

♂ The Gender Agenda: ♀
GAINING MOMENTUM



Women's Month 2013

LAYOUT AND FORMAT OF WOMEN'S MONTH 2013 BOOKLET BY

*Cynthia Williams (Ag. Director, Women's Department) and
De Ann Buckley (Rural Women Development Officer,
Women's Department)*

Cover designed by Greg Godfrey

Greg's artistic interpretation:

The Booklet cover depicts women forging ahead in unity and grace, gaining momentum to keep the world moving. Women are moving forward, hand in hand with men,... happily, graciously and freely, while making radiant waves in their path....! They are moving together as one with the world, including men, gaining momentum to achieve gender equality.

International Women's Day/Women's Month Message 2013

**Hon. Anthony "Boots" Martinez
Minister of Human Development, Social
Transformation and Poverty Alleviation**



The past four years the month of March in Belize has become synonymous with activities and events that recognize and celebrate the achievements and contributions of our Belizean women. For many, this observance often draws mixed opinions about whether all this "fuss" is really necessary. Despite the fact that there may not be total consensus, many public and private organizations have recognized the value of Women's Month and provide support on a yearly basis. This type of response also demonstrates that work still needs to be done to recognize that the empowerment of women is an indispensable tool for advancing national development and reducing poverty. This empowerment seeks to provide women with the opportunity to participate fully in the society, on equal terms with their male counterparts. The theme for this year's Women's Month, **"The Gender Agenda: Gaining Momentum,"** was chosen with this in mind.

This year's theme calls for some stock taking. It provides us with an opportunity to step back to evaluate the advancements that have been made not only in women's rights, but in ensuring that an enabling environment exist where men and women, girls and boys can achieve their optimal development. It is an opportunity to educate ourselves on the impact gender has on society and to consider what support systems and frameworks need to be established to allow men and women to become true partners working together towards the development of their families, communities and the country as a whole. A person's sex should not dictate what that individual can become nor what they can contribute to their society and country. This does not imply that women and men, boys and girls are the same, but rather that each should be given the opportunity to develop and that each should be

respected for their humanity. As a society, it is important to see that empowered women contribute to the health and productivity of whole families and communities and this in turn improves the prospects for the next generation.

The theme of this month's observance also calls for reflection and for the tough questions to be asked. These include questions about the existence of harmful traditional practices that limit the potential of women in Belize. Are women able to freely make decisions about their sexual and reproductive health? Are women able to access services that support them when they are facing situations of gender-based violence? Are the voices of men and women equally valued in all spheres of our society? I would say that if we were to answer these questions truthfully we may find that our society still has some ways to go in this quest for gender equality.

The first step that needs to be taken is that we must see that gender equality is about respecting each other as human beings with rights and responsibilities. We must also realize that as a developing country we can only achieve true develop when men and women both contribute. True national development can only occur if women are able to take a place at the table in the House of Representatives, in local governments, in the media, but also in their communities and households. At the same time, we must also recognize that stereotyping which often defines what a man should or should not be have a negative impact on men and women. The whole notion of a "Real Man" puts men under scrutiny and pressure to conform to society's definition of what all men must be and do. This often hinders them from communicating and participating more fully in all areas of their lives, mainly family life and their own health. These ideas about manhood are deeply ingrained from a very early age. Attitudes and behaviors that are risky and "tough" on the part of young men are often applauded by peers and condoned by society. These stereotypes result in harm to both women and men, and erode possibilities of establishing satisfying, mutually respectful relationships. We need to encourage and support reflection and discussion on issues surrounding masculinity, relationships, parenting and sexuality. This will

contribute to the deconstruction of these negative, high-risk and harmful attitudes. We must recognize that gender equality cannot be achieved without engaging men's participation.

Expectations of how men and women should act in our society and what roles they should play are shaped by culture, religion and even economic, political and social circumstances. So they are not static; they can be changed. What does this mean? Well, it means that change lies in our hands, in your hands, in my hands. We must keep the momentum of women's empowerment going, remembering what has been accomplished but also what is still pending. Let's forge ahead as we try to build a true 21st century society. Mathma Ghandi's famous quote summarizes it best, "Let us be the change we want to see." Belize let us all make a commitment to be that change and embrace the gender agenda.

Have a Happy Women's Month!

WOMEN'S MONTH MESSAGE 2013

MRS. KIM SIMPLIS BARROW

**SPECIAL ENVOY FOR WOMEN AND
CHILDREN**



The work toward gender equality never stops, but the progress being made becomes especially clear in the month of March when outstanding women and girls are recognized for their achievements and for fostering the change needed in their communities. This year's awardees are a major part of the reason we can proudly share the international theme, *"The Gender Agenda: Gaining Momentum"*. These are women who work hard and give selflessly for the betterment of our nation; they are the women that we want to empower our girls to be.

The Women's Department has shown each year that there is no shortage of role models in this country. I hope that the bios contained in this booklet will serve as a beacon of hope for those who place a limit on where they can go because of where they come from. Let's keep the momentum growing by motivating more women and girls to uplift themselves, rise above the odds and chart their own paths to success.

I want to congratulate the awardees, not only for the accomplishments that earned them this recognition, but for having the drive and determination that made it possible. 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 is the moving 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 hanged 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 uniformly 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 Nation's 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 and 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. Over the years, International Women's Day was commemorated in Belize by planning and executing a week of activities during the Month of 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.



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

ONGOING

Throughout the Month of March

- Women in Art Exhibit, Bliss Centre for the Performing Arts, Belize City, (*Organizing Agency: Institute of Creative Arts, Contact Person: Karen Vernon*)
- Pap smear, breast exam, Pelvic Exam and HIV test Promotion for only \$40.00 Pap smear Package Deal on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays (*Organizing Agency: San Ignacio BFLA, Contact Person: Nurse Dolly Witz*)
- Community Mobile Specials on Pap smear, breast exam, Pelvic Exam and HIV test Promotion for only \$40.00, (*Organizing Agency: Punta Gorda BFLA Mobile Clinic, Contact Person: Nurse Desiree Casimiro*)
- Community Mobile Specials on Pap smear, breast exam, Pelvic Exam and HIV test Promotion for only \$40.00 (*Organizing Agency: Dangriga BFLA Mobile Clinic, Contact Person: Desiree Casimiro*)
- "Luk Ya 3" Women in Art Exhibition, Pen Cayetano Art Gallery, Dangriga Town, (*Organizing Agency: Stann Creek – Women's Department, Contact Person: Michele Irving*)
- Pap-smears and Breast Exams throughout March at mobile clinics and fixed clinics country wide, (*Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Eufemia Waight*)

