

# GREAT DAY IN



*In Georgetown (below), the classroom is full and the seminary students are listening. In the nearby town of Patentia, Nikita Kubeer (right) takes a break outside her school's snack bar and talks about the positive influence of her sisters, including Diane (upper right).*

*It's a great day in the morning—and all day long—now that seminary starts it off for these teens at the top of South America.*

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**H**ow do you get your day off to a great start? Teenage Latter-day Saints in Georgetown, Guyana, will tell you the answer is easy—go to seminary. Many of them have participated in home-study seminary before, but the Church has



grown rapidly in this country at the top of South America, and now there are enough youth and teachers to hold early-morning seminary every weekday before school.

## **Start with Seminary**

Visit the seminary class at the Prashad Nagar meetinghouse, and even though it's early, the room is full, and the students are listening. Xiann Kippins, 16, enjoys the class a lot, in part because her mother is the teacher.

"In seminary, we fill our hearts and minds with good thoughts," Xiann explains. "We learn about gospel principles and doctrines, and we see our Church friends every morning, too. My mother and I talk about the things we study together. I have also seen the examples of my older brother and sister, who went to seminary and who are both now on full-time missions."

Shelly and Telesha Seenaraine agree that starting the day with seminary means starting the day off right. "It helps me to begin on a good note," says 14-year-old Shelly, "and it prepares me to make correct choices as I deal with whatever the day holds." Telesha, 15, says seminary is a daily reminder "that the Lord will bless us and keep us safe as long as we are doing what's right."

And Simeon Lovell, 14, and Milena Embleton, 15, say that now that they are used to coming to seminary every morning, the day just wouldn't be complete without it.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR

# GUYANA



## BIG SISTERS ARE WATCHING

**N**ikita Kubeer's big sister Dianne teaches in the same school system where Nikita goes to school in Patentia. Thrilled to be a teacher, she says, "Much of what I am right now is because of seminary and institute.

"At first I felt like I had so many things to do that I was tempted to put seminary aside, but my big sisters encouraged me to go, and now I'm glad they did. Seminary is a wonderful opportunity, and it's important to go and to pay attention. One of the best things I discovered in seminary is that I'll be learning my whole life. And now, as a teacher, I can help others to learn too."

She says that seminary taught her a pattern for learning and teaching. "There are so many examples in the scriptures," she says, "and you also see how your teachers teach. If you follow those examples, learning and teaching will become more natural for you."

Having been encouraged by her big sisters, Dianne is now returning the favor by encouraging Nikita in her seminary studies. They also have a younger brother who will be starting seminary next year.



***Surrounded by her seminary class (above), Sister Kippins says getting up early to study the gospel is a joy. Michael Ramgobin (below right) rejoices that he is “part of something real,” and Clint Callender (above right) serves as a district clerk.***

### **For the Strength of Michael**

In addition to the strength they find in seminary, youth in Guyana fortify themselves from other sources as well. For example, 16-year-old Michael Ramgobin of the Demerara Branch says that *For the Strength of Youth* is a great help to him.

“Everyone should have this,” he says, holding up his copy of the pamphlet. “It really helps you make decisions that are right.” He recommends reading it over and over again, “because it seems like every time you do, you find something new to help you.”

The only member of the Church in his family, Michael says family members support his membership because they see such a difference in him since he became a Latter-day Saint. “I feel a lot more confident as I keep learning more and more about the gospel,” Michael says. He particularly enjoys listening to general conference and attending youth conferences. “I feel I have become part of something real.”

What else has strengthened Michael in the year since he joined the Church? “Reading the scriptures. As you read, the Holy Ghost helps you see things you didn’t see before. Then with the faith you have in Jesus Christ,

you find your way. That’s why my testimony keeps building every day.”

The youth in the branch help each other, too. “We share our concerns and encourage each other,” Michael says. In fact, he feels similar encouragement from everyone in the branch, and was particularly impressed when some of the missionaries presented him with a white shirt and tie.

“When I walked into church the next Sunday, everyone said, ‘Wow, you look like a real missionary.’ I feel a difference when I’m dressed that way.” A full-time mission sounds exciting, he says. It would be a good way to continue the great day that dawned when he joined the Church.

### **Mark This Callender**

Every day is busy for Clint Callender, another member of the Garden Park Branch. But being busy keeps him happy. The 17-year-old did so well on his exams that he is now teaching information technology at the Tutorial High School. He was recently sustained as district clerk, a calling that matches well with his interest in computers and his plans to study computer science at a university next year. He is also busy with Aaronic Priesthood and Mutual activities,



seminary, basketball, friends, and simply living the gospel day by day.

