

THE SILVER INNINGS

THE ROTARACT CLUB OF ANTIGUA

Journey to Success

Youth empowerment and volunteerism within the community to promote the overall development of Antigua and Barbuda! This was the vision of Patrick "Paddy" Benjamin and Anthony Michael (deceased) in 1986 when they approached the then President of their Rotary Club, Hamish Watson, with the idea of starting a Rotaract Club in Antigua. Because of their drive to promote development of individuals, Rotary Clubs all around the world had begun sponsoring youth groups as community service projects, and being members and past Presidents of the Rotary Club of Antigua, both Benjamin and Michael saw the benefits of implementing such a program within the twin island state and thus took up the challenge. The club was officially formed in May of 1986 and the official charter was signed on November 5th, 1986 and handed over to the club by the District Governor Representative Earl Johnson, on December 5 of that same year at a special ceremony held at the Cortsland Hotel.

Twenty-five years later and this challenge has evolved into a huge success with a variety of accomplishments over the years. Benjamin and Michael's expectations of excellence and youth empowerment were fulfilled throughout the years when various Rotaract Club of Antigua alumni began taking up leadership roles within various aspects of the community in areas such as politics, community service, finance and business management and entrepreneurship. Alumni who have and still are making their mark in society include Senator Greg Walters and the late Keva Margetson, who were founding members, and charter President and Charter Vice President respectively. In continuance of that legacy the club continued to mould other prominent figures within the society such as Shirlene Nibbs- former Director of Tourism, Hon. Winston Williams Jr., Diana Browne, Ato Kentish and Daryll Matthew who still continue to excel within their respective fields.

Over the years, the Club has successfully carried out a variety of projects which have significantly contributed to the overall development of our nation and the region. The annual tag drive, which was started in 2000, has allowed the club to raise significant contributions to aid in disaster relief throughout the District 7030; of which the club is a part. Within recent years, the Club turned its attention to the issue of literacy by hosting a national Spelling Bee for Grade 5 students which has been quoted as being a success by Ministry officials and Frank B. Armstrong, representatives of Seven Seas Ltd, the official sponsors. During the past week, the club along with counterparts from around the region shared a bit of Christmas joy with the children housed on the Children's Ward at the Holberton hospital by presenting them with a number of Christmas presents, school supplies, clothing and a brand new washing machine for the ward. It is with projects of this nature, that the Club has been able to clinch the Best Club in District 7030 Award quite a few times including the Rotaract year, 2007-2008.

Apart from working, as is the custom of Rotaract Clubs around the world, the Club promotes fellowship and professional development among its members. Members engage in a number of social activities such as movie nights and birthday outings or just chilling after work and professional activities such as finance seminars. As the club celebrates its 25th year of service, there have been quite a number of activities planned for the year including a week of activities which started with a church service yesterday (Sunday) at the Spring Gardens Moravian Church and culminates with an anniversary dinner on Friday, 9th December at the Tides Restaurant.





"Can't Give Up Now"

There will be mountains that I will have to climb
And there will be battles that I will have to fight
But victory or defeat, it's up to me to decide
But how can I expect to win
If I never try.

I just can't give up now
I've come too far from where I started from
Nobody told me the road would be easy
and I don't believe he brought me this far to leave me

Never said there wouldn't be trials
Never said I wouldn't fall
Never said that everything would go the way I want it to go
But when my back is against the wall
And i feel all hope is gone,
I'll just lift my head up to the sky
And say help me to be strong

I just can't give up now
I've come too far from where I started from
Nobody told me the road would be easy
and I don't believe he brought me this far to leave me



"Life gives us brief moments with another...but sometimes in those brief moments we get memories that last a lifetime..."