



# Jamaican Vibes

Newsletter - December 2008

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## A School with Great Potential By Joyce Mackenzie

As we entered the school yard on this warm November morning, we could hear the strains of children learning to play “Ode to Joy” on recorder. Mrs. Malcolm, the principal, came out to greet us with a wide smile, welcoming us to Tavares Gardens Primary School.

Tavares Gardens Primary School is JSH’s newest project in Kingston - a two-storey building on a small side road just off Spanish Town Road in lower Kingston. Two hundred and sixty children from Grades One to Six attend the school, which is surrounded by low income high-rise apartments. Like the other areas in which we work, life is uncertain from day to day and volatile eruptions can surface at any time.

The school has many needs, and almost no external assistance, yet we saw great potential in the vision and enthusiasm of the students and staff to improve their lives and their school. So in consultation with the principal, JSH is enabling the school to carry out programs to encourage students and appeal to parents.

Last year, as a start with this school, JSH funded a music program for grades three to five, using recorders. In the current school year, JSH is expanding its assistance in music, physical education, and parenting.

The music program is taught by a young man, Paul Samuels, who is not a regular member of the teaching staff. With our support, he has been able to expand the program this year to include all the grades. The children affectionately call Mr. Samuels, “Uncle Paul.” We watched this innovative young man encourage a class of seven year-olds to really shine.

Mr. Brown is another young man who had been coaching football after school. With the support of JSH donors, we have been able to expand his time at the school so that he now teaches physical education to all grades.

This will both motivate students to come to school, and provide them with a healthy outlet for their energy. His aim for the future is to add netball, rugby, and track and field.

Many children in Jamaica suffer from a lack of positive male influence in their lives. Our partners strive to find ways to have male role models for the children. With the addition of the music and physical education instructors we were pleased to see that the students at Tavares Gardens will benefit from their example.



Photo by Dawn Straka

Music class at Tavares Gardens

The school also aims to reach out to parents – both mothers and fathers - and through training and school involvement, develop a group of community leaders who will have better parenting skills. They will meet monthly in workshops organized by the school’s guidance counsellor.

With the new funding for an enriched parenting program, and the addition of “Uncle Paul” and Mr. Brown, the school is newly energized. We look forward to continuing to build our relationship with this wonderful school. Thank you donors!

This project is also supported by the Ontario English Catholic Teachers’ Association (Peterborough) and the Peterborough K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation.

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# It takes a Village...

by Amber Maynard

## 4TH ANNUAL

## GANLEY LECTURE: ANGELA STULTZ

On November 5<sup>th</sup> 2008, a crowd of about one hundred people from Peterborough and the surrounding area came to hear the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Ganley Lecture with Angela Stultz, the Executive Director of the S-Corner Clinic and Community Development Organization in Kingston, Jamaica. Her speech was titled “It takes a Village, plus the Neighbours, to raise a Community.”

Angela began by discussing how her work is an extension of her belief system and used her own experiences as a mother and an orphan to explain the philosophy behind her work. She believes that it takes more than a parent to raise a child. “Parents by themselves cannot raise a child. The child needs the help of its neighbours and strength of the community to properly support and to satisfy a child’s needs. Parents of a child cannot be the only eyes, the only hearts, the only discipline...,” Angela said. “I see my work the same way.”

Angela spoke about the detrimental effects of macro production of goods and global trade on countries like Jamaica. It causes people to migrate to inner-city communities, creating an even more dense population and resulting in increased poverty.

She described how education goes hand in hand with

economic mobility. If people have skills in trades, if they can support themselves, if they have a sense of self accomplishment, they are going to value their lives and the lives of others more. This has a ripple effect within the community, helping to build its confidence, strength and skills.

S-Corner teaches people how to cope with frustrations instead of resorting to violence. Angela noted that Jamaica has a stigma of being the murder capital of the world, but in reality there is violence and poverty everywhere. Collectively people need to work from the root of the problem to remove the stigma and stop violence. We live in a world which creates injustices, where people are pigeonholed, and where a people’s addresses can separate them. We must work together to teach youth and the community to take care of and respect each other as well as ourselves.

Many people have been lost to violence and this hinders the spirits of people like Angela who are working to build

peace. Angela said it’s easy to get depressed in a job such as hers, but for her, the greatest motivation to keep going is the success stories; when she sees the differences in her community, like people who have been helped by the program and who are now giving back.

Angela suggested how people here can get involved. Using the JSH approach as an example, she spoke of the understanding and communication between JSH and its partners and how this benefits the Jamaican people. She encouraged the crowd to continue to support Jamaica through financial contributions, awareness programs and advocacy for results and change.

Angela is one of eight women nominated from around the globe for the International Women of Courage Award for exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for women’s rights and advancement.

This year’s lecture was sponsored by the Ganley Fund for Innovation, Scotiabank-Peterborough and CIDA.



