

THE CONTRIBUTOR

The official Newsletter of the National Insurance Corporation

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NIS Board Awards 16 Scholarships for 2000

The National Insurance continues to make its contribution to educational and national development by awarding sixteen (16) scholarships to primary school students who succeeded in the May 2000 Common Entrance Examination.

The awards, which have been made annually since its inception in 1988, are determined principally by the financial and

economic needs of students. The scholarships are for a period of five (5) years at a Secondary school, premised on the satisfactory behaviour and academic performance of each student.

Coverage is comprehensive and includes the payment of books, uniforms, facility fees, transportation and meal allowances, and CXC examination fees.

Since 1988, the Board has granted one hundred and seventy eight (178, including this year's) scholarships - eight of these being funded at the Tertiary level.

With the inclusion of the new academic year starting in September, the cumulative cost of the scholarship programme stands at approximately EC\$1.44 million.

The list below represents this year's recipients:

Name	School of origin	Sec. School assigned
1. Duran Leonce	SDA (Castries)	Corinth Secondary
2. Petrus Gustave	Grande Riviere (Gst)	Corinth Secondary
3. Kervory Charlery	Plain View Comb.	VCSS
4. Nina Griffith	Pierrot Comb.	VCSS
5. Kaygiana Toussaint	V/F Primary	VCSS
6. Sadia Charles	Mongouge Comb.	Choiseul Secondary
7. Eden Eugene	Laborie Girls'	Choiseul Secondary
8. Levingston Norville	Methodist	SMC
9. Sachia St Clair	Laguerre Comb.	CCSS
10. Natalie Etienne	Odsan Comb.	CCSS
11. Luwanna Anthony	Balata Comb.	CCSS
12. Vandy Williams	Riviere Doree Comb.	Piaye Secondary
13. Dwight Edwardson	Etangs Comb.	Soufriere Compre.
14. Vernesta Flermius	Morne Du Don Comb.	SISSS
15. Samita Gabriel	Anse-la-Raye Primary	SISSS
16. Mindirra Elva	Belle Vue Comb.	Anse Ger Secondary

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Meet The New Editor

Readers will recall that, as we shared with you in our bumper anniversary issue of The Contributor (June 2000), there has been a changing of the guard in the Public Relations department of our organization, the NIS, and hence in the Editorship of The Contributor, with Mr Augustin Louis moving on to his new position as Operations / Human Resource Manager and Mr Desmond Dujon-Henry coming in as the new PR Head and Editor of The Contributor.

Mr Dujon-Henry has been heading the Computer Department of NIS since its inception in 1990, first as Systems Analyst/Programmer and subsequently as Systems Manager.

A look at our new editor's resume reveals that he graduated from the St Lucia "A" level College in July 1983. He immediately commenced work as an Accountant/Auditor at Peat Marwick Mitchell & Co., and also pursued part-time employment as a teacher of Mathematics and popular P.C. Software Applications.

In September 1985, he embarked on studies in Computer Science and Accounting at UWI in Barbados, while there winning, in 1988, the P and R Chaderton Prize for the student with the highest grades in Computer Science and Accounting courses. That same year, immediately after graduating with a Bachelor of Science Degree, he started work

he started as the Accounts Department Supervisor at the NIS. While serving in the Computer Department, Mr Dujon-Henry has completed an MBA, and has made presentations at Social Security seminars in St Lucia, St Vincent and Aruba on topics such as 'Selection of Software Systems', 'Development of Information Technology: Infrastructural Constraints' and 'Management of Change'. As PR Manager, Mr Dujon intends to continue the publication of this newsletter and expand on the content of the NIS website - www.stlucianis.org

The Contributor would welcome comments and suggestions from its readers, and also feedback on the NIS website from all websurfers.

STAFF PROFILES

Bernard Jankie

Inspector

I commenced employment with the National Insurance Scheme in July 1984, immediately after I graduated from the Vieux Fort Senior Secondary School.

I was first assigned to the Vieux Fort Sub Office. Later, I was given the opportunity to work at the Castries Head Office and the Soufriere Sub Office for short periods.

Currently, I serve as an Inspector at the Vieux Fort Sub Branch and I am assigned to a zone, which extends from Vieux Fort Town to Praslin (including La Tournay Housing Development, La Resource, Grace, Belle-Vue, Desruisseaux).

