



INTERNATIONAL PROXY PARENTS

Year in Review 2024-2025

June 2025



INTERNATIONAL PROXY PARENTS ANNUAL BAZAAR

Held Saturday November 16, 2024

Theatre Evening 2025: JMTC Musical 'Alice'
Students Social: At The Zoo Hope Gardens
Art Therapy: At Homestead Place of Safety

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INTERNATIONAL PROXY PARENTS

Year In Review



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The year 2024-2025 for International Proxy Parents (IPP) has been an exciting year! I am indeed honored to serve as President of this group which was founded in 1980 by the diplomatic community to help academically promising students with financial challenges. We continue the mission i) to relieve poverty, suffering and distress among children in Jamaica whose lives we touch and ii) to provide financial assistance for their education and well being.

With the help of our Board, club members in general and other stake holders, our activities and results have exceeded expectations and here are some highlights:

- IPP restored contact with the Diplomatic Corps through courtesy calls with most of the Embassies.
- The Annual Bazaar, our major fundraising event, held on November 16, 2024 in association with The Diplomatic Missions and the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, was a great success.
- Our Scholarship Fund benefited greatly from funds donated by the Diplomatic Corps, The Nurses Association of Jamaica (UK) and The Ellen Pearle Fund. We were able to offer seven (7) additional scholarships in 2025.
- The Students Social this year was held at the Hope Zoo on March 21, 2025. It was a huge success. Our Patron, Lady Allen and Colombian Ambassador Bernard-Stephenson attended and offered word of encouragement to our scholarship winners, their parents, and guidance counselors.



- Our activities in the State homes, including Art Therapy and Theatre Evening Out have been enhanced by donations from the friends of the Windrush Group in UK and local companies.

I love and appreciate the enthusiasm of members and so many local companies for their kind donations which helped us to carry out **IPP's mandate to improve the lives of the Jamaican children where possible.**

Thank you members for bringing your energy, spirit and enthusiasm to each and every meeting! It was a privilege to serve as your President this year.

Celia Jackson

WELCOME TO OUR INNAGURAL ISSUE



Looking back with gratitude, looking forward with purpose

As I reflect on the past year with International Proxy Parents, my heart is full of gratitude. What a wonderful journey it has been—from the election of our new board in June 2024 to our gatherings for meetings, planning sessions, and community events that followed. God has truly been faithful. Each month brought new opportunities to serve, connect, and grow. From board and general meetings to the hard-working Bazaar committee gatherings, we stayed committed to our mission: to support and uplift the lives of students in need. Our Annual Bazaar in November was a true highlight—filled with laughter, generosity, and purpose. And who could forget the warmth and togetherness of our Members' at the Christmas Luncheon in December? As we stepped into 2025, the energy didn't stop. Our theatre evening in January set the tone for another impactful year, followed by four weeks of Art Therapy sessions at Homestead that concluded in February.

Members came decked out in red to enjoy the Pre Valentine members general meeting. The Bazaar committee started the planning for this year's staging and the date was set for November 8, 2025.

And in March, seeing our scholarship recipients and their families at the Student Social reminded us of why we do what we do. It was a moment of pride and purpose all wrapped into one. In May, members join Peju along with her family and friends as she celebrated her 85th birthday.

Now, as we prepare for our June 2025 board elections and continue planning another amazing Bazaar, I want to say thank you. To each member, sponsor, donor, volunteer, and friend—you are the heart of this organisation. Together, we've made a difference. And with God's continued guidance, I believe the best is yet to come.

With love and appreciation,
Karen Jones
Editor, International Proxy Parents
Year in Review



INTERNATIONAL PROXY PARENTS BOARD 2024 - 2025



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1st Vice President
Immediate Past President



Ambass. Claudia Barnes
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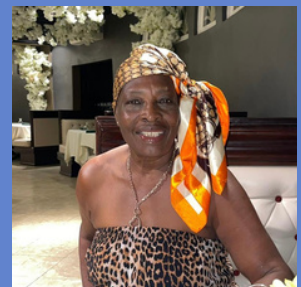
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Roma Greenaway
Education Committee
Chair



Meloney Copeland
Community Projects
Committee Chair



International Proxy Parents Annual Bazaar 2024 “A Welcome Return”

After a long break since our last staging in 2019, the International Proxy Parents (IPP) Bazaar made a much-anticipated return—and it was a success!

