PHOTO BY MARK TITUS

Community member Nicholai Samuels views the photos on display at the JN's Advocacy Through Photography workshop held in Granville, St James.

Granville teens on a mission with camera

Mark Titus
Gleaner Writer

WESTERN BUREAU:

SEVENTEEN TEENAGERS from Granville, St James, have graduated from the Jamaica National Building Society (JNBS) Foundation's Advocacy Through Photography programme, which was held in the troubled community last week.

"This is a wonderful opportunity and we intend to maintain the club because this gives us the opportunity to express our views," said 19-year-old Tyran Grey.

Under the programme, the teens were each presented with a digital camera and taken through five intense days of training on the use of the equipment. They were also tasked with using photography to examine social issues within their communities by highlighting the positives, identifying problems and seeking to effect affirmative change.

"They (the residents) have been in the news lately, and we are trying to get those communities deemed challenged communities, in particular [with] the youths to be agents of change," said Virginia Turner, project manager for JNBS Rural Regeneration Project, of Granville's participation.

The seven-year-old programme is a collaborative effort of the JNBS Foundation, the United Nations Population Fund, the National Library Service, and The Gleaner's **Youthlink** magazine.

JNBS Foundation's arts and media officer, Alicia Glasgow, said the aim is also to stimulate their interest in photojournalism.

"It would be great to see their interest grow to the point where they make a career ... . Photojournalism is a great form of advocacy."

Stewart Reeves, a professional photographer and former headmaster at Jamaica College, conducted the training.

"They have done great," he said. "They need to make photography a part of their lives from now on, as they say a picture is a thousand words."

Trainers from the Youth Advocacy Network also conducted sessions at the one-week project.