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GNYC officially launches "Vote Like A Boss" voter education campaign

Mar 23, 2015 News

...Youth participation vital in formulating national policy – GNYC

In spite of pushback from government officials, the Guyana National Youth Council (GNYC) officially launched its voter education campaign, "Vote Like a Boss", Saturday at the National Library Conference Room.

Saturday's campaign was launched to a room full of interested young Guyanese and civil society groups. The aim of the "Vote Like a Boss" campaign is to increase voter education among Guyanese youth.

Showing support at the event were representatives of the Guyana Women's Roundtable, Blue Caps and the University of Guyana Student Society.

A GNYC representative, Tricia Teekah, explained that citizens can expect voter education campaigns to begin as early as Wednesday in Anna Regina, with voter education workshops open to the public along with civil groups. On March 28, the youth agency will meet to analyse parties' policies and position for upcoming elections. Activities will continue around various towns throughout Guyana until the May 11 General and Regional Elections.

The "Vote Like a Boss" campaign is working in tandem with the Guyana Elections Commission's (GECOM) mandate to ensure that Guyanese are educated and informed in the electoral processes while understanding their duty in shaping the country's policies.

In formulating the campaign, GNYC Chair, Tiffany Daniels, explained that the Council engaged various young people with regard to their views on the electoral system. In approaching other Guyanese youth, Daniels related that the unsatisfactory responses the GNYC received propelled them to kick-start the campaign.

The Youth Council asked questions surrounding reason for youths voting; whether they know what a manifesto is; if they have listened to what other political parties are offering and how does one decide who to vote for.

"We were not satisfied with the responses that we got. Young people should vote, should understand why they vote and understand what they're voting for," said the GNYC Chair in her address to attendees. "We must understand that participating for change in our country does not begin or end with an election but it is our civic duty that extends well beyond one day."



Members of GNYC and civil society present at "Vote Like A Boss" campaign

In her address, Daniels also stressed the vital importance for young people to appreciate the effect they can have on politics and policy. She commented that while voting is not the only way to influence policy in a democratic society, it is the only time every citizen is unquestionably equal as one person has one vote.

"Young people may have policies that are different from older persons. If young people don't vote, we and our distinct interests will be ignored by policymakers," affirmed Daniels.

She went on, "Research has shown that our generation is most likely to push boundaries for inclusivity, that we are more open to others different and diverse people from ourselves. We're more concerned about our environment and transparency and creating change and impacting our country. Yet we are more politically disengaged not wanting to be a part of the confusion."

According to the United Nation's Development Programme, Guyana's youth makes up over 60 percent of the country's population. The GNYC representative said that the council maintains its goal

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of educating young Guyanese to become proactive participants in the electoral process. The GNYC has been facing push back from the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) and the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport. Clement Rohee, the PPP/C's General Secretary, labeled the local youth council as a "self-anointed" entity without the substantial authority to represent the country's young people. The Youth Ministry subsequently raised similar concerns about the agency's legitimacy. Of note at the launch ceremony, were photos of Youth Minister, Dr. Frank Anthony, actively participating in the Council's activities. GECOM has since defended its decision in collaborating with the youth agency in its effort to increase voter education. Also speaking at the event, was Glen Bradbury of United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Chief Party of the Leadership and Democracy (LEAD) Projects. Many of the Rohee's criticism of the party were directed at Bradbury's involvement with GNYC as the agency receives funding from his agency. Bradbury said that one of the major elements of the LEAD project was to engage youth in becoming more active in any democratic process. He said that it was also important not to approach this campaign from a partisan aspect but from an educational capacity. "It is important at this young age for everyone who becomes eligible to vote, to go out and question; to ask questions of individuals seeking your vote and support. You shouldn't blindly support anyone you should take the effort to know why it is important to talk directly to those seeking public office, to express yourselves as to what you need as youth," said Bradbury.

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Weekend Cartoon



Bridge Watch

Demerara Harbour Bridge

Today **Monday, August 1** Print

Monday, August 1

4:00am 04:00

Tuesday, August 2

4:00am 04:00

Events shown in time zone: Guyana Time [Calendar](#)

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