



My name is Joshuanette Francis, the Founding President of the non-profit Good Humans 268 Inc. We are a service organization with persons with disabilities at heart. I am a woman who has faced discrimination and overcome it as a person living and thriving with a disability. My drive to eradicate that discrimination and to sensitize a nation by touching one life at a time is infectious and thus became the beating heart of Good Humans 268. The Organization is dedicated to creating golden opportunities for individuals with disabilities through Community Outreach, Climate Action and Sustainable Farming. The Organization's unwavering commitment to providing employment and training opportunities to individuals with disabilities through productive programs, projects, policies and partnerships is the beginning of change in the disabled community.

One of our flagship programs is our student community service program. With its primary objective to foster a culture of environmental consciousness among young people, this program has the potential to make a significant impact. Through a comprehensive approach integrating recycling, tree planting, and volunteering, we aim to impart knowledge and engage with students, inspiring them to become proactive stewards of the environment. The program is a multifaceted initiative that combines different aspects to create a holistic and highly beneficial approach to environmental conservation. It aligns with the United Nations' global sustainable development goals and has the potential to enhance the island's tourism industry, future human resources and disability awareness. For 12 years students will be engaged in several activities that will help to change their behavior and attitudes toward the environment. The recycling aspect of the project would have received 98,000 USD from GEF small grants and the Sandals Foundation. These funds have allowed the Organization to tackle goals 5,9,10,12,13,14 and 17. There is need for funding for the other aspects of the program.

Our student community service program is one of the Organization's five objectives, and work is being done for two other objectives. The Organization's temporary home is currently located at John Hughes. The future is where the Organization is one 50 acres of land - 35 acres for the farm, 5 acres for the nursery, 10 acres for our state-of-the-art compound here on the island and 10 acres in Barbuda, 5 acres for the compound, 3 acres for the farm and 2 acres for the nursery. We need the support of the government and external agencies to make this home away from home for persons with disabilities. We cannot give everyone a job, but we can give every disabled person a home away from home. The 268 stands for Antigua, and this week is proof that our dream of Good Humans 246, Good Humans 767 and so forth is needed.

Disability is not a bad word. Disability does not discriminate between gender, race, sexual orientation, age, political or religious beliefs. It can happen to any one of us or a family member at any point. Disability awareness is our business; it is our responsibility. As a proud member of the disability communication here in Antigua and Barbuda, today is a good day, and sitting here and being a part of something so important and impactful is proof that individuals with disabilities like our name are good humans.

*Creating golden opportunities for individuals with disabilities through Community Outreach, Climate Action and Sustainable Farming.*

