



WATTS HAPPENING

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ELECTRICITY COMMISSION

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VISION - Leadership in Energy
Delivery, Excellence in
Customer Service...
enhancing the quality of life
for all.

MISSION - To provide a safe,
reliable, high quality electricity
supply, in an environmentally
responsible manner, utilizing best
practices, through empowered
employees committed to excellence
and customer satisfaction.

- Tablets for field workers
- Strategic Plan to be updated
- 18 Honoured at Employee Awards
- T&TEC in D' Carnival

Planning for our future

At its simplest level, strategic planning involves creating a road map for the future, developed after considering your desired future state, in the context of current and future risks, opportunities and strengths that could be exploited for your benefit, and planning mitigation measures against threats and weaknesses.

As the Commission's Strategic Plan Committee engages with staff in all operating centres to help develop T&TEC's strategic plan for the next five years—2020 to 2024—the stories on the following pages provide a serendipitous opportunity to contemplate some of the areas that can impact the Commission's performance in the next five years and beyond.

The beauty in the cover photo depicts T&TEC's *raison d'être*, the provision of light and power for the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, and the resulting improvement in their quality of life. The positive feedback received from visitors about the sense

of security and comfort created by the lights in the carnival village at the Queens Park Savannah reinforces the reason why T&TEC does business and, as we move forward, consideration should be given to how we can continue to provide light and power in the most efficient manner while continuously satisfying our customers. The introduction of tablets for field workers and the concerns about cybersecurity reference the issue of technology and are a trigger to explore the ways in which technology can be used to improve T&TEC's operations but keeping in mind the need to plan for any potential fallout.

The story of the class of 1974 who are celebrating their 50th anniversary could stimulate discussion on opportunities to boost our technical skills by accessing the knowledge and experience of the brightest and best who went before.

Ideas for gender equity and support of women are explored in the article on International Women's Day. This article is a timely reminder to include the issue of gender in strategic planning.

Acknowledging the inherent strength in a system for recognising and rewarding staff for performance and service, but recognising the reality that changing financial fortunes could impact the way this is done, as highlighted in the simplified ERAC article, thought should be given to innovative ways in which this can be done. Similarly, acknowledging that human resources are the most critical resource in any organisation, it would be beneficial to consider the traits that are the best fit for T&TEC's desired state, including altruism, as demonstrated on pages 18-19 and 26, and ways to engender those qualities. While the articles in this issue were not designed to tie into the strategic planning exercise they do provide food for thought to start personal introspection on the different areas that impact T&TEC's operations and its existence. Think about it.

Cover – Photograph providing an aerial view of the Grand Stand and North Park, Queen's Park Savannah at night, illuminated by T&TEC. See story on page 11.

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Tablets introduced for field workers

The big, bulky binders and stacks of work sheets that typify the field supervisor's work space have been replaced by a sleek and convenient seven-inch tablet. The new smart devices provide enhanced functionality for over 200 employees from T&TEC's five Distribution Areas, who can now access information more quickly. The initiative was a joint venture between the Distribution Planning and Support and the Information Systems (IS) Departments, as the Commission becomes a more paperless environment.

"The intention is to provide all our Supervisors on the field with the tools to help them perform their jobs more effectively," said Richard

Sitahal, Manager - Distribution Planning and Support Department. The long-term plan is to have all other field employees provided with tablets. However, in this first phase, Senior Supervisors, Cable and Substation Supervisors, Crew Supervisors, Consumers Investigators, Maintenance Technicians, Meter Inspectors and Meter Readers each received a new Lenovo Tab 3. On it they can access work procedures, construction manuals, the Health, Safety and the Environment Rules, the T&TEC mobile app and the Cardea medical insurance app.

For the most part, those who received the tablets were pleased with the acquisitions. On February 5, distribution day in Distribution North, Meter Reader, Dean Ward said, "It's a move for better efficiency." Senior Supervisor,



Kevin Abraham (Technician III) introduces Crew Supervisor, Roderick King of Distribution North to his new tablet.



Christopher Moore, while being given instructions on how to use his device added, "It's the way forward". At the onset, the devices contained only general T&TEC documents and applications. However, most recipients anticipated using the devices to access documents specific to their jobs. For instance, Joel De Riggs, Acting Cable Supervisor, said he would welcome the availability of drawings for the underground cables in the city. "That way, I won't have to leave an emergency jobsite to return to the office for drawings prior to starting work," he said.

Mr. Sitahal advised that there are plans to increase the functionality of the devices in

the future. For now, however, additional documents can be automatically pushed to each device as the need arises, once it is connected to a wifi network. There is no need, for instance, to physically replace or add pages to the HSE rules, as updates will be done automatically.

So while the field worker is on the job, with a simple touch and/or swipe, he can write a note, or bring up reference documents in a matter of seconds. In addition to portability, employees can work with the assurance of having accurate information at their fingertips.

Use of the devices is guided by the IS Security Guidelines

and the General Instruction for Assignment of Mobile Information Technology Devices to Employees and Members of the Commission. As they are personal assignments, each employee was asked to sign the Mobile Information Technology Device Agreement.

As business and technology trends show, tablets are transforming the way people work and are here to stay. The use of paper is being greatly reduced, so it is a great way to help save the environment, and supervisors can become empowered to do their jobs more efficiently.

New, updated strategic plan for 2020-2024

Right: Member of the Strategic Plan Committee, Israiell Ali, introduces some key concepts to participants at the first consultation session at Head Office. Looking on is Committee Chairman, Zainool Mohammed.



