

VALEDICTORIAN ADDRESS

MR LENNORDO GREEN

Inter-Agency Network Youth Development Programme

Graduation Ceremony

March 8, 2022

To our representative of PIOJ, Heart trust /NSTA, NCU, NHT, SDC, CDCs and my fellow graduates under the *IAN* programme Good morning one and all, Today is the day! Today is the day we woke up and tried to wash down a mixture of excitement and nervousness with a nice strong cup of coffee. After all, coffee is supposed to make everything better.

Today is the day we rushed around the house, frantically trying to find that missing sock, desperately trying to stab that stubborn contact lens into our eye, and hurriedly rushing to find that pristine white shirt we bought for graduation day.

Today is the day we got into the car, only to realise that we were caught in a MASSIVE JAM. The day of all days that the Taxi driver took a wrong turn.

Today is the day we are all finally here, we have reached a milestone in our journeys of traversing that increase and expand our wealth of knowledge and experiences. Perhaps the process wasn't as challenging or frustrating as getting here this morning, but here we are, donning our graduation gowns with enthusiasm. Our efforts are rewarded by the impact we have made in society and community, and of course, the delicious food that comes at the reception. This journey wouldn't be possible without the help of all our stakeholders that is apart of the oversight of the IANYDP.

The IANYDP gave me the opportunity to expand my knowledge of job readiness and office skills where I was placed in charge of the Artisan project to help develop a initiative so that Artist of the community can greatly benefit with an income after products are sold. We had the development of a youth arm for the trench town community with my colleague Devante Thompson as the overseer of that... also we had a social enterprise operated and was overseen by Samika Prendergast. These different roles wasn't just the role we had taken up but also administration, as a task that each and everyone individual should have completed for their respective portfolios .

"It's the climb"- by Miley Cirus.... This song was chosen based on the ups and down we had face throughout the Inter-agency networking youth development programme (IANYDP) and the back and forth with our sponsors trying to get everything on the right path. To see a few of our fellow intern step aside from the program was a very frustrating situation as they leave one by one to take on new venture, I do support each and everyone of them for giving me the courage to start the programme at the beginning and even though they are not here today with me, I do believe they will see light of the end of their tunnel as this is the light of the tunnel for my fellow graduates and I. We had fought through tears and pain with having no resources on our apprenticeship and with the late payment of stipend to having adequate resources and being comfortable even with the late payment of stipends.

However, being apart of the different courses such as Project Management and Business administration course had thought us that no project is perfect and having patience is all apart of growing an organization and building project reputation. We had seen all of these challenges when running the Trench Town Youth Empowerment Programme and we had to be innovative and creative in fulfilling the objectives of this project, even though we had only gotten the initial phase of the project.

Let's also not forget our lecturers and supervisors who have guided us- those who have assured us that we would do just fine on our examinations. It is their commitment in our learning that has allowed us to make a difference in the lives of others. A big thank you to all of them, including the administrative staff that helped prepared us! Apart from these groups of people, my faith in God was the one that ultimately fuelled me with the love

needed to believe in the development of my community. It was because He first loved me unconditionally, that I was able to learn to give to such community especially on grumpy days and “ the community will not get better” days that residents inevitably have. Armed with tools, and supported by love and guidance from others, we have reached a pivotal point in our journey today, i looked back with gratefulness and looking forward with eager expectation of the residents of our community eager waiting for us to walk their journey with them.

Today is the day. The day that we will soon be going through those doors, back to our own lives and our different spheres of influence. But just for today, let us choose to remember why we all walked through these same doors into the auditorium. Whether we are lecturers, spouses, friends, siblings, parents or graduates ourselves, we have either come to share this journey with the graduates or have ourselves started to walk down this path of uncovering the hidden potential of every youth whom are willing to take up programs such as IANYDP. Today is the day. Thank you.