

Say cheese!

*24 teens receive certification
in photography through JN
Foundation programme*

Dalton Laing
Gleaner Writer

SAVANNA-LA-MAR, Westmoreland:

TWENTY-SEVEN PEOPLE from four communities in Savanna-la-Mar have received training in photography and certification under the Jamaica National (JN) Foundation Advocacy Through Photography Programme.

The participants, ages 12 to 18 years, searched the streets of Savanna-la-Mar for ideas to capture on their 14-megapixel point-and-shoot cameras, with which they were gifted for registering with the programme. Under the programme, they used photography as a way of voicing their concerns.

“The whole point is to get them to open up to the things which affect them and use this art form to inspire change,” said trainer Stuart Reeves, who is also a past principal of Jamaica College.

“We are looking for their interpretation of how they see their communities. We grew up with the community, but the children are growing in the community, so they see it from a different perspective.”

Alecia Glasgow, arts and media officer for JN

Foundation, was pleased with the participation in Savanna-la-Mar.

“This is a community component of the High School Advocacy Through Photography Programme, which was conceptualised by Jamaica National Building Society General Manager Earl Jarrett in 2004, and so far, this is the largest group we’ve had.”

The first community-based programme was done in Tivoli in 2010, immediately after the incursion, followed by Granville, St James, in 2011, and now Savanna-la-Mar, where four communities – Russia, Gratto, Seaton Crescent, and Gully Banks/Barracks Road – were targeted.

Gully Banks/Barracks Road is also involved in The Source initiative – a JN Foundation-operated centre for the development of inner-city youth.

PLANTING SEEDS OF ADVOCACY

JN Foundation’s project manager for rural development, Virginia Turner, gave high marks to the Advocacy Through Photography Programme.

“The students did great considering it’s their first time at taking photographs under instruction and knowing how the art form works. They learnt well. They got the concept of what advocacy is all about. The fact is they captured the essence,” she said.

She said the participants began by making their own families and friends the subject of their pictures, before going on to the streets.

She added that a photography club would be established from the group in Savanna-la-Mar so that the advocacy could continue and people could develop the craft and use it as a career.