

50 schools receive computers from ScotiaFoundation

(Tuesday, May 8, 2012) 50 schools from across the island, many of which did not have computers, have been launched into the information age with a gift of at least three computers each from the ScotiaFoundation.

Following a brief ceremony today at the Scotiabank Centre downtown Kingston, principals, elatedly transported the computers back to their various schools in Portland, St. Elizabeth, Kingston, St. Catherine, Westmoreland, Hanover, Clarendon, Trelawny, Manchester, St. Thomas, St Ann, St. Mary and St. James.

Most recipients are primary schools, however several basic, all age and junior high schools, along with one skills training centre were included.

The computers were purchased by ScotiaFoundation in response to the many requests received for assistance in acquiring computers. In order to make a meaningful contribution that would have far reaching impact on the schools, the ScotiaFoundation purchased the computers from and engaged the Camara Jamaica Foundation (CJF) to ensure that the computers would be used optimally by the selected schools. CJF is a non-profit social enterprise that uses technology to improve education.

“We have annually donated computers, usually in September, but never at this magnitude. We have taken the approach to give so many because of the partnership with Camara, and also as one of our ways of observing Jamaica 50th,” said Joylene Griffiths-Irving, Director, Corporate Social Responsibility of Scotiabank.

She added that: “We are also making this donation on Read Across Jamaica Day, in support of the Jamaica Teachers’ Association initiative, because we want to reaffirm our ongoing support for children, education and our schools. Our key objective is to strengthen the teaching and learning process and for the students to optimally benefit from having access to the software on these computers.”

All computers are loaded with educational software which provides interactive lessons in numeracy, literacy and technology. CJF also provides pre-and post installation, training and support to the schools.

“Our guiding philosophy is that children should actively interact with their lessons. We know that when children actively ‘do’, they learn so much more from when they just ‘see and hear’. These computers are tailored to be learning tools which help deliver a complete learning experience by illuminating the subject matter through active engagement. These computers are different from ordinary computers. They are transformed specifically into educational tools as they are loaded with a range of software to teach mathematics, numeracy, literacy,” said Karl Gaynor CEO of CJF.

Schools were selected on the basis of need, following assessments done by the ScotiaFoundation and CJF.

Mrs. Griffiths-Irving also explained that the computer grant is one of several significant activities that ScotiaFoundation will be doing to commemorate Jamaica’s observation of 50 years of Independence. Later on this year, 50 students will benefit from bursaries and grants from the ScotiaFoundation.

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