

Sister Cities Committee Plans to Build Clinic in Mo-Bay Thursday, April 9th, 2009



President of Atlanta Caribbean Jerk Festival, Glen Simmonds (left), makes a donation to Medical Director of the Atlanta Montego Bay Health Mission, Dr. Debra Haynes, to assist the Mission to stage its annual Health Fair, in Montego Bay, St. James. The presentation took place on Sunday, March 22, at the Atlanta-Montego Bay Sister Cities Committee 10th annual fund-raising brunch, held in downtown Atlanta. Looking on is Jamaica's Honorary Consul in Atlanta, Vin Martin, who also chairs the Sister Cities Committee.

The Atlanta-Montego Bay Sister Cities Committee plans to construct a health clinic in Montego Bay, St. James, to facilitate a more organised and sustainable health care programme between both cities.

Jamaica's Honorary Consul in Atlanta, Vin Martin, told JIS News that for the past 15 years, Atlanta has been conducting its health mission to Montego Bay and it is now time that "we have a permanent health facility in that city, where we can schedule to see our patients more frequently and conduct follow-up treatment, rather than just seeing them once per year."

Mr. Martin, who is also Chairman of the Sister Committee, said discussions would be held with the St. James Parish Council as well as the Ministry of Health, to determine a suitable piece of land on which to build the facility.

Addressing the Sister Cities 10th annual fund-raising brunch, on Sunday, March 22, at Atlanta's City Hall, Mr. Martin said the Committee hopes to begin construction of the clinic as soon as the approvals have been given.

This year the Atlanta Sister Cities Committee will stage two health missions to Montego Bay. The first will be held from June 14 to 17, while the second will be held from October 9 to 14. Mr. Martin said based on the extent of the need from previous missions, the Health Committee decided to add another mission this year.

President of the Atlanta Caribbean Jerk Festival, Glen Simmonds, made a donation to the Sister Cities Committee, noting that the cheque represented past proceeds from the annual festival.

Entertainment at the afternoon's event was provided by several gospel artistes, including renowned soloist, Jerard Placide, backed by the Tropical Breeze Band.

Over the past 15 years, the mission has served in excess of 37,000 patients in St. James and neighbouring parishes.

The mission is undertaken in association with the St. James Parish Council and is facilitated by the St. James Health Department. It is one of the major events staged to coincide with Montego Bay's commemoration of achieving city status in October, 1980.

The Atlanta-Montego Bay Sister Cities Committee is the oldest Caribbean organisation in Atlanta, having been established in 1972 by reciprocal agreements between the Mayors of Atlanta and Montego Bay. It is one of 18 members of the Atlanta Sister Cities Commission, which has Mayor Shirley Franklin, as its Honorary Chair.

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