

# GHARP HIGHLIGHTS!

**SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST: AS OF MAY 2007**

- 22,210 persons reached through A&B Programs
- 45 Service outlets providing the minimum package of PMTCT services
- 7090 Pregnant women received HIV counseling and testing for PMTCT and received their test result
- 851 Individuals provided with HIV-related palliative care (including TB/HIV)

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**Guyana represented in NY at Global Business Coalition Annual Awards Event**



L-r—GHARP's Chief of Party, Mr. Kwame Asiedu, CEO of John Fernandes Limited, Mr. Chris Fernandes, GHARP's Private Sector Partnership Manager, Mr. Derrick Cummings, GHARP's Private Sector Advisor, Ms. Sylvia Delafield and Deputy General manager of the Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Company (GT&T), Mr. Terry Holder.

Guyana was represented at the Global Business Coalition (GBC) Annual Awards Event in New York City on June 13th 2007.

The invited delegation included representatives of the Guyana HIV/AIDS Reduction and Prevention (GHARP) Project Private Sector Advisory Board and the GHARP Project. They are Mr. Chris Fernandes, CEO of John Fernandes Limited; Mr. Terry Holder, Deputy General Manager, Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Company; Mr. Kwame Asiedu, Chief of Party, GHARP Project; Mr. Derrick Cummings, Private Sector Partnership Manager, GHARP Project; and Ms. Sylvia Delafield of Howard Delafield International, Private Sector Advisor on the GHARP's Project.

The invitation was the result of Guyana's role in engaging the private sector in the response to HIV/AIDS. The GHARP project has 43 private sector partners.

The GHARP team had been working closely with the GBC Executive /Management Team to help link the GHARP Private Sector Advisory Board with the GBC.

It is envisioned that the GBC/Guyana link could provide a number of benefits including technical assistance to National Business Coalitions on HIV/AIDS.

The GBC Awards was held at the Museum of Natural History in New York and hosted some 700 Guests. It honored eight companies demonstrating action on and commitment to fighting HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, as well as former US President Bill Clinton. Other high profile guests included Sir Richard Branson, CEO Virgin Atlantic, Mr. Jaime Foxx, Actor/Musician, USA and Mr. Vusi Mahlasela, a musician from South Africa.

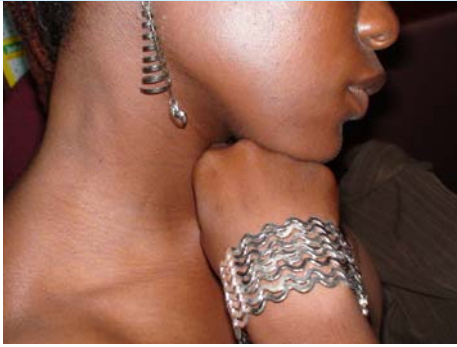
Besides attending the Award Event, the Guyana team had a business meetings with some of the Global Business Coalition senior management staff. Those who attended the meeting from GBC were Mr. John Tedstrom, Executive Director; Dr. Neeraj Mistry Technical Director; Ms. Patricia Mugambi Ndegwa, Director of Business Networks Development and Director, Africa Region based in Nairobi, Kenya; and Ms. Sancia Dalley, Technical Coordinator, the Caribbean Region.

At the request of the Guyana Delegation, the GBC offered to share various Business Plans from other Coalitions around the Globe. The GBC also featured the USAID/GHARP Private Sector Program and Advisory Board on their website.

The GBC stated that it considers Guyana to be a best practice model for the Caribbean as it seems to be the most accomplished and well organized in the Region and as such it might call on the Guyana team for advice in the future.

In addition to the Award Event and the meetings, meetings, Mr. Cummings, Mr. Fernandes and Mr. Holder attended a full day technical session on private sector responses to HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in the business supply chain.

## Positive living—Petronella’s Story



Silver earrings and bracelet set by Petronella

Petronella\* is the mother of 5 children and is HIV+. Her story is fascinating as she has overcome adversity and still maintained her humanity and caring approach to life. It was while Petronella was pregnant with her fifth child that she discovered her status. She went for a regular clinic visit at the Dorothy Bailey Clinic and was offered an HIV test as part of the PMTCT services being provided at that site. Petronella had no problem taking the test as she felt that she was definitely negative and had no fears about her health.

A month later during another regularly scheduled clinic visit she was notified that her test result was in and she was HIV+. Petronella told the nurse who gave her the news that the test was wrong. The nurse assured her that the test had been performed twice and she was indeed HIV+.

Petronella immediately called her partner Jason\* and told him the results. She asked him to come to the centre to be tested and he agreed.

A week later they both returned to Dorothy Bailey and he was told that his test was also positive. He began to cry while claiming that the test could not be right.

Petronella said that initially they both blamed each other but she decided to investigate the situation and determine where did they get HIV. After checking around she discovered that a former partner of Jason’s had died from an AIDS related illness. She also discovered that Jason had been having intimate relations with 6 other women two of who lived in her community.



