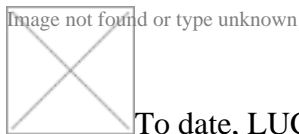


## A Decade Of Support For CFC Youth Football

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Submitted by cjoseph on Mon, 2019-11-18 12:47

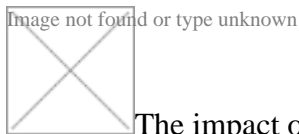
This is the tenth year the St. Lucia Electricity Services Limited (LUCELEC) and Bank of Saint Lucia have teamed up with the Castries Football Council (CFC) to develop youth football players. The youth football league uniquely tailored to their skills, bodies and minds began in 2009. It was the first of its kind in the country. It challenged the status quo. Its mission was to create happy and talented youth footballers. In so doing, the League bred champions and revolutionized how youth tournaments are executed at the national level.



To date, LUCELEC has contributed one hundred and three thousand, one hundred and twenty-five dollars (\$103,125) to the youth league. The financial support through the years, has been flexible, in the best of ways. It began with seven thousand, six hundred and twenty-five dollars (\$7,625) and in 2019 was twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000). The corresponding growth of the tournament and its results is proof of a solid investment that keeps growing.

The tournament is held over a few weeks. It began with fourteen (14) teams playing in three divisions at four venues. Back then, the CFC affiliate clubs were joined by school teams from RC Boys and Saint Mary's College and clubs from Roseau, Marchand and La Clery. Although conceptualized by the CFC for its members, from inception other teams were invited to compete because of the overall aim to improve and grow youth football in the country. It was for that reason a fourth division was subsequently added.

Today, the competition is held for Under-11, Under-13, Under-15 and Under-18 footballers. This year, twenty-one (21) teams competed in the youth league. Eighteen (18) of them were Castries affiliates and three were outside clubs.



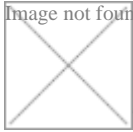
The impact of the CFC youth league cannot be overstated. Today, youth football tournaments by the Ministry of Youth Development and Sports and Saint Lucia Football Association use age appropriate footballs, smaller size playing areas and goals. These are international standards for play that were introduced by the CFC youth league. The player success stories from the league also tell their own tale.

When Castries won the 2019 National Under-15 football title, it was with a team that included eight CFC youth league players. Seven of them were then chosen to represent Saint Lucia at the CONCACAF Under-15

championship won by Saint Lucia. The youth league has also opened academic doors for players. Seven members have obtained partial football scholarships and are studying in the US and 3 players were lured to universities in the US and UK because of their football programmes. Former players have also gone on to form youth teams across the country including in Micoud, Laborie and Vieux-Fort.

The youth football league is more than just a competition. Team sports has overwhelming benefits for players, their communities and by extension the country. The athletes learn discipline, to challenge and triumph, build lasting friendships while engaged in meaningful exercise. Sponsor support has also facilitated the development of players and growth of clubs. After each tournament, the CFC provides technical support as well as football kits (uniforms, boots, socks) and equipment to each club.

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The finals of the four divisions of this year's football league were played on the week-end of

November 9-10. Congratulations to Under 11 champions Valley Soccer, Under 15 champions Lancers, and VSADC who won the Under 13 and Under 18 championships.

As one of the major sponsors of the CFC Youth League, we are committed to providing such opportunities for young people, which they may not have otherwise. Much of our Corporate Social Responsibility efforts targets youth in activities that steer them towards a meaningful life. That support for young Saint Lucians in theatre, education, competition and sports, contributes to fulfilling our broader vision "to be the energy that powers our nation's success".

LUCELEC also recognizes the organizers and officials who have and continue to ensure this tournament takes place, and at such a commendable standard. They build on the legacy of the pioneers of the CFC Youth League, committed volunteer visionaries, who changed the landscape of youth football in the country for the better.

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