

Donnette Scarlett - Blooming Where She Is Planted

BY [Jediael Carter Stewart](#) Posted [November 20, 2020](#)

"Patience, persistence and perspiration make an unbeatable combination for success" - Napoleon Hill.

If ever there was a quote to describe Donnette Scarlett's climb up the corporate ladder, the above would be most appropriate. Scarlett who was recently promoted to the position of Senior Vice President, Group Treasury and Asset Management at one of the Caribbean's largest financial conglomerates – Sagicor Group Jamaica – started her humble journey in Old Harbour, St. Catherine, where she grew up.

Her start in the sector began after she was accepted to study in the faculty of Arts instead of her first choice, studying law, upon applying after high school. Scarlett opted to work instead and secured a job as a teller at the National Commercial Bank in her hometown.

With over 20 years of experience fastened under her belt, the Glenmuir High School alum was promoted from her post as Vice President for Treasury and Investment Services.

Scarlett's Sagicor journey began from the days of Manufacturers Sigma Merchant Bank in the early 2000's, which eventually merged into what is now Sagicor Group Jamaica.

In her new role, Scarlett manages the assets of Sagicor's business lines and ensures that "the different entities do not take on too much risk in any one area".

"I spent a lot of years trading and I love the interaction, the market discussion I have either with the internal team or the external persons I trade with. Volatility is what makes the market and unfortunately that can put a strain on you but I like coming in and being able to anticipate market movements and being able to make the right decision based on that," she noted.

But Scarlett is not all business and crunching the numbers, as she dedicates some amount of her time to altruism. While not an established charity, the SVP along with her husband Merrick, strive to ensure that members of their community, especially the youth are offered opportunities to excel and reach their potential.

"It's a combination of things, mentorship does come into play but it is just helping," Scarlett noted. "So if someone is having a challenge with school, whether physical challenges to get the work done, or financial challenges, we try to help them."

Scarlett explained: "We've had persons approach us who want to do something and they don't have the financial startup, sometimes people want you to write a business plan for them, they want to bounce an idea off you, some require financial output but not always."

"I had one friend who had wanted to do a development in Jamaica, a farming development, so for that one I assisted with the business plan because he needed a business plan to take to the financing institution," Scarlett recounted.

"We've had young people who just wanted to buy inputs, they were starting a new business and they want someone

to just finance them buying these inputs for that business; and we've had someone who just wants to acquire a vehicle to allow him to transport within his business, so it has varied."

The mother of two, a 33 year-old son, and daughter, 25, reasoned that she is moved to help people because it is something she grew up seeing her older sister doing, who raised her. Scarlett, the last of seven children, was raised by her sister who is 13 years older than her, after her mother immigrated to the United States of America when she was 10 years old.

She recalled that her sister, who interestingly is now a caterer, always tended to the many children who would flock their home. "There is always food left to share no matter how many persons stopped by the house."

Having experienced a great level of love and care growing up from her elder siblings, Scarlett said she cannot help but lend a hand when she encounters individuals in unfortunate circumstances.

"I love children and I know first-hand that with a solid foundation everybody has the potential to be something great, and it doesn't have to be in academics, you could be skilled with your hands, but it is for everyone to find their niche." Now at the height of her career and a primary example of hard work being recognized, the chartered financial analyst encouraged young professionals to commit to hard work, show initiative and do something they love.

"There must be something that you're looking forward to at work because you're going to spend at least 8 to 10 hours there depending on the department you're in, so you need to like it. The world has changed, so fortunately there are a lot of options if you do not love your nine to five; you don't have to leave it but do something that you love that will supplement it," Scarlett encouraged.

Noting that now is a different time and a different generation than when she started working, Scarlett added that patience is still a key ingredient necessary to succeed.

For a woman who analyses risk daily, she takes a gamble at succeeding at her hobby, gardening.

She joked that though she loves the activity, she has been relegated to supervising and delegating as her husband does the work. Her attempts at gardening, she said usually end in disaster.

"I am very good at planning out how the landscape should look and what plants should go where, and which plants I want; then my husband does all the work, so he ensures that it's done. I'll plant, but I also love to weed and I sometimes weed the wrong stuff," she said.

Donnette is also an avid traveler who enjoys seeing interesting places across the globe. Her travels have taken her to different parts of world, to include several landmarks across the United States of America; Canada and numerous countries in Europe - England, Spain, Italy and France. In her retirement plan, this finance professional has more plans to explore the wonders of the world.

Though her childhood dream was not fulfilled, Donnette Scarlett is testament to the adage "bloom where you are planted".

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