



## **PRESS RELEASE**

The stakeholders, represented on the board of The Advancement for Vocational Education (AVE) Foundation, namely SVOBE, FAVE, Windward Island Chamber of Labour Unions, St. Maarten Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Ministry of VSA (absent) and Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth & Sport met with the board of directors of The AVE Foundation on June 16<sup>th</sup> 2017.

Stakeholders were given the opportunity to address published reports and therein outlined supposed issues at NIPA. Candid discussions were undertaken, detailed and well substantiated responses were provided on questions posted by the stakeholders. Full clarity was obtained by the Stakeholders and with a proper understanding of matters the portrayed issues in published reports could be placed in proper context and verified on validity.

In addition thereto the AVE board provided full and unfiltered insight into the realities, the strengths and the weaknesses which the NIPA faces as a learning institution. The AVE Board in a well- structured manner outlined the way forward as they continue to put first the study opportunities for students and means for students to obtain excellence.

Planned and impending initiatives, including:

- 1] an extensive marketing campaign to be launched within short, through which the general public, future students -locally and internationally-, will be provided with more information on the type of institution NIPA is, the current programs offered, as well as future programs to be offered at the institution);
- 2] NIPA partnering with other internationally known institutions, to offer students an opportunity to pursue their studies at higher levels in their field of study;
- 3] Collaborations with Secondary school boards FAVE and SVOBE as NIPA offers further programs for graduates from schools presided over by these entities;

The Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Ms. Silveria Jacobs, who requested the Inspectorate to investigate the issues published in reports, received from the Inspectorate a report with recommendations, which recommendations have immediately been adopted and included in the action plans of the AVE board.

The Stakeholders, having verified that principles of good governance are being applied, and tasks are executed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation of the AVE Foundation, are content with the functioning of the current board of directors. Stakeholders, being kept abreast by their representatives of the strives made and the developments at the NIPA Institute, are pleased and satisfy with their representation on the board and have pledged their continued support to the Institute.

Stakeholders, Boards of FAVE-SVOBE and COCI have confirmed that incorporate actions within their respective planning to attain and safeguard study and career opportunities for NIPA graduates.

The Windward Island Chamber of Labour Unions expressed its satisfaction with the functioning of the AVE board, having a full understanding and a complete picture of the institution and the undertakings of the AVE board.

As stakeholders, with the board of AVE Foundation, management and staff of NIPA one joint goal is served and that is the continued development of the institution and its offerings to students including adults attending the evening programs; all with the ultimate aim to offer to the workforce in St. Maarten well-rounded, knowledgeable, practically trained and experienced workers.

The Stakeholders collectively reaffirmed their support of the AVE Board and pledged to move forward, to ensure that current- and future programs will continue to be offered at the institution, so its students may attain excellence in study and career, and in doing so fundamentally contribute towards the further socio-economic development of our people and country.