

WOMEN'S MONTH 2017



EMPOWERING
Women

IN A CHANGING WORLD: PLANET 50:50 BY YEAR 2030

DESIGN AND LAYOUT BY:



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International Women's Day/Women's Month 2017 Message

Hon. Anthony Martinez

Minister of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation

Each year on March 8th we join the global community in commemorating International Women's Day: a day on which the world celebrates the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. In Belize, we have designated the entire month of March as Women's Month. March is the month of stock taking on gender issues, as we not only celebrate the many achievements of our Belizean women, but we also reflect on the progress made in gender equality and equity and renew our commitment to the continued advancement of women.

The theme for this year's women's month, "**Empowering Women in a Changing World: Planet 50:50 by 2030**", focuses on the impact that rapid changes in technology and globalization is having and can have on the status of women. These changes present opportunities and threats to the advancement of women. Along with all the positives that can be gained from an ever shrinking and increasingly interconnected world, also comes global fiscal and trade policies, that lead to increased informality and instability of labour markets and negative environmental impact; all issues that are shown to disproportionately affect women.

If we look at global statistics, women and girls make up more than half the world's population and are often more deeply impacted than men and boys by poverty, climate change, food insecurity, lack of healthcare, embedded societal practices, discrimination and global economic crises and changes. These global realities are reflected by our own local situation.

With the new global 2030 roadmap and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) approved by UN member states, we must look at how women are affected by the proposed goals and how we accelerate the effective implementation of the SDGs, specifically taking into

account SDG 5: Achieve gender equality. This particular goal speaks to the empowerment of all women and girls if we are to ensure a change to ensure a planet 50:50 by 2030. More importantly is the widespread consensus that progress in achieving any and all of the SDGs will be stalled if women's empowerment and gender equality is not prioritized. How then do we as a country take action as partner in the global movement to ensure a planet 50:50 by 2030?

The Government of Belize has worked and continues to work in achieving gender equality and empowerment of women and girls and has made some progress towards promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. There is gender parity among males and females at primary and secondary school levels and in fact female participation in education has now begun to outstrip that of males, especially at the tertiary level. The proportion of women employed in the non-agricultural sector has seen a modest increase from 38.7 per cent in 1995 to 41.7 per cent in 2007, signaling the opening up of labour markets to women. The Labour Amendment Act No. 3 of 2011, provides for the equitable treatment of women in the labour force.

As a champion for change, the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation continues to fight the embedded inequities that impede the achievement of equality and equity for women in Belize by building on past achievements and supporting ongoing national efforts. The Ministry continues to partner in advancing sensitization of gender based violence in schools through its safe school program; creating support mechanisms and resources for survivors of gender-based violence, ensuring a multi sectoral and comprehensive response to gender based violence through the strengthening of the national Gender Based Violence Committee and the establishment of district gender based violence committees whose work is underpinned by a national action plan. Social safety nets for vulnerable women and children have been expanded; partnerships for the elimination of gender based discrimination at all levels of society have been cultivated; child protection and family support programs have been strengthened. The Ministry is also building partnerships with other agencies with the goal of supporting women's economic empowerment and financial independence.

The commemoration of International Women's Day and the celebration of Women's Month give us good reasons to reflect on advances in women's rights around the world and in Belize. However; "empowering women in a changing world" demands much more innovation and initiative. The challenge is to ensure that women and girls are poised to capitalize on the opportunities presented by the changes in today's world. Hence the call for the empowerment of women to ensure that they are able to not only advocate for themselves, but can be advocates for those around them. All stakeholders, policy makers and community need to play an active role in these changing times that often limit or hinder women's advancements. As we celebrate this month, let us consider how we break down barriers and build bridges that support greater education, better health, and career advancement, representation in political and economic decision-making processes and stronger communities for our women. Most importantly, let us consider how we not only empower women and girls, but also engage men and boys, to collectively work together in accelerating gender equality and equity by 2030.

Happy Women's Month!



Mrs. Kim Simplis Barrow
Special Envoy for Women and Children

International Women's Day is an opportunity to not only celebrate how far women have come on the road to economic, social, and political parity, but an opportunity to reaffirm how far we still have to travel in an increasingly complex and globalized world.

This year's theme "Empowering Women in a Changing World: Planet 50:50 by 2030" comes at a critical time because while women continue to make immeasurable contributions to our world, proving that gender equality is a part of the solution to the many challenges facing society, their abilities are often unrecognized, and their human rights are consistently violated.

To address this issue and achieve full equality, substantial commitment and concrete action at both individual and national levels must be taken to empower women, capitalize on untapped potential and bridge the gender gap. This is quite a feat, but one that can be accomplished with the support and partnership of our male counterparts; especially those in government.

This year, as we celebrate our advances, I want to extend a rallying call to each and every individual. Let us work to ensure that everyone enjoys the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities within both social and professional spheres.

Congratulations

to this year's awardees and Happy Women's Month to all!



International Women's Day

International Women's Day (March 8th) is an occasion marked by women's groups around the world putting women and women's rights on the global agenda making it the force behind this day. It is the story of ordinary women as makers of history; it is rooted in the centuries-old struggle of women to participate in society on an equal footing with men.

The tradition of celebrating International Women's Day represents at least nine decades of struggle for equality, justice, peace and development. The idea of a day for women, celebrated all over the world, began in America and Europe. The focus was the movement for women's rights and achieving universal suffrage for women. Between 1913 and 1917 women held rallies either to protest the war or to express solidarity with their sisters.

The International Women's Day protest that changed the world occurred in Russia in 1917 (March 8th by Western Reckoning, February 23 on the Georgian calendar). Coming on the rise of long struggle and many strikes, International Women's Day 1917 inspired thousands of Russian women to leave their homes and factories to protest the terrible shortages of food, the high prices, the world war, and the increased suffering they had bitterly endured. The protest inspired the last push of a revolution. A general strike spread through Petrograd, and within a week, Czar Nicholas II was forced to abdicate. After 1917, and in honor of women's role in the Russian Revolution, International Women's Day secured its place on March 8th on socialist calendars.

