



For Immediate Release
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Primary School Debaters Speak Out Against Sexually Explicit Programmes - in Grand Final Scotiabank HIV & AIDS Debates

Students of the Corinaldi Avenue Primary School in Montego Bay rejoiced last Wednesday after defeating their counterparts from the Lannaman's Preparatory School in Kingston to be declared winners in the Scotiabank National Primary Schools HIV and AIDS Debating Competition. Corinaldi won by a wide margin of 54 points after proposing the moot *'Owners of television stations and producers of sexually explicit programmes should be responsible for the anti-social behaviors of young viewers'*. Both teams were impressive in their arguments as they used extensive research, examples and great argumentative skills.

Each member of the winning team from Corinaldi Avenue received \$300,000, a trophy and certificate while the school received 3 computers and one printer. Lannaman's team received \$150, 000 for each member plus replica trophies, certificates, two computers and a printer for their school. While the third place winners, Morant Bay Primary received \$75,000 for each debater plus certificates, a computer and a printer.

Vivienne Morrison, coach for the Corinaldi team felt delighted by her students victory as they had worked hard in the competition. "At the beginning it was very difficult to motivate the children and get them to work on their research and presentation skills. By the quarterfinals they had improved their vocabulary, listening skills and presentation styles. Going into the semi and grand finals they practiced over time at school and work even harder through lunch and their holidays so I am grateful their hard work paid off."

Ms Morrison also noted that the competition has also had a significant impact on the students as they became more knowledgeable about HIV and sensitive towards persons living with the

disease. “During the debates season the students did a collection drive for food and clothing and donated it to the AIDS hospice in their community.”

The grand final event proved to be an exciting day for the other 1200 children who attended the event from schools all over the island as they were able to test their knowledge levels about HIV and AIDS, speak about the importance of abstinence and demonstrate anti-stigma toward the specially invited persons living with AIDS who attended the debates. The Pegasus Ballroom was transformed to host interactive displays from agencies that work in HIV and AIDS, a cool abstinence lounge and a sex horror house to warn students of the dangers of early and irresponsible sex.

The debate which has the tagline Speak Up! Speak Out! has given students the chance to discuss issues of sexuality and HIV and AIDS since the start of the 2008 season of debates on February 5. They have been exposed to an intense period of research, education and training about the issues involving children and HIV and AIDS. This has also seen them interfacing directly with persons living with the disease through seminars and presentations. The competition has also targeted parents, teachers and members of the external community through a number of seminars and road shows.

Scotiabank launched the competition in December 2006 to raise awareness levels among young children and change attitudes towards persons living with the disease, by fighting stigma and discrimination while promoting healthy lifestyles. Over 190 schools registered for the competition, and received resource material to assist in their HIV and AIDS education.

Since being launched the programme has been endorsed internationally by the Global Business Coalition on HIV and AIDS and also received acclaim from the US Film and Video Festival where it has won a Certificate and a Silver Screen Award for videos the Bank produced and gave to students as part of their resource material,

Scotiabank has openly expressed its commitment to leading the fight against HIV and AIDS internationally. Regionally, Jamaica has led the mission through innovative interactions among staff and in the community. Demonstrating further Scotiabank involvement in the fight against

HIV and AIDS was the recent partnership with the JCDC through our commitment to sponsor a healthy life style category focusing on the fight against HIV and AIDS.

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