Prevailing business management theory recommends that strategic plans undergo a review every five years to ensure that companies keep pace with the dynamic business environment. Therefore, if T&TEC's expects to improve its operations and meet its goals, having a well-defined strategic plan is necessary to provide focus and direction, and

ensure that all stakeholders are on the same page. As a result, the Commission's Strategic Plan Committee has embarked on a review of its existing Strategic Plan (2016-2020), with a view to developing a new, updated version for 2020-2024.

Through a series of 'bottom-up' consultations with

employees representing the three bargaining units, the Committee will conduct a Stakeholder Analysis, where all relevant internal and external stakeholders are identified and their expectations determined; SWOT Analysis, to identify T&TEC's strengths and weaknesses, capitalise on opportunities and mitigate threats; and a Resource Audit, where the importance of various elements of T&TEC's physical, financial, human resource and intangible assets are assessed, and strategies for improvement are identified.

The 10 'first stage' consultative sessions will take place at all five Distribution Areas, Head Office, Transmission Division, King

Right: The Head Office participants listen attentively.



Village, the Public Lighting Department and Mt. Hope.

The first session took place on March 14 at Head Office, with two others in Mt. Hope and South at a later date. It is anticipated that all 10 will be completed by the end of April. Simultaneously, the committee will complete a micro economic analysis of T&TEC's current performance along with a Political, Economic, Socio-cultural, Technological, Legal and Environmental (PESTLE) analysis.

The latter findings and the feedback from the stage one consultations will form part of discussions at table top working sessions in the 'second stage' consultation with T&TEC's Executives, Senior Executives and other relevant internal stakeholders.



Photos above and below: Employees engage in lively discussions during the group breakout sessions.

The Strategic Plan Committee is chaired by the Operations Manager - Distribution Tobago, Zainool Mohammed and comprises other senior members of staff including the Chief Financial Officer as Vice Chairman, the Business Development and Administration Manager as Secretary, Corporate Communications Manager, Corporate Secretary, Corporate Support Manager,

Human Resources Manager, Transmission Maintenance Manager and System Planning and Research Manager.

On completion of the Strategic Plan, the Committee will ensure that steps are in place for full implementation of the Plan, and will regularly monitor to confirm that key objectives are being achieved.



Couva play park first illumination for 2019



Above: Minister of Public Utilities, Sen. the Hon. Robert Le Hunte congratulates Minister of Labour and Small Enterprise Development, Sen. the Hon. Jennifer Baptiste-Primus at the Play Park. Also present were (l-r), T&TEC's Chairman, Keith Sirju; Councillor for California/Point Lisas, Ramchand Rajbal Maraj; President of the Lisas Gardens Welfare Council, Fayola Balewa; Sen. the Hon. Foster Cummings; Minister of Housing and Urban Development, the Hon. Maj. Gen. (retired) Edmund Dillon; and T&TEC's General Manager, Kelvin Ramsook.

The new year commenced with illumination and a sense of community for the residents of Lisas Gardens, Couva. On Thursday February 7, T&TEC continued to manifest its vision of enhancing the quality of life for all, by commissioning 16 – 1500-watt flood lights mounted on 4 – 17-meter-high poles at the Lisas Gardens play park. The Lisas Gardens Housing Development was built in the 1980's and is considered to be one of the oldest communities within the Housing Development Corporation (HDC)'s housing portfolio. The Play Park is located opposite the HDC's commercial Village Plaza, making it the hub of family and community based activities.

The occasion was celebrated by scores of attendees, including Senator the Honourable Robert Le Hunte, Minister of Public Utilities; the Minister of Housing and Urban Development, the Honourable Major General (Ret'd) Edmund Dillon; and Minister of Labour and Small Enterprise Development, Senator the Honourable Jennifer Baptiste-Primus. Also present were Senator Foster Cummings; Member of Parliament for Couva South, Rudranath Indarsingh; Councillors of the Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation; and residents and children eager to experience the "lighting-up" of their

play park. The park was one of 12 community recreation projects erected by the Housing and Development Corporation in 2018, through the Estate Management Division.

T&TEC's Chairman, Keith Sirju, echoed the sentiments of residents when he reiterated the importance of installing lights at the play park, "not only will children and adults have additional hours of play and exercise time, but opportunities for social activities aimed at making your community a more cohesive one."

Special mention was also made of projects undertaken by T&TEC to further improve the quality of supply for residents of Couva and environs. These included the extension of the Atlantic 12kV (kilovolts) feeder from the Point Lisas M5000 66kV Substation, which was completed in April 2018 to improve the electricity supply. It is anticipated that by the end of March 2019, residents of Lisas Gardens will also benefit from an alternative supply in the event of an outage, with the commissioning of a new 20/25 MVA transformer at the Savonetta 66kV Substation. An even more electrifying project is scheduled for the Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo region, with the expectation for work to be completed on the upgraded Couva 66kV Substation. This will provide for any future load growth and improve the reliability of the supply to the Couva Medical and Multi-training Facility.

The ceremony concluded with the unveiling of a commemorative plaque and switching on of the lights which triggered emotional applause from the crowd and sounds of jubilation as the lights brightened the play park. This was followed by the cutting of the ribbon to signify the official opening of the play park which came as a result of a collaborative effort among the Housing Development Corporation, the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission and the executive of the Lisas Gardens Community Council.

I.S. Department heightens cyber awareness



Words like ransomware, phishing and Trojan horse might sound strange and appear confusing, but they have long been a part of the information technology lexicon. These topics also feature regularly within cyber security – a concept that all internet users need to be familiar with.