FRIDAY, MARCH 1

BELIZE DISTRICT

- A Women's Walk, Leaves from Leo Bradley Library, Belize City, 5:30 a.m. (*Organizing Agency: Belize National Library Service and Information System, Contact Person: Shana Vaccaro/ Keisha Zelaya*)
- Islands Health Fair, , Caye Caulker, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: San Pedro & Caye Caulker National Aids Commission District Committee, Contact Person: Dennis Craft/Maricarmen Chi*)

COROZAL DISTRICT

- "Gender Issues" Radio Talk Show, Radio Bahia, Corozal Town, 8:00 a.m.- 9:00 a.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Consuelo Hernandez*)
- Health Screening Sessions for Corozal Free Zone Workers, Corozal Free Zone, Santa Elena Border, All Day, (*Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Vioney Sheppard*)

SATURDAY, MARCH 2

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Free Basic Plumbing Session, ITVET, Belize City, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Tricia Collins*)
- Supporting Single Mother's Expo, NICH Parking Lot, Belize City, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Lodawn Jones*)
- Ms. African Queen, Bliss Centre for the Performing Arts, Belize City, 8:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Concerned Belizean Women, Contact Person: Karen Vernon*) Entrance Fee: Reserved \$20.00 General \$15.00

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Health Screening Sessions for Corozal Free Zone Workers, Corozal Free Zone, Santa Elena Border, All Day, (Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Vioney Sheppard)

CAYO DISTRICT

- Women In Art Exhibit, Centennial Park, Benque Viejo, 2:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Benque House of Culture/NICH, Contact Person: Ingrid Can Valdez)

SUNDAY, MARCH 3

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Church Service, St. Mark's Anglican Church, Hattieville, 11:00 a.m., (Organizing Agency: L.E.A.P Women's Group, Contact Person: Lisa Coleman)

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Health Screening Sessions for Corozal Free Zone Workers, Corozal Free Zone, Santa Elena Border, All Day, (Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Vioney Sheppard)

CAYO DISTRICT

- Church Service, St Ann's Anglican Church, Belmopan, 8:00 a.m., (Organizing Agency: Belmopan Women Council, Contact Person: Beverly Swasey)
- Church Service, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, San Ignacio Town, 6:30 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Mary Open Doors, Contact Person: Anna Silva)

STANN CREEK DISTRICT

- 5th Annual Community Spirit Award, Help Age Center, Dangriga Town, 3:00 p.m., *(Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Michele Irving)*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Health Screening Sessions for Corozal Free Zone Workers, Corozal Free Zone, Santa Elena Border, All Day, *(Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Vioney Sheppard)*

TUESDAY, MARCH 5

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Living Well Session, Women's Department Conference Room, Belize City, 1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m., *(Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Tricia Collins)*
Closed Event
- Women's Month Poetry Night, Bird's Isle Restaurant, Belize City, 6:00 p.m., *(Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Cynthia Williams)*

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Health Screening Sessions for Corozal Free Zone Workers, Corozal Free Zone, Santa Elena Border, All Day, *(Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Vioney Sheppard)*

CAYO DISTRICT

- Healthy Living Workshop, Benque Viejo Police Station Conference Room, Benque Viejo, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Kathleen Pate)

STANN CREEK DISTRICT

- "Women Voices" Radio Talk Show, Hamalali Radio, 7:00 p.m., Dangriga Town, (Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Michele Irving)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6

BELIZE DISTRICT

- "Women of Valor", ITVET, Belize City, 6:30 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: YWCA, Contact Person: Delarai Sanchez)
Entrance Fee: \$10.00

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Health Screening Sessions for Corozal Free Zone Workers, Corozal Free Zone, Santa Elena Border, All Day,
(Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Vioney Sheppard)

CAYO DISTRICT

- Domestic Violence and the Link to Health Issues Session, San Antonio Community Center, San Antonio Village, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Mary Open Doors, Contact Person: Anna Silva)
- Communication and Decision Making Skills Workshop, Cornerstone Foundation, San Ignacio Town, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Cornerstone Foundation, Contact Person: Rita Defour)

- Healthy Living Session, George Price Center, Belmopan, 7:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Belmopan Women Council, Contact Person: Beverly Swasey*)

THURSDAY, MARCH 7

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Gender Sensitization Session for High School Students, ITVET, Belize City, 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Tricia Collins*)
Closed Event
- Lecture on Knowing Your Body, Leo Bradley Library, Belize City, 10:00 a.m., (*Organizing Agency: BNLSIS, Contact Person: Shana Vaccaro/ Keisha Zelaya*)
- Women In Art - Art Exhibit Launch, Bliss Centre for the Performing Arts, Belize City, 7:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Institute of Creative Arts, Contact Person: Karen Vernon*)

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Health Screening Sessions for Corozal Free Zone Workers, Corozal Free Zone, Santa Elena Border, All Day, (*Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Vioney Sheppard*)

CAYO DISTRICT

- Domestic Violence and the Link to Health Issues Session, San Antonio Community Center, San Antonio Village, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Mary Open Doors, Contact Person: Anna Silva*)

FRIDAY, MARCH 8
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Special Treat for Female Patients, Karl Huesner Memorial Hospital, Belize City, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: B.F.L.A., Contact Person: Melanie Montero)
- Health Fair, Sandhill Community Center, Sandhill Village, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Eufemia Waight)
- Health Fair, August Pine Ridge Health Center, August Pine Ridge Village, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Eufemia Waight)

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Personal Safety and Self Defense Session, San Victor Roman Catholic School, San Victor Village, 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Consuelo Hernandez)
- Health Screening for Pap Smears and Breast Examinations, MCH, Corozal Health Clinic, 8:00 a.m. – 12 noon,
(Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Donaldine Lizama)

CAYO DISTRICT

- 4th Annual Belize Woman of the Year Award, U.S Embassy, Belmopan, (Organizing Agency: U.S Embassy, Contact Person: Eric Hayden) Invitation Only
- Bingo Night, Mayan Prince Plaza, San Ignacio Town, 7:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: San Ignacio Women's Group, Contact Person: Yoli Paniagua)

STANN CREEK DISTRICT

- Launch of "Luk Ya 3" Women in Arts Exhibition, Pen Cayetano Art Gallery, Dangriga Town, 4:30 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Michele Irving)