My vision is that all employers comply with the National Insurance Act, that every St Lucian enjoys social and financial protection, and that the National Insurance remains a friendly sound institution and plays a leading role in National Development.

John Victor

Inspector

John Victor has been an Inspector of the National Insurance Scheme for the past eighteen (18) years.

He is assigned to the zone which includes:

Chisel Street, High Street, Jeremie Street, The Morne to Cul De Sac junction turning left to the East Coast road to Mon Repos, Micoud. A well-rounded individual, Mr. Victor lists among his interests, travelling, singing, reading and meeting other people. Mr. Victor believes his goals for the NIS are surely attainable. He would like to see that employers:

1. Ensure proper wages records are maintained
2. Submit their contribution payments and C3 forms promptly.
3. Fully comply with the National Insurance regulations.

Mr. Victor has three mottos which help to guide him through life: -

1. Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.
2. Never confuse knowledge with truth
3. Anyone can pray about anything, at anytime, anywhere.

**Director elected to membership of
The Board of External Auditors
of The Organisation of American States (OAS)**

Ms Emma Hippolyte, Director of the National Insurance Scheme has been appointed to serve as member of the Board of External Auditors of the Organisation of American States (OAS). In accordance with Article 117 of the General Standards of the Organisation of American States (OAS), the Board of External Auditors shall examine the accounts of the General Secretariat in accordance with existing resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Permanent Council, and with the Rules of Procedure of the Board.

The Board consists of three members designated by the General Assembly. Members meet once a year for a period of one week in Washington, D.C., to undertake the audit of the accounts of the General Secretariat. The new board comprises the United States, Peru and St Lucia.

Congratulations are in order to Ms Hippolyte on her new and prestigious appointment.

**REPORT ON WORKSHOP ON "PENSION SYSTEM IN CRISIS"
HELD AT THE HARVARD INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT, BOSTON, USA. JUNE 19 - 30, 2000**

The workshop, organized jointly by the Harvard Institute For International Development (HIID) and the World Bank, attracted participants from the USA, Europe, Asia Africa and St Lucia. The lecturers represented a cross-section of the foremost thinkers on the subject of pension system design, administration and reform in the world. They included University lecturers, two Nobel Prize winners in Economics, the past President of Bolivia who spearheaded pension reform in Bolivia, and World Bank consultants and staff who had advised and led pension reform in Eastern Europe, Africa and Latin America. The major areas of focus were the following:

- Pension Reform in the PAY AS YOU GO system, versus the Defined Benefit system which we have in St Lucia.

- The impact of the various systems on National Economics, Government Fiscal Policies, Capital Markets, Financial Markets, the Insurance Industry and Intergeneration Accounting.

- In addition, the various pension reform systems that have been introduced in the various parts of the world were analyzed e.g. Chile, Bolivia, Argentina, USA, UK and Eastern Europe.

As a result of this exposure, participants were able to prepare a proposal paper on pension reform for St Lucia that focussed not only on the NIS pension but also on the entire pension system in the country.

One should note that the current focus should be on the structure of the reform and not on specific figures or percentages therein as there are numerous sensitivity analyses that have to be performed before definitive figures can be arrived at.

WHY BUDGET?

(continued from last issue)

So, what benefits specifically can you expect if you set up a budget? Naturally, the answer to this question will be different for everyone. But here are some of the most common benefits that people see when they start a budget:

- **Know what is going on**
Personal budgeting allows you to know exactly how much money you have - even down to the last penny, if you so desire. Furthermore, a budget is a selfeducation tool that shows you how your funds are allocated, how they are working for you, what your plans are for them, and how far along you are toward reaching your goals. "Knowledge is power," as the oftquoted saying of George Eliot goes, and knowing about your money is the first step toward controlling it. That leads to our next benefit.

- **Control**
A budget is the key to enabling you to take charge of your finances. With a budget, you have the tools

to decide exactly what is going to happen to our hard-earned money - and when. You can be in control of your money, instead of having your money limit what you do. This bears repeating: you can be in control of your money, instead of letting it control you!

- **Organization**
Even in its simplest form, a budget systematizes or divides funds into categories of expenditures and savings. Beyond that, however, budgets can mean further organization by automatically providing records of all your monetary transactions. They can also provide the foundation for a simple filing system to organize bills, receipts and financial statements.

