



Grand prize winners of Nutrition-ish receive their award from Minister of Labour, Social Security and Human Development Resource Dr Esther Byer Suckoo.

Budding entrepreneurs with big ideas

Within the space of just 72 hours, participants of Orbit's Innovation Startup Weekend delivered five astounding business models.

During the closing ceremony held in the 3Ws Oval at the University of West Indies, five teams – Product Now, H2O SmartFlow, Nutrition-ish, Carib Auto Express and Enjoy Barbados – pitched their businesses and technologies to a panel of judges.

Team Nutrition-ish took home the majority of awards, including **Best Business Performance** and **Most Market Ready Product**. The team also grabbed the grand prize of a \$5 000 pre-approved loan from the Barbados Public Workers Cooperative Credit Union.

The team's mobile app simplifies the nutrition facts labels, converting amounts from grams and milligrams to teaspoons and percentages. As group spokesperson Shabazz Bynoe pointed out in his presentation, "no one really knows what five grammes looks like".

Ecstatic with their win, the group was immensely pleased

but also shocked about the response to the product.

Delivering the closing remarks, Minister of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development Dr Esther Byer-Suckoo commended the winners for tackling the pressing issue of non-communicable diseases.

"We want to be able to work well into our old age, but at this rate we might not be living into our old age, and we might not be able to reap the awards of our labour," she noted.

The minister urged the budding young entrepreneurs to find solutions to societal ills with the use of technology and innovation.

"What we have in Barbados today is a mindset where people can easily find the problems. Everybody knows the problems . . . The challenge that I throw out to you, your generation . . . I want you to start being a part of the solution," she said.

The workshop, which began last Friday, involved mentoring, startup business support and a software



Byron Gibson, facilitator of the Orbit Innovation Project.

hackathon. Using the Orbit Innovation Project, participants tackled local issues using creativity, innovation and information communication technologies (ICTs).

Partner and facilitator of the project, Bryon Gibson encouraged the audience to embrace entrepreneurship and innovation. He suggested to the audience that innovation be harnessed from an early age.

He argued that igniting the entrepreneurial spirit at 30 or 40 was too late, saying: "We are not growing entrepreneurs who are to be world class by starting them or waiting until they are 30 or 40 . . . We've got to start the process now, acculturating our next generation". (KK)

Tara Frater, partner of the Orbit Innovation Project, presents team Enjoy Barbados with their award for Enterprise Innovation.



Enterprise Awards winners Enjoy Barbados.



Patrice Gill of team H2O Smartflow receives her female innovator award from Tara Frater, partner of the Orbit Innovation Project.



Participants of the Orbit Innovation Product: Startup Weekend Barbados.