

NEWSROOM – from the National Commercial Bank Jamaica Ltd. website

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NCB partners with SwimJamaica to offer swimming classes for staff



Belinda Williams, NCB's Public Relations Manager (far right) and Peter Moore, SwimJamaica's Business Co-ordinator (far left), hang out with some children of NCB employees at the bank's Wellness and Recreation Centre.

Living in a country surrounded by water, knowing how to swim should be important to many Jamaicans, young and old. Unfortunately this is not always the case. Recognizing the importance of this skill, the National Commercial Bank has partnered with SwimJamaica, to offer swimming lessons for NCB employees and their families at a reduced cost. Currently, there are approximately 35 people enrolled in the SwimJamaica Programme being conducted at the financial institution's Wellness and Recreation Centre.

On a warm Saturday morning, children can be seen splashing around in the pool with colourful floatation devices such as, kick boards and noodles while keenly listening to their instructors Rohan Whyte and Keisha Rattary. Intermittent cries of "I want to do it again" echo in the distance as the excited children show their eagerness to learn.

"It is going really well and there is certainly a lot of interest from NCB employees for themselves as well as their families," highlighted Peter Moore, Swim Jamaica's Business Co-ordinator, a volunteer from the United Kingdom.

Hour-long swimming lessons ranging from levels 1-3 are taught on Saturdays at 9am, 10 am and 11am at the facility. NCB employees and their families have also benefited from individual lessons, which are available for both children and adults. The lessons began on September 9, 2006 and will run until November 18, 2006. The initial sets of lessons were taught during the summer months of this year. Due to an increased interest from staff and a long enrollment waiting list, measures were implemented by NCB and SwimJamaica to facilitate the current swim term, as well as the possibility of future terms.

"This initiative further utilizes NCB's Wellness and Recreation Centre for the expansion of work-life balance for our employees through activities that incorporate their families more. We continue to encourage our employees and their families to embrace wellness by taking advantage of the opportunity to master an important skill such as swimming," underscored Belinda Williams, NCB's Public Relations Manager.

Launched in January 2005, SwimJamaica is an initiative of the Amateur Swimming Association of Jamaica (ASAJ). The ASAJ is a non-profit association responsible for developing aquatics and water safety on the island. SwimJamaica operates two learn to swim courses, one for children and another for adults. Additionally, they operate a Career Development Programme, which facilitates instructor-training courses. Through their various programmes they focus on the development of water confidence in all their students. At present, they sponsor 130 inner-city children from the Denham Town and Trench Town communities, through swimming classes conducted at the National Stadium's pool.

Certificates are awarded to participants at the end of the curriculum, following an assessment test. The classes offered include water safety, rescue skills, first aid tips, the four competitive strokes, in addition to the fundamentals of water polo and synchronized swimming.

"We are pleased to be helping NCB's staff and their children become more comfortable in the water, as they overcome their fears of the water," added Mr. Moore.