“I’m trying to be a light to my family and to other people,” Clint says. For example, he encourages his family to pray and to hold family home evening. And with friends, he says, “I try to get them to take a look at what they’re doing, to see what is right and what is wrong, to guide them if they want help.” He also talks with friends about the Church’s humanitarian efforts worldwide. “I tell them that in disasters, we provide food and clothing.” And, he says, smiling, “We offer prayers, too.”

Clint says his personal prayers lift his spirit. “It’s wonderful to know that you can kneel down and speak directly to Heavenly Father sincerely, and you will receive an answer, not always right away, but eventually. Prayer helps you to be much closer to Heavenly Father. Just keep the channel open all of the time.”

He looks to the future with hope. “When I’m 19, I see myself serving a full-time mission,” he says. “That’s another way to be an example.” He believes that someday there will



## OVERCOMING TEMPTATIONS

It isn’t always easy to live the gospel, but it’s worth it. And if you want to keep the commandments, the Lord will provide a way (see 1 Nephi 3:7, 1 Corinthians 10:13, and D&C 95:1).

Those are truths Clint Callendar lives by. “Every day I face trials and temptations, every single day,” he says. “Being a member of the Church of Jesus Christ, more trials and temptations are there for you. But remember, Heavenly Father wants us to return to live with Him someday, and you can only do that if you keep the commandments.

“One thing that helps me is that normally I sing a hymn, and mostly I have a prayer in my heart or keep memorizing a scripture. In every thing I try to give praise and thanks unto God” (see Boyd K. Packer, “Worthy Music, Worthy Thoughts,” *New Era*, Apr. 2008, 6).

“I have learned that commandments are not restrictions but guidelines that lead us to Heavenly Father. Trials and temptations help us become strong if we overcome them with faith. When you overcome one temptation, it makes you stronger to overcome the next one.”



*Learning the gospel together helps Michael Meredith and Selwin Lovell (above) follow in the footsteps of Dellon Murray (right), who says seminary is great preparation for a lifetime of service.*

**NEmore**

For additional stories and photos about youth in Guyana, visit [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org).



be a temple in Guyana.

“Families will go there to be sealed, and I hope my family will be one of them,” Clint says. “A temple in Guyana means many more Guyanese will be Latter-day Saints. The temple brings a feeling of peace and reverence, and I think all of Guyana will be blessed.” What a great day that will be!

**Patience in Patentia**

In a smaller town on the outskirts of Georgetown, a place called Patentia, 16-year-old Nikita Kubeer pauses for a moment during her school day to count her blessings. It’s something she does regularly, because it makes her feel good.

“I have a lot to be grateful for,” Nikita says, and she lists many of the things you might think of—family, friends, food, shelter, and especially her testimony of the restored gospel. “The gospel means the most to me when I take what I study and use it in my life,” she says. “Living the gospel has taught me that the Lord will bless us if we are patient, keep the commandments, and trust in His promises. I am particularly grateful to the Savior for what He has done for us.”

With a list of blessings to count and an attitude of gratitude, Nikita, like the other Latter-day Saint youth in Guyana, knows that every day can be a great day when you trust in the Lord. **NE**

**WHY GO TO SEMINARY?**

What advice would someone who has already completed seminary give to you? Ask Dellon Murray of Georgetown, Guyana, and he hesitates for just an instant. It isn’t that he’s at a loss for words, it’s that he can think of so much to say that he doesn’t know where to start.



One of the best things about seminary, he says, is that it helps you build friendships with those who share your values. “At school, we didn’t have a lot of friends who kept the same standards,” Dellon recalls. “So with most students you try to be friendly and do school work with them, but when it comes to hanging out, you have to stay away. In seminary, though, you’re around LDS friends who share the same ideals. It gives you a sense of hope.”

A returned missionary who served in the Jamaica Kingston Mission, Dellon notes that all seven of his fellow home-study seminary students are still active in the Church, and that five of the seven have now served full-time missions. He says seminary also:

- Strengthens your testimony that God the Father and Jesus Christ did appear to Joseph Smith.
- Awakens a desire to feast upon the scriptures.
- Teaches you how to prepare for and receive personal revelation.
- Increases your faith as you feel the Spirit.
- Prepares you to be a better missionary.

Dellon says he was a better full-time missionary “because of what I learned in seminary about the Book of Mormon and the Savior.” He says he knew when he asked people to gain a testimony that they could, “because I had already done the same thing.”