

OUR's Girls In ICT Day to give Teens a look at Careers

(KINGSTON, Jamaica; 2017 April 24): The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) will be hosting a full day of activities for hundreds of teenaged girls from across the island, on International Girls in ICT Day on 2017 April 27 at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, at 8:00 am.

The teens, many of whom will travel from outside the corporate area to attend the event, will be exposed to career opportunities in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

The main goal of **Girls in ICT Day**, is to make girls and young women aware of the vast possibilities offered by ICTs, and give them the confidence to pursue ICT studies and careers. In addition to focusing on girls, the initiative aims to raise awareness among parents, teachers and other influencers in girls' lives.

The main sponsors of the event are the OUR, FLOW, Digicel, Inter-American Development Bank, the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology, the Development Bank of Jamaica, the Jamaica Observer, Caribbean Association of National Telecommunications Organisations (CANTO) and Caricel.

Awards will be presented to OUR's Manager for ICT Regulation and Policy, Evona Channer, who has been recognised as "OUR's ICT Role Model 2016"; Dr. Moniphia Hewling, Cyber Crimes Consultant in the Ministry of Science Energy and Technology will receive the "Girls in ICT Role Model 2016" award, while Vice President for Legal and Regulatory Affairs at FLOW, Rochelle Cameron has been selected as the "Girls in ICT Guru 2016".

Minister of Science Energy and Technology, Dr. Andrew Wheatley will be guest speaker at the event. Other speakers will include: Cyber Security expert, Dr. Moniphia Hewling; Natasha Sampson, Chief Information Officer at Tax Administration Jamaica; OUR's Telecommunications Regulatory Analysts, Fay Samuels and Nakesha Allen; President and CEO, First Global Bank, Mariame McIntosh Robinson; Navita Anganu, of the Inter-American Development Bank, and Dr. Leith Dunn, Head of Gender Studies and Development at the University of the West Indies.

ICT female entrepreneurs and professionals will engage the students by providing first-hand accounts of their experiences. Other female professionals and educators will offer practical advice including how to source financing for starting businesses, subjects and courses students need to pursue in keeping with their career choices, and the traits employers are seeking in potential employees. Topics will include: "ICTs and My Future", "Internet of Things: Staying Safe 'inside' the Web" and "The evolution of the work environment with ICTs".

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Resource persons from over ten companies will make themselves available to act as mentors to the students throughout the day. Microsoft and the University of Technology (UTech) will conduct hands-on workshops, while other companies, including FLOW and Digicel will set up interactive booths to ensure an even deeper level of engagement.

Director of Consumer and Public Affairs at the OUR, Yvonne Nicholson, says, "Last year's staging of the event was very successful, with some 200 students and teachers from about 20 high schools across Jamaica attending and giving positive feedback on how helpful it was to them. This is our second year of hosting a **Girls in ICT Day** event, and we are very heartened by the level of sponsorship we have been able to obtain, to make this day possible". Mrs Nicholson continues, "The OUR, which regulates the telecommunications sector, has taken an active interest in exposing our young girls to the vast career opportunities available in this area. Next year, with the help of sponsors, we hope to expand our offering to include our young men."

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