

# THE PALMYRA FOUNDATION RAISES MORE THAN US\$100,000 FOR SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

The local community came out in full force in support of The Palmyra Foundation, celebrating the children of Jamaica at its inaugural fundraising event held at The Shoppes at Rose Hall, Montego Bay, on December 8, 2007. Prime Minister Golding gave the key note address to the approximately 500 people who attended the event, which raised in excess of US\$100,000 for the 2008 school year from the sale of tickets as well as the sale of donated auction items.

In his address, Prime Minister Bruce Golding underscored the importance of improving the education sector, stating that the new Government has started a series of discussions with international agencies in an effort to raise the funds needed to improve the educational system. Arguing that a good early childhood education is the best foundation for all future learning, Prime Minister Golding said that he felt it was his duty to support the efforts of The Palmyra Foundation. Said the Prime Minister; "There is one thing that we all agree on, regardless of political conviction, and that is that our children are our future."

Kathi Constanzo and Samara Daswani with children of the Catherine Hall Primary School Infant Department who benefited from the 2007 book distribution. (Photo: Suki Kapahi)



The Prime Minister pointed to the fact that children who receive basic learning tools at an earlier age have shown to do better in school than others, even under challenging circumstances. Stated the Prime Minister; "Let us make sure that every child in Jamaica can go to a good basic school where there is good furniture and adequate material and teachers, where they get a good, sound and solid education."

Said the Foundation Chairperson, Kathi Constanzo; "The Prime Minister's support for our efforts made the event a very special occasion. Our aim was to get off to a great start for next year's textbook purchases, and we are



Bruce Golding, Prime Minister of Jamaica with Bob Trotta, The Palmyra Foundation's main supporter.

overwhelmed by the support we have received from the local community. We owe a big thank you to the companies and individuals who supported us by donating food, drink, labor and auction items, making it possible for us to put on the event."

Bob Trotta, developer of The Palmyra Resort & Spa personally donated more than US\$40,000 towards the Foundation's 2007 distribution, which provided 15,000 textbooks to more than 2,000 infant school children in the parish of St. James. Said Bob Trotta; "I'm glad to be able to make a difference to the children of Jamaica. Books create curiosity and inspire learning, and it gives me great pleasure to be able to help." Said Constanzo; "Additionally, The Palmyra Resort & Spa has generously absorbed all operational expenses."

The Foundation's goal has been expanded to include all public school children throughout Jamaica, increasing from the distribution of 15,000 books to 100,000 books in 2008. The Foundations five-year goal is to distribute 1,000,000 text books.

Walter Elmore, President of Turnkey Productions and the Air Jamaica Jazz & Blues Festival, chose The Palmyra Foundation as the official charity of the 2008 Jazz & Blues festival. Elmore stated that his organization was delighted to be associated with a charity that will make a difference to the children of Jamaica. The Palmyra Foundation continued their efforts at the 2008 Jazz & Blues Festival, where The Palmyra tent was visited by many supporters, including the Prime Minister of Jamaica, Mr. Bruce Golding, Minister of Tourism, Mr. Ed Bartlett and Sheryl Lee Ralph, the Tony Award-nominated American actress and singer of Jamaican heritage.

THE PALMYRA FOUNDATION

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