



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**2015 Hummingbird Gala Honors the Honorable Dennis Lalor, Founder and CEO of ICWI Group Limited and Mr. Lowell Hawthorne, President and Chief Executive Officer of Golden Krust Caribbean Bakery & Grill
Special Performance by 'The Voice' Season #5 Winner Tessanne Chin**

New York, NY (June 1, 2015) - The American Friends of Jamaica, Inc. (AFJ), celebrates over 34 years of giving help to those in need in Jamaica. The 2015 Hummingbird Gala and Benefit will be held on Friday, October 23, 2015 at the Plaza Hotel at 768 Fifth Avenue, New York City. This year's fundraising event pays tribute to the Honorable Dennis Lalor, Founder and CEO of ICWI Group Limited and Mr. Lowell Hawthorne, President and Chief Executive Officer of Golden Krust Caribbean Bakery and Grill. Mr. Lalor will be the recipient of the AFJ International Philanthropy Award and Mr. Hawthorne will be awarded the AFJ International Achievement Award.

Mr. Dennis Lalor is the Founder and CEO of ICWI Group Limited, a staple in the Caribbean insurance industry since 1990. His career has led him to be presented the Pan Caribbean Lifetime Achievement Award and the Prime Minister's Medal for his contribution to business and sports. In addition to these contributions, Mr. Lalor was Deputy Chairman of the former Air Jamaica, Ltd. His determination has propelled him to excel in polo as well, where he is the President of the Federation of International Polo for Jamaica.

Mr. Lowell Hawthorne's tremendous growth in entrepreneurship can be seen in his success in franchising the Golden Krust Caribbean Bakery into what the *Wall Street Journal* refers to as, "one of NYC's biggest locally owned restaurant chains". Mr. Hawthorne's remarkable achievements include the prestigious Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award, The *Jamaica Observer's* Business Leader Award, an Honorary Doctor of Letters from Medgar Evers College, and the Order of Distinction in Jamaica. He also holds various positions, including Director of the Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Chairman of the Partnership Board of the American foundation for the University of the West Indies.

This year's gala presents an exciting auction collection through our online partnership with Charitybuzz. The collection will be available on Wednesday, October 14, 2015 at claritybuzz.com. The catalog will include luxury vacations, experiential packages, premier events and unique memorabilia. Patrons of the Gala will be delighted with a spectacular performance by 'The Voice' Season #5 Winner, Tessanne Chin and the return of favored Master of Ceremonies, Brian Roper. The Hummingbird Gala is a black-tie event. Seats are \$550 per person. Contributions are tax deductible as provided by law.

About the Plaza Hotel

The Plaza Hotel is a historic landmark hotel in New York City located across from Central Park in Manhattan. The Plaza is the ultimate New York City luxury lifestyle destination - a timeless urban resort with a new and contemporary spirit. The 2015 Hummingbird Gala will be staged in the opulent Grand Ballroom, which is the heart of The Plaza Hotel's legacy.

About the AFJ

Founded in 1982, the American Friends of Jamaica is a charitable 501(c)(3) organization built on the principles of service and philanthropy; and is established to render assistance in the areas of Education, Healthcare, and Economic Development. The AFJ works in a collaborative effort with Jamaican organizations and stakeholders to bring about change in the lives of Jamaicans in need. Amongst other initiatives, our partners assist us in providing shelter to the homeless, education to inner-city youth and healthcare to those in need. AFJ annual grant cycle begins at the end of each year and grants are disbursed at the end of the first quarter the following year. For more information and to attend the event: www.theafj.org.

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