- **Communication**
If you are married, have a family, or share money with anyone, having a budget that you both (or all) create together, is a key to resolving personal differences about money handling. The budget is a communication tool to discuss the priorities for where your money should be spent, as well as enabling all involved parties to "run" the system.

- **Take advantage of opportunities**
Knowing the exact state of your personal monetary affairs, and being in control of them, allows you to take advantage of opportunities that you might otherwise miss. Have you ever wondered if you could afford something? With a budget, you will never have to wonder again - you will know.

- **Extra time**
All your financial transactions are automatically organized for tax time, for creditor questions, in fact, for any query which may come up regarding how and when you spent money. Being armed with such information sure saves time digging through old records.

- **Extra money**
This might well be everyone's favourite benefit. A budget will almost certainly produce extra money for you to do with as you wish. Hidden fees and lost interest paid to outsiders can be eliminated forever. Unnecessary expenditures, once identified, can be stripped out. Savings, even small ones, can be accumulated and made to work for you.

GETTING TO KNOW US BETTER!

In this series which begins in this issue of 'The Contributor', we will be providing the public with a variety of brief messages regarding the nature of the NIS and its role and operations in our St Lucian society. The information is concise and accurate and will educate YOU on how to make proper use of the NIS. Be sure to follow this feature, so that you can have your questions and concerns answered. We will discuss such important topics as Registration, Contributions, Returns and Benefits.

Today we answer the questions:
What is the NIS? What can it do for me?
While many of you out there - contributors and beneficiaries - already know the answer to those questions, this is what most persons want to know when they are first introduced to the NIS. So here goes.

The NIS is a system which makes it compulsory for persons to contribute 5% of their wages into a fund while they are employed. This is matched by an equal amount from the employer. When persons are unable to work because of illness, maternity or employment injury, they receive benefits. They can also receive pensions in cases of disability, retirement or even if they are survivors of a deceased member. The NIS can do a number of things for you - but before you learn about those benefits, you must know something about the operations of the organization. In the next issue of this Newsletter, this column will bring you specific information on how you can make proper use of the NIS. We will start with the very first step you must take, i.e. Registration.

Research and Training

The research and training units of the National Insurance are both critical to the organisation in an environment that seeks to promote sound decisionmaking based on scientific findings. The environment also supports innovative thinking and more efficient ways of solving organizational problems at reasonable cost to the business place. Simultaneously, the expectations of employees, in terms of research and training opportunities, keep increasing both quantitatively and qualitatively, as the typical donor and funding agencies have all embarked on a retrenchment policy so that the training pool that was once available at the national level has visibly contracted. This then places certain organisations in a precarious situation as employees have become aggressive and tenacious in their demands for training by their employer. Some employees see this as an exclusive

function of the employer and seldom accept the view that the organization has its own agenda and timetable which may or may not coincide with their individual ambitions.

Since assuming the management of these two units, a first measure has been to try to set up a training plan to reflect the training needs of the National Insurance at present and for the next ten years or so. This document is now in draft form and finalization will take place very shortly, after discussion with the Director.

On the research side, a plan is also being drawn up. Some of the areas to be reflected in the plan will be islandwide surveys on the informal sector, and seasonal workers. This is of tremendous importance as it has actuarial implications. We also hope to streamline our data base with the national population.

Additionally, there will be the establishment (formal, that is) of linkages with some Government Departments, for example: The Registry, Education Ministry and Inland Revenue, since their core data bases are similar to ours at the National Insurance. The two units - Research and Training - will therefore not allow themselves to be seen by the employees and management as place holders within the organization but rather as dynamic structures ready to be pro-active - not simply reactive - tools.

Albert Cenac,
Head, Statistics, R&D, Training.

NIS Scholarship Holder excels at 'A' Levels

In August, 2000 we received the A' Level Cambridge results of our only Upper Sixth student, Mingee Lucien, at the division of Arts, Science and General Studies of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College. She obtained the following: Accounting (A grade) Management of Business (A grade) and Economics (B grade).