The day started with an official opening ceremony led by the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, Ambassador His Excellency Deryck Murray High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Although the skies were mostly cloudy and we had some rain in the early afternoon, over 300 patrons still came out to support and enjoy the day.

We were proud to welcome **three diplomatic missions** this year:

- **Argentina** brought a lovely display of their local wines, snacks, and sweets. The hit of the booth was the homemade empanadas prepared by the Ambassador’s wife—guests couldn’t get enough!
- **Colombia** showcased beautiful artisan jewellery and art pieces, along with their famous guava cheese, which was a tasty treat for many.
- **Trinidad and Tobago** served up delicious island favourites including buss-up-shut, roti, doubles, and triples—full of flavour and well enjoyed.

The **Jamaica booth** didn’t disappoint either, with local favourites like curried goat, BBQ chicken, ackee and salt fish, sweet treats, and even plants on offer. One of the crowd favourites, as always, was the **White Elephant Booth**—filled with gently used clothes, household items, and other treasures. It stayed busy all day! We also had over 30 local vendors selling everything from jewellery, fashion, and home décor to spices, art, and more. Most vendors reported doing very well and said they would definitely be back for the next bazaar.

The Children’s Corner kept the little ones entertained throughout the day with lots of fun activities, including a bounce-about, face painting, and our Cultural Passport Challenge Book—a fun and educational way for kids to explore the different booths and cultures. Throughout the day, patrons enjoyed vibrant entertainment that added a joyful rhythm to the event. Charmaine Lemonious uplifted the crowd with her soulful renditions. Everton Pessoa serenaded patrons with timeless reggae classics and DiMario McDowell captivated hearts with his smooth vocals and inspiring original pieces. MC Marlon “Musique” Campbell guided the day’s flow with energy and charisma, that kept the audience entertained and engaged from start to finish.

Overall, it was a fantastic day filled with culture, community, and good vibes. The board and members of IPP are so thankful for everyone who came out and supported. We are already looking forward to an even bigger and better event in 2025!

Submitted by:
Karen Jones





INTERNATIONAL PROXY PARENTS

PROJECTS HIGHLIGHTS 2024 – 2025





Children from State Homes Attend JMTC Musical Alice

International Proxy Parents (IPP) successfully hosted its annual Benefit Night in collaboration with the Jamaica Musical Theatre Company (JMTC) on January 25, 2025, featuring the lively and imaginative production of Alice. The event took place at the Phillip Sherlock Centre for the Creative Arts and continues to be one of IPP's signature yearly projects aimed at providing meaningful and enriching experiences for children in state care.

This year, IPP invited approximately 75 children from three state homes to attend the performance as special guests. For many of these children, it was their first time experiencing live theatre, and their reactions throughout the evening reflected pure joy, excitement, and wonder.

The JMTC production of Alice was a vibrant and engaging adaptation of Lewis Carroll's beloved tale. The colourful costumes, energetic musical numbers, and standout performances from the young cast captivated the audience, with the children especially enjoying the whimsical characters like the Mad Hatter, the Queen of Hearts, and the Cheshire Cat.

IPP members were on hand to warmly welcome the children, help with seating, and ensure they had a comfortable and enjoyable experience. Refreshments provided for the children, and the accompanying staff was well received and appreciated. This Benefit Night is part of IPP's continued commitment to creating opportunities that broaden the horizons of children from state homes and provide exposure to arts, culture, and positive social experiences. The smiles and feedback received confirmed that this project remains a valuable and impactful part of our annual calendar.

Sincere thanks to all members who contributed their time and resources to make the evening a memorable one for our young guests.

Submitted by:
Karen Jones





Art Therapy Sessions at Homestead



A 4-week Art Therapy course was delivered for young women aged 13-17 currently in state care, with the goal of supporting their reintegration into family life.

The program focused on using the heart as a symbol of feeling, encouraging participants to express emotions through color and shape. Art-making became a tool to explore identity, process experiences, and build emotional awareness.

Weekly themes included color and emotions, mapping feelings, storytelling through symbols, and creating a final piece representing hope and connection.

The course helped participants build confidence and emotional expression, supporting their journey toward healing and reconnection.

