



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Trade and Industry

MEDIA RELEASE

Trade & Industry Minister launches Yachting Marine Apprenticeship Programme

July 10, 2024: One hundred and fifty (150) trainees are set to benefit from the 1st cohort of participants under the Yachting Marine Apprenticeship Programme (YMAP). This announcement was made by Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry during the launch of the Yachting Marine Apprenticeship Programme on Wednesday 10 July, 2024. This Programme is yet another proactive initiative by the Government, through the Ministry of Trade and Industry, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, to strengthen our Yachting sector through the building of capacity among our most valuable resource - our young people.

Minister Gopee-Scoon described Trinidad and Tobago's Yachting sector as one that has demonstrated its economic viability over the years with the provision of world-class repair and maintenance services for all types of pleasure crafts. The Minister articulated that based on global trends, the demand for yachts has gradually expanded over the last few years, owing to rising disposable income, increased focus on leisure or recreational activities and growing preference for luxury tourism. She went on to state that manufacturers are also focusing on including luxury features in pleasure crafts for improved performance and enhanced customer experience. These developments indicate that the Yachting sector is becoming more sophisticated and Trinidad and Tobago must respond and adapt to these developments internationally and review our product offering.

In response to these emerging trends the Minister urged business and individuals that provide yacht repair and maintenance services to modernize and upskill their human resources to be better equipped to repair and maintain these contemporary vessels. She noted that as a result of this, there is a need for greater training and development of staff that work on these vessels to remain relevant and competitive. She explained that, "globally, the use of apprenticeship training systems are also growing in popularity as a useful tool to support workforce development and create a ready supply of labour to efficiently and effectively fill existing vacancies." This view was supported

by a Forbes Magazine article in November 2023 which also advocated the implementation of Apprenticeship Systems.

It is against this background, Minister Gopee-Scoon indicated, the Yachting Marine Apprenticeship Programme (YMAP) was conceptualized by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, as well as key industry stakeholders. The YMAP involves training in a range of specialized areas through both in-class and practical sessions. It will also feature a period of industrial attachment whereby trainees will be placed at the facilities of companies within the sector to gain practical training on what was learnt in the classroom. Additional features of YMAP are that it involves a monthly Stipend Allowance of TT\$1,500, as well as the provision of employment opportunities within the sector upon graduating.

The areas of specialization include inter alia: Sail Repair; Marine Air-conditioning and Refrigeration; Marine Plumbing; Renewable Energy Systems for the Boating Industry; Marine Cleaning, Painting and Repairs; Marine Electrical and Electronics; Woodworking for the Marine Industry; Marine Welding and Fabrication and Marine Mechanic. Upon successful completion of the 6 to 9-month Programme, depending on the area of specialization, graduates will receive a Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQ) Level 1 Certificate or a CVQ Level 2 Advanced Certificate.

Professor Emeritus Clement Imbert, ORT, Chairman MIC-IT in his Remarks said that MIC-IT is very proud to collaborate with the Ministry of Trade and Industry on this programme and commended the Ministry for placing priority on such a vital industry.

Minister applauded the new trainees, for embracing this opportunity to enhance their skills through this Programme. She encouraged them to be diligent, put their best foot forward, stay the course and they will be successful.

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