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DIASPORA | GOOD SHEPHERD JAMAICA MARYLAND CHAPTER DONATES OVER US\$75-THOUSAND TO CHARITY

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The 2019 Partners of Good Shephard (POGS) awardee, Ms. Grezzel Cathnott (center), is flanked by (l-r) Lady Sylvan Alleyne; founder PFGS Arch Bishop Emeritus of Kingston, the Most Reverend Charles Dufour; Chancellor Emeritus of the University of the West Indies (UWI), Sir George Alleyne; President of POGS Ms. Joy Dufour; and Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of Jamaica, Mrs. Andrea Dubidad- Dixon all share a light moment at the POGS seventh fund raising dinner dance at the Thaddeus conference room in Rockville Maryland on Saturday, May 4, 2019 | Derrick Scott Photo

WASHINGTON DC - The Maryland-based Partners of Good Shepherd Jamaica (POGS) has contributed just over US\$75-thousand in financial assistance to various projects to assist the vulnerable and under-served in various communities in Jamaica.

According to POGS President Joy Dufour, her organization has been very pleased to be able to render this assistance over the past seven years. "Good Shepherd Jamaica was established to assist the poor and infirmed and it is our mission to provide financial, physical and moral support to address the educational and healthcare needs of the disadvantaged in Jamaica," she explained.

Ms. Dufour gave an overview of the POGS Maryland chapter, at the organization's seventh fund raising dinner-dance, in Rockville Maryland on Saturday, May 4, 2019. She told the large audience that their contribution has helped the organization to support Mustard Seed Community and Good Shepherd Foundation of Jamaica, and helped the Good Shepherd Medical Center, a state-of-the-art health facility in Montego Bay which provides healthcare needs of the working poor in the Jamaican tourist capital.

Ms. Dufour conceded that POGS alone cannot change Jamaica, but "it can cast a stone across the waters to create a ripple." It is a drop in the ocean, she said, "but the ocean would be less because of that missing drop." She added the organization may not be able to feed 100 people but it can feed one person.

In her message to mark the occasion – read by the Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of Jamaica, Mrs. Andrea Dubidad-Dixon – Jamaica's Ambassador to the United States, Her Excellency Audrey Marks, commended the POGS membership for devoting itself to providing much-needed support and assistance to the poor and disadvantaged in Jamaica. "I am thrilled to note the remarkable progress that POGS Jamaica has made in its relatively short life."

This newly-built medical center and hope hospice located in Montego Bay as well as the Mustard Seed Community which have been serving the needs of the vulnerable in Jamaica have been the primary beneficiaries of the benevolence of POGS in a culture that is increasingly characterized by self-

centeredness. “Your tangible support to these organizations sends a strong message of love and hope to the benefactors,” she declared.

Ambassador Marks added that the support of POGS compliments the efforts of the Government of Jamaica which has accorded high priority to reducing the level of poverty in Jamaica. “While we have experienced success on the economic front supported by the macro-economic stability over several consecutive quarters of growth, reduction of debt, inflation and unemployment, we are cognizant of the need for social protection for the poor and vulnerable in the society.”

It is for this reason that the Government in Jamaica has increased cash grants by about 50 percent to approximately 300 thousand beneficiaries of its flagship assistance Program of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH), the Ambassador explained.

In his address, former Chancellor of the University of the West Indies (UWI), Sir George Alleyne, lauded POGS for its consistency in supporting the poor and needy in Jamaica. Sir George appealed to the audience to support this organization as the funds are channeled into the right direction, which is assisting the vulnerable in the Jamaican society.

The 2019 POGS Award for outstanding contribution to the organization and to the Mustard Seed Community, went to Ms. Grezzel Cathnott.