Submitted by:
Meloney Copeland
CP Community Chairperson



A 65inch television was donated by IPP to the Home on the final day of Art Therapy Sessions





Lady Allen and Colombian Ambassador Bernard-Stephenson speak at International Proxy Parents Students Social 2025 at Hope Zoo

Our annual Students Social is a highly anticipated event for both our scholarship awardees and the IPP membership. Normally the social is a somewhat formal occasion often hosted at the residence of one of the members of the Diplomatic Missions that support our cause

On such occasions the students are exposed to formal dining while learning about the culture of the host mission through their various presentations.

For 2025 however, the social was held in a less formal setting at the Hope Zoo on March 21 from 10AM – 3PM in partnership with Guardsman Limited. The company waived the entrance fee for all persons attending the social - eighteen of our nineteen awardees, eleven parents, six guidance counsellors and members of IPP



The event was hosted at the Ibis Gazebo, ideal for its central location smack in the middle of the Zoo and so we were never far from the animals and other attractions such as the train ride and the Petting Zoo.



The programme was opened with an address from the IPP President Mrs Celia Jackson

At right specially invited guest, Colombian Ambassador to Jamaica, Her Excellency Mrs. Bernard-Stephenson was greeted by Education Committee Chairperson Roma Greenaway. Her Excellency, who has familial roots in Westmoreland Jamaica, was a very relatable guest speaker for the students. Using her own life as an example she delivered a forceful and inspirational message, moving easily between Jamaica patois and standard English. Her anecdotes of the cultural similarities between St. Andres, Colombia and Jamaica were fascinating for everyone present.

Ambassador Bernard-Stephenson has demonstrated great interest in the work done by IPP. Colombia participated in the 2024 annual scholarship fund raising Bazaar held in the Gardens of the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel and has encouraged other heads of missions to do the same



The Ambassador promised “surprises” for the “top” student. Rikki-Nicole Powell, Head girl from St Jago High School immediately stood to make her case as to why she was deserving of the “surprise” offer. Kevi-Ann Grant, a 6 tformer of Dunoon Park Technical High was also quick to stand and present an argument on her own behalf based on her various academic and other achievements. The Ambassador was so impressed by them both that she doubled the offer so that they could both benefit.



St Catherine High School

The students from each school had the opportunity to meet with Ambassador Bernard-Stephenson for an informal mingle and photo opportunity.

She graciously posed for photographs with each school along with guidance counselors and members of IPP.



St Hildas High School



Ruseas High School



Tacious Golding High School



Dunoon Technical High School



Vere Technical High School



St Jago High School

The day's activities included spot quizzes on zoo animals, viewing the animals and birds in their cages, petting some of the animals and a train ride around the zoo.



Lady Allen, our Patron, paid a surprise visit to the social and in addition to delivering an inspirational address to the students she was on hand to make awards to students and mingle with participants



Left: Lady Allen with IPP members.
Below: Parents and guardians with Ambassador Bernard-Stephenson



New Vision Civics, donated by Canadian Womens' Club, and a book written by the late Locksley Lindo were presented to each school for their school libraries. Here Canadian Women's Club and IPP member Karen E Smith presents New vision Civics to Mr. Jermaine Young, Guidance counsellor from Vere Technical High School. Also in the picture are IPP President Mrs Celia Jackson – left and IPP Liaison Officer for Vere Technical Mrs Meloney Copeland

A representative from each school delivered a brief thank you to IPP and gave testimonials of the personal support provided by their respective Liaison Officers the ,value of the IPP bursaries to them and the difference it has made in their family's ability to cope financially. Below is the message from one student



Kevi-Ann Grant

On behalf of all the recipients, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to the International Proxy Parent Committee for your unwavering support and dedication. Your tireless efforts have made a profound difference in our lives, providing us with the resources and guidance we need to thrive.

We are deeply touched by your commitment to our well-being and your unwavering belief in our potential. Your compassion and understanding have created a safe and nurturing environment for us to grow and flourish.

Thank you for your generosity, your time, and your unwavering support. We are truly grateful for the opportunity to be part of this incredible program.

Name: Kevi-Ann Grant
Grade:13

Article prepared by: Roma Greenaway – Past President & Education Committee Chairperson March 2025



International Proxy Parents

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**DIPLOMATIC CORPS IN JAMAICA
ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS 2024 - 2025**

Diplomatic Corps Hands Over Bazaar 2024 Funds to IPP

It was a very special moment as members of the Diplomatic Corps officially handed over their pledged donation to International Proxy Parents (IPP) following the successful staging of our 2024 Bazaar.

