

**Dominica Association of Teachers  
20<sup>th</sup> National General Meeting  
Wednesday April 24, 2019  
St. Alphonsus Parish Hall  
Goodwill  
Commonwealth of Dominica**

**Theme: “Education: An Essential Investment”**

GUESTS

Hon. Petter Saint Jean	Minister for Education and Human Resource Development
Mrs. Chandler Hyacinth	Permanent Secretary - Ministry of Education & human Resource Development (Ag.)
Mrs. Melena Fontaine	Chief Education Officer (Ag.)
Bishop Gabriel Malzaire	Bishop of Roseau
Pastor Lennox Timothy	District Superintendent – CUM Church
Ms. Kimone Joseph	Featured Speaker – Head (UWI) Open Campus Dominica
Mr. Kertist Augustus	Secretary / Treasurer (WAWU)
Mrs. Nazarine Williams-Titre	SEO – Secondary Schools (Ag.)
Mr. David Maximea	Education Officer – East
Mrs. Margaret Jules Royer	Education Officer – West
Fr. Charles Martin	Parish Priest – St. Alphonsus Parish
Ms. Valencia Webb	Counsellor – Catholic Schools, Diocese of Roseau
Mrs. Nadia Mark Henderson	Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development
Ms. Weeferly Jules	Ministry of Education – Senior Planning Officer
Ms. Cecilia Carr	Chief Personnel Officer (Ag.)

PRESS

GIS	Kairi FM
DBS	The Chronicle
DNO	CBN4 News
Marpin 2k4	Vibes Radio
DAVibes	The Sun

DOMINICA ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS (DAT) EXECUTIVE

- Mr. Mervin Alexander                      President
- Mr. Julian Benjamin                        1<sup>st</sup> Vice President
- Mr. Marcus Blondel                         2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President
- Ms. R. Vania Martin                         General Secretary
- Ms. Noreen Graham                         Asst. General Secretary
- Mr. Jerry Coipel                              Treasurer
- Mr. Valentine Telemacque                Asst. Treasurer
- Ms. Juanita Carbon                         PRO
- Mrs. Celia Nicholas                         Immediate Past President

**Absent**

- Ms. Rosamund Rolle                        Trustee (work related)
- Mrs. Kathleen Cornelius                    Trustee ( out of State on DAT business )

OFFICE STAFF

- Mrs. Harriette Thomas Benjamin

FORMAL SESSIONCALL TO ORDER /PRAYER

- The 20<sup>th</sup> National General Meeting was called to order at 9:10 am by the Chairperson and PRO Ms. Juanita Carbon. The National Anthem was sung in its entirety followed by a minute of silence for deceased educators.

PRAYER

Fr. Charles Martin, Parish Priest of St. Alphonsus led the gathering in prayer.

WELCOME

- Chairperson Ms. Juanita Carbon welcomed all present to the 20<sup>th</sup> National General Meeting.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FEATURED SPEAKER

- Ms. Juanita Carbon introduced formally Ms. Kimone Joseph the Featured speaker. Ms. Carbon read Ms. Joseph's biographical notes ( as in the programme)

MS. KIMONE JOSEPH – FEATURED SPEAKER

Ms. Kimone Joseph started off her presentation by offering sincerest congratulations to the Dominica Association of Teachers on the occasion of its 20<sup>th</sup> National General Meeting. She stated that as a fellow educator she was heartened by the chosen theme.

She looked at “Education as an Essential Investment” from the standpoints of:

- 1 The Home
- 2 The School
- 3 The Country

Some highlights from her presentation:

### **The Home**

Parents and family members serve as the first teachers of children providing their basic needs, developing sensory stimulation and helping them to distinguish right from wrong.

Parents need to sacrifice not only funds but time in order to ensure that their children do well. She also noted that it is a fact that children who get help and encouragement at home are more likely to succeed than those who do not.

Parents need to understand the value of education and the need to ensure that they do all they can for the children to get the best foot in the door.

### **The School**

Teachers need to educate their students but also should see the need to educate themselves.

If teachers want to be taken seriously as professionals, they have to be committed to learn and grow.

Dominican educators need to invest time and scholarly work in discovering solutions to our problems and to assisting our education system improve.

### **The Country**

There must be an inclusive approach to education. We stand to gain much more by being inclusive and allowing diverse thoughts and opinions.

People must understand that the Government / the Ministry of Education cannot pay for everybody’s studies. If we are to be serious about education as an investment we must be prepared to make sacrifices.

We have to set priorities and focus on the things that last. Education is one of the resources that lasts.

### **REMARKS**

Hon Petter Saint Jean - Minister for Education and Human Resource Development

Highlights of Mr. Saint Jean’s remarks:

The Minister began by expressing his profound gratitude to the Dominica Association of Teachers (DAT) for inviting him to the august gathering.

He also took the opportunity to commend the Dominica Association of Teachers (DAT) for its contribution to education and the development of Dominican Educators.

