

Hands create golden history

CORI BAYNES

Guardian South Bureau

THE GOLDEN Hands Steel Orchestra delivered outstanding performances during the recently concluded Antigua and Barbuda Moods of Pan 2006 festival, capturing the respect and approval of thousands of pan enthusiasts.

Also, the southern based junior pan side, won the festival's Five Alive competition, walking away with the US\$2,006 first prize and challenge trophy becoming the first orchestra outside of Antigua to win the competition.

The seventh annual Moods of Pan Festival, which was organised by the Gemomites Steel Orchestra in collaboration with the government of Antigua and Barbuda, was held on November 24-26 and featured a host of steel orchestras regional including local bands Trinidad All Stars and Golden Hands.

Under the direction of band leader Franka Hills Headley, the orchestra opened its 40-minute performance on Friday with a powerful rendition of the gospel item God and God Alone followed by Joyful Joyful.

Other songs from its playlist included Lord I Lift Your Name On High and

Shout To the Lord.

In the Five Alive Performance on the second day of the festival, Golden Hands captured top honours with its rendition of Short Shirt's Tourist Leggo.

Speaking in a recent interview, Headley said that the victory at the festival increased the level of confidence of the local performers.

"The Antigians were so receptive of the Trinidadian contingent and they appreciated the skill of the children of Golden Hands," Headley said.

"Being from the land of pan, it was pleasing to us to make a good representation and the winning really gives us the encouragement to continue working to deliver excellent music both in and out of Trinidad."

She stressed the importance of not taking the pan or any other indigenous art form for granted, adding that many of children who have special talents are often neglected because there is no one to encourage them.

"I think in Trinidad we take for granted quite a bit the talent that the children have. The festival gave our children the encouragement to continue doing music because at the end of the day it is all about appreciation," Hills Headley said.



Members of Golden Hands Youth Steel Orchestra during a practice session at the band's Independence Avenue panyard in San Fernando. The group captured first place at the Moods of Pan-Festival, held in Antigua/Barbuda last week.

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