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 West Indies  
 Zambia  
 Zimbabwe



## JCI Barbados - Earth Day Message, 2015

We at Junior Chamber International (JCI) Barbados, wish to extend salutations to all Barbadians as we celebrate the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of **Earth Day**.

**“It’s Our Turn to Lead”** is the theme chosen for 2015 by the international community, we-the Board and members of JCI Barbados - believe that the capacity for change and the assurance of our future lies within each and every Barbadian.

We are committed to developing sustainable social programs directed towards providing education about the rich history of our island home, while simultaneously underscoring the importance of preserving and protecting our environment.

In the coming months, through the JCI Barbados **Green Roots Project**, we will be fulfilling our mandate to create awareness of the need to make Barbados a Green Society.

In 2013, the island of Kiribati; one of the poorest countries on earth, spoke to the impact the rise in sea level and climate change has had on the country. They reported the likelihood that in 30 years the island could be uninhabitable.

The challenges presented by Global Warming and the rise in sea levels are not germane to our sister small island state alone, but are of equal concern to us residing in the Caribbean. In recent years, we have experienced increasingly active hurricane seasons, with each passing year the intensity of the storms have worsened. This threatens **Our property, Our livelihoods and Our lives**.

Our daily choices and habits have a direct impact on our environment. In 2015, each citizen can choose to conserve energy by investing in energy efficient technology. We can also choose to utilize renewable energy sources and start the process of curbing our dependence and consumption of fossil fuels.

2015 is a year ripe with the potential for global change. This could be the year that all of our leaders institute an Environmental Law, but the wheels of change are slow in turning and some of our policy makers have not acted with the urgency which should be ascribed to the protection of our fragile environment.

JCI Barbados is committed to lobbying for change, but we need your help. Together we will stand and agitate for action. Together we will show Barbados a new direction.

The Government of Barbados has assigned some attention to environmental issues by way of the Environmental Protection Department.

Investigations have been made into developing solar energy and wind power on a large scale as an alternative renewable energy source. In addition, an expected investment of up to \$240 million is proposed for a plasma gasification waste to energy plant which when operational, is expected to generate up to 25 percent of the island’s energy.

Chemical management policies consistent with international standards have also been implemented. Through the Globally Harmonized System of classification and labeling; chemicals are easily identified. Potential hazards are communicated clearly to ensure safety in usage and proper disposal to protect the environment.

Improvements have been made in the operation of waste water treatment plants to regulate waste water discharge which if left untreated will impact negatively on marine life.

**Junior Chamber International Barbados**

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Consistent with this effort, both ground and beach water are monitored to identify trends in these media so immediate and concise action may be taken to avert a catastrophic event.

Barbados is signatory to the Stockholm Convention which addresses the Persistent management of Organic Pollutants - POPS; as well as the Basel Convention, with its emphasis placed on controlling the transboundary movement of hazardous waste and disposal.

With these initiatives and the proposed national goal of the government and people of Barbados of achieving 29 percent renewable energy generation by 2029, there are no definitive dates for the implementation of these alternative energy plants.

Indeed there is still much work to be done.

"These fields and hills beyond recall are now our very own. We write our name on history's page with expectations great; strict guardians of our heritage, firm craftsmen of our fate."

These are the lyrics penned by Mr. Irvin Burgie and immortalized in our national anthem. The resolution of our environmental problems does not lie squarely on the shoulders of our government or corporate Barbados. **The Spirit of Barbados resides within each of us. It is our duty to ensure we leave behind a proud legacy for future generations.**

Happy Earth Day Barbados!

### About JCI

JCI is a membership-based non-profit organization of over 200,000 young people ages 18 to 40 in 5,000 communities and more than 100 countries around the world. Each JCI Member shares the belief that in order to create lasting positive change, we must improve ourselves and the world around us. We seek targeted solutions to the unique problems in our communities to build a better world, creating global impact.

### About Green Roots

The Green Roots Project is an initiative seeking to educate the young citizens of Barbados about their environment, the importance of recycling and to build an awareness of the need to make Barbados a "green society." JCI Green Roots initiatives bring attention to the most key component of our survival – our environment. Green Roots recognizes that the management of our natural environment which includes the health of our people directly impacts our ability to earn and is important to Barbados's future.

## Junior Chamber International Barbados

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