

Andre Latchman Feature Fridays

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In 2015, Team member of the year for Sagicor Group Jamaica, André Latchman, was also the most outstanding team member of 2015 for the entire group of Sagicor Financial Corporation (SFC) in the Caribbean. Latchman won the Sagicorian Award at SFC's annual event in Barbados in March of that year.

The event recognizes outstanding SFC team members in 22 countries in the Caribbean, Latin America, the United Kingdom and the United States, and Latchman topped them all.

After completing his undergraduate degree at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Latchman worked as a HEART trainee as a cheque disbursement clerk at Sagicor Life Jamaica. He was promoted to the call units in Sagicor Individual Life Division and in December 2010, became team leader in the new group contact centre.

In 2012, he moved up to quality analyst before his transition to the group human resource department as learning and development officer in October 2014. But having impressed at the contact centre, he was recalled to briefly manage its operations. Today, the astute and well-spoken Latchman is assistant manager, learning and development, group human resources.

His journey was not easy. A product of Cockburn Pen, Kingston, Latchman is the eldest boy of parents who separated because of their abusive relationship when he was 10 years old, and he was determined to improve his mother's circumstances if he could.

Weekend Work

While at Dupont Primary, Latchman cleaned cars, swept yards and washed dishes to earn extra cash.

"I did not attend school on Fridays as there was a businesswoman in the community whom I helped. I worked with her on Saturdays and Sundays for \$70 - \$100 for the three days. It bought my exercise books and lunch; I was glad for the job as I felt a sense of accomplishment," Latchman recalls.

His innate passion for hard work and excellence made the high-performing Latchman sit Common Entrance at age 10 in grade five, where he passed for Jamaica College (JC).

At JC, he found a second mother in Cynthia O'Sullivan, the school's then plant manager. O'Sullivan and the school's mentorship programme grounded Latchman, arming him with his drive for community service and participation.

In sixth form, he was the leader of the AshChar Consultants Schools Marketing Challenge, which JC won; as team captain, he got a tuition scholarship to the UWI, where he majored in language and communication. Shortly after starting university, he gained his part-time employment in JPS's customer care department.

Always goal-oriented, Latchman explains, 'I've always had in the back of my mind that I wanted to be a trainer at Sagicor. I took part in training programmes and then started training team members, and in October 2014, I qualified for my current job in group human resources as assistant manager of learning and development."

He also participated in many related service certificate courses, training sessions, workshops and overseas seminars to further hone his skills as a trainer.

Not Surprising

His nomination for the Sagicor Jamaica Team Member of the Year 2015-2016 title was not surprising, given his conviction and work ethic.

"I believe it's really my attitude, and it's coming from my background. I don't have a sense of entitlement. Whatever I'm given to do, I do it to help others. Whatever change comes, I'm going to move with the change. I'm an ambassador for the Sagicor Group.

"I do it because I feel a sense of ownership and belonging. I am seen as always being happy and joyful - if they knew where I was coming from, they would know why I work this hard. I'm living the kind of life I never had growing up," Latchman said about the award.

Committed to excellence, Latchman says he must first of all exceed his own expectations, so he sets very high standards which will naturally exceed everybody else's.

Latchman is also active in his church and community and works with the Elite Club Limited to provide tutoring for children sitting GSAT examination as well as to assist with lunch money and tuition.

Latchman is happy to have acquired a house for his mother, where she now resides. "It's somewhere they can call their home. I am trying to complete the payments on the property and put certain things in place for them. Then I can start to focus on my life," he said.

His future includes a master's degree and he plans to have his mother accompany him when he takes up the prize trip for two to Barcelona, Spain.

Andre has been promoted to the role of Group Client Experience Manager, Sagicor Group Jamaica. We wish him all the best in his new role as he continues to inspire others to do and be their best.

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