TOLEDO DISTRICT

- Gender Health Fair, Punta Gorda Central Park, Punta Gorda Town, 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Lorraine Johnson)

ORANGE WALK DISTRICT

- Leadership and Team Building Session for Women's Group Leaders, Banqitas House of Culture, Orange Walk Town, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Makesha Suazo)

SUNDAY, MARCH 10

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Church Service, St. Paul's Anglican Church, Corozal Town, 7:00 a.m., (Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Consuelo Hernandez)

TUESDAY, MARCH 12

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Free Personal Safety and Self Defense for Women and Girls, UB Faculty of Education and Arts Campus, Belize City, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: University of Belize, Contact Person: Renee Wentz)

- Teenage Mother's Parenting Session, Centre for Teenage Mothers, YES, Belize City, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Youth Enhancement Service, Contact Person: Ms. Lorna Tench)

STANN CREEK DISTRICT

- "Women Voices" Radio Talk Show, Hamalali Radio, Dangriga Town, 7:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Michele Irving)

TOLEDO DISTRICT

- Personal Safety and Self Defense Session for Women and Girls, UB Punta Gorda Campus, Punta Gorda Town, 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: University of Belize, Contact Person: Renee Wentz)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Cosmetology Makeover for Female Inmates at Belize Central Prison, Kolbe Foundation, Hattieville Village, 9:00 a.m.,
(Organizing Agency: YWCA/Women's Department, Contact Person: Marcie Carballo)
- "Empowering Gender Gaining Momentum" Seminar for Female Police Officers, Princess Hotel and Casino, Belize City, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Police Department, Contact Person: Sr. Sup. Louise Willis)

CAYO DISTRICT

- Health Fair, Maya Mopan Nazarene Church, Maya Mopan Village, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Western Health Region Hospital, Contact Person: Rose Anderson)
- Gender Equality Session, Cornerstone Foundation Office, San Ignacio Town, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Cornerstone Foundation, Contact Person: Rita Defour)

- "Belizean Reality" Video Presentation, Sacred Heart Junior College, San Ignacio Town, 5:15 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Kathleen Pate)

COROZAL DISTRICT

- "Be Special" Day, Women's Department Office, Corozal Town, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Consuelo Hernandez)

THURSDAY, MARCH 14

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Center for Community Resource and Development (CCRD) Open House, CCRD Office, St. Martin's Area, Belize City, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Center for Community Resource and Development, Contact Person: Sandra Alvarez)
- Lecture on Diabetics and Kidneys, Leo Bradley Library, Belize City, 10:00 a.m., (Organizing Agency: Belize National Library Service and Information System, Contact Person: Shana Vaccaro/ Keisha Zelaya)

CAYO DISTRICT

- Health Information Fair, More Tomorrow School Compound, More Tomorrow Village, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Western Health Region Hospital, Contact Person: Rose Anderson)
- Bingo Night, Private Residence at 22/24 Kisadee Street, Belmopan, 7:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Belmopan Women Council, Contact Person: Beverly Swasey)

FRIDAY, MARCH 15

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Community Service Expo & WIN-Belize Day, YWCA Basketball Court, Belize City, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: WIN-Belize, Contact Person: Sheena Gentle)
- KISS(Keep It Sexy and Safe) Lounge for young Ladies, BFLA Headquarters, Belize City, 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency, Contact Person: Melanie Montero)

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Sexual and Reproductive Health Session for Women, Cascada Maya Conference Room, Corozal Town, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Consuelo Hernandez)
- Health Screening for Pap Smears and Breast Examinations, Corozal Health Clinic, Corozal, 8:00 a.m. – 12 noon,
(Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Donaldine Lizama)

SATURDAY, MARCH 16

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Women's Month Bike Rally, Leaves from Western Avenue and Western Highway, Belize City, 6:00 a.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Cynthia Williams)
- YWCA Post-Bike Rally Breakfast, YWCA Court, 6:00 a.m.,
(Organizing Agency: YWCA, Contact Person: Sonia Lenares) Cost: \$6.00
- Women in Art Showcase- 'We Women are Warriors' feat. d'bi young anitafrika, Bliss Centre for the Performing Arts, Belize City, 8:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Institute of Creative Arts, Contact Person: Karen Vernon) Entrance Fee: \$20.00

- Free Pap-smear and Breast Exam, Private and Public, Belize City Health Centers, All Day, (*Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Eufemia Waight*)

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Women's Month Bike Rally, Leaves from Corozal Central Park, Corozal Town, 6:00 a.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Consuelo Hernandez*)

ORANGE WALK DISTRICT

- Women's Month Bike Rally, Leaves from El Establo, Orange Walk Town, 6:00 a.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Makesha Suazo*)

CAYO DISTRICT

- Women's Month Bike Rally & Expo, Leaving from Macal Park, San Ignacio, 6:00 a.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Kathleen Pate*)
- Wellness Day, Western Health Regional Hospital, San Ignacio Town, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Western Health Regional Hospital, Contact Person: Rose Anderson*)

STANN CREEK DISTRICT

- Women's Month Bike Rally, Leaving from Benguche Park, 7:00 a.m., Dangriga Town, (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Michele Irving*)

TOLEDO DISTRICT

- Women's Month Bike Rally, Leaving from Central Park, 5:00 a.m., Punta Gorda Town (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Lorraine Johnson*)

SUNDAY, MARCH 17

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Women's Month Bike Rally, Leaving from Hattieville Police Station, Hattieville Village, 6:00 a.m., *(Organizing Agency: L.E.A.P Women's Group, Contact Person: Lisa Coleman)*
- Rural Women's Cricket Competition, Bermudian Landing Village, Belize District, 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., *(Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: De-Ann Buckley)*
- YWCA 57th Prayer Service, St. John's Cathedral, Belize City, 9:30 a.m., *(Organizing Agency: YWCA, Contact Person: Marcie Carballo/Beverly Brown)*

CAYO DISTRICT

- Senior Step Variety Show, George Price Center, Belmopan, 5:00 p.m., *(Organizing Agency: National Council on Ageing, Contact Person: Ix-chel Poot) Entrance Fee: No Charge*

