

MINISTRY OF TOURISM

**TOURISM YOUTH SYMPOSIUM
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM THROUGH
YOUTH INVOLVEMENT**

REMARKS

**MR. LA QUAN PEARIE
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
"JUNIOR MINISTER OF TOURISM"**

Date: Tuesday July 04, 2017

Venue: Hyatt Regency Trinidad, Dock Road, Port of Spain

Time: 8.30am – 2.30pm

As I, La Quan Pearie, look back at the year that has just elapsed, the year during which I became Trinidad and Tobago's first ever Junior Minister of Tourism, I can truthfully say that it has not only been an eventful and memorable year but it was also a year during which I learned a lot.

What made the year so eventful you may ask? Well during my tenure as Junior Minister of Tourism, I had the opportunity to attend many events and functions. One of the first functions that I attended was SOTIC Barbados. At this event, I did not only go there to participate in a competition to become the Caribbean Junior Minister of Tourism, of which I placed second, but I also got the opportunity to meet and converse with various businessmen and stakeholders in the Tourism Industry and other Junior Ministers of Tourism from around the Caribbean learning from them all the ramifications of the industry and getting insight into their perspectives on how the industry can be strengthened.

However, besides rubbing shoulders with these distinguished men and women in the tourism industry, I mostly enjoyed participating in 'tourism' activities where I met and encouraged young people, like myself, to get involved in making Trinidad and Tobago's Tourism Industry more viable.

During my year, I established a Tourism Club at my school where we participated in various activities such as a Turtle Awareness Programme followed by a Beach Clean Up on Manzanilla Beach where we cleaned the beach to make it a more beautiful place for tourists as well as locals to enjoy its “sun, sea, and sand.” At this point I want to convey heartfelt thanks to the Honorable Minister of Tourism, Ms. Shamfa Cudjoe, Adrian and Bridget for not only coming and supporting us at this beach clean-up but for supporting my every effort along the way.

Another memorable moment that I have was when I visited Primary and Secondary Schools and interacted with the youths, educating them on how interesting the Tourism Industry can be. The interest that was displayed on their faces, the eagerness to become a part of making Trinidad and Tobago’s Tourism Industry better as well as the enthusiasm and passion that they expressed for tourism activities certainly brought a smile to my face for this would be a memory that would forever be etched in my memory.

As enjoyable as attending events and meeting new people was for me, what really defined the past year was how much I have learnt that being Junior Minister of Tourism was hard work and that it was

not all about travelling and posing for pictures for the press. I remembered having many restless nights thinking of the daunting tasks that lay ahead, or being overcome with nervousness anytime I had to host an event or speak to the media. All those restless nights made me understand the value in preparing and positioning myself for success.

Most people only see arrival at the destination called success, but they fail to see the long hard journey that precedes it. I remembered having to read thick books and other materials that explained the inner workings of the Tourism Industry. This re-emphasized to me the value and importance of reading as a way of acquiring knowledge which opened up the highway to understanding.

What I truly understood, for the most however, was the many “buffs” I received from my teacher Mrs. Fleming when I was not always as diligent as I should be or punctual in terms of meeting deadlines for projects, for which I was sorely reprimanded. However, as I look back on the times that she “buffed” me I realize that it was all for my own good. She taught me to be efficient, organized and thorough. If something was not done properly, then it had to be re-done until it met her high standard of excellence. I learned from her that position required preparation and

responsibilities required lots of hard work and not to mention some sleepless nights. For these lessons I am eternally grateful.

In retrospect, I recently encountered some sleepless night when I was putting together a brochure to guide tourists through my lovely home-town of Manzanilla as well as planning a Tourism Fair. This brochure will be launched at our first ever Tourism Fair which will take place on Sunday 9th July at the Manzanilla Beach Resort from 12 noon. Everyone here is invited to this spectacular event.

As I come to the sunset of my stint as Junior Minister of Tourism, I take this opportunity to encourage all young persons to get involved in whatever way you can to make Trinidad and Tobago a better place not just for Tourism and tourists, but for all of us who live in this beautiful twin island state. To the future Junior Minister of Tourism I say this, learn from my experiences and surpass my achievements until every Ministry in the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has a Junior Minister.

In conclusion I take this opportunity to thank God for guarding me on my many journeys and guiding my footsteps along the way.

I thank the Ministry of Tourism staff headed by Minister Cudjoe, the staff at TDC and Ms. Bridget Beckles for working to ensure that I not only upheld the tenets of the tourism ministry but more importantly become a successful individual who would be an asset to our nation. Thanks everyone.

I thank my parents and family who have been my pillars of strength when I needed the support.

I thank my debate teachers, Mr. Andre Thomas and Mrs. Georgia Fleming for ensuring that I was always well prepared for any event that I was called upon to attend and deliver a speech. Their labour of love will never be forgotten.

I thank my principal Mr. Harvey Murray, the members of Manzanilla Tourism Club and the Manzanilla Police Youth Club for assisting me in all my endeavours during this year.

Before I take my seat I must say that to me, the word “Minister” means servant. Therefore it was my pleasure:

- **TO SERVE** your youthful perspectives

- **TO WAIT** on Trinidad and Tobago as we prepare a nation to be enjoyed by locals as well as foreigners
- **TO BRING** ideas as bright as sunlight and smiles to every person I encountered
- **TO PAY** homage to all the individuals who strive to promote our country
- And **TO TIP** my hat to the Ministry of Tourism for giving a young person like me the opportunity of a lifetime.

I THANK YOU!!