

Contact

Ms. Kalifa Hickinson
Marketing & Communications
PJIA
khickinson@pjiae.com

P.O. Box 460
Philipsburg, St. Martin
Caribbean
Tel (599) 554-7089
E-mail: Offshoreediting@gmail.com

Offshore Editing Services

NewsRelease

PJIAE Managing Director tells Toastmasters, Communicating is the way we live our lives

MAHO, St. Maarten (May 23, 2012)—Managing Director of Princess Juliana Int’l Airport operating company (PJIAE), Regina LaBega, told the over 200 Toastmasters gathered at the Sonesta Maho Beach Resort on May 18, that, “communicating is the manner we live our lives.” She was delivering her keynote address to the Toastmasters District 81 Conference under the theme “Communicating ... Connect and Lead.”

“Communication, that is effective communicating, is about much more than the words we use; it’s about the manner in which we live our lives,” she told the audience that included Prime Minister Sarah Wescot-Williams, herself a Toastmaster. LaBega was quoting Jedd Medefind and Erik Lokkesmoe authors of the book titled, *The Revolutionary Communicator: Seven Principles Jesus Lived to Impact, Connect and Lead*.

“What we consider today as communication amounts to making a lot of noise without much regard for the content or the message. To paraphrase Marshall McLuhan, the message is the noise or the medium itself. No wonder we have so much confusion in the world today with so many contesting noises in varying, ear-splitting decibels,” LaBega said.

She continued: “Communication, to use an almost cliché phrase, is a two-way street. This means that when real connection is established, the communicator and his audience share something in common that impacts the lives of both of them. This is what leadership is all about.”

LaBega, using John C. Maxwell’s definition of leadership, said: “Leadership is influence. If people can increase their influence with others, they can lead more effectively.” Cellphones, smartphones, iPads, etc., have revolutionized how we relate to one another, how we communicate with one another, the managing director contended.

She narrated a personal story to illustrate how new technology could negatively impact our connectedness to one another.

“Technology has virtually eliminated distances in terms of communications,” she said. “You can have a video call with someone in China on Skype or Messenger. You can be in your yard plucking mangos in St. Martin while talking to a friend in South Africa! But that same technology, paradoxically, can drive a wedge between you and your best friend at the same dinner table, alienating both of you from each other, while you stay connected with some invisible, uninvited guests, with whom you keep laughing over trivialities.”

“We have a new Facebook generation that share personal photos, videos and stories with the whole world, while they would not as much as say ‘good morning’ to their neighbor or classmate!” she continued. “We have two, three cellphones but not two, three minutes for our children who are demanding our attention!”

LaBega added, “Your organization does not only train people in public speaking, but understands fully well that communicating goes much more beyond words and that the ultimate

communicator is truly a revolutionary who is at the pinnacle of leadership.” Toastmasters International is an education organization that helps its members develop communication, public speaking, and leadership skills.

“You arrived on our island through the gateway to the Northeastern Caribbean, the Princess Juliana International Airport, which I am privileged to head. PJIA is a communication hub that connects the rest of the region, and indeed the whole world. We would appreciate if, after you leave us, you could stay connected, and let us know how well we are doing as regional leaders in aviation,” LaBega concluded.

For the first time, Toastmasters District 81 has a St. Maartener as its Governor: Rolando Tobias, who will be overseeing the 17 territories that fall under the District. Tobias was sworn in as Governor during the conference that ended Sunday, May 20, 2012.

Caption1:

PJIAE Managing Director Regina LaBega (R, front) joins guests in applauding Toastmasters for a highly successful Toastmasters District 81 Conference 2012. Minister of Health Cornelius de Weever is seated to the right of Ms. LaBega. (*PJIAE photo*)