MONDAY, MARCH 18

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Lunch Seminar on Spirituality, UWI – Open Campus Auditorium, Belize City, 12 noon- 1:30 p.m., *(Organizing Agency: UWI Open Campus, Contact Person: Jane Bennett) Closed Event*
- Women's Forum, UWI Open Campus Auditorium, Belize City, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., *(Organizing Agency: UWI Open Campus, Contact Person: Jane Bennett) Closed Event*

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Health Screening Sessions for CCH Staff, Corozal Health Clinic, Corozal, All Day, *(Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Vioney Sheppard)*

CAYO DISTRICT

- Benque Health Fair, Benque Health Clinic, Benque Viejo, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Emma Gabriel*)

TUESDAY, MARCH 19

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Lunch Seminar on Education, UWI Open Campus Auditorium, Belize City, 12 noon - 1:30 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: UWI Open Campus, Contact Person: Jane Bennett*)
Closed Event
- Free Personal Safety and Self Defense for Women and Girls, UB Faculty of Education and Arts Campus, Belize City, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: University of Belize, Contact Person: Renee Wentz*)
- Official Launching of the YWCA Belmopan Building, Belmopan, 2:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: YWCA, Contact Person: Sonia Lenares/Regina Campbell*) *Invitation Only*

STANN CREEK DISTRICT

- "Women Voices" Radio Talk Show, Hamalali Radio, Dangriga Town, 7:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Michele Irving*)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Lunch Seminar on Health, UWI Open Campus Auditorium, Belize City, 12 noon - 1:30 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: UWI-Open Campus, Contact Person: Jane Bennett*)
Closed Event

- Health Talk for Seniors, YWCA Auditorium, Belize City, 3:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: YWCA, Contact Person: Joyce Flowers*)
Invitation Only
- Free Personal Safety and Self Defense for Women and Girls, UB Faculty of Education and Arts Campus, Belize City, 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: University of Belize, Contact Person: Renee Wentz*)

ORANGE WALK DISTRICT

- Women's Rights and Domestic Violence Session, Trial Farm Government School, Trial Farm Village, Orange Walk, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Makesha Suazo*)

TOLEDO DISTRICT

- Team Building and Leadership Workshop, St. Peter Claver Parish Hall, Punta Gorda Town, 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Lorraine Johnson*)

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Reading of PPD Sessions for CCH Staff, Corozal Health Clinic, Corozal Town. All Day, (*Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Vioney Sheppard*)

CAYO DISTRICT

- Work and Self Reliance Workshop, Cornerstone Foundation Office, San Ignacio Town, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Cornerstone Foundation, Contact Person: Rita Defour*)
- Healthy Living and Menopause Information Session, Blackman Eddy Community Center, Blackman Eddy Village, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Kathleen Pate*)

THURSDAY, MARCH 21

BELIZE DISTRICT

- 8th Annual Women's Summit, Radisson Fort George Hotel and Marina, Belize City, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Cynthia Williams)
- Lunch Seminar on Finances, UWI Open Campus Auditorium, Belize, 12 noon- 1:30 p.m., (Organizing Agency: UWI Open Campus, Contact Person: Jane Bennett) Closed Event
- Building Resilience and Self Esteem in Children, YES Centre for Teenage Mothers, Belize City, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Youth Enhancement Service, Contact Person: Ms. Lorna Tench)

CAYO DISTRICT

- Health Fair, Ontario Community Center, Ontario Village, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Western Health Regional Hospital, Contact Person: Rose Anderson)

FRIDAY, MARCH 22

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Health Fair, San Pedro Polyclinic, San Pedro Town, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Eufemia Waight)
- Lunch Seminar on Social Aspects & Human Rights, UWI Open Campus Auditorium, Belize City, 12 noon- 1:30 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: UWI Open Campus, Contact Person: Jane Bennett) Closed Event
- YWCA Open House Motorcade, Streets of Belize City, 3:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: YWCA, Contact Person: Nadine Harris)

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Health Fair, San Narciso Community Center, San Narciso Village and surrounding villages, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Donaldine Lizama)
- Health Screening for Pap Smears and Breast Examinations, MCH, Corozal Health Clinic, 8:00 a.m. – 12 noon,
(Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Donaldine Lizama)

CAYO DISTRICT

- Generation Mix, George Price Center, Belmopan, 7:00 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Belmopan Women Council, Contact Person: Beverly Swasey)

STANN CREEK DISTRICT

- MDG Community Fair and Expo, Riverside Market Square, Dangriga Town, 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Michele Irving)

SATURDAY, MARCH 23

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Women Softball Marathon, Roger's Stadium, Belize City, 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., (Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Tricia Collins)
- Cook-Off Competition, Crooked Tree Show Grounds, Crooked Tree Village, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.,
(Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: De-Ann Buckley)
- YWCA Open House, YWCA Compound, Belize City, 10:00 a.m., (Organizing Agency: YWCA, Contact Person: Sonia Lenares)

- Sexual Reproductive Health Training for Young Women, YES Centre for Teenage Mothers, Belize City, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. (*Organizing Agency: Youth Enhancement Service, Contact Person: Ms. Lorna Tench*)
- YWCA Tea Party, YWCA Headquarters, Belize City, 4:40 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: YWCA, Contact Person: Jennifer Smith*)
Fee: \$10.00

CAYO DISTRICT

- Free Personal Safety and Self Defense for Women and Girls, White Tent, UB Belmopan Campus, Belmopan, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: University of Belize, Contact Person: Renee Wentz*)
- Belmopan Women's Tennis Tournament, Belmopan Tennis Court, Belmopan, 10:00 a.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Kathleen Pate*)
- Wellness Day, Belmopan Tennis Court, Belmopan, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Western Health Region, Contact Person: Rose Anderson*)

TOLEDO DISTRICT

- Inter-generational Forum, Help Age Center, Punta Gorda Town, 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Lorraine Johnson*)

ORANGE WALK DISTRICT

- Gender Session: Sharing Responsibility in the Household, Banquitas House of Culture, Orange Walk Town, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Makesha Suazo*)

SUNDAY, MARCH 24

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Women's Softball Marathon, Ricalde Stadium, Corozal Town, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Consuelo Hernandez*)

MONDAY, MARCH 25

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Health Fair, Rhaburn Ridge Village, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Eufemia Waight*)

CAYO DISTRICT

- Healthy Living and Menopause Session, Cotton Tree Village, 7:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Kathleen Pate*)

TUESDAY, MARCH 26

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Health Fair, Rhaburn Ridge Village, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Eufemia Waight*)
- Teenage Mother's Parenting Session, YES Centre for Teenage Mothers, Belize City, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Youth Enhancement Service, Contact Person: Ms. Lorna Tench*)