Thanks to the contributions of **three embassies**—Colombia, Argentina, and Trinidad & Tobago that participated in bazaar—along with an additional donation from the wider Diplomatic Corps, the full pledged amount was met. This collective effort stands as a testament to the power of partnership in action.

Present at the handover were some of our diplomatic partners:

His Excellency Deryck Murray, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Trinidad & Tobago High Commissioner,

Her Excellency Emeliana Bernard-Stephenson, Ambassador of Colombia, and

His Excellency Marcelo Balbi Calvo, Ambassador of Argentina.

International Proxy Parents (IPP) was proudly represented by, Karen Jones, Hansini Khemlani, Pauline Lindo, Roma Greenaway, and Carol Charlton.

High Commissioner Murray, having experienced the Bazaar firsthand, shared that he now fully understands IPP’s mission and the heart behind our work, and he committed to encourage even more participation from other diplomatic missions for the 2025 staging.

Ambassadors Bernard-Stephenson and Calvo echoed his sentiments, both also moved by what they had experienced at the event. In true friendly spirit, Her Excellency cheekily warned Argentina that “Colombia is bringing it next year!” sparking laughter and set the tone for what to expect at an even more vibrant and engaging IPP Annual Bazaar the 2025 edition.

IPP expressed our heartfelt thanks for the continued support of the Diplomatic Corps in Jamaica. This partnership not only helps to fund our mission but also strengthens the bridge between service, diplomacy, and heart. We look forward to many more years of shared impact and collaboration.

Together, we are creating brighter futures—one child, one project, one partnership at a time.



Submitted by:
Karen Jones



Courtesy Calls on Diplomatic Corps in Jamaica



Belgium



Cuba



Colombia



Japan



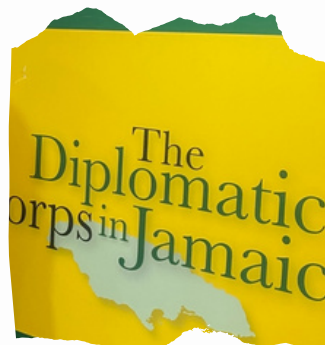
Argentina



Dominican Republic



Germany



India

Diplomatic Corps in Jamaica Events



Japan



**Birthday
Celebration
For
His Majesty
The
Emperor
Japan**



Japan

**Groundbreaking for The Japan Garden
at Hope Gardens**

Trinidad & Tobago

A taste of Christmas

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THANK YOU!

To Our Sponsors 2024 - 2025

On behalf of the International Proxy Parents (IPP), we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the esteemed members of the Diplomatic Corps in Jamaica, our valued sponsors, and generous donors for your unwavering support throughout the 2024-2025 year.

Your contributions—whether financial, in-kind, or through steadfast partnership—have played an invaluable role in allowing us to fulfil our mission of empowering and supporting students across Jamaica. Your generosity has helped to fund scholarships, mentorship programs, educational tools, and countless acts of kindness that have transformed young lives.

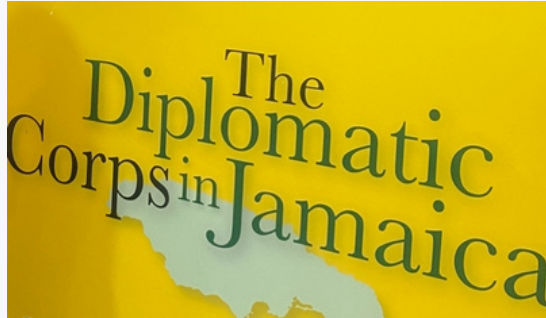
As we look ahead to the 2025-2026 year, we invite you to continue walking this impactful journey with us. Together, we can do even more to provide opportunity, encouragement, and hope to the next generation.

We also warmly remind you to save the date for our International Proxy Parents Annual Bazaar—our signature fundraising event—taking place on November 8, 2025. Your continued participation and support make this vibrant event a success year after year, and we look forward to sharing another memorable experience with you.

With sincere thanks,
The Board & Members of International Proxy Parents (IPP)

THANK YOU!

To Our Sponsors 2024 - 2025



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**INTERNATIONAL PROXY PARENTS
JUNE 2025**