



PRESS RELEASE

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DMS and Joanna Clarke Committee Members Follow Up on Progress

GEORGE TOWN, Grand Cayman – In the months following the presentation of the 2010 Joanna Clarke Excellence in Education Award (JCA) recipients, dms Organization Ltd (DMS), the award sponsor, and JCA Committee members have been making the rounds to observe the progress of each of the winning initiatives. Spanning across October and November they conducted site visits to Cayman Prep and High School for its Marine Science Programme, George Town Primary School for its Digital Visual Media Club and John Gray High School for its Scuba Diving Club.

In May, DMS presented cheques totaling \$12,000 KYD to help fund these initiatives, and as part of the award follow up, the JCA Committee and DMS ensure that they see the grants in action and learn firsthand how these initiatives are advancing. Ms. Joanna Clarke, the namesake of the award, was in attendance at each of the visits and interacted with the students and teachers leading the initiatives.

Of the experiences, Ms. Clarke said, “This is by far my favourite part of the award process, following up to see how the children are benefitting. Hearing from the students firsthand about their experiences is incredibly rewarding, and as I have been in previous years – I was once again delighted to learn that each of the schools is capitalizing on the opportunity and ensuring that the projects are being executed as planned.”

Ms. Clarke was accompanied by Tara Tvedt, a committee member and a DMS employee, to Cayman Prep where they were treated to a PowerPoint presentation reviewing what students have been up to so far, with funding having assisted with underwater writing slates, \$100 towards each student’s PADI diving certification and snorkel equipment.

“Their presentation was insightful as they shared with us experiences they have undergone in
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years past, including participating in the lionfish culling response team and assisting in reef clean ups island wide. The Marine Science Programme is most impressive, though unfortunately the recent weather has been challenging, and they look forward to the ventures that lie ahead, such as a trip to Little Cayman's Marine Research Institute."

Krista Pell, DMS Vice President and a JCA committee member, joined Ms. Clarke at George Town Primary School where they enjoyed a presentation by the Digital Visual Media Club's members. The club equips students with necessary skills to integrate literacy with media, teaching students proficiency in various digital, visual, broadcasting and photojournalism applications, as well as the opportunity to explore careers in the relevant industry.

"We had the opportunity to hear directly from the media club's newest members who were particularly excited about the experience. They showed their videos to date, and explained the challenges they had experienced along the way, and accordingly the insight they have gained," said Ms. Clarke.

Following the presentation, Ms. Clarke spoke to the students and challenged them to capitalize on all opportunities ever offered to them with these new resources – continually focusing on learning and developing skills.

JCA committee members Winston Connolly and Lydia Warren both attended the John Gray High School site visit along with Ms. Clarke. The Scuba Diving Club seeks to heighten awareness for environmental and marine conservation, and the funds have contributed towards purchasing equipment to make diving more accessible to students after they have completed their open-water dive course.

"It was exciting to learn about their diving adventures, and what they gained from the experiences. It was even communicated to us by teachers that their new-found passion has contributed towards improved attendance at school, which was particularly rewarding to hear. I have always maintained that students need to be passionate about what they are learning to truly benefit, and upon our visit that is exactly what I came to learn."

With each of the winners receiving a \$4,000 KYD grant, the award assists in funding their worthy initiatives as well raising awareness about the effort and encouraging further private sector support from the community.

Ms. Clarke has been an iconic educator in the community, impacting students for more than 40 years. DMS launched this cornerstone education initiative to recognize the efforts of all persons and organizations that contribute to education in the Cayman Islands.

DMS is a business conglomerate engaged in the financial services, real estate and media industries.

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Ms. Clarke at George Town Primary School following up on the progress of the Digital Visual Media Club.



Two students from Cayman Prep's marine science programme using underwater slates purchased from Joanna Clarke funds to record marine data.

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