

Daren Miller NSSC Presidential Debate 2009

You know they say the strongest principle of growth lies not in any one of us Presidential Candidates standing here behind our podiums and coating it with spittle and idle theatrical fluff – you’ll see later on, but in human choice. You either accept the conditions as they exist, or you accept the responsibility, yes? Of changing them.

To our President, Ms. Chantal Cogle and her Executive, Members of the television audience, friends, colleagues supporters, Mr. Stephens! My good friend - I bring you greetings.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is time – Unity of purpose over conflict and discord, hope and vision over fear and pessimism. We must pledge to choose wisely for us all, to always march ahead to march into the future, si se puede, yes we can, and by God Almighty, so we will.

Look, the NSSC exists in an era of great challenges on many fronts. These are not the making of Chantal Cogle, Kemesha Kelly or Tamian Beckford, but instead a National Governmental mishandling spanning many years.

My friends, we are better than this, Jamaican youth!

We are more **decent** than a situation where a secondary school student has to go hungry on end because either there are no programmes at his school to help him or the programmes they have are ill-fated.

We are more **advocating** than a situation where Kathy and Paul has to use umbrellas in class when it rains and have classes outside when the weather is fair, because the classroom is extremely small for the 55 students who use it - Needless I mention the sporadic water supply in some areas – some none at all! This is outrageous!

No wonder they say Education for us is free. Why because 30 and 40 thousand dollars for text books and special fund payment complete with limited or no lab equipment or terrible fencing in garrison areas is what? Chicken feed?

Today I say to you my friends, to traditional and non-traditional High School Students across the length and breadth of this great nation – enough!

This moment – this election – is our chance to prove to those responsible that we, the youth of Jamaica have had it. And that is why I'm running for President of the National Secondary Students' Council.

Change does not only come from the NSSC you know, today my friends, change comes to the NSSC. Change happens because you demand it.

With your help, change means embracing the digital age as our youth do – Facebook, Twitter, Blogs to have students know of their statutory rights and responsibilities under the NSSC, utilizing the performing and visual arts as a means of achieving this.

Change means getting the NSSC involved in the promotion and facilitation of entrepreneurship as data has proven that entrepreneurship accounts for 80% of the world's wealth.

We will partner with the Jamaica Youth Business Trust, the High School Equivalency Programme and JAMAL to ensure that irrespective of their grades, no child has to leave High School hopeless of a productive and prosperous future.

As President, I will have a special committee set up at the National level to carry out surveys in each region; these regions will be assigned objectives that ought to be met by or before tenure's end. If met, however reasonably, the region will be awarded an NSSC crest which they will pin to a banner provided for them.

These banners my friends can bare either promotive or demotive crests and as such, will serve as motivation for regional performance as they will be on display at regional and other mass Student Council gatherings.

And finally, change means signing off at long last on our Constitution and the completion and distribution of our handbook. Yes we can ladies and gentlemen and before my tenure ends as President, so we will. You have my word.

And so Jamaica! If you feel the same energy that I do, the same urgency that I do, if you feel the same passion that I do, the same hopefulness that I do – if we do what we must do, then I have no doubt that all across this country Jamaica, you will make the right decision for us all. The ball is in your court. How will you play?

My friends may God bless you and may he perpetually bless the youth of Jamaica.