Mingee attended St. Joseph's Convent where she was funded for five years by the National Insurance Board. Having performed satisfactorily at the CXC Examinations in 1998 she was recommended for further funding at the tertiary level. The Board unhesitatingly agreed and the fruits of that decision are

surely overwhelming. Congratulations to you, Mingee, and we hope that your unflinching determination will inspire not only other scholarship holders of the National Insurance, but students in general. You have started well. Remain as steadfast as you have been. We at the NIS are extremely happy.

Albert Cenac
Co-ordinator,
National Insurance
Scholarship Programme

Interview with Mrs Paula Bleasdille

Accountant, who recently joined the NIS.

1. How recently have you joined the NIS staff?

I joined the NIS staff on June 19, 2000.

2. Tell us a bit about the route which has taken you from high school to this point?

I attended the St. Joseph's Convent and the A' level College (now Sir Arthur Lewis Community College). I later obtained a B.Sc (Hons) in Management Studies from the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies and completed my professional qualification with the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants (ACCA) at the Emile Woolfe College of Accountancy in England.

As far as my work experience is concerned, I was a primary school teacher for two years. I served as an Accountant at the St. Lucia Air and Seaports Authority and as an Audit Supervisor at PriceWaterhouseCoopers where I

worked over the last five years.

3. What does your job at NIS entail?

My job entails managing the staff and operations of the collections unit, maintaining and controlling the contribution arrears portfolio, the preparation of periodic arrears reports, monthly financial statements and other management reports.

4. How do you find the atmosphere in the organization generally and in your department in particular?

I find that there exists a sense of togetherness among the staff, who appear to be very knowledgeable and committed to getting the job done well.

5. With whom are you required to work most closely?

Because a significant part of my time is spent managing the contribution arrears portfolio, the work of the Accounts Department is heavily dependent on the cooperation of the Compliance and Records Department.

6. Are there any important concerns or challenges for the Accounts Department in the near and not-so-near future?

The challenges facing the Department are varied, but basically involve developing the capacity to maintain procedures, which would enhance the efficiency and effectiveness in monitoring the arrears of contributions and ensuring that timely and accurate statements are issued to employers.

7. On a personal note, are you married? Do you have a family?

I am married with two wonderful daughters, Destinie and Gheminee. As a wife and mother, effective time management has always been a critical component in developing my career. It is not always easy, but I am blessed with a supportive husband, Wilton, who is very good at assisting with the girls, and a most reliable extended family.

8. To what do you attribute success in life?

I believe in putting Jesus Christ first and being fully committed whatever the undertaking.

BIRTHDAYS

MAY

EMELDA ELIVIQUE
CLAUDETTE GILBERT
JOAN LEON
ANNETTE LUCIEN

JUNE

SHARON ALEXANDER
MORELLA REECE
JULIETTA ST. LOUIS
VITALIS JULIUS
WILLIAM THOMAS

JULY

ALBERT CENAC
LEONA JEAN
MARCELLA MONROSE

AUGUST

CLAUDIA ELIAS
KENELM FELIX
BERNARD JANKIE
CLIVE JN BAPTISTE
AUGUSTIN LOUIS
YOLANDE TRIM
KEITH WALCOTT

SEPTEMBER

NATHAN CHARLES
WARREN COMPTON
DAVID GEORGE
CHARLES ST HELEN

New multi-storey car park to ease congestion

Castries Car Park Facility Limited

The Castries multi-storey, multipurpose facility project was initiated by the Government of Saint Lucia and has since become a project of the National Insurance Scheme (NIS) and the National Insurance Property Development Company Limited (NIPDEC). A feasibility study was submitted to the Government of Saint Lucia in October 1996 and a revised feasibility study was submitted in October/November 1997. Since then, negotiations have been held among NIPDEC, the NIS and the Government of Saint Lucia.

As a result, a Special Purpose Company, Castries Carpark Facility Limited, was formed with NIS and NIPDEC as the shareholders.

Justification for the Car Park Facility

The City of Castries is the main anchor and focus of an urban region that stretches to Gros Islet. All the main Government offices, most of the shopping centres, the majority of professional, banking and other commercial services offered on-island are located in Castries.

Consequently, like all other capital cities in the region, it accommodates more than twice its resident population during the daytime. This multi-storey carpark facility is one of the strategies for easing the traffic congestion by providing safe parking spaces in the overcrowded capital city. It is also proposed that the Company be given the responsibility for the operation of a paid on-street parking voucher system within the city of Castries.