The date became official in 1921, when Bulgarian women attending the International Women's Secretariat of the Communist International made a motion that the day be celebrated around the world on March 8th

In the early days of its observance, International Women's Day was celebrated as a socialist holiday honoring working women. With the resurgence of feminism in the 1960s came a renewed interest in International Women's Day. Feminists found it a ready-made holiday for the celebration of women's lives and work and began promoting March 8th as such.

In Belize, the first International Women's Day was observed in the late 1970s and was initiated by a strong group of women from various organizations. Since those early years, International Women's Day has assumed a new dimension for women in Belize. The growing international women's movement, which has been strengthened by four global United Nations conferences, has helped make the commemoration a rallying point for coordinated efforts to demand women's rights and participation in the political and economic process. Increasingly in Belize International Women's Day is a time to reflect on progress made, to call for change, to celebrate the acts of courage and determination by ordinary Belizean women who have played an extraordinary role in the history of women's rights. Originally, International Women's Day was commemorated in Belize by planning and executing a week of activities in March. In 2009, in an effort to provide more agencies with opportunities to highlight women's issues and the achievements of women in observance of International Women's Day, the Women's Department transformed what was originally Women's Week into Women's Month in March.



Schedule of Events

ON GOING THROUGH THE MONTH OF MARCH

Belize District

Special 15% Women's Month discount to all Women

Belize City

Organizing Agency: *Brothers Habet, Barrack Road*

Free Aerobics Classes, Roger's Stadium

Belize City, Mon-Thurs, 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Organizing Agency: *Women's Department*

Contact Person: *Lodawn Jones*

***Open to 20 Registered Persons Only**

Corozal District

Free Pap Smear and Breast Exam

FRIDAYS ONLY, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: *Ministry of Health*

Contact Person: *Nurse Donaldine Lizama*

***Open event**

Stann Creek District

Luk Ya 8, Women in Art Expo and Marketplace

Pen Cayetano Studio Gallery, Dangriga Town,

Organizing Agency: *Women's Department*

Contact Person: *Michele Irving and Ingrid Cayetano*

***Open Event**

TUESDAY • FEBRUARY 28

Belize District

• **Women's Breakfast** featuring Guest Speaker, Donna Greschner,

Canadian Constitutional Lawyer & Equality Rights Expert

Best Western Belize Biltmore Plaza, Belize City

Organizing Agency: *The National Women's Commission*

Contact Person: *Ann-Marie Williams*

***Closed Event. Invitations Only**

WEDNESDAY • MARCH 1

Corozal District

Women's Economic Empowerment Fair

Central Park, Corozal Town, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: *Women's Department*

Contact Person: *Consuelo Hernandez*

***Open Event**

Stann Creek District

Speak out Radio Show

Hamalali Radio Station, Dangriga Town, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Women's Department and Speak out Radio Show

Contact Person: Ifasina Efunyemi and Michele Irving

***Open Event**

Women's Empowerment Seminar

Lighthouse Worship Center Conference Room, Placencia Village, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Supt. of Police Suzette Anderson

***Closed Event**

THURSDAY • MARCH 2

Belize District

YWCA Poolside Happy Hour

Y.W.C.A. Poolside, Belize City, 5:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: YWCA

Contact Person: Andre Godoy

***Open Event Price: \$5 to Swim**

Stann Creek District

Women's Empowerment Seminar

Lighthouse Worship Center Conference Room, Placencia Village, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Supt. of Police Suzette Anderson

***Closed Event**

FRIDAY • MARCH 3

Stann Creek District

Social Event for Women Police Officers and Civilian Staff

Beach Front, Placencia Village, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Supt. of Police Suzette Anderson

***Closed Event**

SUNDAY • MARCH 5

Belize District

Women's Church Service

Queen Street Baptist Church, Queen Street, Belize City, 10:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Assistant Commissioner of Police Dezerie Phillips

***Open Event**

Stann Creek District

Luk Ya 8, Women in Art Expo and Marketplace Opening Ceremony

Pen Cayetano Studio Gallery, Dangriga Town, 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Women's Department and Pen Studio Gallery

Contact Person: Michele Irving and Ingrid Cayetano

***Open Event**

MONDAY • MARCH 6

Corozal District

Radio Talk Show-Women Legal Rights

Romantica FM, Paraiso Village, Corozal District, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Organizing Agency: Women's Department

Contact Person: Consuelo Hernandez

***Open Event**

WEDNESDAY • MARCH 8

Belize District

“Plotting the way forward: A critical look at the Women’s Movement and Gender Based Violence” Women’s Forum

Best Western Belize Biltmore Plaza, Belize City, 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: PETAL & POWA

Contact Person: Simone Hill

***Registration Required. Invitation ONLY.**

International Decade for People of African Ancestry: Belize Outstanding Woman Patriot Recognition of Ms. Michelle Irving

Belize Biltmore Plaza, Belize City, 11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Organizing Agencies: EmergentCorp, PETAL & BAC

Contact Person: Dr. Abigail McKay

***Invitation Only. RSVP required: emergentcorp.bze@gmail.com**

Wesley’s 8 - A Pictorial Exhibition honoring the legacy of Women’s Work to Church, Community & Country Opening Night

Wesley Methodist Church Lawn, Belize City, 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Wesley Methodist Church

Contact: Ann-Marie Williams

***Open Event**

Cayo District

Diamonds Night Event, Backyard of Benque House of Culture (NICH)

Benque Viejo Town, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Benque House of Culture (NICH)

Contact Person: Nalleli Trujillo

***Open Event**

Corozal District

Women's Legal Rights Workshop

Corozal Junior College, San Andres, Corozal District, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Women's Department

Contact Persons: Consuelo Hernandez

***Closed Event**

Orange Walk District

Women's Empowerment Seminar

Grand Mestizo Conference Room, Orange Walk Town, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Supt. of Police Carol Tucker

***Closed Event**

THURSDAY • MARCH 9

Belize District

Self Defense Training- For the Helping Early Leavers Students

Y.W.C.A. Auditorium, Belize City, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: YWCA

Contact Person: Deadra Bennett

***Closed Event**

Stann Creek District

Women's Month Girl's Rally

Independence High School, Dangriga Town, 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.,

Organizing Agency: Women's Department in partnership with Independence High School,

