

Contact:
Phone 301-672-4133
jwisdom2u@gmail.com

P.O. Box 38
Lanham, MD 20703



Press Release

INSTITUTE OF CARIBBEAN STUDIES (ICS) PARTNERS WITH READ ACROSS JAMAICA Heightening Volunteerism Support in Literacy Awareness

Washington, DC, February 26, 2014: Read Across Jamaica (RAJ) Foundation today announced a new partnership with the Institute of Caribbean Studies (ICS). This partnership is designed to engage members of the Caribbean Diaspora in literacy awareness and create avenues for heightened volunteerism in support of Jamaica's Vision 2030 Education Goals.

ICS has pushed to engage the Caribbean Diaspora in volunteerism through its own flagship Life Skills Empowerment and Entrepreneurial Development (LifeSEED) Program and understands that empowering youth by focusing on programs that provide opportunities for economic self-development begins with the ability to read. The Read Across Jamaica movement's success has been in promoting reading and literacy.

RAJ Foundation's service to Jamaica has spanned 10 years since its March 2004 launch and inception of the Literacy Project in Siloah, St. Elizabeth. The RAJ Literacy Project began as a college research project of Founder/CEO, Ja'nice Wisdom, while studying at the University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland. The RAJ initiative is the grandchild of the National Education Association's Read Across America Initiative, Washington, DC.

In addition to its signature campaign, *Read Across Jamaica Day*, RAJ Foundation assists schools, reading centers and after school programs with local celebrations of reading by encouraging Literacy Ambassadors to participate in Education Week activities that give back to communities across Jamaica.

This partnership is just another example of the Diaspora coming together to support early literacy programs and initiatives that reach out to parents, teachers and youth advocates to help young children get a great start with a specific focus on "creating opportunities for our youth to get excited about reading," said Ms. Wisdom, who is a 2nd generation Jamaican.

"ICS is pleased to partner with Read Across Jamaica Foundation to continue to ensure the empowerment of Caribbean youth through the engagement of the Jamaican and wider Caribbean-American Diaspora through advocacy, programs, and volunteerism," said Lisa Soares – Jamaica Diaspora Advisory Board member (Youth) and Program Director for ICS' Diasporas in Development Initiative, which aims to support Caribbean NGOs to design and execute volunteer initiatives in their home countries.

###

About Institute of Caribbean Studies

The Institute of Caribbean Studies (ICS) is a non-partisan, non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization established in 1993 dedicated to education, advocacy and action on issues that impact on Caribbean Americans.

The Institute provides a forum for the public and private sector, the non-government organization community, scholars and others interested in promoting a dialogue and assist in the execution of actions that result from that dialogue.

About Read Across Jamaica Foundation

The Read Across Jamaica Foundation (RAJ) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to introduce creative and interactive methods of reading to children and encourage them to enjoy literature as an aid to changing future disparaging lifestyles affected by illiteracy. READ * RECITE * ENCOURAGE.

"Share a book with a child and you have given illiteracy a dose of cure..."