STANN CREEK DISTRICT

- "Women Voices" Radio Talk Show, Hamalali Radio, Dangriga Town, 7:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Michele Irving*)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

BELIZE DISTRICT

- Women United for Peace (PRAY THE DEVIL BACK TO HELL documentary) Open discussion, UWI-Open Campus, Belize City, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Mattie Roter Outreach Women's Group, Contact Person: Veronica Jones*)
- 8th Annual Outstanding Women's Awards, Bliss Center for the Performing Arts, Belize City, 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., (*Organizing Agency: Women's Department, Contact Person: Cynthia Williams*)

THURSDAY, MARCH 29

COROZAL DISTRICT

- Health Screening for Pap Smears and Breast Examinations, MCH, Corozal Health Clinic, 8:00 a.m. – 12 noon, (*Organizing Agency: Ministry of Health, Contact Person: Nurse Donaldine Lizama*)

Outstanding Women

The Women's Department once again has chosen to honor six women from each district for their outstanding contribution to their communities. 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.

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, "***The Gender Agenda: Gaining Momentum***", invites us not only to celebrate all that has been accomplished, but to look forward to the work that still needs to be done.

These women will be honored at the 8th **Annual Outstanding Women's Awards Ceremony** on March 27th, 2013 at the Bliss Centre for the Performing Arts at 7:00 p.m.



Raquel Trapp's motto in life is to encourage and educate women, men and children to reach their goals despite their situation in life. She was born in Belize City on July 27, 1973 where she attended primary school. She began high school but was unable to finish due to financial difficulties. However, she did not let that stop

her from reaching her goals or changing who she was. Ms. Trapp is a proud mother of four children. She is presently the community health worker in Mahogany Heights where her official duties are to plan and implement health education session; conduct sessions in school and the community; execute health activities within her community; collect vital statistics on birth and deaths in the community; arrange disaster preparedness trainings; and community home visits. Aside from her duties as a health worker, Ms. Trapp also works along with other organizations to organize sessions on nutrition, counseling to prevent suicide, water sanitation, and most importantly domestic violence and child abuse which she see is growing in her village. To educate and empower villagers in and around her community, Ms. Raquel goes the extra mile literally walking to everyone's house to speak with them to ensure that they can access the services they need.

Ms. Trapp organizes an annual back to school drive to assist children who are in difficult situations in the community with school materials. Despite not getting a pay check, Ms. Raquel tries to assist her community whenever she can and would even go to businesses to ask for donations to give out to some of the villagers. Ms. Trapp is an active member of her church and she assists by taking the children and youth to a yearly camp where they participate in activities that encourage them to reach for their goals in life. Her goal is to help them be resilient despite life experiences and most of all, to be strong and learn how to cope with issues that they might face on a daily basis.

Submitted by: Women's Department (Belize District)



Carmen Marcela McCulloch was born on the July 17th, 1969 and grew up in the silent village of Sand Hill. She attended Guadalupe R.C. School with her other brothers and sisters. At the age of 22, she got married but her husband was violent. She had two daughters, Priscilla Melinda and Minita Kamisha. After seventeen years of turmoil, she decided that it was enough and separated from her husband in October of 2008. Things were very rough for her family after the divorce but she realized that tough times never last but tough people do. During those times, she received assistance from Mary Open Doors to get back up on her feet. She feels that she did not only get back on her feet, but is now flying.

Ms. Carmen never forgot Mary Open Doors or where she came from. Like a potter taking a slab of clay and making it into a beautiful vase, she took her experience and turn it into something good. This remarkable woman puts her best efforts working as an advocate for women and children at Mary Open Doors.

Since Ms. Carmen's official employment with the organization in January 2012, she works tirelessly to support the founder of Mary Open Doors. Her life revolves around helping victims of domestic violence and abuse that seek help at the organization. She works non-stop as an assistant in the day and a shelter supervisor in the night for Mary Open Doors.

Ms. Carmen is not only a social service worker for the clients; she is also a friend, councilor and comforter. She doesn't consider her services as a job, she considers it a blessing. It is a blessing to the clients that seek out help and leave knowing that that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Submitted by: Women's Department (Cayo)



Glenda Francis was born in Corozal Town on November 6th 1944. She was the second child of a family of nine and from a tender age helped her mother to make ends meet. As a child going to primary school, she recalls having to sell during recess homemade sweets and puddings.

In 1959, St. Francis Xavier Primary School teachers offered her a scholarship to attend Xavier College in Corozal which she embraced enthusiastically. With support of her parents, she received a High School Diploma in 1963. In 1970, she entered the teaching profession and later attended the Belize Teacher's College, where she received her Trained Teachers Certificate. She also held the post of principal at the St. Francis Xavier School Infant Division, a post she held for seven years.

After retiring from the teaching profession, Ms. Francis believed she could still give much more to her community and people of Corozal District so she joined the Help Age Corozal. As a member of Help Age, she empowers the elderly by providing services and an environment that enables them to achieve ageing with dignity. She is also serving as an interpreter for the voluntary medical teams from abroad that visit villages in Corozal District, providing communities with free medications and check-ups.

As a Communion Minister, she visits shut-ins for elderly and other sick people, she takes communion to them, prays and listens to them and gives them words of encouragement and also provide them with food packages. She strongly believes in this year's theme for the elderly "seniors are the foundation of our nation".

Submitted by: Women's Department (Corozal)



Mrs. Victoria Hernandez was born on November 17, 1957 to Eliberto Escalante and Claudia Talango in Orange Walk Town, Orange Walk District. She was the youngest of seven children, 5 daughters and 2 sons. She married Francisco Ramon Hernandez on September 15th, 1976 and had 5 children, four girls and one boy.

Her community work began in 1994 when she became part of the first parent's committee at La Inmaculada Primary School and assisted in the construction of the school's cafeteria. In 1999, she was awarded the Mother's Day Award by the Orange Walk Town Board for her community service.

In 1994, she began working with the Community Parenting Program (COMPAR) in the Ministry of Human Development as a volunteer. She has attended numerous training to prepare her for the work she engaged in including various parenting, child abuse and juvenile issues

She also worked with NEMO when needed and was always the first to volunteer even if it was to pack and distribute food to those who needed it. Her work with the Ministry of Human Development also included helping with the community service program for first time offenders and was part of the District Coalition Group. She has also worked with NOPCAN, Human Rights Commission of Belize and National Aids Commission. She has also served as an assistant chairlady and chairlady to VOICE since 2010. She provided input to the "Situational Analysis of Older Persons in Belize and to Mrs. Yvette Torres from Banquitas House of Culture in developing a DVD showcasing older persons from Orange Walk Town.