Contact Person: Michele Irving and Tamara Recinos

***Closed Event**

Orange Walk District

Women's Empowerment Seminar

Grand Mestizo Conference Room, Orange Walk Town, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Supt. of Police Carol Tucker

***Closed Event**

FRIDAY • MARCH 10

Corozal District

Social Event for Women Police Officers and Civilian Staff

4 miles Lagoon, Corozal District, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Supt. of Police Carol Tucker

***Closed Event**

Stann Creek District

Women Rally

Hamanasi Resort, Hopkins Village, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Hamanasi Resort and Belize Family Life Association

Contact Person: Nurse Desire Casimiro

***Closed Event**

SATURDAY • MARCH 11

Belize District

Family Pool Party- for the General Public

Y.W.C.A. Pool, Belize City, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: YWCA

Contact Person: Andre Godoy

***Open Event. Price: \$3.00 Children ages 3-12 /\$5.00 Adults 13- Over.**

SUNDAY • MARCH 12

Belize District

61st Anniversary Church Service

Y.W.C.A. Auditorium, Belize City, 4:30 p.m.

Organizing Agency: YWCA

Contact Person: Sheryl Terry

***Open Event**

Sunday Movie: Iron Jawed Angels – The story of women fighting for American women's right to vote

Bliss Centre for the Performing Arts, 6:00p.m.

Organizing Agency: National Women's Commission &

The Bliss Centre for the Performing Arts

Contact Person: Ann-Marie Williams

***Open Event. Get free tickets with Organizing Agencies**

WEDNESDAY • MARCH 15

Belize District

Women's Empowerment Seminar

St. Catherine's Gymnasium, Belize City, 8:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Assistant Commissioner of Police Dezerie Phillips

***Closed Event**

Youth Information/Educational Fair

Y.W.C.A. Campus, Belize City, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: YWCA & Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Joan Arnold

***Open Event**

Stann Creek District

Speak out Radio Show

Hamalali Radio Station, Dangriga Town, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Women's Department and Speak out Radio Show

Contact Person: Ifasina Efunyemi and Michele Irving

***Open Event**

THURSDAY • MARCH 16

Belize District

Women's Empowerment Seminar

St. Catherine's Gymnasium, Belize City, 8:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Assistant Commissioner of Police Dezerie Phillips

***Closed Event**

Seniors Health Talk- For Seniors

Y.W.C.A. Auditorium, Belize City, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: YWCA & Ministry of Health

Contact Person: Joyce Flowers

***Open Event**

FRIDAY • MARCH 17

Belize District

Social Event for Women Police Officers and Civilian Staff

Goff's Caye, Belize District, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Assistant Commissioner of Police Dezerie Phillips

***Closed Event**

YWCA Motorcade

Streets of Belize City, Belize City, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: YWCA-Belize City&YWCA- NARCED Belmopan

Contact Person: Nadine Harris

***Open Event**

Women in Art Exhibit and Performances Night

Spoonaz Café, Belize City, 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Organizing Agency: National Institute for Culture and History

Contact Person: Karen Vernon

***Open Event**

Orange Walk District

Women's Economic Empowerment Expo

Queen Victoria Park, Orange Walk Town, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Women's Department in partnership with Banqitas House of Culture

Contact Persons: Makesha Suazo and Shantel Casimiro

***Open Event**

SATURDAY • MARCH 18

Belize District

Open House & Sports Day

Y.W.C.A. Compound, Belize City, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: YWCA

Contact Person: Joevannie Collins

***Open Event**

Cayo District

Women in Art and Economic Empowerment Fair

Cayo Welcome Center, San Ignacio Town, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Women's Department

Contact Person: Elyne Serano

***Open Event**

WEDNESDAY • MARCH 22

Cayo District

Women's Empowerment Seminar

George Price Center for Peace & Development, Belmopan City, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Supt. of Police Sandra Bowden

***Closed Event**

Corozal District

Women's Rights Information Booth

San Victor Park, San Victor Village, Corozal District, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Women's Department & Red Cross

Contact Persons: Consuelo Hernandez & Amarily Teck

***Open Event**

THURSDAY • MARCH 23

Belize District

Women's Health Care VIA Screening Services

Ladyville Health Center, Belize District, 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Women's Department

Contact Person: De-Ann Buckley

***Open Event**

Cayo District

Women's Empowerment Seminar

George Price Center for Peace & Development, Belmopan City, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Supt. of Police Sandra Bowden

***Closed Event**

Orange Walk District

Women's Testimonial Forum for Community Citizens

Sandy Hunter Library, Orange Walk Town, 6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Women's Department in partnership with Sandy Hunter Library

Contact Person: Makesha Suazo and Shamira Carrillo

***Open Event**

Domestic Violence and the Law Workshop for Police Officers

Police Department Conference Room, Orange Walk Town, 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Women's Department

Contact Person: Makesha Suazo

***Closed Event**

FRIDAY • MARCH 24

Cayo District

Social Event for Women Police Officers and Civilian Staff

Log Cabins, San Ignacio Town, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Belize Police Department

Contact Person: Supt. of Police Sandra Bowden

***Closed Event**

SATURDAY • MARCH 25

Belize District

Collet Community Bike Rally, Nando's Warehouse

George Price Highway to YWCA Headquarters, Belize City, 5:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Organizing Agency: Collet Education and Resource Center in partnership with Gateway Youth Center

***Open Event. Registration can be done at Collet Education and Resource Center, Gateway Youth Center or prior to the Bike Rally**

Breakfast- on the Y.W.C.A. - Lawn

YWCA Compound, Belize City, 6:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Organizing Agency: YWCA

Contact Person: Jennifer Smith

Cost: \$6.00 per person Open Event

1st Para-Professional Training on psycho social support skills

ITVET, Belize City, 10:00 p.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: PETAL

Contact Person: Simone Hill

Targeting teachers, Nurses and Social Workers

***Open Event. Registration required at a small cost.**

Cayo District

Y-2-Y Walkathon (Belmopan to Belize City)

Starts at YWCA- NARCED Center, Belmopan, 5:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: YWCA, Belize Police Department & Belize Red Cross

Contact Person: Yvette Gill

***Open Event**

Stann Creek District

3rd Annual Dangriga's Women of Honor Awards

Mars Place, Dangriga Town, 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Dangriga Town Council and Women's Department