The Carpark building is a six (6)-floor multi-purpose facility comprising 156,300 sq ft and located at the southern end of the Graham Louisy Administrative Building in Castries. It offers an integrated mix of accommodation for car parking, commercial activity and offices as follows:

1. Three hundred and twenty-one (321) car parking spaces.
2. Rental area of nineteen thousand, eight hundred (19,800) sq ft for offices.
3. Rental area of fifteen thousand, eight hundred (15,800) sq. ft. for commercial activities including a food court area, supermarket, post office and an open-air terrace on the roof of the building.

The project was constructed under a turn-key arrangement by NIPDEC.

The technical team on the project follows:

1. Architects - NLBA/IAP
2. Civil Engineer - Thomas Walcott
3. Mechanical & Electrical Engineer - Francis & Francis
4. Quality Surveyors - Skinner Harper & Dolcy

The cost of the project is estimated at EC\$23.8 million dollars. The proposed financing mechanism of the project was a mix of debt to equity in a ratio of 60:40. The debt financing was provided by a commercial Bank and the National Insurance Board at a fixed rate and repayable over a fifteen-year period. The equity will be raised through the Company which owns and manages the facility with shareholdings as follows: NIS 85%, NIPDEC 15%.

Amusement Corner

Is Sea Water Blue?

Sea Water is actually colourless. If you held ocean water in your hands, you would see that readily enough. But the surface of the sea absorbs all except the blue rays of the sun. These rays are reflected by the water, and make the ocean appear blue. Minerals and tiny organisms in water make the seas take on different colours in some places. Some seas appear deep blue while others are blue-green. So really the Black, Yellow, Red and White Seas are all as blue or bluegreen as any other sea!

A Question of Age

Asked his own age and that of his sister a boy replied, "Three years ago I was seven times as old as my sister; two years ago I was four times as old; last year I was three times as old; and this year I am two-and-a-half times as old." What are their ages?

Find the Numbers:

16	3	2	?
5	10	?	8
?	6	7	12
4	15	14	?

MORE THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW!!!!

- Donald Duck comics were banned in Finland because he doesn't wear any pants
- In the last 4000 years, no new animals have been domesticated.
- Nutmeg is extremely poisonous if injected intravenously.
- Some lions mate over 50 times a day. (YES!!!)
- The cruise liner, Queen Elizabeth 2, moves only six inches for each gallon of diesel that it burns.
- The Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, has twice as many bathrooms as necessary. When it was built in the 1940s, the state of Virginia still had segregation laws requiring separate toilet facilities for blacks and whites.
- TYPEWRITER is the longest word that can be made using the letters on only one row of the keyboard. You can't kill yourself by holding your breath.

Why Do You Yawn?

Sometimes when your body is very tired, your lungs and the rest of your respiratory system may slow down until there's too little air in your lungs. As soon as this happens, your body sets off a quick movement, or spasm, in the muscles of your mouth, throat and chest. This spasm forces you to take in a deep breath of air - a reaction that we call a yawn. You yawn, then, not to stretch your jaw muscles or to relax or anything like that, but to take in more air. Yawns can be contagious. Sometimes if you see a person yawning, you may yawn too! Yawning can be so contagious that simply by reading about yawning, a person will yawn! Did you yawn while reading this article?

Riddles

- What is never out of sight?
- Which burn longer: the candles on a boy's birthday cake or those on a girl's?
- What do we always leave behind because they are dirty?
- There is one type of nail that a carpenter always tries to miss; which is it?
- What is bought by the yard and worn by the foot?
- What can run but can't walk?

Brain Teasers

There are eight apples in a bag and eight children who each want an apple. Is it possible to give an apple to each child and still end up with one in the bag?

If tomorrow's today is Saturday, what is the day after tomorrow's yesterday?

What is the next number in this series:
1 2 3 2 5 4 9 8 17 16 ...?

- Answers**
- A question of Age: The boy is 10; his sister is 4
 - Magic Square: missing numbers horizontally starting with line 1: 13 11 9 1
 - Riddles: The letter's; neither - no candles burn longer. They all burn shorter; footprint; his finger; carpenter; water
 - Brain Teasers:
 - Take 7 apples from the bag and give one each to seven of the children. Then give the bag containing the eighth apple to the eighth child.
 - Saturday
 - 33.