Cyber security refers to the protection of computer systems from theft or damage to their hardware, software or electronic data, and from disruption or misdirection of the services they provide. Viruses and other forms of unauthorised access can cripple the usability, reliability, integrity and safety of a computer system.

One of the components of risk management involves

mitigating T&TEC's information technology and other related risks. In light of this, the Information Systems (IS) Department has embarked on an awareness drive to educate employees on the risks of cyber threats and what they can do to protect themselves and the Commission.

Team Leader of the newly-formed volunteer Cyber Security Committee, René Labban, Systems Analyst I, IS Department, explained that "statistics and studies both show that 95 percent of cyber security breaches are due to human error. The need to educate is therefore not just a good idea, it is now mandatory."

The awareness drive began in January with a staff bulletin on passwords and another in February on the unauthorised installation of applications. The lessons will continue throughout the year, with focus on a different topic each month (see side bar). "This awareness is a continuous process; with the ever changing threats, we need to keep assessing our environment and come up with new ways to address the changing threats," said Mr. Labban.

Employees are encouraged to look out for the bulletins and follow the advice given, since "this will not only help protect the Commission, it can also help to protect you."

The Cyber Security Committee, whose members include IS Department employees Dakota Swanson, Navin Dabiesingh, Larry Pinhero, Kevin Castle and a representative from the Corporate Communications Department, has identified 12 issues to be covered during the year:

- **Passwords**
- **Installing unauthorised applications (Use of flash drives)**
- **What to look for in emails**

Executive appointment



Nigel Marquez

Nigel Marquez was promoted to Human Resources Manager from January 1, 2019.

Prior to his appointment Mr. Marquez acted, for several periods, as Human Resources (HR) Manager and Industrial Relations (IR) Manager. He joined T&TEC in 2002 as a Clerk III and received several promotions in the HR and IR Departments. His last appointment was Senior IR Officer.

Mr. Marquez holds a BSc in Literatures of English and Human Resource Management

from UWI and an MSc in Human Resource Management from the Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business with specialisation in Industrial Relations, Benefits and Compensation Management. He also holds Executive Certification in Conflict Resolution from the University of Windsor, Canada and is a Senior Certified Professional from the Society for Human Resource Management, Virginia, USA. He is the immediate past President of the Human Resources Management Association of Trinidad and Tobago.

- How to spot a bad/malicious URL
- Malware and phishing
- Selfies and social media
- Clean Desk policy
- Safe Internet habits
- Encryption
- Smart Phones
- What to do if you are hacked?
- Controlling what your kids are exposed to (Kold safe routers)



Apprentice class of 1974 celebrates 50th anniversary

Touching and emotional. These were the words used to describe the events that unfolded at the 50th anniversary celebrations for the class of apprentices, 1969 – 1974, which stirred up bygone sentiments from all attendees. The Canton Palace restaurant resounded

in merriment as attendees embraced each other and re-connected, staying true to the theme of the evening, "Maintaining the Link." The 1969-1974 batch consisted of 51 apprentices, 32 of whom were retained by T&TEC.

Vishnu Seetaram, Area Manager - Distribution South, delivered remarks on behalf of T&TEC and reflected on the contributions made by the apprentices and the ways in which they would have paved the way for their successors. Other speakers included former General Manager, Denis Singh; former Assistant General Manager – Administration, Merlin Ramjohn; and past apprentice, Pundit Robindranath Maharaj.

Feature speaker Mr. Singh, commended all present for their active interest in maintaining friendships and camaraderie. He boasted of having interacted with a cadre of highly skilled, trained and motivated employees - which T&TEC has always needed. He recalled that an Area Manager - Felix Alleyne - emerged from this very graduating class.

Mr. Ramjohn recapped some historical events, much to the amusement of those present. He told T&TEC's third batch of apprentices that he was pleased to witness the fruits of labour produced by T&TEC and congratulated the graduates on their accomplishments. He urged all present to maintain their close relations and use their past to forge the way forward.

Felix Alleyne, Former Area Manager - Distribution East, recalled the honour he felt when asked to act as a 'mentor' to up and coming apprentices. He believed his invaluable experience would make a difference in the minds and hearts of those who truly enjoy what they do. His advice to current trainees and graduates; "Aim high, follow your dreams and keep focused." Mr. Alleyne entered the Trade School upon leaving secondary school with a school leaving certificate. He attained his Ordinary and Advanced Level Certificates as well as a B.Sc. part time. He managed to secure employment at T&TEC, moving up the corporate ladder until his retirement in 2013. He hopes his success story from



Guest speaker, Mr. Ramjohn and other guests at the dinner table.

Savannah North Park Lights



Minister of Public Utilities, Senator the Hon. Robert Le Hunte, along with Minister of Community Development, Culture and the Arts, the Hon. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, switch on the lights at the North Park Area. Also in attendance were T&TEC's Chairman, Keith Sirju; T&TEC's Area Manager Distribution North, Curvis Francois; NCC Chairman, Winston Gypsy Peters; and NCC CEO, Colin Lucas.

Let the show begin! Workers from the Public Lighting Department laboured to ensure the timely installation of light at the North Park and "Tarmac" Queen's Park Savannah. Senator the Honourable Robert Le Hunte, Minister of Public Utilities, along with Minister of Community Development, Culture and the Arts, Dr. the Honourable, Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, formally switched on the lights prior to the start of the King and Queen of Carnival competition on February 21.

The illumination of this space in front of the Grand Stand was completed to ensure secure lighting for events carded during the Carnival Season. This endeavour would have been most appreciated by attendees of the popular Army Fete held the following night, and also loyal patrons, event organisers and visitors to the Savannah for Panorama finals, Dimanche Gras and Calypso Monarch competitions.

