



December 2007

Jamaican Self-Help

Speaker Fabian Brown Shares his Passion

“To whom much is gifted, much is expected”

This was one of the main messages carried forward by Fabian Brown on his recent tour of Central Ontario. Fabian is currently the CEO of St. Joseph's Hospital in Kingston, Jamaica and the Director of Development at St. Patrick's Foundation, one of Jamaican Self-Help's long-time Jamaican partners. JSH invited Fabian to Ontario to speak to a number of groups as part of our global education mandate.



Photo by Dawn Straka

Fabian Brown and John & Rosemary Ganley

He was the special guest for the 3rd Annual Ganley Lecture on October 16. In this presentation, Fabian made an impassioned plea for Canadians and Jamaicans alike to use their talents to create a better world. “To whom much is gifted, much is expected” could refer at first glance to requesting financial support for Jamaica; yet more importantly it points out that we all have “gifts” – talents, time, good health, education, the list can go on - that we can and must contribute to build a true global community.

Fabian carried this message, and his capacity to see the talents in everyone, to hundreds of people, including JSH supporters, high school students and teachers, Jamaican-Canadians, NGOs, and government representatives, as he made his way from Peterborough to Ottawa, Kingston, Cobourg and finally Toronto. He highlighted the way at-risk youth from inner-city communities in Kingston, Jamaica have developed their own talents and artistic capabilities to become leaders and role models in their home community. The group Fabian has facilitated, the “St.

Patrick's All Stars”, now has almost 100 members from ages 15 to 30 who come together regularly to learn the performing arts of music, dance, and spoken word. As these youth become more involved in the programme, they also learn team work and leadership skills. They become a support group for one another and their community as they cope with the daily challenges of living with poverty and violence.

Fabian proudly described the accomplishments of this group, and then went on to urge Canadians to join this movement for a better future. Using Jamaican Self-Help as one example, he noted how important is it for Canadians to “meet people where they are at”, to try to understand the realities of life in Jamaica, and to offer solidarity to those who struggle daily. He reminded his audience that they can offer hope, certainly through much needed financial support, but also through actively reaching out to share in the lives of others.

Jamaican Self-Help is very grateful to Fabian Brown for his willingness to share his time, expertise and passion with us.

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A Day in St. Mary

by Marisa Kaczmarczyk

The following is a report from a recent monitoring trip to Jamaica.

“Hello, my name is Bufferin... I’ll be driving you today.” “Is that the name your mother gave you?” I asked with a smile. “No, miss, but all my friends call me Bufferin”. “Well, it’s great to meet you Bufferin and thank you for driving.” And so began our day of visiting the four schools that comprise the St. Theresa’s Literacy Project. Stacy Wilson, the co-ordinator, had arranged for a 4-wheel drive vehicle and a local driver because we knew that the roads into the hills would be impassable with our little Toyota. Spending time with Bufferin was also a great way to hear more about aspects of daily life in the rural communities around Annotto Bay, St. Mary.

As we veered around gaping potholes and washed-out roads, we learned that Hurricane Dean impacted the local banana plantations, the main employer of the region, resulting in the layoffs of many workers. The record rainfall in the two months since the hurricane continued to affect the local crops as well as the roads.

We reached the top of the long winding gravel path and walked the remaining way to May River Primary

School. We could see that a new building had been erected. This was the new Reading Room, home to the JSH-supported remedial reading programme. The growing number of students in this tiny mountain school necessitated another classroom as the positive results of the reading programme encouraged parents to send their children to this school. For example, last spring, of the 8 students who sat the GSAT (the Grade 6 national exam), 6 passed for traditional High Schools. We met the remedial teacher, Keisha Anderson, who was very pleased with her new space and her students this year.

From there we headed back down the mountain to Mt. Joseph Primary School, that also had a gleaming new resource room. Here we met the remedial reading teacher, Paulette Bennett and her principal, Mrs. Thompson. Again both were very pleased with the new building, particularly as their school population was also increasing. The principal beamed when she told us that for the second year in a row the school had achieved a ranking of 4 stars out of 5 by the Ministry of Education for its Grade 4 literacy work. 18 Grade 6 students passed the exam to move on to High School, where just a few years ago there were no passing students.

At the Annotto Bay High School, we briefly saw the two high school literacy classes, where Grade 10 students were taking special literacy classes each day during their regular English class time. The High School set aside one classroom specifically for this programme, which is run by St. Theresa’s Literacy Project. The school agreed to contribute computers and the necessary equipment so that the programme can use current literacy software to better meet the interests of the teenagers in the class.

Finally we visited the very active Reading Room at the Annotto Bay All Ages School. Three groups of students, each with its own teacher, shared one classroom and were working on various levels of reading. There were two new teachers, along with the experienced Ms. Henry. Despite the noise and the mosquitos, all the teachers and students were enthusiastically working on their exercises.

