



Youth Development Foundation, Inc.
Promoting Culture & Education Through the Performing Arts

Trinidad & Tobago Teen Wins Talented Teens International 2004 **Youth Development Foundation Awards Over \$10,000 in Scholarships to Talented Teens**

(New York – August 18, 2004) Fifteen year old Nicola Dalrymple, Miss Trinidad & Tobago, walked away with the title of the Hal Jackson's Talented Teens International® (HJTII) scholarship program for 2004 over 35 other highly talented delegates from around the world. Hal Jackson's Big Top: A Circus of Love and Fun was the theme where the 34th annual competition was held on Saturday, July 31st at Aaron Davis Hall – City College of New York. In addition to performances by some of the world's most Talented Teens, the audience was treated to musical selections by Virgin recording artist Ricky Fante' and Orpheus Record's saxophonist Andrew Ward.

This year's theme was incorporated into the opening number where the delegates were dressed in an array of circus themed costumes ranging from Ring Masters to Lion Tamers. All production numbers were choreographed by Leslie Dockery, co-choreographer of "From My Hometown", and Keisa Parrish, Miss California HJTII 1995 and former Radio City Music Hall rockette. After each contestant introduced themselves in the Parade of States & Countries, the Top 10 Finalists were called.... Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Jamaica Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Trinidad & Tobago, and Virginia.

Celebrity judges included singer/actress Sheryl Lee Ralph who is a former talented teen winner, Michael P. Jordon of "All My Children", Storm P and choreographer/producer George Faison. After the Top 10 finalists were judged on their personality, community achievements, goals, poise, appearance and talent, the top five were called to the winner's circle. They were: 4th runner up - Miss Delaware, Kendra Oates, a 16 year-old acrobatic dancer - \$500; 3rd runner up a vocalist, Miss Nevada, Laura Sheppard, 17 - \$1,000 ; 2nd runner up Kristena Wright, Miss Virginia, a 16 year-old modern dancer - \$1,500; 1st runner up - Najla Williams a 16 year-old modern dancer from New Jersey - \$2,000; and the 2004 HJTII winner is Miss Trinidad & Tobago, Nicola Dalrymple a 15 year-old singer, dancer and actress who won \$5,000.

Miss Dalrymple receives a \$5,000 scholarship to the college of her choice, intercultural trips to Europe and the Caribbean, a diamond ring, and many other fabulous prizes. Nicola, a native of Tobago, is a triple threat in the performing arts world, who sings, dances and acts. After winning the highly competitive program, Nicola, who attends Bishop's High School in Tobago, said, "I am truly blessed and looking forward to an extremely exciting year". She is undecided as to which college she will attend but knows she will major in medicine and become a pediatrician. This 16 year-old says that "success is not measured by the position you attain or the achievements made in life, but the obstacles you overcome to get there, by the grace of God."

Additional awards were presented that evening including the Wilda LaBrie Scholarship of \$1,000 which went to Miss Florida, Typhani Mattis, a 16 year-old vocalist with a 4.3 GPA; Most Talented is Miss Nevada, Laura Sheppard, a 17 year-old vocalist who will receive \$1,000; Miss Photogenic, chosen by Mychal Watts, official photographer of Talented Teens International, is Miss Delaware, Kendra Oates, 17 an acrobatic dancer who will receive \$500 sponsored by Right On! Magazine;

Miss Personality is 15 year-old Bianca Revels, a tap dancer from Michigan; Miss Congeniality is 16 year-old Kristena Wright a modern dancer from Virginia - \$250; and Miss Creativity is Miss Georgia, Bianca Knox, 16 a Hip Hop Dancer - \$250. All scholarships are awarded to the college of their choice.

Prior to the competition, the 36 delegates enjoyed a week of outings which included a visit to City Hall where Mayor Michael Bloomberg presented Hal. Jackson, Founder and CEO of HJTTI, the 2003 International Queen, 15 year-old Tatiana McConnico, and the thirty-five 2004 delegates an official welcome to the city of New York. Immediately following the ceremony, everyone enjoyed a delicious luncheon in Manhattan Borough President, C. Virginia Fields' office hosted by Special Assistant to Ms. Fields, Fred Lewis. The delegates made a stop on Broadway where they saw *Caroline, or Change*; visited radio stations WBLS & WLIB in which Mr. Jackson is Group Chairman, cruised around the New York harbor while "lunching" on the Spirit of New York; dined at Tavern on the Green restaurant where Sheryl Lee Ralph, George Faison, and Andrea Shell were honored at the 4th annual Shooting Star Awards dinner. They were also mesmerized by the soulful saxophone of Orpheus Record's Andre Ward who performed on saxophone after the awards were presented. No trip to NYC is complete without visiting Harlem USA where the delegates were treated to exquisite cuisine of Spoonbread Restaurant and were judges at Amateur Night at the Apollo. Special guest appearances were made during the week by O'Ryan (B2K's Omarion's brother), *All My Children's* Michael B. Jordan, and *Moesha's* Sheryl Lee Ralph. Next year's competition will be held in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The week concluded with all of the young ladies being presented on stage at Aaron Davis Hall along with Virgin Records recording artist Ricky Fante.

Sponsors for the 2004 HJTTI program include ICBC Broadcast Holdings, Inc., Right On! Magazine, the Anguilla Tourist Board, WBLS, the British Virgin Islands Tourist Board, Alken Tours, HSBC Bank, Ebony and the Amsterdam News.

HJTTI, under the auspices of Youth Development Foundation, Inc. (YDF), is a non-profit tax-exempt organization that "*Promotes Culture and Education through the Performing Arts*". Founded in 1971 by Hal Jackson, legendary radio personality and 2001 Broadcasting and Cable Hall of Fame inductee, YDF provides a support system for young women which offers exposure, encourages cross-culture exchange, and nurtures emerging talent from around the world while providing training, educational scholarships and travel opportunities. For more information, please call (212) 592-0413 or visit www.TalentedTeens.org.