Trainee to Area Manager, will inspire others to follow in his footsteps.

The T&TEC apprenticeship programme was launched in 1952, six years after T&TEC began its operations in 1946. The programme has served as a model and framework for the existing training facilities today.

Right- Past Apprentices in conversation. From left. Carlyle Clarke, Pundit Robindranath Maharaj, C.Ramjitsingh, and R.Helenese.



Balance for Better - Five ways to celebrate women

International Women's Day (IWD) was celebrated on March 8, under the theme, Balance for Better. Balance, depending on its interpretation, can allude to simultaneous management of your personal and professional life; penetrating the glass ceiling for equality in the workplace; bridging the gender wage gap; or even balancing the gender roles at home, that is, changing the discourse on female and male functions. Whatever your interpretation, "Balance for Better" seeks to establish opportunities for women to gain greater equity.

Throughout the years, T&TEC has been improving gender parity, as evidenced by a growing number of female engineers, managers and board members. In support of women, here are five ways in which we can celebrate women and help improve the gender balance ... every day of the year.

Donate to a cause

Throughout Trinidad and Tobago, many non-profit organisations exist with the specific goal to assist women in need. The Organisation for Abused and Battered Individuals (OABI) was founded to address the rapid increase

in cases of abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, and gender-based violence. Similar non-governmental organisations include the Women's Organisation for the Underprivileged, the Coalition against Domestic Violence, and Women against Abuse and Violent Encounters

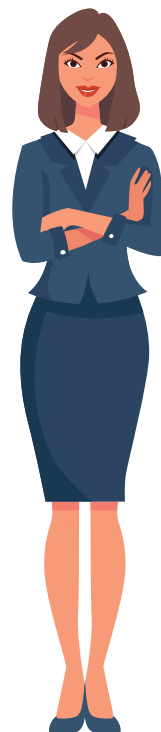


(Tobago). While assistance need not be financial, volunteering of time, talents, personal necessities and even providing mentorship or educational classes are some ways to ensure women at these institutions are uplifted.

Support for women-owned businesses

The Association of Female Executives of Trinidad and Tobago (AFETT) has identified challenges faced by women's businesses to include funding, lack of proper support systems, and fear of failure. To honour women all year round,

support female entrepreneurs of art, crafts, trades, restaurants or big project undertakings and help overcome these limitations. Artisan markets like Upmarket and seasonal pop-up shops are filled with female small-business owners. Regardless of the endeavour, patronising their business, or even offering social media support to enhance their visibility is another way to celebrate these women, and help them reach their goals.

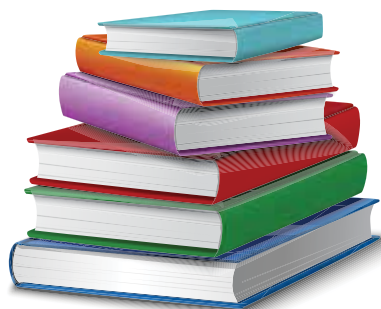


Read a book from an inspiring female author

Trinidad and Tobago has produced many award winning writers. Merle Hodge, is well known for her recognisable novel, *Crick Crack, Monkey*, which focuses on the effects of colonial imposition, social and cultural values, and cultural appropriation on the Trinidadian female. Another author, Valerie Belgrave, who wrote

Ti Marie and *Dance the Water*, participated in the 1969 sit-in of students at the ninth floor of the Sir George Williams University (now Concordia), in Canada, in protest against a professor who was accused of racism. The incident, which became the subject of a documentary called *The Ninth*

Floor, is believed to have helped spark the 1970 Black Power Revolution in Trinidad.



Another more contemporary author, Lauren K. Alleyne, is the writer of *Difficult Fruit*, which names and claims the fruits of a passage into womanhood, and *Honeyfish*, a collection of poems which memorialises and mourns the deaths of African Americans who have died at police hands. Her work has been widely published in journals and anthologies such as, *The Atlantic*, *Ms. Muse*, *Women's Studies Quarterly*, *Guernica*, *The Caribbean Writer*, and *Crab Orchard Review*, among others.

Delve into "Her Story"

Learning about the historical feats of Trinidad and Tobago women can certainly change the way other women view themselves. One such woman is Linda McCartha Monica Sandy-Lewis, also known as, Calypso Rose. Recognised globally for her energy, passion and undeniable stage presence, Calypso Rose also suffered three heart attacks, two bouts of cancer and is a child rape survivor.



Apart from culture, there are countless other amazing women who inspire, like our first female President, Paula Mae Weekes; Olympian Cleopatra Borel; former Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar; or Chemist and multiple patent-holder, Dolly Nicholas, the first female to receive a national award for scientific invention.

Honour yourself

For women, the ultimate way to honour yourselves may just be to start from within. Celebrating and elevating other women should ideally occur after much introspection and becoming aware of your higher purpose and ultimate goals in life. This can be done by developing dormant talents, investing in your education, striking a balance between your personal and professional life, or learning a new skill - become your own plumber or mechanic, for instance.

For men, continuous support for women and propagating equitable opportunities can ensure that IWD is celebrated every day.



Eighteen honoured at simplified ERAC



Chairman, Keith Sirju, presents 41-year awardee Gilbert Taylor with his token

The 4th Floor of the Stanley P. Ottley Building, Mt. Hope was illuminated by the vibrant colour of orange, accentuated by beige and white, creating an ambience fitting to say thank you. The colour was also a fitting representation of the energy, brilliance and passion of the 18 awardees who were being honoured for their long service to T&TEC.