At the end of the day, we said farewell to Bufferin, our fearless driver, and then our team met with the Board of St. Theresa’s Literacy Project. The Board is made up of 8 community volunteers: a business woman, an insurance salesman, a librarian, a secretary, a nurse, a principal, a teacher and a child



Mount Joseph Primary School

development officer. Together with the co-ordinator, Stacy Wilson, they represent a broad base of the community and lend their expertise and talents to ensuring the success of the Literacy project . At the meeting we congratulated them on their strong programme and their continuing dedication to the needs of children in their community.

A comment from the teachers at the Annotto Bay High School sums up what we experienced on this short visit:

“When learners participate in teaching-learning activities, we, the teachers, are motivated and want to do more. We realize that learning takes place in different stages, and research bears this out. Our task is to be creative and help these students who are non-achievers in the system, to believe in themselves, and to experience individual success.”

Photos by Christine Post



St Theresa's Literacy Project



After the Hurricane - Reaching out to overcome adversity

by Angela Stultz, E.D., S-Corner Clinic

In August, Hurricane Dean passed just south of Jamaica, averting a direct hit. The news reported that over 300,000 people were displaced by the storm and casualties had been reported. The situation was even more compounded in social and economically deprived communities such as Bennetland, in which S-Corner operates. Bennett Land is a densely populated and desperately poor inner-city community located two miles west of downtown Kingston. This four square miles area is home to approximately 2500 families (10,000 persons). Almost three out of five dwellings are single room, often constructed from scraps of wood and zinc.

The residents' living conditions exposes their vulnerability to hurricane and other natural disasters. After the hurricane, the lack of electricity affected the operation of the S-Corner Health Clinic. All immunization supplies were lost and the Child Welfare Clinic was forced

to close its doors. However, the doctor continued to see residents. Livelihood projects also suffered from rain and subsequent heat. Feeding supplies were lost, and 90 chickens from our most sustainable project subsequently died. Some sections of the community were inaccessible based on blocked roads and fallen debris. There was no water, garbage pile up, mosquito infestations, poor sanitation practices and exposure to health hazards.

Although the Jamaica Public Service reported that they had supplied 90% electricity across the country, four weeks after the Hurricane there was still no electrical supply in the Bennetland community. Additionally, the lack of water adversely affected the ability to resume normal life patterns. Social amenities like the provision of water, electricity and garbage clear up is more of a socially stratified problem than a natural disaster. In inner-city communities the stigma attached to the addresses

challenges the residents' ability to resume normalcy. Drivers of supply companies express fear in entering, and the State often ignores the cry for intervention. As such, it has become a normal trend to see on National Television, inner-city residents who resort to blocking the streets and demonstrating that "we waan justice". S-Corner acts as the community's voice in these situations.

The strong sense of community, culture, caring and sharing became very evident in the aftermath of Hurricane Dean. Regardless of turf division and age differences, volunteer actions were high. Throughout the community men could be seen cutting trees and repairing fences while women and children cleared debris and filled water containers.

S-Corner Clinic is one of the 6 projects supported by Jamaican Self-Help.



Updates & Upcoming Events

19th Annual Brunch & Auction

Mark your calendar early! This year our annual Brunch & Auction will be held on Sunday April 20th at Princess Gardens in Peterborough. Includes great auction items and amazing food. Tickets are \$35/person (tax receipt \$20). More details to come soon.

Make Poverty History Committee

JSH has just received a grant from the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation for the Make Poverty History: North-South Youth Dialogue Project. This new adventure will bring youth from Jamaica, Nicaragua and Canada together for a dialogue about policy around aid, trade and debt. MPH is excited about moving forward with this new initiative.

One World Dinner

The World's Largest International Vegetarian Potluck Dinner, Dance & Dessert Auction is set for Saturday February 2, 2008 at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Peterborough. Co-sponsored by JSH, the Kawartha World Issues Centre and the New Canadians Centre. A great family event!



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• JSH would like to thank Community Living Peterborough and Peterborough Community Service Orders for their help with our mailouts.
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Rogers Street Artisans Sale December 8 & 9

This year for Christmas buy your gifts from local artists and JSH will receive 10% of the sales! Items include pottery, silver jewelry, soapstone sculpture and much much more. December 8th and 9th from 10 am to 5 pm at 363 Rogers Street. For more information call 743-1671.

Trips to Jamaica

The JSH Youth Awareness Trip programme will be going ahead for March and July 2008 with participants from the following high schools: TASSS, St. Peter's, Kenner, Norwood and Trinity College School. The students will volunteer with children in Kingston, learn about life in Jamaica and visit some other parts of the country.

Donations of Securities

Now the most tax efficient way to make a charitable donation is through the gifts of publicly traded stocks, bonds, mutual funds or other securities. With the Federal Budget presented in May 2006, you are not subject to any capital gains tax on publicly listed stocks when they are transferred directly to charities and you will receive a receipt for income tax purposes for the full market value of the securities. Talk to your personal advisor for more information.

Programme undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada provided through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

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Philosophy &

Mission Statement

Jamaican Self-Help is an organization of Canadians working in solidarity to foster the development of healthy Jamaican communities through partnership based on mutual respect, understanding and a shared vision of self-determination; and foster an understanding of global forces North and South and their inter-connectedness.