



Monday, March 14, 2011 St. Martin, Islands 5

CEOs help refurbish Sister Regina School

SIMPSON BAY--A group of CEOs of US Fortune 500 companies, including Hewlett Packard (HP), volunteered their time Sunday and invested a considerable amount in a refurbishment project for Sister Regina Primary School in Simpson Bay.

Pat Whelan of GoTearnDynamix.com, one of the participating companies, noted that a team of 100 volunteers had turned out at the school on Sunday morning. They re-painted the gymnasium and painted all doors and exterior in the courtyard area with 250 gallons of bright-coloured paint.

New games were installed and 90 tonnes of sand were brought in, which was dispersed around the school, particularly on a playground at the back of the school, which now has a much smoother surface for the pupils to engage in recreation.

Young volunteers from the school gave helping hands, but primarily working to complete the project in three hours were the visitors.

Commenting on his motivation for this initiative, Whelan said, "Because you can see the difference in the kids, I think that's the biggest thing; that you are doing something to help a kid."

Cynthia Herbert of CCS by Artemia, a local destination management company, explained that these CEOs aboard a private charter on cruise ship *Wind Spirit* had approached CCS by Artemia with the desire to carry out an extensive community service project on the island.

Distributor Ingram Micro President Keith Bradley said the group started off its five-day visit to the island with a means of giving back every year. "We think it's important when we come on trips like this to really give back to the local community the we're visiting. We find that it is a great form of team spirit to start off with something that makes us do a little bit of work before we relax on the beautiful islands."

He noted that 30 customers and five vendor partners were participating. These partners included CEOs of Cisco, Juniper Networks, International Business Machines (IBM) Corporation, HP and Lenovo.

"It's such a great opportunity; we are overwhelmed. It's so good to see that people know their social responsibility towards communities and that they go even further than outside their own community to do something for us. We cannot be more grateful for that," said school Principal Ria Uiterloo.

Speaking on behalf of the Roman Catholic Schools Board, Director Lilian Avengreat said, "We are grateful that Sister Regina School was selected for this service. It shows you that when you do good, good follows you. And the good that the teachers are doing here with the children is given back now with a group of 100 people giving services to this school. So we appreciate their initiative."