Delivering a quote from William Arthur Ward, "Feeling gratitude and not expressing it, is like wrapping a present and not giving it", Chairperson, Assistant Corporate Communications Manager, Clare Cooper-Vincent, set the tone for the modified Employee Recognition and Awards Ceremony (ERAC). The

event took place on January 31, and honoured employees achieving 25 to 41 years of service, who were either nearing retirement, or recently retired. The employees were recognised in the presence of their guests, Members of the Commission, Managers, and the Senior Executive.

T&TEC Chairman, Keith Sirju, congratulated the "remarkable" group of awardees and noted that the luncheon ceremony was being held because the Commission "is obliged, notwithstanding our financial challenges, to acknowledge your contribution and thank you for your loyal service to the Commission and indeed to the people of our country". The Chairman

referenced a commemorative programme booklet with awardees' profiles, and noted that "a common thread in all your stories was a sense of pride in your job and regard for the customer's needs as priority." He therefore asked those who are not yet retired to share their experiences and positive values with other employees, as the Commission continues to improve its productivity and service delivery.

General Manager, Kelvin Ramsook, saluted awardees for their longevity and outstanding work. He delivered an intimate recounting of each recipient's professional stewardship and commended them on the impact made



Awardee Sheila Williams gives the Vote of Thanks.



Distribution Tobago Awardees (L-R) Selwyn Williams, Sheila Williams, Rudolph James and Helen Phillips.

in helping to shape the Commission over the years.

Thirty-six-year long service recipient, Sheila Williams brought the gathering to a close. Speaking on behalf of her colleagues, Ms. Williams, former Commercial Officer from Distribution Tobago,

referred to the celebration as "closing this chapter of our lives" and described their contribution as "pillars and stalwarts" of T&TEC and the wider society.

Guests were treated with entertaining performances by musical vocalists and a

guitarist from the Angelic Sounds Music Centre and by Tynielle Solomon, Clerk II, Distribution Tobago.

As the formal part concluded, the atmosphere was lightened as invitees mingled and partook in a delicious buffet lunch.

Awardees: Back row (L-R): Wayne Brown, Errol Moe, Harold Lee, Winston Sankar, Helen Phillips, Gilbert Taylor, Gabriel Nelson, Rudolph James and Selwyn Williams. Front Row (L-R): Placidus Vance, Brian Armoogan, Sheila Williams, Ingrid Mundy, Kishore Balbadar, and Patrick Wiggins.



Hotline work in focus in Tobago

On February 19, 2019, Distribution Tobago's hotline crew, led by Hotline Supervisor, Ericson Smart, installed a 12 kV Air Break Switch (ABS) using hotline techniques at Robert Street, Bon-Accord Integrated Development. The job signalled the revival of the two-truck hotline system in Tobago, which further reduces the disruption of supply to customers for jobs of this nature.



Hotline Crew. (l-r), Marlon Hector (Driver), Hector Graham (Ag Hotline B Linesman), Johnny Sampson (Driver), Ericson Smart (Hotline Supervisor), Nicanor Irvine (Hotline A Linesman), Darren Sandy (Hotline B Linesman)

The new ABS, number 106, was installed to establish the fourth feeder out of the Milford Bay 66/33 kV Substation. The 12 kV board at the Substation was designed to have 4 - 12 kV feeders but, in 2009, during phase one of the Substation upgrade project, only 3 - 12 kV feeders were established and commissioned. With the anticipation of further load growth in the already developing south western end of Tobago, work is underway to establish the fourth feeder, which is expected to be completed by the end of April. When commissioned, the new feeder will provide greater

flexibility on the 12 kV distribution system and improve the reliability in the electricity supply to customers.



UWI students visit Communications Department

Last November, electrical and computer engineering students from the University of the West Indies (UWI) were given the opportunity to visit T&TEC as part of their education in the field. The 25 students engaged with employees of the Communications Department at Mount Hope, to learn about the diverse technologies used and to apply their knowledge to the real world.

Senior Engineer, Mark Lessey; Engineer II, Navin Rampersad; and Engineer I, Susan Pooran-Churaman, were happy to share their expertise on T&TEC's mobile radio system and a new trunk radio system, which allows switching personnel to communicate effectively and safely; the PBX network, which facilitates internal and external



Engineer II, Navin Rampersad, explains the workings of the radio room during the tour.

telephone communication at a reduced cost; and the video surveillance equipment, located at various communication sites to view and protect the Commission's assets. They were also introduced to fibre optic SONET technology, which is used to transport all the above mentioned services, while also providing transport services for internal Departments

such as Information Systems, Protection and SCADA, Metering and System Control and Generation Interface.

The exercise began with a presentation by Mr. Lessey, followed by a tour of the radio room, where the students observed how the various technologies are installed and merged to provide communication services to employees.

The enthusiasm of the students showed that they enjoyed the interactive exercise and were intrigued by the different applications to which they were introduced.



Left: Senior Engineer, Mark Lessey, with students of the University of the West Indies at Mount Hope.

Employees who love all and serve all

Altruism is described as being selfless and concerned for the well-being of others. It is characterised by putting others first, thinking about how your actions will affect others, feeling good after helping someone and being proactive. In this edition of the Watts Happening, we showcase the altruistic efforts of T&TEC employees in the hope of inspiring others to do their part to make our country a better place.

Below: Michael Chong Kiaw preparing to serve up hot meals.

