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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Inmate Wins Gold at JCDC Speech Parish Finals

Kingston, Jamaica, March 19, 2025 — An inmate from the Tower Street Adult Correctional Centre (TSACC) in Kingston, has secured a gold medal at the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission's (JCDC) Speech Parish Finals for Kingston and St. Andrew held on Tuesday, March 18, 2025.

Under the mentorship of Y.A.R.D Empire founder Iris 'Terri' Salmon, the inmate delivered a compelling performance of '*GBV Tek Heed*', a dub poem advocating against gender-based violence (GBV). His powerful plea to "not suffer in silence" earned a thunderous applause at the St. Luke's Anglican Church Hall.

"I'm feeling elated, great and excited to know that we came here today and didn't put ...all this work in vain as we obtained this gold medal, not only for me, but for the whole team," he said.

The journey to gold was marked by two months of rigorous training, supported by the Department of Correctional Services (DCS). The inmate first met the veteran actress in May when she conducted sensitisation sessions about GBV and sexual harassment. As a father of three daughters, the message resonated deeply, inspiring him to write the poem.

"I have three lovely daughters and would never ever want to hear something bad happen to them, so we have to push this message to the highest level so persons can think more wisely," he said. "I most definitely think I am the perfect person to send this message as someone on the inside. Because we're incarcerated, there's so much different persons charged for different things, so it puts a mindset in your head to try avoid this one because it can be the easiest one to land you back where you're coming from."

Salmon, who started her non-profit organisation in 2017 to empower youth and men through the visual and performing arts, said the activity has also positively impacted other inmates.

"They have been gathering and watching him rehearse, and most of them now know what GBV is and how to prevent it," she said. "We are hoping when they have finished their time and go

home, even within the facility, they can understand and share among each other what it is and how to prevent it, and don't come back into the facility because of a GBV issue."

Assistant Superintendent Alfred Duncan, former head of the TSACC's school programme, said the victory is a testament to the transformative power of rehabilitation.

"He is a model inmate who has always been involved in rehabilitation programmes that will push him forward in preparation for re-entry into society," Duncan said. "This is one of the mantras of the Department where we prepare them to be a model to others who may be straying from the path, so they will not only see him as a model but also emulate him in his daily walk. He has made us proud."

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