The Minister continued by stating that as educators we should be aware of the following:

That our students are confronted with a rapidly growing technological future which they have to be prepared to embrace.

That students continue to learn long after they have left the school system

That our focus should be on the process, the relevant information and the know how.

As educators:

We must see ourselves as an enabling force

We must enhance the joy of learning

We must see education and development as being interchangeable

We must be able to recognise the daily challenges that confront teachers

He concluded his remarks with the following statements

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has partnered with the Dominica Association of Teachers (DAT) in pursuit of better work condition for teachers.

The Dominica Association of Teachers (DAT) has done an exceptional job at representing the interest of teachers.

Recognition of retirees – Mr. Mervin Alexander – President, Dominica Association of Teachers (DAT)

For each retiree a short citation was read and each retiree or their representative was presented with a plaque in recognition of his/her contribution to Education in the Commonwealth of Dominica.

*Retirees:*

Ms. Eugenia Richards

Mrs. Nelly Joseph

Mrs. Mathilda Toussaint

#### VOTE OF THANKS

Mr. Marcus Blondel – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – DAT gave the vote of thanks.

Following the vote of thanks all were treated to refreshments. This brought the Opening Session to an end.

#### BUSINESS SESSION

##### CALL TO ORDER

The business session was called to order

MINUTES - 19<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL GENERAL MEETING – presented by General Secretary – R. Vania Martin (pages 15 – 20, 20<sup>th</sup> National General Meeting Booklet)

##### Amendments

NONE

The minutes was adopted as amended on motion by Ms. Angelina Martin and seconded by Ms. Nola Stedman.

MATTERS ARISING:

NONE

REPORTS

*Secretariat's Report* – presented by Ms. R. Vania Martin

(pages 31-33, 20<sup>th</sup> National General Meeting booklet)

Mrs. Dublin stated that she expected a report on summer workshop for 2018. Ms. Martin informed the meeting there was no summer workshop for 2018 due to Hurricane Maria.

Ms. Eugenia Richards asked the question if the membership of DAT was still 741. Ms. Martin responded to the question stating that the membership fluctuated but not drastically

- Mrs. Margaret Jules Royer suggested that there should be more school visits. She congratulated DAT for the Special General Meeting held on Friday January 4, 2019. She also suggested that a letter should be sent to the schools giving feedback of the meeting.

The executive gave a commitment to increase school visits in the coming months.

Mrs. Dublin suggested that there should be a communique from the Ministry of Education to DAT to inform of teachers' appointments.

Ms. Anita Williams suggested that staff representatives should be used to liaise with DAT and to disseminate information from DAT to schools. She also suggested that DAT should reach out to the younger teachers to inform them of the union and its achievements.

The report was adopted on a motion by Ms. Nola Stedman and seconded by Mrs. Josephine Dublin.

*Treasurer's Report* – Presented by Mr. Jerry Coipel - Treasurer

(pages 22 – 29, 20<sup>th</sup> National General Meeting Document)

- Mr. A. Dalrymple, auditor from A. Dalrymple & Associates was present and read the Independent Auditors' Report (page 23 of the booklet).
- Ms. Sharon Hansby asked for an explanation of the \$299,000 Government Settlement in the DAT Statement of Comprehensive Income on page 25. The Treasurer responded that these were monies negotiated for under various non salary matters during the then current negotiating triennium.
- Mrs. Josephine Dublin applauded the Association for being a million dollar institution

The report was adopted on a motion by Mr. Lancaster Dyer and seconded by Ms. Anita Williams.

*President's Report* – presented by Mr. Mervin Alexander

- The President began his remarks with a question many teachers often ask “What is DAT doing for us”? He followed up with a question and an answer “Who is DAT”? “ DAT is all of us”.
- The president stated that DAT has done a lot for its members. DAT is about professionalism.
- He impressed on teachers to be supportive of each other as a staff and by extension as a teaching fraternity.
- He informed members that DAT would be 30 years the following year and that should be considered a milestone and we should celebrate big.
- He encouraged members to volunteer to be school representatives and hoped that DAT has a representative in every school.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Celia Nicholas and Mr. Timothy Lavinier have been appointed to the board of IT for Dominica. IT for Dominica was collecting materials which would be shipped to Dominica in November 2019. Schools had to apply to be recipients of these supplies.

Sub Committees – Ms. Mandy Graham gave a suggestion to establish committees within the Association, For example Sports, Education and Social.

Insurance claims – There was a delay in processing of claims since Hurricane Maria. Most claims were sent to Barbados for processing.

Renaming of DAT Building – The planning committee was still working on it

DAT Discount Card – The card was to be revisited as some businesses on the card were no longer in operation and to look at the possibility of getting some other businesses on board.

The session ended at 1:40 pm on a motion by Mrs. Chinda Bynoe-Francis and seconded by Mrs. Doreen Watt. The National General Meeting closed with the singing of the Association's theme song.

Respectfully submitted

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R Vania Martin (Ms.)  
General Secretary  
Dominica Association of Teachers