Labourer Michael Chong Kiaw spends a couple evenings after work each week cooking and distributing meals to the homeless in Chaguanas. He joined the charitable group, *Love All, Serve All*, as a cook in 2017 and soon after began making runs to serve food to persons in Longdenville, Enterprise, Montrose and in the heart of Chaguanas. "I love cooking, so it was easy for me to help out," he said. "We serve vegetarian meals, including soups, kitchari (dhal cookup), roti, noodles and callaloo, to between 40-150 persons." The group

relies solely on donations and prepares meals daily from two locations, Port of Spain and Chaguanas. On Michael's Chaguanas deliveries he distributes hot meals to grateful men, women and even children, some of whom now know him by name.

Michael is known among his colleagues in the Supplies Department for his generosity, and would often be called to assist when other like-minded individuals were on missions to help others. Such was the case when his colleague, Matthew Henry, also a Labourer in the





Above: Matthew Henry offering assistance during recent flood relief efforts.

Supplies Department, called upon him to provide meals to families affected by October's flood. Like Michael, Matthew is also well-known for his generosity and willingness to help others. If a family's house burned down, or a single mom needed school books, Matthew was the one to mobilise assistance. "I used to get licks as a child for giving away my lunch," he joked, explaining that he prefers "to do without so that someone else can have."

Helping others has always been Matthew's philosophy. After assisting his military friends in relief efforts after the regional hurricanes Maria

and Irma in 2017, he felt compelled to join the Army Reserves. He is currently making plans to enlist so he can make a meaningful contribution. More recently, Matthew was a hero to many during the October floods. When news of the devastation first emerged, he and his friend, ex-soldier Jeffery Wong, journeyed to Port of Spain to shuttle commuters from City Gate to their communities along the East-West corridor, to as far as Arima. Later, he journeyed to several stricken communities, wading through neck-high waters to rescue trapped residents and returning after

the waters receded to help with clean up. "People are afraid to step forward and will watch from afar during a disaster, but I cannot see people suffering," he said.

Matthew enlisted Michael and his group, who were able to contribute towards providing 600 boxed lunches to affected families that weekend.

"The feeling I get after giving back is indescribable," said Michael. "On the days I go out to distribute food, I get the best night's rest." He is considering extending his kindness with a soup kitchen, so persons can get cleaned up and have a meal "inside a warm place, instead of out on the cold pavement."

With names like Matthew and Michael, it is no surprise that these two gentlemen have adopted saint-like traits and giving of themselves is second nature. For those not so inclined, take Michael's advice, "find something that you love doing, or that you are good at and use it to help someone. Then it won't feel like a chore."

Well done, gentlemen!

Do you know of any other altruistic employee? Do let us know!

Young players shine at TAHSO

After an electrifying preliminary performance and scintillating semi-final showing, the South/Central zonal champs, T&TEC Tropical Angel Harps Steel Orchestra, culminated the 2019 Carnival season with a credible ninth place finish among the large conventional bands at the 2019 national Panorama finals.

Intense preparations began in January, with long-standing arranger, Clarence Morris and section leaders, working hard to finalise the arrangement of their selected tune, Superblue's Rag Storm. TAHSO's membership is notably young, but the years of investing in their youth players and grooming them under their first-class music

programme, have paid off immensely. As Mr. Morris acknowledged, many of the young players have "come of age and although they were members of the youth band, they have been doing so well, we just filtered them in," he said on preliminary judging night on February 10.

The Junior Orchestra placed seventh in the Junior Panorama finals on February 24 at the Queen's Park Savannah, with an energetic performance of Kes' Hello, arranged by Curtis Jones.



Some of the young players of the TAHSO Youth Orchestra

Some of the young players even arranged for single pan side, New Age Trendsetters, which performed at the TAHSO pan yard and made it to the Panorama finals for the first time, placing twelfth.

Kudos to all involved - the tuners, painters, welders, the musicians and the management of TAHSO on a job well done.

TAHSO gave an exhilarating performance on Panorama finals night.



Young arranger leads "East Side" to the top

*Photo courtesy
Newsday.*



In the quiet night air, the crisp melodic sound of steel pan music wafted through the country side village of Belle Garden, Tobago, the home of the small, yet electrifying, T&TEC New East Side Dimension steel orchestra. It was a couple weeks before the Panorama preliminaries and the energy in the panyard was prescient of the successful 2019 Carnival season that would follow with their rendition of Kes' 2018 soca hit Hello.

After the death of Ken 'Professor' Philmore, their arranger for three years, the band, popularly known as "East Side", opted for a young, up and coming Tobagonian arranger, 24-year-old Kersh Ramsey. This was Mr. Ramsey's first time arranging for a Panorama competition. He said that he was humbled and grateful for the faith placed in and opportunity given to him by the band. He chose Hello, because he wanted a piece that was

current and upbeat, and he believed himself capable of producing a captivating and creative arrangement of the song. This was a departure from the older songs, chosen for "strong musicality", that the band played in years past.

East Side usually comprises a core stage side of approximately 18 players who perform year round. However, for Panorama, the band's management solicits players outside of the Belle Garden community. Over the last few years, the band would contract Trinidadian players but decided against that route this year, with the exception of the drill master.

What started as a cost saving measure brought out the best in the band and on the night of the National Panorama preliminaries, they executed a clean and energetic performance and placed first, along with two other bands, in the small band category. This created a momentum which

took them to first place in the Tobago House of Assembly's Pan Champs and second in the national Panorama finals in the Small Band category.

The band received many accolades from the public for their riveting showing and the competency of the arranger. Secretary of the band, Joycelyn Blackman-Muir, was grateful and overwhelmed with joy at the accomplishments after overcoming various obstacles, including low morale among players early in the season.