Contact Person: Earth Lopez and Michele Irving

***Open Event**

MONDAY • MARCH 27

Corozal District

Information Booth, Corozal Central Park

Corozal Town, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Education Department & Women's Department

Contact Person: Maria Correa & Consuelo Hernandez

***Open Event**

TUESDAY • MARCH 28

Cayo District

Mental Health Workshop

YWCA NARCED Center, Belmopan, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: YWCA and Ministry of Health

Contact Person: Yvette Gill

***Open Event**

WEDNESDAY • MARCH 29

Belize District

12th Annual Outstanding Women's Awards

Best Western Belize Biltmore Plaza, Belize City, 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Organizing Agency: Women's Department and

Office of the Special Envoy for Women and Children

Contact Person: Cynthia Williams

***Open Event**

Cayo District

Sexual Health & Ageing Women 50+ Workshop

Belmopan, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Organizing Agency: National Council on Ageing

Contact Person: Cherene Rivero

***Registration required for participation**

Outstanding Women

The Women's Department once again has chosen to honor women from each district for their outstanding contribution to their communities and for being role models to girls across the country. This year, the Department recognizes six women in recognition that we all must take be the change we want to see in Belize. These women clearly demonstrate that they were willing to be the change they wanted to see in Belize. Each of them deserves our admiration and respect because they have served Belize well. They have opted to share their gifts and skills so that their communities could benefit. They have opened their hearts to those around them and have gifted them with their own lights.

The Department also invited agencies to honor women chosen by their respective organizations to be acknowledged for the outstanding contributions they have made to the organization or to the community on a whole. It is because of these women and the many others like them that we celebrate this Month.

It is important that we take note of all their contributions and use this momentum to reenergize our efforts in the path that leads to women's empowerment and the respect of their human rights. This year's theme, "**Empowering Women in a Changing World: Planet 50:50 by 2030!**" provides us the opportunity to recognize that although women continue to contribute to social, economic, cultural and political achievement, but the progress towards gender equality and equity has slowed in many places. It is a theme which calls for action to ensure that we continue to prepare women in the many facets that they are taking part while still retaining many other roles. It also reminds us that while we prepare women, we must also be ready to continue the discussion about equality and equity because if we are to achieve the sustainable goals, we must engage everyone. Everyone - men and women - needs to be active in the advancements of women's rights, women's involvement in politics and as leaders within the many spheres of their community. We must all take concrete steps to help achieve equality more quickly - whether to help women and girls achieve their ambitions, call for gender-balanced leadership, respect and value difference, develop more inclusive and flexible cultures or root out workplace bias.

The theme encourages every person, every community to do what they can to empower women and girls in their midst, within their own spheres of influence and commit to take pragmatic action to accelerate parity. We need to move from talk to purposeful action - and with men and women joining forces - we can collectively help women advance and realize the limitless potential they offer. It also encourages women to be mindful of their own needs and seek to safeguard themselves in all facets of their lives, as mothers, wives, professionals and citizens.

These 17 women will be honored at the 12th Annual Outstanding Women's Awards Ceremony on March 29th, 2017 at the Best Western Belize Biltmore Plaza Hotel at 6:30 p.m.

Congratulations

to our 2017 Awardees!



Neima Naomi Roches

Neima Naomi Roches is commonly known as the local "Mother Theresa" and was born in Corozal Town in 1990. She was brought to Carmelita Village in the Orange Walk District as a teenager to attend High School. She started New Hope High school but was unable to finish, but strongly believes that education is important and must be the priority for our children.

Neima is presently the president of the Carmelita Government School PTA, whose aim is to provide health education and a healthy meal for the less fortunate children. She is currently the leader of the newly formed Carmelita Women's Group, and a volunteer of the Women's Department. She organizes informational days and offers skills training sessions for women in her community so that they can be empowered and self sustainable.

Neima is the mother of one child but has several other children in her home that she considers her "adoptive" children. These children would just walk into her home and refuse to go back to their parents, so to avoid any problems she works closely with the Ministry of Human Development. In her community, she is considered as a sister, caregiver and a counsellor, because she is always willing to give a helping hand and a listening ear to those in need. She often does home visits and care for senior citizens in her immediate surroundings. Neima seldom uses the word "no", she believes that she must help all, especially if they can't help themselves. She often says that one day God will repay her for the kindness she shares and show others.

Submitted by the Women's Department: Orange Walk District



Marie Sharp

Marie Sharp is a well-known Belizean legend, entrepreneur and owner of Marie Sharp's Fine Foods, with its factory located in the Stann Creek Valley of Belize.

While working as an Executive Secretary for the Citrus Company of Belize, Marie began planting Habanero Peppers and a wide assortment of fruits and some vegetables on Melinda Estates, a family owned farm in the Stann Creek Valley. From the products, she grew, she created a complete line of the best habanero pepper sauces, jam, and jellies. All these products are USFDA tested and approved, all natural, contain no artificial colors or preservatives.

For 35 years, Marie has dedicated her entire days ensuring that her factory produces only the best. Although she has met many obstacles throughout her career, the determination Marie has is as fierce as that of her pepper sauce.

Marie Sharp was inducted into the New York City Hall of Fame for Pepper Sauce in April 2016, and proudly represents the country of Belize as a born Belizean woman, a successful entrepreneur, and a distinguished lady. She was the only woman amongst other inductees to have been selected for this award.

Today Marie is in 99% of the Belizean hot sauce market and exports her products to countries worldwide such as Japan, Germany, the United States, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Mexico, and Central America. She is an icon for all Belizean women, exemplary of the drive needed to achieve economic empowerment in today's world. Marie Sharp is the Queen of Peppers to all in Belize.

Submitted by the Women's Department: Stann Creek District



Ms. Francisca Assi

Born on April 2nd, 1957, Ms. Francisca Assi is a well-known elder of San Antonio village, Toledo and an inspiration to all women.

Throughout her life, her selfless and caring character manifested and she started working with elders and pregnant mothers and is one of the most respected traditional birth attendants in Toledo. Her legacy precedes her and is one of the most sought after and trusted women in her field.

