



**GIS MARKETING &
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CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Two New Employment Programmes Planned

Unemployed Caymanian single mothers and young men over the age of 21 years will get an opportunity to tackle the barriers that have kept them from getting and maintaining employment, when two new *Passport2Success* programmes are launched in 2012.

The Ministry of Education, Training and Employment is expanding its highly successful *Passport2Success* programme to include these two new groups, in two separate work-readiness development programmes.

The two cohorts, scheduled to start in January 2012, will run concurrently for 20 weeks. However the single mothers' programme will begin three weeks prior to the programme targeting young men.

An application deadline is set for 30 November, 2011. Twenty spaces are available for each programme. Application forms are available online at www.passport2success.ky.

According to the Hon. Rolston Anglin, JP, Minister for Education, Training and Employment, the two new programmes are a response to the need for more quality interventions to assist persons seeking employment.

"Since its launch in April 2010, *Passport2Success* has proven that a quality programme, which addresses barriers to employment in a holistic way, is needed and can make a difference. The program is achieving its goal of transforming struggling young people age 17-20 into mature, work-ready citizens, and we are confident that it can also make a difference for other vulnerable groups out there," Minister Anglin stated.

Minister Anglin advised that focus groups have been held with single mothers and young males, by the Ministry's strategic partner, the Wellness Centre, to better understand their unique experiences of unemployment. The information gathered will be included in a revised curriculum and will be reflected in changes to the programme model.

“This consultation process is critical; I am convinced that the key to the success of Passport2Success is the fact that it responds to real life issues and needs of the participants, whatever they might be,” Minister Anglin noted.

Wellness Centre Director, Ms Shannon Seymour, explained that the programmes will include the development of communication and negotiation skills. Core elements will include résumé writing, an overview of the Labour Law and employment contracts, and sessions covering workplace expectations and practices.

Identified deficits in budgeting and finance skills, customer service skills, department and self-confidence will also be addressed. Group and individual counselling and detailed assessments will also be important features of the programme.

To start, successful applicants will participate in a three-week in-class orientation that includes site visits and guest speakers. Following that, a 16-week combination of in-class work and internship will add to participants’ skill base. Week 20 will close the programme with the sharing and processing of experiences as well as a graduation exercise.

Noting the importance of the internship component, Programme Facilitator Dr. Tasha Ebanks-Garcia explained that its focus will be skill acquisition as opposed to work experience.

“We want our graduates to walk away with a tangible skill. Through an apprenticeship-focused internship, participants will have the opportunity to learn skills that will increase their marketability and employability. The benefit for employers is that skilled Caymanians will be available at the end of the programme.”

Passport2Success organisers are soliciting the support of local businesses for the provision of unpaid internships. Interested organisations may contact Shannon Seymour on 949-9355 or email info@wellnesscentre.ky.

Passport2Success is a free programme provided by the Ministry of Education, Training and Education, with the support of private sector sponsors Butterfield Bank

(Cayman) Ltd., CML Offshore Recruitment, and LIME Communications. Transportation for the program is provided by Webster's Tours Ltd.

(GIS)

Photo caption: *Photo by Information Officer Kenisha Morgan.*

A group of recent *Passport2Success* graduates with Education Ministry representatives and sponsors.

For the official Cayman Islands Government web portal, www.gov.ky:

Web title: Passport2Success for Adults

Web blurb: Two new programmes will target unemployed Caymanian single mothers and men over 21 years.