

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

### **MBJ TEAM SANGSTER CHARITY RUN/WALK**

Montego Bay, Jamaica, 11 September 2023// Sangster International Airport (SIA), Jamaica's leading gateway to the world operated by MBJ Airports Limited (MBJ), hosted its 3<sup>rd</sup> MBJ Team Sangster Charity Run/Walk on September 10 at the Sangster International Airport.

Two male athletes affiliated with Rainforest Seafoods, along with a British female runner competing in the 10K race, were among the standout performers at the event on Sunday morning.

The annual event, which drew just over 2,000 participants, saw Kemar Leslie, who is rapidly establishing himself as a prominent figure in the racing circuit, claim victory in the 10K male category, with an impressive time of 35 minutes and 59 seconds. Meanwhile, Sharita Whitley, a first-time visitor to Jamaica, secure the first place in the female 10K category, completing the race in 49 minutes and 57 seconds.

In the 5K race category, Leslie's training partner, Dwayne Graham, crossed the finish line in first place with a time of 16 minutes and 38 seconds. On the female side, Rosalee Wedderburn of Impressive Track Club, left her competitors behind with a time of 25 minutes and four seconds.

Now in its third year, the 10K/5K Run and Walk event aims to raise \$8 million to fund educational grants and scholarships. Sharon Hislop-Holt, Manager, Commercial Development & Marketing at MBJ Airports Limited, is optimistic about achieving this goal.

"I am absolutely thrilled with the overwhelming support we've received this year! When we reached out for sponsorship, the response was truly incredible. It's a testament to the generosity of our community. This event, has gained recognition for being not just contributing to a good cause, but an excellent event that the airport community and corporate Jamaica look forward to. All the funds raised go toward education, a cause we know is greatly needed," stated Hislop-Holt.

According to the Commercial Manager, the scholarship programme, with its three levels of support, is a source of pride. "Whether you're an airport employee, from the surrounding community or a community organization assisting those in need, all can benefit from this initiative. Last year, we were able to help over 50 individuals directly and indirectly, and our goal this year is to double our impact."

The prizes this year included 10 airline tickets courtesy of Jetblue, Spirit and Virgin Atlantic and hotel weekends compliments of Couples, Hyatt, Hilton, Royalton, S Hotel, Secrets and Zoetry along with gift baskets from CPJ, Reggae Mart and Tortuga.

The event could not have had the impact had it not been for the participants such as Leslie, a chef, who spoke of 2023 being an exceptional year for him. He used the opportunity to encourage runners to eat



more fish, noting this was an underlying strength, which girds you and help one to train hard so they can perform on the day.

In the case of Whitley whose father is Jamaican from Clarendon; as a tourist, she searched the web for running events being staged and saw the MBJ Charity race advertised. She decided to register, but not once did she envisage winning the 10K title.

“Basically, I came to Jamaica for vacation, but I love to run. The cost to enter was fantastic. I am absolutely amazed at winning. I am representing England and Jamaica,” she stated, revealing this was her first win.

The other 10K winners included Sheree Bryan and Precious Azarzar of Reggae Mart, who placed second and third respectively and Winston Dehaney and Jomo-Rhys Gilman, both representing PureLuv Running.

Refreshment was provided by sponsors; CPJ, Club Mobay, Express Catering Limited, Goddard Catering and Sunshine Snacks.

Other major sponsors of the event included Airports Authority of Jamaica, Aerotel, Amstar, Avis, Bhavela, Budget Car Rental, Catherine’s Peak, Caribbean Hub, Cellairis, Chukka, Dufry, Digicel, Elite Media Concepts, Deja Resort, Eulen, Global Exchange, Hospiten, Jamaica Civil Aviation Authority, Jamaica Customs Agency, Jamaica Tours, Jamaica Tourist Board, Passport, Immigration & Citizenship Agency (PICA), House of Diamonds, Moet Hennessy, Playa Hotels and Resorts and Troupe & Company.



Participants getting ready to start the race





**About Sangster International Airport:**

Sangster International Airport (IATA: MBJ, ICAO: MKJS) is an international airport located 3 mi (4.8 km) east of Montego Bay, Jamaica. The airport is capable of handling nine million passengers per year. It serves as the most popular airport for tourists visiting the north coast of Jamaica. The airport is named after former Jamaican Prime Minister Sir Donald Sangster.

**About MBJ Airports Limited:**

MBJ Airports Limited, the operator of Sangster International Airport, connects Jamaica to more than 60 international destinations. A record 4.7m passengers used the airport in 2019. MBJ operates SIA under a 30-year concession awarded in 2003 and the airport provides employment to more than 7,500 persons. SIA has been named the Caribbean's Leading Airport by World Travel Awards for 14 years.

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