cause for termination.

Special Projects

While the Trustees were unable to host the annual fundraising golf tournament, financial support has been received to help with the Awards delivery to special groups. The Legacy Foundation, the charity support arm of the Barbados Public

Workers Co-operative Credit Union Limited, has agreed to provide \$17000.00.

This money is to advance first aid certification among participants by training Award staff and volunteers as first aid instructors.

The Maria Holder Memorial Trust generously has accepted a proposal to fund the Award programme in efforts to have deaf teens take part in the Bronze Award.

The funding extends to youth from the Probation Department and the Barbados Youth Advance Corps taking part in the Award. This second project also found favour with the International Award Foundation. The Three Funds committee agreed just two weeks ago to provide approximately \$5000.00 to supplement safety materials and technical equipment for this project. We are very excited by this project as it will show the diversity of the Award as being an option for ALL youth.

The national Giveback programme introduced by the government required those studying for degrees is proving very useful for the Award. Even here today, we have some of those students assisting to make this event possible. There are an invaluable resource and some have taken on the challenge to enroll in the Award.

I am sure they will enjoy being part of the Award family. As mentioned the Award is formalizing its relationship with the Probation Department through

accreditation. Social Work Students at Cave hill campus were unable to do their usual community based volunteering as required in their programme. They found safe haven in the Award and delivered a series of online workshops in the summer months. These have been well received and we hope to keep them around.

The Pandemic

Like the rest of the country, the Award had to adjust to restricted movement and curfews. Staff switched to working from home and Award leaders have to be commended for stepping up and getting online. Some held regular online meetings with participants. These meetings helped some participants find focus in the uncertainty and allowed others to stay on track to completing sections. This shows the commitment of our volunteers and for that we are eternally grateful. The office arranged online meetings with leaders. The gatherings provided great insight into how the Award can enhance the experience for both the leaders and the participants. The meetings are to become a regular feature on the Award's calendar.

The International Award Foundation enacted a number of temporary changes to allow participants to continue their Award progress. These included being able to

do online and homebased activities for their sections. A virtual Bronze Exploration was also developed. This has not yet been used in Barbados.

The local website has been updated to include a section on COVID-19. There you can find ideas on activities for doing the Award at home. It also provides updates to parents on how we are adapting to the pandemic. We are hopeful to have a return to normalcy by this time next year. But in the interim we continue to be flexible as we facilitate our volunteers and certainly the participants in their award journey.

Regional & International News

A direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic was the cancellation of the annual CASC camp in Jamaica. The International Gold Event in Uganda was called off. While there was no CASC camp the AGM took on a virtual format. Discussions are set to resume later as the members felt it was too early to take any firm decisions at that meeting. The topics tabled were the next hosting of the camp and the legal registration of CASC as an organisation.

At the international and wider Americas level, a number of major changes have occurred. Whilst these were not occasioned by the pandemic, it did help to advance to position. The Foundation has been facing the challenge of funding its

global operations for a number of years. A strategic review of operations late 2019, pointed to the need to reduce staff and operational costs. Sadly decisions taken included the closure of the Americas office in Jamaica. That has also led to the retirement of Maj David Clarke. We are overly grateful for his more than 30 years with the Award. But he has not left the Award and will stay on globally as an Honourary advisor and here in Barbados will serve with the Trustees.

Gladly not all of the regional team is lost. Maria Hudson will provide direct support to the Award in Barbados. She is now the Operations Manager. Globally the award will be moving away from regional divisions. Maria reports to one of three Operations Directors, Melissa Stoakes. She was the former EMAS Regional Director. A closer working relationship between NAOs and the foundation is to be one of the features of the new structure. There are monthly meetings with the NAO and the Operations team (Maria and Melissa). A spin off from the COVID-19 response is a monthly All Association briefing. This is a zoom call with representatives from the Foundation and NAOS to discuss the Award's delivery and any pending works.

The Foundation is still figuring out how to maintain a financially stable organisation. Once of the recent discussions at the International Council and

extended to the wider association spoke to just how to earn money to support the Award. A number of ideas are being considered, chief among them is how can money be generated through NAOs.

Stephen R Smith
National Award Chairman
Nov 21 2020