



MINISTER LOOKS FORWARD TO PARTNERING WITH NCPD

Minister of Social Development & Family Services visits the NCPD

On Friday February 12, 2016 the Honourable Cherrie-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn, Minister of Social Development and Family Services, joined by a small contingent, visited the National Centre for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) in San Fernando, following an invitation by the Centre's CEO, Dr. Beverly Beckles.

The meeting began with a tour of *The Unit of NCPD*, located at Seukeran Street, San Fernando, led by Dr. Beckles and Unit Coordinator, Danielle Ryan who gave an overview of the assessment and evaluation process completed prior to intake. The Minister was also informed that students at the Unit are taught basic life skills to prepare them for independent living, such as, sorting clothes and doing laundry, basic cleaning and cooking skills, as well as remedial learning.

The tour then proceeded to the main location at 7-21 New Street, San Fernando where Minister Crichlow-Cockburn was welcomed by Chair of the NCPD Board, Shereen Baksh, Dr. Natalie Dick, Director, as well as members of NCPD Staff. The Minister and her team were also given an opportunity to interact with trainees and apprentices, during a tour of the vocational skills training facility where trainees and apprentices receive certified training, according to their interest and ability. Some of the areas where training is provided include Agriculture/Horticulture, Beauty Culture, Food Preparation, Garment Construction, Information Technology, Office Administration, Welding, Book Binding and Woodwork. Trainees and apprentices also participate in Remedial Education, Computer Literacy Training, Life Skills, Music, Art, Craft and Sports.

Following the tour the Minister and delegation met with members of the NCPD team to discuss matters related to the functioning of the NCPD and opportunities for partnership with the Ministry in creating a more inclusive society for persons with disabilities. Among the matters discussed were the recently ratified UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the National Policy on Persons with Disabilities and the need for additional capacity for assessment and vocational training for persons with disabilities.

Minister Crichlow-Cockburn lauded the NCPD for the impressive work they have done at the Centre, expressing that she was encouraged by what she has seen. The Minister stated, *"I have keen interest in partnering with NCPD to meet the needs of the population of persons with disabilities. Though this is my first official visit to the facility, it is certainly not my last one"*.

The NCPD looks forward to partnering with the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services in the common goal of creating an inclusive society for Persons with Disabilities.

ABOUT NCPD

NCPD is a non-governmental agency (NGO) which promotes equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities through training, information, research and consultative services. The Minister was invited to tour both of the NCPD's facilities as well as meet with the NCPD's Board of Directors. For more information on the National Centre for Persons with Disabilities, please visit our website, www.ncpdt.org, or contact us by telephone at 652-4880 or via email at ncpd1@hotmail.com.

(Please see photos attached)

Photo 1 – Minister Crichlow-Cockburn and Mrs. Danielle Ryan, Unit Coordinator, interacting with Students at the Unit



Friday 15th February, 2016

Photo2 - Minister Crichlow-Cockburn meeting part of the NCPD Team

(left to right – Ms Seema Persaud – Operations Manager, Dr. Natalie Dick – Director, Ms. Shereen Baksh – Chairperson, The Honourable Cherrie-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn, Minister of Social Development and Family Services, Dr. Beverly Beckles, CEO, Mrs. Danielle Ryan – Unit Coordinator, Kahaya Sooklalsingh - Programme Manager , Sonya Le Maitre – HR Consultant)



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Photo3 - Minister Crichlow-Cockburn meeting students in the Music Class and the Music Teacher, Mr. Malomo Joseph



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