Profile:
Tracy F. Hackshaw

" FROM A SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATE,
TO THE WORLD"

Tracy Hackshaw wants to connect *everyone* to the Internet, giving them "meaningful access" so they can use the Internet for their own advancement.

"Urban areas are very well connected to the Internet," he notes, "but in many of the remote areas of my country, you can't even get a stable cell phone signal. I don't think our citizens have a complete idea of what the Internet can really mean for them. They can learn basic math skills, or master secondary school equivalency, or whatever they want to learn."

Getting everyone connected is Tracy's aspiration—for his country, and for the two-thirds of the world's population who do not, as yet, have Internet access.

Tracy is Deputy National Chief Information Officer for Trinidad and Tobago, and was a Vice Chair of the ICANN Governmental Advisory Committee from 2013 to 2015 (the youngest person ever elected to the position—more on that later). He also plays a key role in involving the "Small Island Developing States" in Internet policy discussions.

The Next Generation Leaders programme (NGL) of the Internet Society played an important role in helping Tracy reach a position where he can make significant contributions towards achieving his aspiration.

While Tracy is a long-time Internet evangelist, he was initially a not-very-active member of the Internet Society, having started his career in an only semi-technological role within government. That changed when his involvement in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process brought him into greater contact with the Internet Society. He was a founding organizer of the ISOC chapter in Trinidad and Tobago, took the online learning course about the Internet then offered by ISOC and DiploFoundation, and was invited to participate in ISOC's Next Generation Leaders programme.

As part of the programme, he was an ISOC Ambassador to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in 2009 (in Sharm-el Sheikh), and a returning ISOC Ambassador in 2010 (Vilnius) and again in 2012 (Baku,

**TRACY F. HACKSHAW,
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

Internet Society Fellowships: Ambassador and returning Ambassador to IGF.

Advice to those seeking to work in Internet Governance: "Work hard, read a lot, ask questions, stay curious … and never take no for an answer."

Person he admires: "The person I most admire is my mother. She always said, 'Whatever you do in life, wherever you are, always seek to make a difference.'"

Favorite place: "I spent a lot of time thinking, playing, and planning in The Queen's Park Savannah in Port of Spain, Trinidad, and have my fondest memories of my Mom, my friends and my pets there. I also treasure the beaches at Charlotteville and Speyside in eastern Tobago."

Favorite food: "A straight fight between Pelau and what we call a 'stiff curry' - very spicy curried chicken, beef or shrimp with potato, chick peas, other vegetables, along with white rice or roti."

Azerbaijan). Because he had already taken the equivalent of the NGL's eLearning course *Shaping the Internet: History and Futures,* he served as a tutor and later an expert moderator for the course.

The ISOC Ambassadorship to the IGF, which was part of the NGL programme, opened doors for him.

"I met people from ISOC in person for the first time at that IGF. The formal preparatory session was invaluable in figuring out what was going on. I took a bold approach—I asked workshop organizers to include me in their panels. I believe they readily accepted me because I was an ISOC Ambassador, and that made them view me differently. The organizers were glad to have new people approach them, and the Ambassadorship gave them confidence in me."

> *"By engaging with these people, I made a series of valuable connections that I still use in doing my work today."*

Through participation in the IGF, he connected with people from ICANN, receiving a fellowship to the ICANN meetings in Sydney, Seoul, and Cartagena, between 2009 and 2010. What he learned at those meetings led him to articulate positions promoting a multistakeholder approach for Internet policymaking, as opposed to the traditionally government-centric consultation process.

It also eventually led to his election, and then re-election, as Vice Chair of the ICANN Governmental Advisory Committee, representing the Latin American & Caribbean region. As the youngest person ever elected to that position, and one from a small nation, he is still humbled by his election—"150 countries had to agree to it."

As vice-chair of the now very active Internet Society chapter in Trinidad and Tobago, Tracy has been involved in organizing a roundtable for the 50+ "Small Island Developing States" (SIDS) at the global IGF meetings for the past three years.

"We structure it to maximize participation," he says. "Chapter members facilitate discussions. There are no PowerPoints." This year's topic, "Free Internet—Bane or Boon?" examined the implications for small developing nations of accepting corporate or other offers of free Internet service (the benefits are obvious, but these offers can also lock the country in to those services). Last year's roundtable focused on the relative importance for SIDS of access to the Internet vs. other forms of infrastructure development. Not all participants are from Small Island Developing States—last year's included Vint Cerf and Niel ten Oever.

It's been quite a path for a man, whose single mother took out a loan equivalent to several months of her nurse's salary, to buy him his first computer.

What he wishes he had known:
(1) "You really can't please everyone, and certainly not all the time ... so don't bother trying. Focus on doing the absolute best you can, and your efforts should exceed most people's expectations."

(2) "Don't sweat the small stuff... as you get older and wiser, you realize that your time and effort is a most valuable resource that you should never take for granted, and that you should not waste on things which are meaningless in the grander scheme of things."