Ms. Assi also works closely with Punta Gorda Hospital and is one of their Community Health Workers, who play a crucial role in the health and safety of those residing in rural areas. She has been one of TMWC pioneers and helped to found the organization in 1997. Ms. Francisca continues to be the backbone of this organization to keep women encouraged, empowered and engaged in social change. She has served two terms as Chairlady of TMWC. Remarkably, she was a signature to the "Ten Points of Agreement" in 2000 signed between the Government of Belize and the Maya Leaders of Toledo on behalf of TMWC and its Maya women membership. Presently, Francisca serves on TMWC's Board of Directors as a Counsellor.

Her greatest quality may be her undaunted dedication to the causes she believes in. Despite her busy life, she will find ways to be present at any event that she is invited to. Once she commits to something, even if it means she has to rise early or walk long distances, she will be there. She has demonstrated brave leadership and has stood up for women's right and has represented women in court as their "witness", "attorney" and "translator"; yes, she is our hero!

Submitted by Women's Department: Toledo District



Sandra Coye

Mrs. Sandra Coye was born in Benque on November 7th, 1978 and she is the oldest of six children. Mrs. Coye went to Succotz Primary School then later on attended Mt. Carmel High School. At the age of seventeen she got married and had two children.

At a very young age she became a victim and a survivor of domestic violence and is now helping other women to escape the cyclical and damaging effects of domestic violence. As a single parent to her two children, Mrs. Coye became self-sufficient while contributing to her community to make a difference.

She started volunteering at different organizations and connected with a local women's group in Benque to do embroidery during her free time. With a strong faith, she became a regular visitor to a faith-based ministry and would facilitate Bible study for the children in the community.

Today, Mrs. Coye continues her work with the ministry as she volunteers and help women empower themselves while being a support and mentor to them. She provides some level of comfort to these women and children as they transition to safety after leaving a violent situation.

She once felt she couldn't have done this on her own, but with the help of God she is guided every day. She has a passion to enhance the quality of life of every woman at every given opportunity.

Submitted by Women's Department: Cayo District



Lydia Esther Vallejo

Ms. Lydia Esther Vallejo was born on the 4th of March, 1960 in the village of Patchakan, Corozal District. She was raised by a single mother with six other siblings. She completed her primary school education at Patchakan Roman Catholic School and due to economic constraints, she was unable to further her studies.

Having only a primary school certificate did not deter Ms. Vallejo from contributing to her community and country. In 1993, she began volunteering at the Presbyterian Dental Clinic by assisting the doctors and formed part of the Dental Clinic Team which visited schools in the surrounding areas providing health education to children for more than ten years.

In 2006, Ms. Vallejo joined the Patchakan Presbyterian Women's Group and along with other members, she visited families in need. Their main objective was to help the elderly and abused women. She continues to work with this group to this date.

In 2010, her vision about helping the victims of domestic violence by establishing a shelter for victims was born and became a reality in 2013 when the House of Dorcas opened its doors to victims of abuse. The shelter is owned and sustained by the group through fund raising efforts. Ms. Vallejo along with 6 other women manage the shelter very closely with the Ministry of Human Development/Women's Department to provide temporary shelter to victims of abuse. Besides working with abused women, she volunteers at Jacob's Farm, a Rehabilitation Centre for men.

Ms. Vallejo is seen as a role model in the community for having dedicated her life to serve others and doing her work with passion, dedication and commitment.

Submitted by Women's Department: Corozal District



Aisha Pollard Robinsin

Mrs. Aisha Pollard Robinsin was born on March 28th, 1991 in Belize City. Mrs. Robinsin is the eldest of 10 children for her mother. She is a devoted wife and mother to two beautiful children and is presently pursuing her Associates Degree in Social Work at the University of Belize.

At a very young age, Mrs. Robinsin was introduced to an advocacy program called Kid' O Rama which taught children and young persons about the Convention on the Rights of a Child. She remained a member of the program from 2002-2009. After leaving the Kid' O Rama show, she joined the Youth Arm of the Belize Family Life Association and later earned the position of YAM president. She was also an active in the International Year of the Youth steering committee.

Throughout the period of 2007-2009, she acted as a teen reporter, where she was responsible for creating news articles on issues affecting youths in Belize. In 2009, she was awarded the Executive Director Award from BFLA YAM for having leadership skills and was recognized as a nominee for the Minister of Youth Award through Youth for the Future. In 2010 she continued her movement and represented the Belize Family Life Association Youth Advocacy Movement in Grenada at the Caribbean Family Planning Association Youth Meeting and Annual General Meeting.

Aisha also represented Belize as a Youth Ambassador on the Belize Delegation to the UN High Level Meetings on HIV/AIDS at the UN headquarters in New York. In 2013 Mrs. Robinsin represented Belize UNFPA office at Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Barbados. She is presently a member of the United Nations Population Fund Youth Advisory Group.

Submitted by Women's Department: Belize District



Hon. Tracy Taegar-Panton

Hon. Tracy Taegar Panton is the first woman to have a successful election campaign in Belize City's Albert Constituency. She is currently serving as the Minister of State in the Ministry of Economic Development, Petroleum Investment, Trade & Commerce. Prior to her election, Minister Panton most recently served as Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Civil Aviation. She has also served a number of local and regional bodies including the National Economic Development Council and the Caribbean Tourism Organization. Presently, she chairs the House Committee for Public Utilities, Transport & Communications and is a member of a number of other House Committees.

She has also worked with many organizations including the Belize Red Cross, for which she was president for two years. Minister Panton holds a Master of Science Degree in Business Administration from the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Tourism Management from Florida International University.

Tracy and her husband Herbert have two daughters, Adreanna-Maud and Hope Robyn who are, undoubtedly, her most important life achievements. Her extensive experience; her compassion for humanity; her commitment to service has helped her to excel as a leader, mentor and role model for young women.

Submitted by the Belize City Council



Mindy Pratt

Mindy Pratt is an exemplary woman, and is a student of the University of Belize Social Work Programme. Her journey began at the tender age of 12 where she was an active volunteer in social work and this passion propelled her to now serve as the Programme Director at Haven House.

