



Anguilla Johnessa Harrigan

"Imagine you are the Minister of Tourism for your island. What would you do, and what projects could you create, to help bring locals and tourists closer together?"

If I were the Minister of Tourism for Anguilla there are a number of things I would try to do to help make my island better known around the world as the best place in the Caribbean for tourists to visit.

I would try to make sure that the island is kept beautiful and attractive by appointing, on the Tourism Board, a group of people who would be responsible to see that the island is kept beautiful and clean. In order to stop littering the roadsides and parks with garbage, I as the Minister would put laws in place—to make people who litter pay a fine when they are caught. These fines would help to pay to keep Anguilla a clean and healthy place to visit and spend vacation. I would educate the children about how bad it is to litter, especially those at the Stoney Ground Primary School.

Another very important thing I would do to develop tourism on my island is to try and make Anguilla free of almost all crime and violence. People who commit crimes against tourists would have to do community work, under supervision. I would also make sure that they work in the gardens at the hotels, and cut grass by the roadsides to pay for what they did to the tourists. While they are in prison, they would be educated, about how important tourism is in our island, so that they would learn not to trouble the tourists or anyone else again.

In order to bring the tourists and locals closer together, I would make sure that a special day called “Tourists Appreciation Day” is observed. This would be like a big beach party, with a big boat race and free food for guests. A special address would be given by me on CNN and Fox News letting the world know, how much we appreciate our visitors because tourism is Anguilla’s main industry. The Government would give out prizes to people who have visited Anguilla ten times and over.

As Minister of Tourism, I would have young tourists who are students visit the Primary schools and share their experiences as students with the pupils here. This would be interesting and educational. Our children would learn interesting things about the visitors’ culture and way of life in their countries and they would learn our games, like cricket and have fun with us at break time. I would also try to bring locals and tourists closer together by having an Annual “Host a Visitor Day,” when Anguillians would invite tourists into their homes and treat them with good, old time Anguillian hospitality, with lots of local food and share with them our culture.

These ideas can help make tourism in Anguilla much better. They may seem difficult to do, but with the help of all our people, they can be done. As our school motto says, “Together we aspire, together we achieve.”

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Antigua & Barbuda Aaliyah Mussington

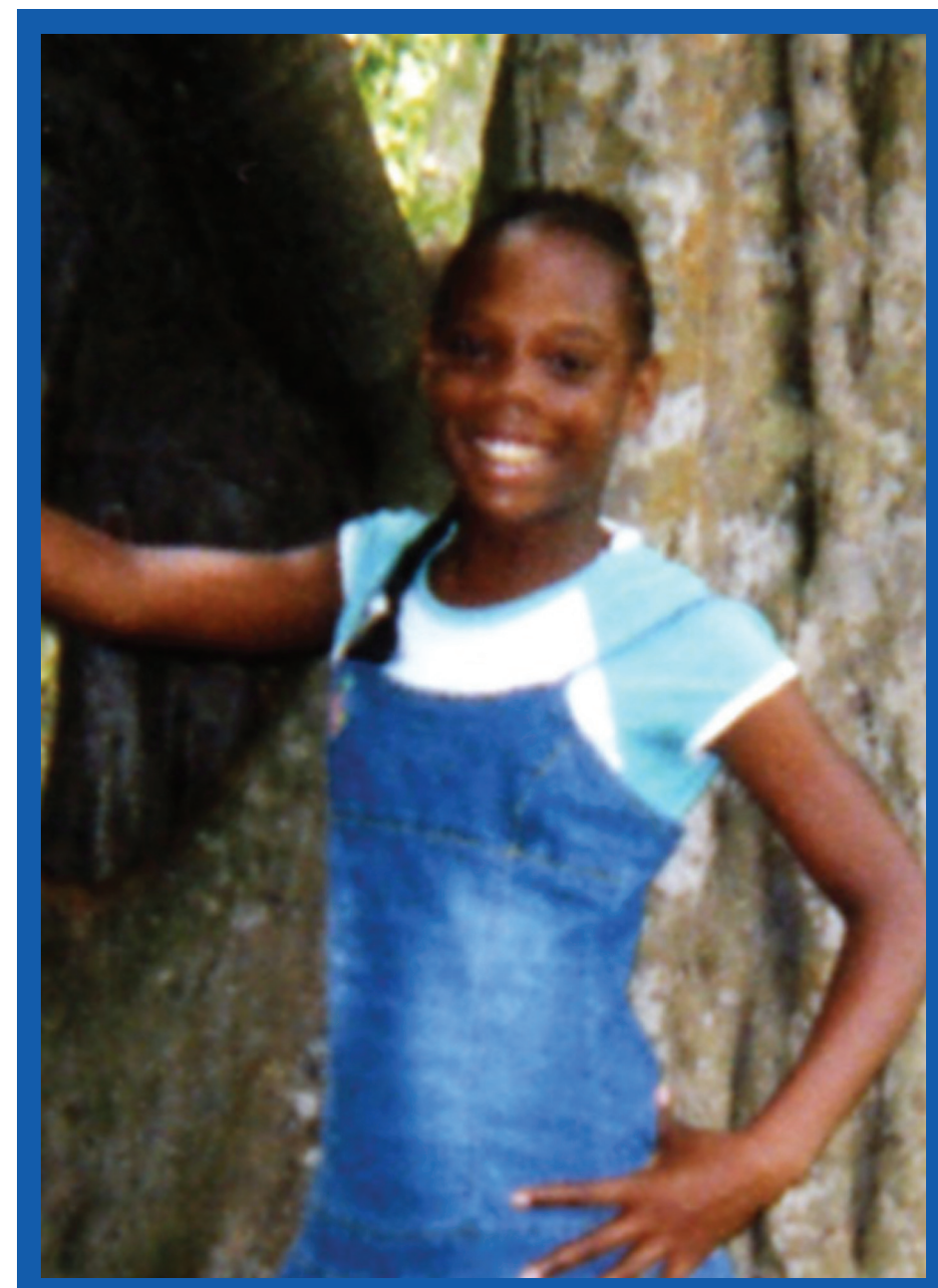
"Imagine you are the Minister of Tourism for your island. What would you do, and what projects could you create, to help bring locals and tourists closer together?"