"Ms Vicky" as she is affectionately known. She continues volunteering even now at her 55 years of age in other areas such as the Charismatic Group, Liturgy Committee and Santa Anna Religious group at La Inmaculada Parish in Orange Walk Town. She dedicates her time to visiting the sick, shut ins and doing spiritual works.

Submitted by: Women's Department (Orange Walk)



Mrs. Sandra Garrett is a loving and cheerful source of motivation and support for others. When she is not making decisions as a member of Help Age Dangriga, she may be found making a birthday cake for one of the seniors or telling them funny stories.

In her own way special way, Ms. Sandra has touched the lives of many. Each day of the week there is always something for her to do or someone to help. She is an active member of Sacred Heart Church and is always present at church functions and always willing to offer prayers for those who need them. Ms Sandra is also a skilled craftsperson; she makes creative gifts to brighten someone's day. Or, she may give one of her lovely wreaths which is always a source of comfort to grieving families

One of Ms. Sandra's most outstanding virtues is the gift of time that she generously gives to others. As a very active member of Stann Creek Palliative Care and Dangriga Cancer Society this lovely lady may spend her entire day visiting the sick; praying with their families and offering them her funny stories to lighten and brighten their day.

Others will tire and go home but Ms Sandra is tireless and she will go on from one home to the next. Her commitment to serving others is unflinching. Volunteerism is alive and well in Mrs. Sandra Garrett and for that we have chosen her to be Stann Creek's outstanding Woman.

Submitted by: Women's Department (Stann Creek)



The evolution of Maya women started way back in 1980's by a phenomenal leader, **Micaela Wewe** who actually opened the doors for Maya women's leadership and participation in social and economic development. Micaela's life story tells us that when she became a member of the Belize Rural Women's Association (BRWA), her husband was still alive and she was still in her child bearing age. Her husband was no exception to the rule of machismo, but these barriers did not stop Micaela from attending BRWA workshops and meetings all over the country and abroad. Micaela took her children with her to the meetings, even while they were breastfed. She also had to be accompanied by her husband, on occasions, who wanted to verify what she was really doing in those meetings. BRWA provided for her accommodations and meals and that of her children and husband if needed. Nonetheless, her hardships only fuelled her passion to learn new skills that would remove her from poverty and restriction of her own freedom.

Micaela is a role model for Maya women. Her leadership and determination evolved into several spectrums and proved that no circumstance can stop a woman from emancipation. Micaela is a professional craft maker; she was the first woman to make Maya baskets in commercial quantity and established a market for Maya craft in Belize City. She is a pioneer of the Toledo Maya Women's Council and a great Maya women leader.

Submitted by: Women's Department (Toledo)



Emmeline Elizabeth Baptist was born on October 2, 1941 in Belize City. She is the second of 10 siblings. She received her formal education at St. John's Primary School in Belize City. She later met and married John Baptist in 1965; that union produced four children, one son and three daughters. Baptist is known as a mother who cared for and continues to care for her husband and grown children.

Emmeline has been with the Black Cross Nurses since it was revitalized in the early eighties. As the current Vice-President, she has served devotedly for over 20 years. When called upon, she would not hesitate to give her support. She is a straightforward person, giving her honest and direct opinion when she is asked.

As a Seventh Day Adventist, she's one of the founders of the Darcas Group. She's also a member of Helpage Belize.

This dependable rock of the BCNA holds fast her faith in Christ and always sees the glass half full and not half empty.

Besides her involvement in the social aspect of her community, Baptist enjoys doing handy craft and travelling.

The Black Cross Nurses awards Mrs. Emmeline Baptist with as 2013 Outstanding Women's Award.

Submitted by: Black Nurses Association



Laura Tucker-Longsworth is a registered nurse who received basic nursing and midwifery education from the Bliss School of Nursing, Belize. She holds a Certificate in Nursing from the University of the West Indies and a Master of Science degree from Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing, Loyola University, Chicago. She is an Advanced Practice Nurse with specializations in Health Systems Management.

Nurse Longsworth is an entrepreneur and managing director of Nursing & Healthcare Services Consultants Ltd, which offers services to healthcare providers and agencies in delivering quality healthcare. Mrs. Longsworth is a lifelong member of the Nurses Association; she counsels and mentors colleagues and students. She serves on the disciplinary committee of the Nurses and Midwives Council and as vice chairperson on the Board for Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital. She is a member of the Sigma Theta Tau Honor Society of Nursing and awardee for Professionalism and Service from Loyola University, Chicago.

Laura is committed to lifelong learning and service to the Belizean community through various organizations. She is a founding member of the Belize Cancer Society and is currently its President. Mrs. Longsworth has been married for 43 years, has three children and six grandchildren.

Submitted by: University of the West Indies – Open Campus



Mrs. Imelda Velasquez has been teaching and encouraging the young women of YES since the early 2000's, when she began her weekly Bible studies at the YES Training Centre. Since then, she has faithfully provided our students with an hour of scripture teaching, spiritual guidance, and life lessons on Wednesday mornings. Both students and staff look forward to her studies, and her constant presence has greatly enriched our program.

Mrs. Velasquez began working with youth long before coming to YES. For over twenty-one years, she has been actively involved in children's ministries. She taught Bible Club and helped run the Vacation Bible School at Open Doors Believer's Chapel in Belize City. She then became involved with the same ministries at Bethany Chapel when her family moved to Burrell Boom. Her current Saturday Bible Club includes children not only from Bethany Chapel, but also from the entire Burrell Boom community.

Love for God and desire to see change in the lives of youth and children is what motivates her to continue in her service. She applies her same joy and dedication to her personal life, where she is the mother of four and recently celebrated her thirty-second wedding anniversary.

YES is truly indebted to Mrs. Velasquez for her support and involvement in our programs. Congratulations for a well deserved honor!

Submitted by: Youth Enhancement Services



Staff Sergeant Carolyn Tillett, of Roaring Creek Village, Cayo District, was enlisted into the Belize Defence Force on 13th November, 1985. During her twenty two years of service she successfully completed several promotional courses that made her to the rank of Staff Sergeant. She is a dedicated individual who does her best in any undertaking.