Mr. Ramsey has emerged out of this carnival season as one of the young arrangers to watch. He and the band are looking forward to continually building their relationship and acquiring even more success in the future.

T&TEC in D' Carnival

Right: Marlon Rampersad as D'Maratus



The love that Distribution South's Marlon Rampersad has for the mas' was evident this carnival season. Despite a reduced budget, the 19-year veteran was still committed to producing the beautiful individual costumes for his family. His portrayal this year was D'Maratus, a majestic peacock spider, built by re-purposing and re-using some of the materials from his previous costumes. He placed 4th in the South King of Carnival competition.



Distribution Tobago's calypso diva, Estate Constable Dionne Nicola Phillip, represented T&TEC at the Tobago House of Assembly's Inter-Department Carnival competition, placing third. Her song, The Flooring Man, was a humorous double entendre about her dealings with a tradesman to renovate her bedroom. The T&TEC tent at the competition was also decorated

depicting Nicola's presentation, complete with bed, drapes and hardwood floors.



Michael Toby, also from Distribution Tobago, has established himself among the top steelband arrangers in the country as the arranger for the

only large band in Tobago, Redemption Sound Setters. The Line Clearer has been a member of the band for 28 years, and moved up the ranks, from player, to drill master, drummer and finally, to arranger, when he began arranging in 2013. This year, the band won the Tobago House of Assembly's Panorama competition with their rendition of Nailah Blackman's Iron Love.



Michael is a past winner of T&TEC's 2013 Emancipation talent competition in the pan category. He also arranges for Tobago small band, Uptown Fascinators and Canada's JK Pan Vibrations.

"Rumbox" captures curry duck title



T&TEC's Central Distribution Area was the hot-spot to be on Friday February 15, as fourteen teams fired up their chulhas and contended for the top prize of \$3,000.00 at Distributions' South and Central Soca After Work Curry Duck Lime.

The jointly-hosted after work lime kicked off from 5:00 p.m. and included participating teams from various Areas and Departments. The intense aroma of curry powder, bhandhania, and 'buss' pepper filled the air as teams began to chonkay their pots, and showcase their sweet-hand skills.

It was team "Rumbox", representing Head Office, to emerge curry duck champs, led by iron chef Rajendra Ganar and members, Amit Ramoutar, Kevon Ramdhanie, Richard De Leon and Sheradon Hastic, who arrived fashionably late, duck in-tow. In the face of losing headway arising from paramount disadvantages such as getting lost and enduring

peak time traffic, the team still managed to smoke out the competition and emerge as the overall winner. When questioned about his culinary expertise, Rajendra Ganar attributed his talents to spending a lot of time turning the iron pot at Caura River limes. Team member Amit Ramoutar identified the secret ingredient as "tardiness", but nonetheless the team's collective effort helped secure their win.

The night unfolded with patrons catching the Carnival spirit with Soca artiste Nadia Batson leveling up the party vibes, with her crowd pleasing groovy hit "So Long." Employees and friends alike revelled to the sweet sound of soca into the night and the competition ended on a high note with announcement of the overall winner.



Soca artiste Nadia Batson during her performance at the after work Curry Duck Lime.

T&TEC shuts down TT-Post fundraiser



First place winner Hayden Kurban of Distribution North.



First place female- Sherry-Ann Williams.



Second place winner Kevin Briceno of Distribution East.



Second place female- Salida Patrick

T&TEC employees walked away with the lion's share of prizes and top positions at a fund-raising event and Fitness Party Burnout hosted by the Trinidad and Tobago Postal Corporation (TTPost) on Saturday February 9. The sound of sweet soca rocked the crowd from left to right at the National Mail Centre in Piarco, while participants showed off their aerobic skills, including children who challenged themselves by joining in the fun.

Northern Area's Hayden Kurban shut down the event as "Last Man Standing" and placed first as the overall winner, while Northern Area Sports Club member Sherry-Ann Williams captured the first place female title overall. Kevin Briceno, representing the Eastern Area Sports Club, placed second in the male category, while his wife, Salida Patrick, placed second in the overall female category.

After a vigorous session of twists, turns, and dips, it was T&TEC which stole the show and walked away triumphantly. The event proved to be a test of endurance and fortitude for some; for others, it was an opportunity to enjoy the Saturday evening, jamming to their favourite tunes in the spirit of the Carnival season.

Employee update

Appointments, Promotions, Moving On and Accomplishments

APPOINTMENTS

NAME

Michael Popplewell
Sandy Chadee

POSITION

Technical Assistant III
Engineer II

AREA/DEPARTMENT

Distribution North
Supplies

PROMOTIONS

NAME

Carol Ann Lee Singh-Kaloo
Nickesha Sammy
Nigel Marquez
Louis Castillo

POSITION

Head of Projects – Dist.
Subsection Leader
Human Resources Manager
Crew Supervisor

AREA/DEPARTMENT

Technical Division
Distribution Tobago
Human Resources
Distribution South

DEPARTURE

NAME

Barry Rampersad
Brian Armoogan
Carl Philbert
Claudia Forde
Clement Mc Kain
Ennis Ambrose
Errol Balroop
Evelyn Blackman
Frederick Gonzalez
Gilbert Taylor
Krishna Harrylal
Lennox Toby
Melvin Springer
Michael Madray
Nerrisa Mohammed
Norman Bobb
Paul Amoroso
Pearl Alleyne
Phillip Charles
Rajkumar Alexander
Ramdallip Rampersad
Rawlins Cuffie
Rosemarie Sathoo
Sherwin Mc Lean
Soya Sahatoo
Steve Ramtahal
Susan Adolphus-Roan
Tameshwar Ramnarain
Wazir Mohammed