I believe that the job of the Minister of Tourism is an important one. If I were the Minister of Tourism, I, along with my Ministry, would be responsible for coming up with a variety of methods to bring locals and tourists together. This would be very helpful in selling Antigua and Barbuda as a tourism destination.

One way in which I would go about achieving this is to organize health walks to different historical sites and places of interest around the island. The tourists and locals who sign up for these walks would not only be working on keeping fit and healthy, but they would be interacting with each other. This interaction would also allow the tourists to learn more about our country and culture.

Also, I would set up a system in which locals can sign up to get overseas pen pals in countries that are tourist markets. In this way, persons living abroad can get to know about our island and they may be encouraged to come and visit. When they come to visit, they would have already formed friendships from writing to their pen pals, and they would feel more comfortable being here, while being able to interact and spend time with their pen pals.

Another thing I would do to help bring locals and tourists closer, is to organize joint sight seeing tours to places of interest like Bird Island, Nelson's Dockyard, Fig-Tree Drive and so on. A variety of activities on these trips would encourage interaction between all involved.



I would also make provisions for tourists to visit places where some of our local products (e.g. Suzie's Hot Sauce) and local crafts are made. The local Craft Market is one example of a place that would be visited. Tourists would be able to see first hand the production process of these items. During these activities, tourists can ask questions and interact with the workers, and even be given a chance to practice making these items. In this way, the aim is for tourists to develop a closeness with our people while still giving them a first hand view of how our products are made.

In addition to this, when it is Carnival, I would arrange for tourists who wish to take part in the mass troupe parades to be able to so at a low cost or maybe free. This would create a way for more tourists and locals to interact with while having fun.

These are just some of the ways I would help to bring locals and tourists together. When tourists are able to interact with our warm, friendly people, they will want to return time and time again. It is true; the beach is just the beginning!

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Aruba Simran Mirpuri

"Imagine you are the Minister of Tourism for your island. What would you do, and what projects could you create, to help bring locals and tourists closer together?"

If I were the Minister of Tourism, I would do my best to make the locals closer to tourists. In one of my projects I would have a meeting with all the hotels on the island to organize complementary transportation from the hotels to a "cultural center." Firstly, in this cultural center we would promote our Aruban culture by encouraging the talented locals to give their time once a month to participate in this program.

In this program called "Interaction with Arubans", we would start with a complementary souvenir flag as you enter the Cultural Center of Aruba. There would be different stalls and counters with different things to see, learn, eat and admire, understand and enjoy.

As you proceed inside, we have to create a feeling to make a person feel deeply involved and interested. The stalls should start off with a brief and fun topic about our history, currency and exchange rates. Then a stall which teaches you the language called "Papiamentu." The locals can interact with the tourists by teaching them fun and basic words in a few minutes. They could have books with translation on sale for a small amount.

The next section would be picking up your favorite Aruban outfit and choosing a local dancer. They will teach you the steps according to the music you choose. So, it would be great to learn the dance and enjoy the wonderful evening and may also encourage a little "spur of the moment competition and learning to play the instruments."



Next, would be a "cook and taste." This would have the popular Aruban food like pastechis. The locals cook and demonstrate food in front of the tourists and make them also participate. After that, they could sample the fabulous food. They can buy recipe books that would be on sale, and share and exchange recipes.

Outside the cultural center there would be a special area which would be for kite flying demonstration. This would really help them interact and they can also create competitions together.

To end the evening there would be carnival dancers to perform and the tourists would pick up the carnival outfits to rent for the evening and join the fun.

I hope my idea is appreciated and can be put to use. This might help the locals and tourists interact and get close, by keeping in touch by phone and e-mail for their future visits. In this way our locals can also visit the tourists in their country for vacations. This can help maintain relationships. I hope as the Minister of Tourism I can promote this great idea.

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