Mindy always displays passion and commitment in her work with youth and women. She volunteered with YWCA and Ebenezer in providing tutoring services to academically challenged primary school students and in her secondary years she served as President of the E.P.Y.H.S Peer Helpers Program for two consecutive years in which she was instrumental along with the Counsellor and her team in setting up structured student support services. She is the Secretary on the Women's Issues Network Board and the alternate representative on NGBVC.

She is a natural team leader and has been involved in many capacity building trainings in the area of HIV/AIDS, Sexual Health, Organizational Leadership, Gender Base Violence and working with vulnerable groups to name a few. Being a survivor of domestic violence herself, she advocates on behalf of vulnerable groups especially battered women and children. Mindy Pratt, a young and dedicated worker for women and children.

Submitted by: Haven House for Battered Women



Dr. Abigail McKay

For over thirty years, Dr. Abigail McKay has been professionally involved in human capital development through leadership in areas of economic empowerment, health and human services. Belize has benefited from her expertise in adult training for lower and higher literacy levels, administration, strategic planning, institutional and individual capacity building, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and process and impact evaluation.

While Dr. Abigail McKay's credentials are impressive and merit recognition for choosing to use her professional skills for the benefit of Belize and Belizeans, her selection for this award is in acknowledgement and appreciation for her priceless contribution to community development through her voluntary support of numerous community based organizations and initiatives in Belize. She is currently actively involved as President of the Belize History Association, Executive Secretary of the Girl Guides Association, Technical Advisor of Promoting Empowerment Through Awareness for Les/Bi Women (PETAL), and current country representative of the regional consortium of higher educational institutions and universities in the United States of America, Latin America and the Caribbean, UNIPOP. PETAL recognizes with tremendous gratitude Dr. McKay's work and contribution as a true advocate for gender justice in Belize.

Submitted by PETAL



Fabiana Scotts Rowley

Mrs. Fabiana Scotts Rowley was born on 7th December 1950 to Donecia Scott Cadle. She grew up with her extended family including her aunts Matilda Usher, Amelia Scott, cousins, uncles, and grandfather who instilled her with Christian values. While Fabiana did not complete her primary school education, she was motivated and took the then Primary School Leaving Exam and enrolled at the Belize Technical College.

Her talents were demonstrated while working at the Cottage Industry weaving artwork from straw. From an early age Fabiana displayed qualities of a good caregiver as such, she became involved in many voluntary organizations including Red Cross, Girl Guides, Legion of Mary, St. Vincent the Paul Society, Hand in Hand Ministries, Center for Community Research and Development (CCRD) and the Mattie Roter Women Outreach Group. After the death of her niece/daughter Jackie Malic she became an activist and as a result school wardens were instituted and introduced in schools and she was one of the first set of school wardens.

In 2015 Fabiana was diagnosed with breast cancer, had surgery and is in remission. This did not deter her; she rides her bike and continues her regular home, hospital and prison visits. Fabiana is a powerful and strong Belizean volunteer and role model, whose selflessness makes her worthy of this award. Her entire family including her children Jennifer, Steven, Alton, Adelma and grandchildren are proud to have her as their mother and grandmother. Enjoy your special award for the work you continue to do.

Submitted by Mattie Roter Women Outreach Group



Dominique Noralez

Ms. Dominique Noralez was born in Belize City on January 12th 1997, to Charlet Hauze and Albert Noralez.

Dominique attended St. Martin's Primary School and graduated as the Salutatorian with numerous awards and top honors. She went on to St. Catherine's Academy on a scholarship from the Belize Kids First Association. In May of 2014 she graduated with the Catherine's McCauley gold honors and the young writers' award. Presently, she is a Student Servant Leader of St. John's College Junior College majoring in Biology and Chemistry.

In 2012, Dominique became a Youth Ambassador under the US State Departments' Exchange programme and received leadership and advocacy training in United States. Dominique also joined the B.F.L. A's., youth arm (YAM). As President, she serves on the sub-committee of the National Aids Commission for information, education and communication as representative for Youth and Children.

Dominique has a love for the arts. She plays the tenor pan with the Pandemonium Steel band. She expresses that the 'pan' for her does more than just make music; it reminds her that out of something that was once used for other things, grand things may be created. For these reasons, it is with great pleasure that she is being awarded as the 2017 Outstanding Young Woman.

Submitted by Department of Youth Services



Olivia Torres Pat

Mrs. Olivia Torres Pat was born in San Jose Succotz Village, Cayo District. She graduated from San Jose Succotz R. C. Primary School and Sacred Heart College. She is the mother of three children: Kathia, Tanya, and Emil.

Mrs. Pat started her career as a teacher and worked in this profession for 15 years. In 2007, she served as the Community Librarian. She was instrumental in procuring aid from national and international organizations, for community projects such as a modern library with computers and internet access.

Mrs. Pat helps both students and adults continue their education. She assists in clean-up campaigns, community hurricane preparedness, and raises awareness of conservation and environmental issues.

Mrs. Pat is the President of the Kichpan Kanateen Women's Group. This group received a grant through the Y.W.C.A. E.E.O.E.M. Project. Currently, these women generate income to provide for their families. She contributes to a wide range of training, including Small Business Market Readiness for Artisans and sewing. She is also an active member of St. Joseph Catholic Parish.

Mrs. Pat is "YWCA Belize Outstanding Woman of the Year 2017" for being an instrumental leader, who selflessly contributes to ensure that Belize is a better place for all.

Submitted by Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)



Doña Ernestina Moh

Doña Ernestina Moh was born in 1938, Doña Ernestina Moh has been the leader of the Caledonia Village Comparsa Group for over 20 years. Even before becoming the head of the group in earnest, she dedicated much of her life to the teaching and retrieval of the Carnival tradition and the cultural forms that accompany it. Through her efforts, the Carnival of Caledonia Village has been maintained, as Caledonia remains one of the few communities in Northern Belize with a living memory of the tradition, songs, music, and belief system that comprise it.

Many students and cultural activists from other communities visit and rely heavily on Doña Tina, as she is affectionately known, for assistance in translating and explaining the Carnival songs, and to demonstrate the dances. She has trained countless young people in the traditional dance and music of the Maya-Mestizo of Northern Belize; for this she can be considered a cultural icon within her local community. Additionally, her generosity and dedication to the tradition have allowed her, despite her humble background, to arrange for the elaboration of, and donation of the materials required for the staging of traditional comparsas to the school. She has always said, "The little I know, I want to share.... While I am alive, I will do it."