POSITION

Customer Services Officer
Control Operator (PTH)
Meter Reader
Salaries and Wages Supv.
Estate Constable
Technical Assistant II
Meter Reader
Stenotypist
Surveying Assistant
Meter Supervisor
Crew Supervisor
Mechanical Assistant
Hotline Supervisor
Substation Supervisor
Clerk II
Hotline Supervisor
Software Developer I
Customer Services Officer
Operator II (Tobago)
Line Clearer Supervisor (T)
Driver – Aerial Lift Truck
Crew Supervisor
Section Leader
Crew Supervisor
Customer Services Officer
Line Clearer Supervisor (T)
Clerk Typist
Estate Constable
Snr. Supervisor Trans. & Dist.

AREA/DEPARTMENT

Commercial
System Control & Generation Interface
Distribution South
Chief Accountant
Security – Distribution East
Distribution East
Distribution East
Metering Services
Distribution East
Metering Services
Distribution Central
Distribution Tobago
Distribution South
Distribution East
Distribution South
Distribution East
Information Systems
Distribution South
Distribution Tobago
Distribution North
Distribution South
Distribution East
Distribution East
Distribution East
Distribution Central
Distribution Central
Communications Department
Security – Distribution North
Distribution East

Call Centre employees care

Because of its wide reach, social media is often used to highlight the sad realities of some of society's most vulnerable citizens. Featuring images to tug at the heartstrings of viewers, Facebook and WhatsApp posts seek to get troubled persons the help they desperately need. Unfortunately, very few persons are moved enough to actually assist.

For employee, J'leise Orr, however, it was impossible to ignore a heart-breaking Facebook video of a woman relating the tragic event of her daughter succumbing to an asthmatic attack at home in the presence of her (the daughter's) five young children. Ms Orr, a Dispatcher II at the Call Centre, came across the emotional video last December and knew that she had to do something.

She said, "the video stood out to me not only because I'm a young mother but because of the trauma that the children went through." After relaying the story to her colleagues, and with the blessing of their Supervisor, Farrell Christopher, they all



J'leise Orr (left) and other Call Centre employees.

agreed to help the grieving woman, Kathy-Ann Cyrus, and her grandchildren, whose ages ranged from nine months to ten years old. The employees quickly collected foodstuff, clothing, shoes, toiletries and household supplies, which Ms. Orr delivered to the family in Santa Flora. "When I visited, Ms. Cyrus was very, very appreciative and said that a lot of people call and promise help, but most don't actually show up."

The five children, four boys and one girl, now live with Ms. Cyrus, her other daughter and husband in a modest two-bedroom wooden house, without

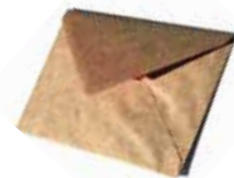
indoor plumbing. Despite her financial difficulties, Ms. Cyrus is determined to keep the children together.

The Call Centre employees have decided to informally adopt the children by "assisting with their annual school supplies," and are seeking to mobilise assistance to construct another room to the house to better accommodate the family.

Should you wish to assist the family in any way, please contact J'leise Orr at extension #4547.

LETTERS

The following are excerpts of some letters and emails that have been received over the last quarter. Correspondence may be edited for length or clarity.



January 18, 2019

Mr. Shazard Mohammed
PLD, Manager, T&TEC

Mr. Rajesh Jaimungal, Senior Foreman and his crew* visited the Gasparee Island, Chaguaramas early this morning (January 18) and replaced the blown cells on the five street lights near Bomshell Bay Resorts.

We really appreciated your assistance in rectifying this problem. Please convey our thanks to Mr. Jaimungal.

Regards
Angela Campbell
GIHAL
Operations Manager

** Editor's Note – The crew members that assisted with repairs were Zaid Ali, Crew Forman, Darlin Nehore and Brian Sookraj, Linesmen 'B' and Sherman Ramsaran and Brandon Khan, Labourers.*

Tuesday 22 January, 2019

Email to - Customer Services Officer, East

Good day,

I wish to express my sincere thanks to your Customer Service Representative (CSR) - Ms. Keisha Peters for her

extreme professionalism and customer service displayed to me this morning.

Ms. Peters was very diligent and went above and beyond to facilitate my request for connection.

Ms. Peters is a true example of excellent customer service and, by extension, a great representation of T&TEC Arima [Service Centre].

Keep up the great work!

Best regards
Johnason Nath
Manager, Production Support,
ITM Division
Republic Bank Limited

Customer, Patricia Marchan, of Lowkie Trace, Penal, sent a thank you card to the employees of Distribution South in appreciation for the work of the "350 crew". The crew was assigned to a job in December 2018 to reposition the customer's Point of Entrance.

Ms. Marchan was appreciative of the "thoughtfulness shown to me" by Crew Supervisor, Krishna Lall, and crew members Donny Loutan, Gregory Callender and Naresh Rampersad. The Engineer in

charge of the job was Valline Jacob.

February 18, 2019

The Utilisation Engineer
T&TEC
Arima

Dear Sir/Madam

On January 18, 2019, a letter was written requesting the removal of T&TEC wires at the Madras Government Primary School's playground. I am pleased to report these wires were removed on February 4 and 15, respectively.

I wish, on behalf of teachers, staff, students and myself, to express our sincerest gratitude for the prompt, efficient and professional service given to us by the responsible parties.

Thank you,
Cherry Ann Drakes
Principal

