



## THE NATIONAL GAS COMPANY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO LIMITED

### MEDIA RELEASE

#### **Fifteen Tuners by 2021- NGC and MIC arrangement hits the right note**

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The recent loss of pan pioneer Ken ‘Professor’ Philmore has left the pan community bereft of yet another curator of precious knowledge about the instrument, adding to an unfortunate pattern that has emerged over the past two decades—the loss of skilled craftsmen in the art of the steelpan without replacements from the current generation.

This has put the sustainability of the national instrument in jeopardy, a problem heightened by the fact that more than a loss of skilled players, there is a pressing need for more persons that are capable of designing, manufacturing and tuning the steelpan.

The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited’s (NGC) latest thrust in its support of our nation’s national instrument, through its partnership with the MIC Institute of Technology Limited (MIC-IT) for the customized delivery of its Mechanical Engineering Technology with Steelpan Manufacturing Programme to NGC sponsored Steelbands seeks to reverse this trend and put the NGC sponsored bands on the pathway to sustainability. The programme, a three-year intervention, training 15 young persons in the art of pan tuning, was officially launched at MIC-IT’s headquarters on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

This launch was a follow-up to a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed between MIC-IT and NGC in July, which would allow NGC’s sponsored steelbands—NGC Couva Joylanders, NGC La Brea Nightingales, NGC Steel Xplosion and Gonzales Sheikers—to benefit from the customised delivery of the MIC-IT Programme.

At the launch, Mark Loquan—President of NGC- noted that just as the Company acts as the aggregator of natural gas in Trinidad and Tobago’s value chain, the aim of NGC’s partnership with MIC-IT was to “allow Trinidad & Tobago to become the aggregator of pan knowledge”.

According to Mr. Loquan, this project goes beyond NGC’s Corporate Social Responsibility portfolio, and would serve to give Trinidad and Tobago and its national instrument a competitive advantage.

Also speaking at the launch, MIC-IT's Assistant General Manager, Training Division, Nathan Languigne, proudly announced that this programme was developed by its Macoya Workforce Development Centre (MWDC), but specifically in keeping with NGC's vision for sustaining the steelpan. "We recognise the global importance and cultural significance of our national instrument and we are honoured to create and deliver a programme that would generate skilled craftsmen and musicians to fabricate and manufacture the steel pan while ensuring the growth of our steel pan legacy, all through education and training".

Representatives of Pan Trinbago and several members of the steelband community were also on hand to give their support to this initiative most notably, Champion Arranger, Duvone Stewart, who also took the opportunity to entertain the guests with his considerable skill on the tenor pan.

**For more information:**

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