

JBI to Launch Scholarship Programme

Source -- <https://jis.gov.jm/jbi-to-launch-scholarship-programme/>

FEBRUARY 20, 2019

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The Jamaica Bauxite Institute (JBI) is to launch scholarships for young persons in its greenhouse cluster areas, called the JBI/Alcan Rio Tinto Legacy Fund Scholarship Programme.

The programme was created to facilitate sustainability for the JSIF/JBI Water Harvesting and Greenhouse Cluster Project, which is administered under the Bauxite Community Development Programme (BCDP).

In an interview with JIS News, Director of Lands and BCDP Administrator at the JBI, Dr. Dianne Gordon, explained that after graduating, the students who benefit from the scholarships will serve the cluster areas as resource persons.

“Although the greenhouse farmers have been trained and all the material has been provided to them, we need to be assured that going into the future, they would become more independent and not rely so much on us. To facilitate them in becoming more self-reliant, we felt that it would be a good thing to have some persons from the greenhouse cluster areas (apart from those who are currently involved in greenhouse production) to be professionally trained,” she explained.

Dr. Gordon said that funding had been sought from the Development Bank of Jamaica (DBJ) through the Alcan Legacy Fund and the scholarships were established for the two-year Associate Degree in Agriculture, tenable at the College of Agriculture, Science and Education (CASE) with a special focus on greenhouse production and management.

“Upon graduation, they are expected to go back to their communities and impart their new-found knowledge to the farmers and to assist them with the management processes,” she noted.

Dr. Gordon pointed out that six of the eight scholarship recipients had already been identified and had begun studies at CASE in the 2018/2019 academic year. The other two students, who are yet to be chosen, are slated to begin studies in September 2019. The scholarships are valued at \$600,000 (\$300,000 per year) and cover the cost of tuition, boarding, meals and other basics. The launch and official signing ceremony will take place in March 2019.