Consistent with her promotion of this cultural tradition has been her stress on the maintenance of cultural values. Her work has been based in the premise of encouraging positive identity reinforcement among the young people of Caledonia, pride in Maya-Mestizo Heritage, and respect and understanding for the varied cultural and social beliefs and practices that exist within the community, while always advocating for the promotion and maintenance of Carnival.

Submitted by the National Institute of Culture and History (NICH)



Odali Elmita Mai

Odali Elmita Mai was born on October 7th, 1986 to a Christian Family of Six. She attended San Francisco RC School and later went to Corozal Belize Adventist High School and Belize Adventist Junior College where she graduated with her Associates Degree in General Studies majoring in Arts and Science. She is a free spirit and enjoys doing things that are challenging. Her work experience throughout the country allowed her to forge many bonds of friendship with friends who appreciate her for her professionalism and friendly personality.

Odali became part of the BFLA family in June 2011 as a Sexual & Reproductive Health Field Educator doing Behavior Change Communication for the prevention of HIV among Key populations in Belize. She took on this position with a passion that her peers and beneficiaries would seek advice from her as a counselor even after hours. In her free time Odali dedicates her time to her loving son and daughter not to mention that she has a passion for sports and body fitness keeping a healthy life style.

Presently Odali is a Christian member the Centro Evangelisco Belice in Orange Walk Town where she also plays a major role.

Submitted by Belize Family Life Association (BFLA)



Saraley Magana

Saraley Magana was born in Belize City, and grew up in Ladyville. She attended The Ladyville Evangelical Primary School and furthered her studies at Kings College where she graduated in 2004 with a Diploma in Business. In 2007 her life changed when she became a mom to a wonderful son, whom she loves with every breath of her life!

Life to Sara means trusting in God, family and friends. She lives on the happy side of life and like everyone else sometimes with ups and down. ..sad and sometimes depressed days. She is surrounded by friends who are more in number than her Family.

In 2008 she became a Sexual & Reproductive Health Field Educator doing Behavior Change Communication for the prevention of HIV among Key populations in Belize with the BFLA. To Sara BFLA is her second home as through her work she has learned so much and feels that this knowledge has allowed her to enrich her life and the life of others. She strives to do right all the time and her motto is "give your best always." Sara loves God, her son David and the beach! Her favorite hobbies are listening to music and hanging out with friends.

Submitted by Belize Family Life Association (BFLA)



Leticia Velasquez

Leticia Velasquez affectionately known as Mel has a passion for working with women and girls who are infected or affected directly or indirectly by HIV/AIDS and other infections. Her passion has driven her to be a leader to create change and be a voice for others who find themselves voiceless. "I want to embrace every opportunity that comes my way that will help me to be of support and courage for other young women". Mel became a member of Production Organization for Women in Action-POWA in 2007, as she is a firm believer of its vision and mission and the collaborative efforts it has with other organizations in building a network that helps to create changes for all women in Belize. Mel also believes that as women we are vulnerable in many situations and if we do not empower our women and girls we will crumble quickly.

As a volunteer educator with POWA and BFLA, Mel has educated thousands of women, girls, men and boys. Mel always give of herself without expecting anything in return. She has 14 children, 4 of which she has given birth to the others are her nieces, nephews or those who drop by her house and refuse to leave.

It is for all these reason that BFLA has chosen Leticia Velasquez to be one of its Outstanding Woman of 2017.

Submitted by Belize Family Life Association (BFLA)



Gloria Louise Gabourel

Gloria Louise Gabourel an extremely articulate woman who came from a humble beginning was born on June 8, 1956. This mother of three has been an educator from the age of 18 and finds great pleasure in helping others whether young or old. Mrs. Gabourel has been serving as a Chief Invigilator for the UWI, Open Campus, Belize for the past 8 years. She works very diligently and efficiently.

G.G. as her close friends fondly call her, finds joy in taking care of her plants on a daily basis and moving her waist to the rhythm of music, which is one of her favourite pastime. Gloria is a people person and she finds great joy in bringing her friends and family together always. She usually advises them to put God first and let the higher power be the final judge. She tries her best to emulate good behaviour at all times, because she believes that people live by example and you practice what you preach. This amazing mother is passionate towards kids and she usually goes an extra mile to help them. It is truly an honour for the UWI, Open Campus, Belize to present this Woman's Award to Mrs. Gloria Louise Gabourel.

Submitted by University of West Indies – Open Campus

Working Together

In Belize, many government and non-government organizations are working together to improve the lives of Belizeans.

BELIZE FAMILY LIFE ASSOCIATION (BFLA)

BFLA is a member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation which offers family life education and organized family planning. Through the dissemination of information on family planning, BFLA assists Belizean women and men in making healthy, well informed decisions about their sexual reproductive health.

CONTACT: 203-1018
bfla@btl.net

FAMILY COURT

The Family Court was established in 1898 to keep pace with the ever growing social and legal needs of the family. It plays a vital role in keeping society together. It is responsible for the administration of justices for family and juvenile justice matters. The Family Court has dealt with thousands of cases over the years ranging from domestic violence, legal separation, custody, maintenance and juvenile offenders.

CONTACT: 227-4107 / 227-4114

HAVEN HOUSE

Haven House is currently the only safe house for female survivors of domestic violence and their children in the Belize District. Opened in 1993, the shelter provides temporary housing for up to 21 days, counseling and legal advocacy for residents.

CONTACT: 222-4947

MARY OPEN DOORS

Mary Open Doors is a shelter for battered women and their children. It is located in the Cayo District. It officially opened in 2008, but had functioned informally prior to that. The Mary Open Door office provides basic counseling, skills training and job placement for its clients.

CONTACT: 626-5780

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

National Committee for Families and Children is a statutory body that is set up to oversee Belize's compliance with its international, regional and national commitments to children and their families.

CONTACT: 223-0059

www.ncfc.org.bz

NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMISSION (NWC)

The National Women's Commission was established in 1982. Over the years, the commission has been instrumental in creating and supporting a wide variety of programs for women. The National Women's Commission has conducted in-depth research regarding women's issues in Belize and has published several major documents including the National Gender Policy and Women in Politics.