During her years in the Belize Defence Force, Staff Sergeant Tillett displayed outstanding leadership skills, initiative, the ability to work as a team member and a commitment to service. She has been a recipient of the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, which is awarded to members of the BDF who have served 22 years or more and who have demonstrated exemplary behavior throughout their years of service in the Force.

Since her retirement from the BDF, Staff Sergeant Tillett has worked tirelessly with the Belize Defence Force Youth Cadet Corps (BDF YCC) as a full time member of the Volunteer Element. She has been with the cadets since its inception in 2008, playing a very important role in the development of the program and gaining the trust of the program commanders and parents of the young men and women who make up the YCC. She is a skilled first aid provider who is called upon on numerous occasions for advice and immediate response. She is an outstanding example of a woman leader because of her personal pride and integrity, which she promotes and encourages all women to duplicate.

Submitted by: Belize Defense Force



Brenda Marie Belisle was born on May 22, 1954 in Belize City, Belize. She is the youngest of three girls, the first two being twins. Brenda learned the value of hard work and has been supporting her immediate and extended family from an early age.

Miss B, as she is affectionately called, has excellent cooking skills and worked at the St. Martin's Parish and St. John's College as a cook for the Priests. She held this job for 12 years before moving on to having her own catering service. She is now working at the YWCA's snack shop where one can get delicious food including Creole Bread and Bun.

Although quiet by nature, Miss B makes sound contributions to the planning and implementation of the Winners Women's Group activities. Miss B is always willing to go the extra mile to achieve results. She believes that education empowers therefore she ensures that her seven daughters and one son receive a good education. She also continues to empower herself by participating in educational sessions facilitated by WIN-Belize and the Winners Women's Group.

Apart from cooking, Ms. B loves to dance and travel. Miss B is very dedicated and committed to serving others selflessly.

Submitted by: Women's Issues Network of Belize (WIN-Belize)



Miss. Jacqueline Tiabo believes commitment is essential to all undertakings. She is motivated and dedicated to making a difference specifically to and for the next generation. The only child of Sonia Tiabo, she was taught at an early age that success is a result of hard work and determination. Jackie's passion and commitment is integral to her work in developing opportunities for young women.

Her formal education began at Bernice Yorke's Institute of Learning and later St. Joseph Primary School. Jacque attended St. Catherine Academy, received her Associate's Degree from St. John's Junior College and the B. S. in Management at Harding University in Arkansas. She is the Manager of Civil Service Credit Union.

Ms. Tiabo's commitment for and reverence to service began at the YWCA where she was initially a member of the Fundraising Committee and was elected to the Board of Directors in 1992 where she serves as Treasurer. In 1995, Jacqueline was the YWCA youth representative to the International Women's Summit and the World YWCA Council in Korea. Her two decades plus work with the YWCA has witnessed her participation in every program and project of the Y.

Ms. Tiabo participates in both the Ebenezer Methodist Church Choir and the Combined Choir and is a Steward and Accountant to the Circuit. Her Ambassadors for Christ membership facilitates her focus on youth mentoring. She also volunteers at the church's Soup Kitchen and Senior Citizen's Group.

Jacque is the mother of one daughter, Maeliene.

Submitted by: Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)



Patricia Flowers (April 5, 1979) is a young inspiring Belizean female, who resides on the South Side of Belize City. She is the mother of seven lovely children, whom she loves with all her heart.

The passion she had for her very own children inspired her to work closely with the families and children within her Lake Independence community.

She is currently the President of the Non-Profit Organization "My Neighbors and Me". "My Neighbors and Me" is a community-based group aimed toward the development of children in the Lake Independence area in the fields of dance, drama, music, arts, and sports.

Ms. Flowers believes that her involvement with the families and children within the community will go a long way, and hope to continue being a community activist.

The National Committee for Families and Children encourages Ms. Flowers to continue demonstrating children and adolescent participation within her community.

Submitted by: National Committee for Families & Children



Maria Erlinda Gamero, nee Constanza, was born in the Orange Walk District on March 29th, 1947. She received a high school scholarship to study in Guatemala City. Upon returning to Belize she worked at the Belize Sugar Factory and Belize Fishermen Association before pursuing further study in Miami. It was here that she became involved in visiting Women Prisoners at the Miami Dade Prison where she assisted the Social Worker.

Returning to Belize Maria worked as a teacher at Muffle's Junior College. She later became a Senior Social Worker at the Refugee Department in Belmopan; a Women's Officer at Help for Progress, and the National Coordinator at the Human Rights Commission of Belize.

As Coordinator for the Human Rights Commission of Belize, she has contributed greatly in educating and creating awareness on human rights through different sources, and has represented Belize internationally.

At the age of 66, Maria now works as a Counselor /Guidance Officer at the Belize Central Prison rehabilitating female inmates. Her love and passion for helping these women is heard in the sincerity of her words, "When I see people responding and bringing changes to their own personal lives, when I meet them outside in society and are integrating and doing well, I feel God has worked in their lives and it is worth the while."

She continues playing an important role as an active member of the Board of Directors of the Human Rights Commission of Belize.

Submitted by: National Council on Ageing



Mrs. Dylcia Feinstein Mrs. Dylcia Feinstein attended Holy Redeemer Primary school before moving on to Saint Catherine's Academy; she performed very well, both in school and setting a good example for her five siblings. Mrs. Dylcia enjoys being in charitable activities and other programs and committees that give back to the community, and help people in need. Mrs. Dylcia, today, some 47 yrs after

having embarked on this path, certainly finds joy and happiness as she spends time with her two sons and three grandchildren, well, with a fourth on the way; she is presently a proud member of the Board of Directors for the well known International Women's Club. She currently holds the post of being Newsletter Editor in the Club. Coupled with the time she spends in that organization, she is also a board member to the National Library Service, focusing on the literacy of the young Belizean public. Mrs. Dylcia still finds the time and energy to also be a prominent member of the Board of Directors for Haven House, a house for refuge to battered women and children. Haven House is a NGO and gets most of its finance from the community initiatives and fundraising events, Mrs. Dylcia makes sure that whatever fundraising activity that may be done she is actively involved. She supports the shelter with monthly groceries and uses her influence to get sponsors and donors to assist with a few of the operational expenses. Ms. Dylcia Feinstein; a woman of firm determination and character, but yet having a soft heart to those in need.

