***MEDIA RELEASE***

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**Twenty-three tertiary undergraduates receive specialist workplace training courtesy TSTT’s 2019 Vacation Internship Programme**

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Twenty-three tertiary undergraduates have been selected by TSTT to undergo four weeks of specialist workplace training via its 2019 University Vacation Internship Programme which was recently launched at the company’s Learning and Development Centre on Edward Street, Port-of-Spain.

The enthusiastic bunch of young men and women took part in a series of character building and employee development seminars before being placed into TSTT’s various Lines of Business to begin their introductory journey into the world of work.

Each intern was then assigned to a specific department, based on their area of study, and will receive guidance through its daily operations by a mentor. The objective of this hands-on University Internship Programme is to assist young adults in gaining much-needed work-experience and providing them with a platform to increase their marketability.

At the launch, TSTT’s Senior Manager Enterprise Operations, Darryl Duke, welcomed the promising team of interns. In his address, Duke revealed that he was also part of a similar ‘summer student’ programme hosted by his current employers back in 1991; one of which played an integral role in his development as a young professional.

“It is because of my first internship programme at TSTT that I stand in front of you here today as an Operations Manager. This programme was key in laying my foundation as a young man entering the workplace. This year, we are once again bridging the transitional phase from school to a work environment. TSTT is not only eager to help shape the next generation of leaders, but, it would be remiss not to mention that the programme is mutually beneficial. Since we’re always involved in change, communication advancements and technology as a whole, we try to ensure that we stay ahead of the curve by capturing the ideas of the youth. It’s one of the many ways that we get fresh ideas,” stated Duke.

Altogether, these 23 undergrads were shortlisted from a line-up of over 80 applicants. Those selected are currently within their second to third year of schooling at a recognised tertiary institution and are maintaining a grade point average of 3.0.

Sideek Headlie of TSTT’s Transformation & Change Department shared similar sentiments, “as a company that is heavily involved in Corporate Social Responsibility and outreach programmes, we like to ensure that the youth in T&T have an opportunity whereby they can build relevant work experience by interacting with the various systems, technologies and professionals. In order for us to capture the critical competencies that we need to deliver on our business model, we need to grow those skills in-house, develop strategies to retain them and make sure that they can support the organisation,” he explained.

Zaynah-Marie Howard – currently in her final year of Actuary Sciences at the University of the West Indies (UWI) – expressed great delight to be a part of this year’s Internship Programme. “I’m looking forward to learning more about the business so I can put the theory I’ve learnt into practice. Transitioning out of the classroom and into the world of work is crucial for me at this point, so I am grateful to TSTT for this opportunity,” she explained.

Khachielle Farmer, a second year Optometry student at UWI, also shared her thoughts as a first-time participant and was eager to get started on her four-week developmental programme.

“I believe I can gain more confidence when speaking to persons on a public platform. Additionally, critical thinking brings innovation so I would like to expand my horizon in this regard. I’d like to leave a legacy wherever I go and I believe TSTT is, through the University Internship Programme, is doing their part to educate and strengthen the local workforce on a national scale,” stated Farmer.

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