CONTACT: 223-4284

www.nationalwomenscommission.org

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)

UNICEF is an international organization dedicated to meeting the needs of women and children around the world. It places emphasis on health, education, social services, legislation and outreach programs aimed to enhance the national development of Belize.

CONTACT: 223-3609

www.unicef.org

PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION (PAHO)

PAHO was established in 1902 and is the world's oldest public health organization. It serves as the regional office of the World Health Organization and works with all the countries of the Americas to improve the health and quality of life of their peoples. PAHO is dedicated to working with governments of the Americas primarily, Ministry of Health, in addressing public health issues such as Gender-based Violence.

CONTACT: 224-4885

www.paho.org

YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION (YWCA)

The Belize YWCA opened in 1956 and has consistently provided a wide variety of services and programs to women of all ages. The facility currently offers a long list of programs including the Helping Early Leavers Program, a daycare, ESL classes, aerobics and community education classes.

CONTACT: 203-4971

www.ywcabelize.org

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (UNFPA)

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. UNFPA supports countries in using population data for policies and programmes to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect.

CONTACT: 223-1644

www.unfpa.org

WOMEN'S ISSUES NETWORK OF BELIZE (WIN)

WIN-Belize was officially launched during Women's Week in 1993. The organization was established with the realization that there was a need for organizations to combine their human and financial resources for greater efficiency and effectiveness. WIN-Belize works to coordinate resources and activities of many local women's groups.

CONTACT: 227-1069

www.winbelize.org

PRODUCTIVE ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN IN ACTION (POWA)

Productive Organization for Women in Action (POWA) is a community-based organization that began in 2003 in Dangriga Town. It grew out of the need for women to support other women in areas of Gender-based Violence, HIV/AIDS, Gender and Economic justice. In 2011, its youth arm called Girl POWA was created to focus on girls who are vulnerable to issues such as HIV and Gender-Based Violence (GBV). POWA girls participate collectively in POWA's activities and along with members of POWA, receive extensive training in several areas, including: HIV/AIDS and SRH education; community outreach; self-esteem; and assertiveness, and negotiation skills. They serve as Community Ambassadors in their neighborhoods and the wider Dangriga community. Since February 2013, POWA manages the "Dangriga Cares" Center which serves as a safe place for community members to interact. Activities and services provided by POWA include Women Empowerment Sessions, Peer Leadership Program, Counseling Program, Legal Advice Services, HIV/AIDS Prevention and Child Abuse Prevention Program,

CONTACT: 502-3002 / 622-8671

powa2grow@gmail.com

YOUTH ENHANCEMENT SERVICES (YES)

Youth Enhancement Services is a non-government organization that provides training, support and education to teenage girls. YES was founded in 1989 by the National Children's Home in London and Barbados.

CONTACT: 225-2315

BELIZE WOMEN'S POLITICAL CAUCUS

This is a voluntary, not-for-profit, non-partisan, non-government organization governed by the Steering Committee at the national level comprised of the president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary, and the chairpersons of the Standing Committees. The Standing Committees are: Membership, Fund-raising, Publicity, Legislation, Newsletter, Research, Education & Training and Political Action & Appointments. All BWPC members set the agenda of BWPC at its Annual General Meeting (AGM). An Administrative Committee, which consists of the president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, takes care of the day to day responsibilities of the Caucus. Its main objectives are to provide a neutral, objective and multi-partisan space and forum for women to discuss, caucus and build consensus positions on issues and concerns that they consider important to the political, social and economic well-being of Belize through their lens; to build coalitions with a broad base of woman and women's organizations nationally, regionally and international that have similar objectives; to educate the populace on the need for gender equality and men and women's equal participation in decision-making processes both in the public and private arenas; to advocate for policy and legislative change to advance the cause of equality between women and man in the political and other decision-making processes; to build strong, constructive and sustainable relationships with woman elected and appointed officials at all level of political parties, government and in all sectors; to monitor government policies and programs that have implications to women's participation in the political and decision-making processes and to the social and economic well-being of Belize; and to promote research, collect data and compile statistics, plan and implement programs and activities centered on increasing women participation in the political and other decision making processes;

CONTACT: 637-6191

belize_womencaucus@yahoo.com

HOUSE OF DORCAS

House of Dorcas is owned by a Womens Group of Patchakan Village. The group of ladies uses the house as a training center for women and youth. They teach arts and crafts, sewing, earrings making among others. Beside skill training programs conducted, they also provide spiritual guidance to its members and members of the community. They are able to sustain the house through donation from abroad church members and other community organizations.

CONTACT: 602-5859

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

The Special Envoy for Children and Women is the Belizean champion for women and children, working primarily to advocate for and influence the development of social policies and legislation; advocate for the implementation of programmes and initiatives that benefit children and families and promote their rights; collaborate with government and quasi-government bodies to present projects seeking financial resources at home and abroad to support programmes and initiatives for children and engage in public awareness and education activities designed to sensitize the general public to issues affecting women and children.

CONTACT: 223-1941/42

special.envoy.office@humandev.gov.bz

WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT, MINISTRY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

The Women's Department continues to be one of the leading organizations in Belize dedicated to improving the lives of women. Since 1978, the Women's Department has worked to empower women through a wide range of progressive initiatives including training classes for women, the promotion of public education in the schools, facilitating support groups and organizing community events to raise awareness about Domestic Violence and women's issues.

CONTACT: *sec.wd@humandev.gov.bz*

Belize City: 227-3888/ 227-7397

Corozal: 402-2120

Orange Walk: 302-2058

Cayo: 804-2098

Dangriga: 502-0038

Toledo: 702-2021

The Women's Department and the Special Envoy for Women and Children would like to thank its partner agencies, civil society, the business community, international agencies, our volunteers and the general public for the support that continues to be given to the multi-sectoral effort to put women at the forefront of our agenda.



Special Envoy for Women & Children



Special Thanks:



GraceKennedy (Belize) Ltd.

Grace Kennedy Belize Limited
for continued support during Women's Month.

Have a Wonderful Women's Month 2017