

TITLE

Training professional baristas in the Caribbean

Jamaica: Deaf Can! Coffee

PROJECT SUMMARY

Founded in 2015 by Harvest Call Jamaica, a Christian mission organization, Deaf Can! Coffee is a social enterprise that trains young people with hearing impairments to become professional baristas. The enterprise currently employs 25 youngsters part-time on the campus of Caribbean Christian Centre for the Deaf.

FACTS & FIGURES

- 17 Jobs created in 2015 (2 full-time)
- 25 jobs created in 2016 (4 full-time)

PROBLEMS TARGETED

People with hearing impairments face many barriers when looking for employment, which often leads to frustration and demotivation, especially among younger persons.

SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

Deaf Can! Coffee engages deaf young people by focusing on their own interests, and equips them with the knowledge and confidence to operate a sustainable coffee venture. The young people are trained and certified as baristas, and the aim of the company is to operate coffee bars that are known to its customers for a great product, talented staff, and an enjoyable experience. Once the candidates complete training (which includes menu card preparation and financial and communication management), they are employed in the café, but also work upon request for mobile coffee stations set up by corporate organizations. Visual tools and iPads are used to bridge communication barriers with the customers; moreover, customers are taught greetings and how to place orders in sign language. The project started with one small coffee shop on the campus of a school for the deaf in Kingston, which has been significantly scaled-up to a larger and more cultivated café training centre, called the E3 Café.

OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

Deaf Can! Coffee has an annual cost of US\$40,000 and has obtained funding from the Digicel Foundation and other organizations. It continues working to facilitate sustainable national development in the core areas of skills training, work readiness, education, special needs, and community development. The practice has grown over the last year. Due to the project's immense success, a second branch was opened in a public space; and discussions are under way for a third location to be opened before the end of the year.

QUOTE

“When we started our small coffee shop I was nervous talking to customers, but now I’m very confident interacting with hearing people.”

— Jerome Pindling, barista, Caribbean Christian Centre for the Deaf (age 17)

CONTACT

Mr. Blake WIDMER

+876-587-3833

deafcancoffee@gmail.com

www.deafcancoffee.com

REFERENCES

- <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20160429/deaf-can-coffee-brews-storm>
- <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/outlook/20151122/deaf-can>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bYkH3qiPrEA>
- <https://www.deafcancoffee.com>
- <https://twitter.com/Nevpositivemed/status/747586356444966912>

