

**Girls in ICT Day 2016**  
**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2016,**  
**Bishop's Centenary College,**  
**Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago,**  
**Opening Address**

*The Magician in You*

I want to start by asking two quick questions

1. What is Luck?
2. Do you think that everyone in this room has the power within to create your own luck?
3. Do you believe in magic

I want you to think about the first question – I want to leave it with you to think about it – even after leaving this function today. Think about it each time you are faced with decisions, when you are tired of the studying and the peer pressure makes you feel like giving up.

The second question I will answer for you by sharing a short story about myself.

I can identify with most of you if not all of you in this room.

**Like you** I went to a borderline school; came from a rural community; and did not enjoy some of the excess we come to take for granted today. Like you also, I was labelled and at times felt like I was boxed in a stereo type.

**Unlike you however,** I did not have cell phones, google or Wi Fi and Girls in ICT Day where you have a dynamic line-up of women to come and share their stories with you urging you to choose careers in ICT.

**Like you** though, I had incredible dreams, aspirations and ambitions challenged by the decisions we make in life and the attitudes we develop along the way. Like you I had the power within to do anything I wanted to do, break out of the box and make my own label. What a decision to make when you are just 15 or 16 years old.

But that power within – the one that allows us to dream and have ambitions and aspirations coupled with the right plan, dedication and preservice can make magic in your lives.

Some will call it luck, some call it being at the right place at the right time, and some call it choices. I call it magic and making your own magic. Whatever you choose to call it this morning I want you to remember this – it is being prepared for what you want– because once you are prepared you can do it. Knowing what you want, putting a plan in place and working towards it is what it is all about. It is **your magic** when you make the decision to stay the night in and study for the extra hour instead of going to the movies with friends. It is **your magic** when you put down the smart phone or tablet and get the last question answered for the test the next day. It is **your magic** when you make an effort to consistently do what is right and stand up for what is wrong. It is **your magic** when you encourage your friends to follow their dreams and aspirations.

Your magic is your power, it lies within all of us, how we nurture that power, is an ongoing process and it has the capacity to bring you what others call luck. It is like a young child learning to walk we will not get it right the first time, but that's ok cause once you get it right you will never creep again. The power within together with preparation, is the difference between success and failure.

You have two essential powers - the power within and the power of ICT. Use the power within to develop your attitudes and discipline, your dreams and aspirations, and use the power of ICT to help you realize that dreams. Together, they will help you to break out of the box and design a label you can be proud of. Not everyone will like your label – and that’s ok. Because it will be your label designed and created by you.

You are living in exciting times - you have two essential powers – the power within you (your magic) and you have the power of ICT - go make some magic in your lives and the lives of others. *You will Expand Horizons and Change Attitudes* while doing so.

So as you sit back and listen to this powerful line-up this morning, I encourage you to listen and engage the speakers and exhibitors be sure to make some notes that you can reflect on later.

## Vote of Thanks

Thank you Vydia,

I am going to do this vote of thanks different today. I am starting with the students, who are the focus of today's activities. It is because of you we have planned this event to commemorate Girls in ICT Day and while we have given you lots of information today, you have given us the most important gift - listening to us. Some of you have worked very hard on the competition and gotten rewards and we thank you for your participation. Now that you have tasted what hard work can do, I do hope that you will continue to work hard and be motivated to achieve greatness.

Mrs. Yvonne Pinder, Principal, Mrs. Akai and the staff at Bishop Centenary – you are always so excited to partner with us to work with the girls. Regardless of how late we are you are always willing to get this done for your girls. It is this type of dedication and commitment that makes Bishop Centenary the school to turn out successful young ladies, equipped to face the world and take their place in society and for this we thank you

The speakers, **Ms. Janelle Pascall, Ms. Hadassa Noray, Ms. Jacqueline Morris, Mrs Neeala Maharaj- Racha and Mrs Natalie Maharaj.** Thank you for taking time talk to us about your life in ICT, its women like you who inspires our girls every day. Thank you for showcasing your products to get the girls thinking about careers in ICT you may think that it just a few hours of your time but the impact is far reaching.

**Ms. Bridgette Hyacinth**, what is life without motivation – boring your feature address have inspired me so much that I know that the students will be talking about you and your journey for years to come

Mr. Anthony Rosales and Mr. Fariz Karim – what can we accomplish without men in our lives – almost everything and pretty much nothing – your presence here today show your willingness to work towards empowering our girls and for that we thank you.

This event could not be possible without the sponsors, Flow, Blink Bmobile, Soroptimist International of Port of Spain, Huawei, Pure, Nestle, KCL Capital Market Brokers Limited, DoubleX, Bermudez, Microsoft, UTT, iGovtt, Office Authority, Premier Party Rentals, and Very Exciting things.

You know in my address this morning I spoke about magic, well, I see magic every day from My own Chairman, and Secretariat Staff, I see magic when we decide to do something like this and every single staff member gets involved to the point that our partnership for the event looks like this. I see magic in the planning process, I see magic in the decorations and food, I see magic in the transport to get here on time. I see magic in the MC. And I want to say thank you so much for the magic of CANTO.

***Thank you thank you thank you***