Photo by Liz Mann



# Direct from Jamaica-The All Stars!

In October, Jamaican Self-Help was very pleased to host members of the St. Patrick's All Stars performing group as part of a four-city tour – the first of its kind for this talented group of young Jamaicans! The “All Stars” is a group of over 50 inner-city Jamaican youth from Seaview Gardens in Kingston, who are learning to use their talents to express themselves and their culture, and learn leadership skills to help themselves and their community. The full performing group includes a Marching Band, dancers, singers, dramatists and a technical team. They dream to one day build a performing arts studio in their community. The tour featured 8 of the members who have shown leadership within the group.

Peterborough was the first stop on the 12-day tour, where JSH hosted a range of educational and fun activities over three days. A crowd of almost 200 people came out to see the All Stars' first Canadian performance which included patois skits, song

and dance. The group also had opportunities to meet members of the John Howard Society as well as reconnect to some past awareness trip participants. A highlight was the All Stars participation in the local high school “Terry Fox Run” where they joined hundreds of teenagers in the annual fundraising rally.

After spending a few days in Cobourg and Kingston, the All Stars wound up their tour in the nation's capital. The JSH volunteer committee there organized a variety of activities for their time in Ottawa: from a visit to the IMAX Theatre to helping with the Salvation Army soup kitchen. Their final Canadian performance was to a packed audience of Jamaicans and Canadians at the Ottawa Mennonite Church.

The tour aimed to provide Canadians with a better understanding of Jamaican culture and social realities, while developing the leadership and performance skills of the Jamaican youth. Fabian Brown,

the All Stars' leader, remarked that the tour was a great success – the participants learned a lot about themselves and their peers in Canada, and have motivated the rest of the All Stars group to continue to work hard to develop their talents and achieve their goals!



Photos by Kathy Boyd

## SOUTH NORTH YOUTH POLICY PROJECT

by Julia Anderson

In 2007 JSH received funding from the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation to undertake an ambitious project linking youth from Canada, Jamaica and Nicaragua to create a shared policy vision around the international food crisis. The policy vision, and the process leading up to it, will take into account the political and economic realities of each country and will be rooted in an understanding of how policies in the North and South could (but often do not) work together to promote human rights and positive human development. The project has two main components: the SNYPP Steering Committee and the SNYPP Conference.

The Steering Committee is a tri-country committee of youth working together to plan and carry out all aspects of the conference. The 10

person steering committee is made up of youth who represent organizations in their respective countries. The organizations were chosen based on their commitment to youth voice, similar operational capacity, and willingness to work in international partnership. They are: the Seaview Gardens Youth Council, the Caribbean Youth Summit Association and the Centro Comunitario Oscar Arnulfo Romero. The Conference will take place in Peterborough in May of 2009 and will bring together a larger group of youth from each organization in Canada, Nicaragua and Jamaica. The conference will give youth the opportunity to discuss and find solutions to the more structural roots of the food crisis; and will give participants practical skills to be active members of civil society.



# MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

## Annual One World Dinner

The World's Largest International Vegetarian Potluck Dinner!

Saturday January 31, 2009 6:00pm

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Peterborough.

Theme: "Food as Energy?" with speaker Haroon Akram-Lodie from Trent University.

Entertainment, dance and dessert auction.

Proceeds to Jamaican Self-Help, Kawartha World Issues Centre, and the New Canadians' Centre.

A family-friendly event.

Contact the JSH office at 743-1671 or [jsh@nexicom.net](mailto:jsh@nexicom.net) for more information on these events.

## Annual Brunch and Auction

Sunday April 19, 2009

Princess Gardens Atrium – Peterborough.

Doors open at 11:30am.

Silent & Live Auction. Entertainment, great food, and good company.

All proceeds to Jamaican Self-Help.

Plan to bring your family and friends this year!

## Change 4 Change Campaign

JSH's latest fundraising campaign

Pick up a campaign package from the JSH office and collect change from friends, coworkers, family, or classmates. Every penny can make a difference, and it's amazing how quickly those pennies add up! An easy way for you to help Jamaica. A perfect idea for classrooms, family events, or clubs. Contact the JSH office for more information to receive your campaign package. All proceeds raised will support JSH education and community efforts in Jamaica.



Adam Scott CVI students Giles Hall and Jesse Tanner contributed their designs to the new Change 4 Change fundraising campaign.

## Jamaican Self-Help Board of Directors

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Marisa Kaczmarczyk

Julia Anderson

Heather Kenny

Amber Maynard

After over 15 years of service, JSH bids a fond farewell to our Office Administrator, Carole Pineau. Carole will continue to add her creativity to our newsletter and website, and we wish her all the best in her other endeavours! We also wish to welcome new staff member Heather Kenny and co-op student Amber Maynard to our team.

- JSH would like to thank Community Living
- Peterborough and Peterborough Community
- Service Orders for their help with our mailouts.