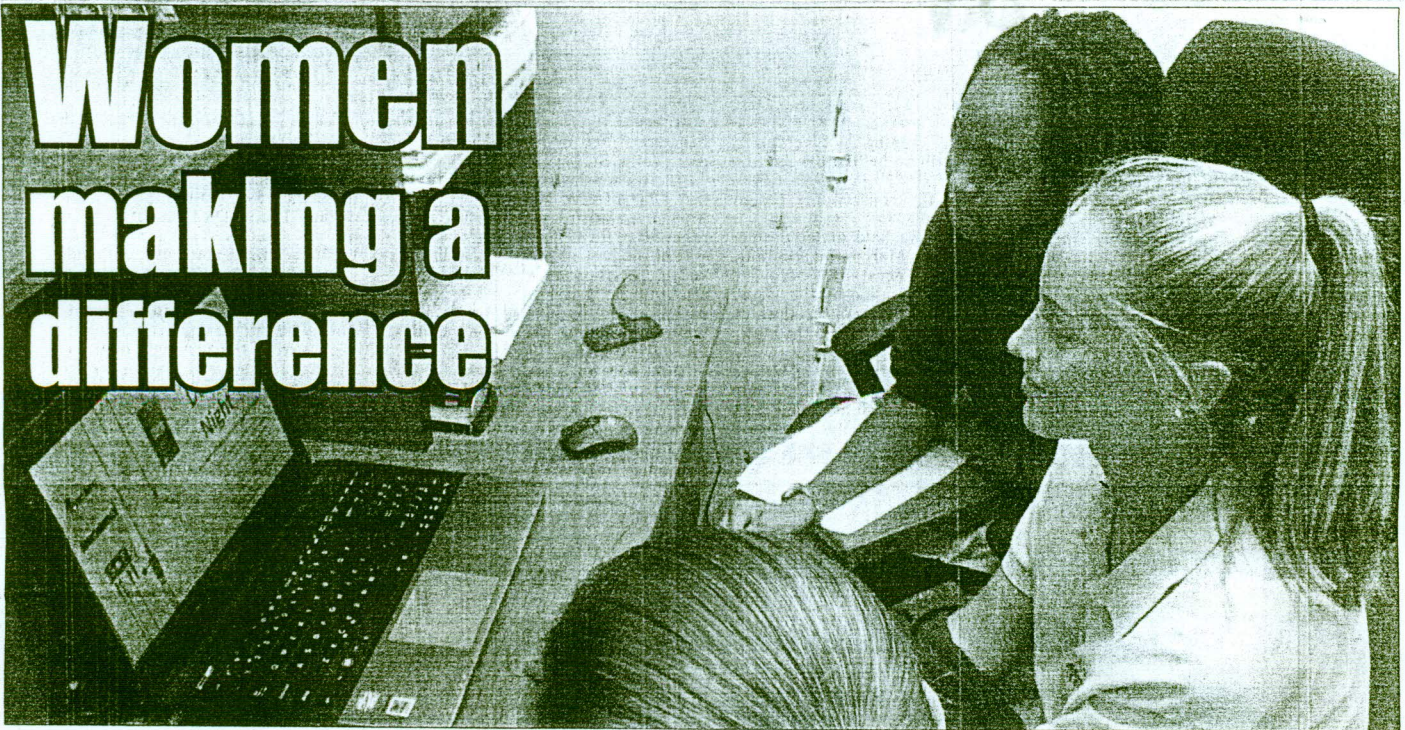


Women making a difference



ABACO students learning what they can do to help combat climate change.

Photos: Barefoot Marketing

CLIMATE change is quickly becoming a large problem across the globe and particularly affects the Bahamas as an island chain surrounded by water.

The Bahamas is made up of 90 per cent water and contains coral reefs which break down wave energy and minimise impacts from storms such as hurricanes. Officials from the Bahamas National Trust said if climate change worsens, many of the country's coral reefs will die and in addition, land will be lost due to rising sea levels.

The BNT recently organised a webinar titled 'Women and The Environment: Our adaptation to Climate Change' which was broadcast to over 100 female students throughout the archipelago and chaired by College of The Bahamas Professor Margo Blackwell. The event was organised in conjunction with Minister of Social Services and Community Development Melanie Griffin.

Young women from Grand Bahama, New Providence, Abaco, Eleuthera,

Andros and Long Island tuned in as all women presenters from a variety of environmental agencies gave brief presentations on climate change and the small steps we as individuals can take to slow it down.

"The Bahamas is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world when it comes to the impact of climate change," said Mrs Griffin, who hosted the webinar. "I am very pleased to welcome this great group of women to discuss the timely topic of climate change and how important it is to put a stop to this in the Bahamas."

As the event was held during National Women's Week, all of the presenters were women which included: Nikita Shiel Rolle, founder and director of Young Marine Explorers (YME), Olivia Patterson, programme coordinator for 'Friends of the Environment', Shenique Smith, director of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Gabrielle Douglas of the Andros Conservancy and Trust (ANCAT) and Lakeshia Anderson, Grand Bahama parks man-

ager at the BNT. Each presenter gave their individual perspective on climate change based on their research on their respective islands.

Ms Anderson presented on "Climate Change and Protected Area Management". She highlighted the importance of the establishment of protected areas, like BNT parks, when it comes to climate change as they help to reduce overfishing, pollution, dredging, illegal and destructive fishing practices, sand mining, invasive species and other threats in these areas.

"These protected areas help to increase reef resilience," said Ms Anderson, "and reduce some of the local stressors to improve coral reef health to mitigate hurricane impacts."

In her presentation, Ms Rolle gave small tips that students can make to help combat climate change including don't let others litter, save as much energy as possible, and use as little plastic as possible.

The various speeches are uploaded on the BNT's Youtube page.



MELANIE Griffin opening the webinar.



STUDENTS from Grand Bahama who participated in the webinar.