

## For Immediate Release



### **The American Friends of Jamaica, Inc. honors Guardsman Group Ltd. Chairman, Kenny Benjamin at the annual Hummingbird Gala in New York City**

**New York (July 1, 2014)** The American Friends of Jamaica, Inc. (AFJ) recognizes individuals who epitomize philanthropy, leadership and integrity. The 33rd annual Hummingbird Gala will celebrate the Honorable Kenneth S. Benjamin, OJ, CD, LLD (Hon), JP at The Plaza Hotel in New York City on Friday, October 24, 2014. The evening's schedule includes a cocktail reception, dinner, presentation of the Hummingbird Award, entertainment and a live auction.

Kenny Benjamin is an exemplary business leader who is the founder of Guardsman Group of Companies; the region's largest private security conglomerate with more than 7,000 employees spread over Jamaica, Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Guardsman Group is the leader in its field and is poised to expand its footprint. Mr. Benjamin models his life by his conviction to "*love thy neighbour as thy self*". This love extends to animals and a passion for philanthropy which is demonstrated through his civic affiliations. He is the Executive Chairman of the Jamaica Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Chairman of the Management Committee of the Bustamante Hospital for Children and Executive Chairman of the Hope Zoo Preservation Foundation.

This year's gala presents an exciting auction collection through our online partnership with CharityBuzz. The collection launches two weeks prior and will include luxury vacations, experiential packages and shows like the Grammy Awards, movie premiers, VIP behind the scenes sporting events, unique memorabilia and a selection of fine wines. A pledge drive during the Gala will benefit Breds - the Treasure Beach Foundation skills training and youth leadership through their General Colin Powell Challenge Course which has done transformational work with over 400 inner city youth ([treasurebeach.tumblr.com](http://treasurebeach.tumblr.com)) over the past 6 months. Patrons of the Gala will be delighted with a spectacular performance by ten time Grammy nominee Third World Band.

Ambassador Brenda Johnson, President of the AFJ stated "*Early childhood development and youth unemployment are some of the challenge in today's world. The AFJ is pleased to collaborate with likeminded partners to break down barriers to help people fulfilling their God given potential*".

The Hummingbird Gala is a black-tie event. Seats are \$550 per person. Contributions are tax deductible as provided by law.

#### **ABOUT THE PLAZA HOTEL**

The Plaza Hotel is a historic landmark hotel in New York City located across from Central Park in Manhattan. The Plaza is the ultimate New York City luxury lifestyle destination - a timeless urban resort with a new and contemporary spirit. The 2014 Hummingbird Gala will be staged in the opulent Grand Ballroom which is the heart of The Plaza Hotel's legacy.

#### **ABOUT THE AFJ**

Founded in 1982, the American Friends of Jamaica is a charitable 501(c)(3) organization built on the principles of service and philanthropy; and is established to render assistance in the areas of Education, Healthcare, and Economic Development. The AFJ works with a broad coalition of Jamaican organizations and stakeholders to bring about change in the lives of Jamaicans in need. Amongst other initiatives, our partners assist us to provide shelter to the homeless, education to inner-city youth and healthcare to those in need. AFJ annual grant cycle begins at the end of each year and grants are disbursed at the end of the first quarter the following year. For more information and to attend the event: [www.theafj.org](http://www.theafj.org).

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