Jamaica: NCU grants Prime Minister Honorary degree for her public service

Posted: 15 Aug 2012 09:00 PM PDT
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Adventist Risk Management's anti-abuse message now a global movement

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Prime Minister Simpson Miller was conferred with the Doctor of Public Service during the first commencement exercise at which she was the keynote speaker.

"I thank you for conferring upon me the honorary doctor of Public service, which I accept with humility and I dedicate to the people of Jamaica whom I have dedicated most of my life."

She added "The Bible says that a city set upon a hill cannot be hidden, and NCU, formerly West Indies College, has been lit in a bright, shiny educationally beacon which has more than 100 years of contribution in education."

The Prime Minister praised the Adventist Church for its contribution to nation building.

"I extend the appreciation of a grateful nation to the Seventh-day Adventist Church with its more than half a million members in Jamaica for your sterling contribution to the spiritual, educational, economic and social development of our people and our nation," she added.

**Never Forget Parents**

As the prime minister addressed the more than five hundred graduates assembled, she challenged them not to forget their parents as they climb the ladder of success.

"I commend those mothers and fathers who would forgo the church hat or a new dress or new furnishing to ensure your education. You must never forget that or their contribution in ensuring that you are here today," said Simpson Miller.

"There are times," she continued, "when people rise to a level and they tend to push their parents or guardian in the background because they do not speak the Queen's language. If your friend cannot accept them, let those friends move out of the way. I am an example. I am from humble beginning and look where I am today."

Former Ambassador of Jamaica to the United States of America, Her Excellency Audrey Marks was the second commencement speaker and was also given an honorary Doctor of Public Service degree.

**NCU Recognizes Excellence**

The University also recognized Digicel Jamaica as its 2012 award recipient of the president's medallion for being a role model in the society and it contribution to NCU's growth and development.

Dr. Bertram Melbourne, Professor of Biblical Language and Literature at the Howard University School of Divinity, was named the 2012 Product Sample for being an outstanding alumni who has
exemplified the ethos and values of the institution.

Approximately 910 students graduated during this year's graduation commencement exercises in NCU and its extended campuses.
Seventh-day Adventist risk management officers are hoping a grassroots campaign to stop child abuse finds traction among the church’s 17-million member global family.

Launched last week at the North American Division's Teacher's Convention in Nashville, Tennessee, United States, the Seven Campaign invites Adventists worldwide to join in spreading a clear message against all forms of child abuse, bullying and neglect.

"Children are one of the most important resources entrusted to us by God, so we feel it's important to work together with our partners to mobilize Adventists around the world -- along with our community partners -- to advocate for an end to child abuse," said Julio Munoz, manager for client experience for Adventist Risk Management.

The Seven Campaign is the latest step in the organization's recent emphasis on abuse awareness and prevention. In February, ARM launched the Child Protection Plan, which shores up Adventist Church guidelines on child abuse with practical methods of training and screening employees and volunteers who work closely with minors.

Now, ARM officials want to spur a groundswell of advocacy to further ensure that Adventist Churches, camps and clubs shelter children from abuse and misconduct.

"We want to not only make it clear that we stand against child abuse, but we want to get our members talking and actually engaged in spotting and preventing misconduct," said David Fournier, ARM manager for Marketing & Communication.

Already, more than six thousand Adventist educators from the United States, Canada, Bermuda and the Micronesian islands have pledged to rally their students in an awareness campaign using social media and a digital resource kit that includes flyers, posters, talking points, petition forms and logos available on the initiative's website.

"A grassroots movement such as the Seven Campaign is important because people know what's going to work best in their communities, so we give them the resources and they can customize the campaign for their community," Munoz said.

ARM is also depending on the involvement of its partners - chief among them the North American Division's Education department -- in spreading a strong message of awareness and advocacy.

"It is our responsibility as educators, administrators and church members to make each child feel valued and safe," said Larry Blackmer, NAD vice president for Education, in the Seven Campaign launch press release.

Other partners include the Center for Conflict Resolution at La Sierra University, Christian Record Services for the Blind, the Center for Youth Evangelism, John Hancock Center at La Sierra University and the Children's, Women's, Family and Youth Ministries departments of the Seventh-day Adventist world church.
"Hopefully this will become a cultural movement among Adventist membership, and with that, create upward pressure to make use of the Child Protection Plan and other child-protection resources that Adventist Risk Management offers," Fournier said.

To download the Seven Campaign digital resource kit, visit [www.thesevencampaign.com](http://www.thesevencampaign.com).