Brown Faux Pearl Necklace and bracelet set by Petronella

Petronella had also had her children tested and her former partner and they were all negative. She was desperate to know where did this disease come from. She also had no knowledge of HIV and thought that only animals had the disease and as such she wasn’t a t risk. Petronella then set about learning as much as she could about the disease so she could also educate others about this virus.

## Private Sector at 2nd Pan Caribbean Business Forum



Front Row L-R Janet Abbenstets (Guyana Revenue Authority), Gwen King (USAID/GHARP), Jackie Mendes (Farfan & Mendes), Sharon Tong (Guyana Lottery Co. Ltd.), Amanda Jairam (Scotiabank), Islamun Mohamed (Caricom Rice Mills), Back Row L-R Derrick Cummings (USAID/GHARP), Niaiol

tion of Industry and Commerce.

USAID/GHARP Staff along with members of the USAID/GHARP Project Private Sector Advisory Board attended the 2nd Pan Caribbean Business Coalition Forum. The dele-

gation was jointly led by Ms. Amanda Jairam, Advisory Board Chair and Country Manager, Scotiabank and Mr. Kwame Asiedu, Chief of Party, USAID/GHARP Project. The forum was to facilitate a structured Caribbean Business response to mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS in the workplace by adopting prevention and treatment strategies that promote private and public partnership.

USAID/GHARP Project lead partner, FHI, has worked with its lead private sector partner, Howard Delafield International (HDI), to develop and organize what is now the largest and most robust public/private sector business coalition on HIV/AIDS in the Pan Caribbean region. The GHARP team has engaged 43 entities in a variety of private sector initiatives, including workplace programs and education, workplace policy development and implementation campaigns that are aimed to reduce stigma and discrimination, peer education and linking workers with VCT, PMTCT, and treatment.

Paul (Institute of Private Enterprise Development), Kwame Asiedu (USAID/GHARP), Sir George Alleyne (UN Special Envoy of the Secretary General for HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean, Chancellor of UWI, Director Emeritus of PAHO), Denise Thompson (Citizen’s Bank Guyana Inc.), Terry Holder (Guyana Telephone & Telegraph Co.) and Carol Ayoung (CEO, Caribbean Association

\*Picture taken by David Gasser of Merck, Sharp and Dohme.

## Positive Living continued.

She continued attending clinic and when it was time to deliver her baby she received an HIV drug as did the baby after birth. Today her baby is a thriving 2 year old who is HIV negative. After the birth of her child Petronella wanted



Red Beaded Necklace and earring set made by Petronella.

to track down the other women and encourage them to be tested. Two who lived in her community took the test and they too proved to be positive. Another who lived outside of the Capital city took the test and she too was positive. The woman was on the verge of get-

ting married and was quite distraught. Petronella convinced her to come to Georgetown and meet with Nurses Peters and Langevine as she knew that with counseling and the support group the woman would begin to feel better. She came to Georgetown met with Petronella and then left saying she would be back after lunch. It was later that Petronella discovered that she had returned home and committed suicide.

Petronella felt really bad about it but came to realize that it was not her fault and she could not save her.

One day while Petronella was at Stabroek Market where she sold shopping bags she met a young woman who was crying and very upset. She asked her to tell her what was wrong and after some persuasion the young woman Lucy\* admitted that she had just discovered that she was HIV+. Petronella immediately made plans to take her to Dorothy Bailey to meet Nurse Peters. The nurses at Dorothy Bailey administered another HIV test which confirmed her diagnosis and she too soon joined the support group at the clinic that Petronella was now a part of.

A few weeks after joining the support group Lucy brought an application form for the A New Attitude Project and shared the information with Petronella. This project had been designed to help Persons Living with HIV to acquire skills which could be

used to start their own businesses. Petronella had always wanted to design and make her own jewelry so she jumped at the chance. She enrolled and took classes with local designer and artist Liz Deane-Hughes who was one of the consultants hired to work with the women.

She soon discovered that she had a natural talent for bead designs and began developing a clientele.

Petronella's business has taken off and she now is able to afford two healthy meals a day. She has also been able to begin the process for home ownership and she and Jason just celebrated one year of marriage.

Petronella has also befriended the two women from her hometown who she convinced to get tested and they continue this unique relationship. She is not on medication at present as her CD4 count remains high. Her husband is medicated, healthy and is employed in the city. Her hopes for the future are the ownership of a house, a boutique to sell her beautiful pieces and to live to see her children married and happy in their lives.

\*Names have been changed to protect their identity.

## GHARP SPOTLIGHT—Sunil “Robert” Dhaniram

Sunil or Robert, as he is called, joined the GHARP team April 1st 2005 as a Driver/Messenger. GHARP staff was expanding as a Mobile Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) Team had been employed and there was need for a driver to ferry them to their various locations.

Project work was not unfamiliar to Robert as he had worked for the previous six years on the Canadian International Development Agency/GBET Project as a driver. That project had been scheduled to end in October of 2005 and Robert decided to begin looking for a job somewhere else. He applied to GHARP and in April joined the Driver/Messenger Team.

He found the transition to be a smooth one and so did the other members of

staff. He and the mobile team set out on a daily basis to offer VCT services around Georgetown and its environs.

