

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### **MBJ Airports supports Jamaica's youth with 'Change for Children' initiative**

Montego Bay, Jamaica, 8 May 2017. Sangster International Airport operator MBJ Airports Limited continues giving back to Jamaica in 2017 by maintaining its focus on the nation's youth under its "Change for Children" initiative.

Since 2011, Change for Children has disbursed more than JMD 5m to a number of local organizations, the Caribbean Christian Centre for the Deaf, Montego Bay Boys and Girls Club, Scout Association of Jamaica and Montego Bay Autism Centre being the major beneficiaries.

"We are proud to be able to contribute to key non-profit organizations that make a positive impact in the lives of countless young persons across Jamaica," commented MBJ Airports CEO Rafael Echevarne. "It's critical that Jamaica's youth are nurtured so they can realize their full potential," he said, noting that Change for Children reflects the airport operator's commitment to the country's long-term socio-economic development.

Contributions to local non-profit organizations have been used for instructional material, computer equipment, and to support teambuilding and leadership programs. Change for Children is funded by unsolicited donations made by departing passengers using coin collection boxes located in the departures terminal at Sangster International Airport. In addition to the monetary contributions MBJ Airports has made to help sustain organizations that assist children in need, the airport operator has also provided support through the donation of furniture.

Nicholas Headley, Operations Manager at Caribbean Christian Centre for the Deaf, said the funds received thanks to Change for Children would be used primarily for equipment to upgrade the computer lab at the organization's Montego Bay campus. "It comes at a really, really good time as we are doing refurbishing of the facility," he said, adding, "We really are very grateful."

The Scout Association of Jamaica uses the funds for trophies, transport and food integral to the group's activities. "We depend solely on the private sector to support us with our funding. The donation from MBJ's Change for Children initiative is very important to us. It's been twice now that we've gotten assistance through this project and it's been very, very helpful, said Scout Association of Jamaica Chief Commissioner Maurice Brown.

Change for Children began with a proposal from US-based Richard Lackowitz of Island Health Care Services and Mark Kerr-Jarrett, Managing Director of Montego Bay real estate developer Barnett Limited. These two individuals remain instrumental to the initiative. In 2016, a mentorship component was launched with MBJ staff members volunteering their time to Change for Children.

#### **About MBJ Airports:**

MBJ Airports Limited, operator of Sangster International Airport, is a partnership between Mexico-based Grupo Aeroportuario del Pacifico (GAP) and Canada-based Vantage Airport Group Ltd. through a 30-year concession agreement with the Government of Jamaica that began in 2003. For more information about MBJ Airports, please visit [www.mbjairport.com](http://www.mbjairport.com)

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