

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

### **Caribbean Science Foundation announces plans to establish Computer Coding Workshops in Saint Lucia**

*Castries, St. Lucia - November 27, 2018* - The Caribbean Science Foundation (CSF), which has its headquarters on the campus of the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados, has announced plans to establish Computer Coding Workshops in Saint Lucia.

In January 2018, the CSF, Scotiabank, and the U.S. Embassy to Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean, and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) partnered to launch a pilot Computer Coding Workshop in Barbados, which was successful in training students in basic coding skills and website development. The workshop is being held again in Barbados from September to December 2018 and will be replicated in Saint Lucia in 2019 with grant support from the U.S. Embassy to Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean, and the OECS. The first of multiple workshops in Saint Lucia will take place every Saturday from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, between January 12 and March 30, 2019 at the Castries Comprehensive Secondary School and will culminate in a public showcase by the participants on March 30, 2019.

Professor Cardinal Warde, Interim Executive Director, Dr. Dinah Sah, Co-Executive Director and Mrs. Gillian Hassell, Adjunct Program Manager of the Caribbean Science Foundation recently visited Saint Lucia to inform and engage interested stakeholders. Professor Warde stated, "The Caribbean Science Foundation is pleased and proud to launch its Computer Coding Workshop in Saint Lucia. We are certain that this initiative will have a lasting impact on helping Saint Lucia to train the technology workforce of the future." Hon. Dr. Gale T.C. Rigobert, Minister for Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development, expressed her delight with the initiative, stating that "The introduction of this computer coding workshop in Saint Lucia by the Caribbean Science Foundation is consistent with the government's ambition to improve access to technology and technological training to all young citizens". The Workshop complements the CSF's flagship programme - the Student Program for Innovation in Science and Engineering (SPISE) - in which 13 Saint Lucian university-bound high-school students have participated since 2012.

The goals of the CSF Computer Coding Workshops are to stimulate more student interest in science and engineering careers, especially computer science, and to help prepare students for university study in the STEM disciplines in general. In addition, the Workshops are intended to help increase the low numbers of skilled ICT workers in the Region and to encourage the formation of more globally competitive ICT companies.

These goals are consistent with the mission of the CSF which is to assist with the diversification of the economies of the Caribbean Region by harnessing science and technology for economic development, thereby helping to raise the standard of living.

Saint Lucian residents who are interested in a career in ICT, particularly in website or mobile application development, are encouraged to apply to participate in the workshop. Applicants must be Caribbean citizens over the age of 15 years. Out of school and at-risk youth, individuals with disabilities, females, and science and mathematics teachers are especially encouraged to apply.

Applications can be made online at <http://caribbeanscience.org/coding-workshop/st-lucia/>

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