During his tenure as Driver/Messenger Robert also enrolled at the Institute of Distance and Continuing Education in their General Guidance and Counseling course. He also took the time to enroll in the Psychology Diploma course offered by Cambridge University of London, England through the School of the Nations in Georgetown. Both of these courses are ongoing. His hope is to continue working in the HIV/AIDS arena and to expand his area of expertise into Counseling/Care and Support.

Recently the position of Receptionist was vacated and was advertised within GHARP. Robert had on several occasions filled in for the receptionist and



**Sunil  
“Robert”  
Dhaniram,  
GHARP’s  
Receptionist**

as he was once again ready for a change he applied and was successful. Initially, he had to put up with some staff members teasing but as usual he took it in good faith. He finds the job challenging and interesting and continues learning this new position. Although male receptionists are rare Robert feels that “once you get the job done, the tone of the voice is unimportant”.

Robert is married and the proud father of two sons; Dominic and Jase.

## FOCUS ON—Linden Care Foundation

The Linden Care Foundation emerged from the Regional AIDS Committee, which was managed by the Regional Administration, to a non-governmental organization to work in a more dynamic way to deal with the various activities /issues aimed at preventing and reducing the incidences of infection of persons with HIV/AIDS and to reduce the rate of transmission of STI's from person to person.

Since its inception it was able to manage several projects aimed at sensitizing young persons about the dangers of being infected with HIV. It has since expanded its operations to include the Care and Support services for people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. Most recently, they have been successful in forming a network of persons living with HIV/AIDS. Activities at the Foundation include **Prevention Education**

- \* Peer Counseling

- \* Peer Education
- \* Group Counseling with special emphasis on youths and children
- \* Workplace sensitization
- \* Sensitization among religious groups, men of organized and unorganized groups, Youth Groups, Schools and Health Workers

**OVC and HBC Services are also provided.** Services for children include life skills programmes, nutritional diets, Summer Camps, home work assistance, mini library facilities, referrals for free medical services, Counselling and Group Sessions.

Services for families include family and friend counseling, voluntary counseling and testing; referrals to social welfare services; Home Visits and Home Care for HIV+ persons. Home visits are also done for children.

**Linden Care foundation is dedicated towards achieving a number of goals including** reducing stigma, eliminating discrimination, empowering youths, and enhancing the nutritional status of children.



**Hazel Maxwell-Benn, Project Coordinator at Linden Care Foundation**

The most recent development at Linden Care Foundation has been the establishment of the Adherence to Treatment Centre which was opened in 2006. This project was made possible through collaborative efforts of the Rotary Club of Georgetown, United Women for Special Children and the then Umobile telephone company.

Linden Care Foundation continues to be a safe haven for children and persons living with and affected by HIV and AIDS.

## GHARP Private Sector Partner—John Fernandes Limited

John Fernandes Limited (JFL) is one of Guyana's oldest companies with approximately one thousand (1000) employees. Recently, Chris Fernandes, CEO John Fernandes Limited, spoke about his company's affiliation with GHARP.

John Fernandes Limited was invited to be a part of GHARP's Private/Public Sector Program and Mr. Fernandes said that he was happy to sign on. He felt that Guyanese companies are different to other companies around the world and that made for a unique response to the HIV crisis. John Fernandes Limited is made up of a wide cross-section of workers and over the years a number of persons have died as a result of AIDS related illnesses. The company has always looked to the full benefits of not just their employees but their spouses and children. JFL prides itself as being a caring company and once HIV was identified as a significant problem in Guyana the company

wanted to respond in the appropriate manner.

After signing on with GHARP they developed their HIV/AIDS policy and training began.

Recently Mr. Fernandes was invited to be part of a delegation from Guyana which attended the Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria's Annual Awards Event in New York. He was curious to see what this meeting would be all about and decided to accept the invitation. While in New York he attended three functions:- the Award Event, a business meeting with the Global Business Coalition and a Technical Workshop on HIV/AIDS.

He found these activities to be informative and fascinating to hear how the various business communities in Africa and other parts of the world are dealing with HIV/AIDS in the workplace. He noted that Guyana was the only country invited from the Caribbean region and felt proud

the GHARP Project and Guyana were singled out to attend this Global meeting.

In preparation for this meeting he read as much as he could on the subject as HIV/AIDS was still something that he was learning about and he wanted to be able to actively participate in the events in New York.

Mr. Fernandes attended a full day technical session on private sector responses to HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in the



**Chris Fernandes receiving Plaque from H.E. David Robinson, U.S. Ambassador to Guyana at Signing Ceremony held March 9, 2007**

*"People say that companies should care because it affects business. I like to say it affects your fellow human beings." Chris Fernandes*

business supply chain. At this meeting, he recognized that there was no blue print to guarantee success just like any business today. He felt that just like in business there are measuring sticks, if a

company achieves a certain level of HIV/AIDS awareness or competency within the organization, there should be some sort of certification issues. From a humanitarian level companies should be able to get certified but there are some people who might need this sort of reward to get involved and perhaps it should be considered.