Submitted by: Haven House - Shelter for Battered Women



Louise Geraldine Willis was born in the Stann Creek District. She is a career Police Officer and holds the rank of Senior Superintendent in the Belize Police Department (BPD). She holds certificates in Accounting and Paralegal studies along with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from University Of Belize. She is awaiting

her Master's Degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the University Of The West Indies, Mona Campus in Jamaica.

She is a well rounded Police Officer and has worked extensively in Police Administrative, Operational, and Managerial sectors. She has a vast experience in areas of Community Policing, Financial Investigation, Training, Prosecution, Traffic and Tourism and has also being Commanding Officer of the Benque Viejo Del Carmen and Officer Commanding the Cayo Formation of the (BPD). Furthermore, she has attended numerous local seminars and high level international courses in Australia, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Salvador at International Law Enforcement Academy, Panama, Management of Serious and Organized Crimes, Money Laundering, Security of Major Events, Police Management, respectively and has applied her knowledge to all aspects of Policing.

Her ultimate dream is have the Police Training Academy accredited by The University of Belize so that an associate degree in police science is awarded to police officers when they graduate. She believes that with adequate training and education, satisfactory benefits, a police officer will be motivated enough to work diligently to reduce crime and the fear of crime in the community.

Submitted by: Police Department



Myrna Manzanares was born in 1946 in Gales Point Manatee and was the only girl child for her mother. She grew up in a very large extended family in a small community.

Her close stitched community practiced all the Kriol traditions including such as jumping the Sambi, brammed during Christmas Season, spent nights telling stories and many more typical traditions. This sense of cultural togetherness became a part of her psyche from early childhood.

Myrna left Belize in 1965 to join her family who had migrated to the states after Hurricane Hattie, but she missed the freedom of her country and yearned for her home, Belize. In 1986 haunted by this longing, she returned home. She immediately became consumed with community involvement with cultural activities, storytelling, plays, Queen of the Bay pageant, promoting Kriol Games, 10th day Parade and many more.

Myrna soon invited people with similar interest to join forces and in 1995 the National Kriol Council was incorporated as a not for profit organization.

Her dream is to leave a legacy for Kriol children not to feel less than other cultures but to walk tall beside them as proud Belizeans. Anybody who is acquainted with Myrna can attest that she is a multifaceted, high energy, articulate, fun loving and truly a remarkable woman who has a genuine love and appreciation for family, culture, and people. She is a Woman of Culture.

Submitted by: National Institute of Culture and History



Virginia Echols was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1947. She began her career as a Dental Assistant, Instructor and Collections Expert in 1966. She taught Dental Assisting at the University of Detroit Dental School and Wayne County Community College. In 1982, she founded the Dental Auxiliary Services, Inc., a consultant agency.

Ms. Echols served as a Peace Corps volunteer from 1983 to 1986 in Liberia, West Africa, following her tour of duty she worked as a collections agent for Liberia Telecommunications and later became the Director for Admissions and Student Records at the A. M. E. Zion Community College, Liberia, West Africa. Virginia fled Liberia during the Civil War in October 1990.

Ms. Echols migrated to Belize in 1993 and is now the Director of Credit Master Systems. She is the host of the Women at Work Talk Show on KREM Radio/TV. She also hosts a Radio Ministry, Moments of Inspiration, which started the first Sunday in June 2000. This Ministry based on the concepts of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. (shows motto: Get Lost in the Music, Get Found in the Music, Get Up With GOD.) She is currently a licensed Missionary of that church.

Ms. Echols is a member on the Board of the UBAD Educational Foundation (UEF) and is responsible for the programmes at the Library of African and Indian Studies including the Kwanzaa Youth Group and is the founder of the Mattie Roter Women's Outreach Group that visits women who are in the Belize Central prison. In 1996, Virginia became a member on the Board of Governors at the Dorothy Menzies Child Care Center.

Ms. Echols is the mother of one daughter, two sons and seven grandchildren

Submitted by: Mattie Roter Outreach Women's Group



Dr. Marjorie Elizabeth Parks, Deputy Director of Health Services and Chief Nursing Officer in the Ministry of Health, has been working in the health field for the past 37 years. She is a Registered Nurse/Midwife by profession, receiving all her basic nursing education and training in midwifery in Belize, at the now defunct Bliss School of Nursing. Dr. Parks received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing Education from the University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston, Jamaica in 1989, and her Master of Science in Nursing Degree from Syracuse University, in Syracuse, New York in 1995. Dr. Parks, a Fulbright Scholar, received the Award for Academic Excellence and was inducted into Sigma Theta Tau, the International Honors Society for Nurses in 1994. Dr. Parks completed the Doctor of Education Degree at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida in 2011. She analyzed the Organizational Commitment of Belizean Nurses Employed in the Ministry of Health in Belize in her applied dissertation.

Dr. Parks has held various positions in the nursing profession, including Staff Nurse, working mainly on the pediatric and medical surgical wards and "casualty" (accident and emergency) department; Sister Tutor and Principal Tutor at the Bliss School of Nursing; and Principal Nursing Officer. Dr. Parks participates in, and holds office in many professional, social, and service organizations including The Belize Red Cross Society, The Nurses' Association of Belize, The Belize National Cricket Association, and the Belize and Belmopan Choral Societies. Dr. Parks is an avid reader and enjoy watching Cricket, singing, dancing, and socializing with family and friends. She has three children and two grand children.

Submitted by: Nurses Association of Belize

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

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

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

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. Its main objectives are to provide a neutral, objective and multi-partisan space and forum for women to discuss political, social and economic issues through their lens; to build coalitions with a broad base of woman and women's organizations locally and abroad; to educate the public on gender equality, men and women's equal participation in decision-making processes; 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 levels; to monitor government policies and programs that have implications to women's participation in the political and decision-making processes; and to promote research, collect data, plan and implement programs to increase women participation.

CONTACT: 637-6191

belize_womencaucus@yahoo.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

WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT, MINISTRY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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: Belize City, 227-3888/ 227-7397

Email: sec.wd@humandev.gov.bz

TEL: Corozal: 402-2120, Orange Walk: 302-2058,

Cayo: 804-2098, Dangriga: 502-0038, Toledo: 702-2021

The Women's Department 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.

Have a Wonderful
Women's Month 2013!



Special thanks to Print Belize for their assistance in the printing of this booklet and to Greg Godfrey the cover design.