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JA SLU Start-Up Fete 2017: Innovation in Action

Union Orchid Gardens came alive on Tuesday, February 7, 2016, when students from seven local secondary schools gathered for Junior Achievement St. Lucia's annual "Start-Up Fete."

The event, which has been held in Saint Lucia since 2013, seeks to foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship by



encouraging students to develop out-of-the-box business ideas, all while providing support and sharing techniques which will help these students to grow their businesses.

This year's cohort had the opportunity to pitch their business ideas and get coaching from a team of mentors and judges that included business, marketing and sales experts, entrepreneurs and

government officials. The mentoring team also presented on some important topics ranging from ideation and marketing to leadership and corporate social responsibility.

Managing Director of Algas Organics and 2016 Young Entrepreneur of the Year Johanan Dujon, one of the JA mentors, delivered a very rousing speech to the Junior Achievement students. He chronicled his journey as an entrepreneur and emphasised the reality of being a 21st entrepreneur. He said, “Entrepreneurship is not a house on a hill with five (5) Audis parked in front of it. It is the result of hard work and dedication.”

Communications Specialist at the NCPC, Ms. Taluah Girard who served as JA mentor, lauded JA

SLU for this initiative. “The role of entrepreneurship in job creation and the reduction of unemployment, particularly among the youth, is undeniable. Junior Achievement St. Lucia provides the perfect platform for youth to network with not only their peers but established entrepreneurs.



With youth unemployment on the rise, we should definitely be looking to entrepreneurship as a long-term solution. The NCPC remains committed to promoting awareness of competitiveness and encouraging activities which will help to achieve sustained growth and development. The ideas presented here today are very promising.”

The students of Beanfield Comprehensive emerged overall winners of the Start Up Fete with their product idea, **Ban-Chow**; a delectable and nutritious chowmein made from local green bananas. Entrepot Secondary School came in second place with their business idea; **Kup Kreationz** while Vieux Fort Comprehensive captured third place with **Doc & Print Express**.

About the National Competitiveness and Productivity Council (NCPC)

Established in October 2013, The National Competitiveness and Productivity Council (NCPC) is responsible for the identification of key issues related to competitiveness and productivity in Saint Lucia.

The NCPC and its Technical Secretariat is committed to providing the necessary advocacy and research to produce timely and effective recommendations to policymakers on issues that affect both competitiveness and productivity on island. For more information about productivity or on the NCPC, visit www.stluciancpc.org; www.facebook.com/stluciancpc, call 468-5571/5576 or send an e-mail to stluciancpc@gmail.com