AFJ
AMERICAN FRIENDS OF JAMAICA

PRESS RELEASE

Jason Henzell, O.D. and Joseph “Joe” Bogdanovich to be honored at AFJ Hummingbird Gala in NY

New York, NY, July 16th, 2025 – The American Friends of Jamaica (AFJ) is proud to announce the 2025 Hummingbird Gala, which will be held on Friday, October 10th at the Plaza Hotel in New York City. This year's Gala will celebrate awardees: Jason Henzell with the International Humanitarian Award and Joseph “Joe” Bogdanovich with the International Achievement Award.

Jason Henzell, O.D.
As the Chairman of Jakes Hotel, Villas and Spa and the co-founder of BREDS, the Treasure Beach Foundation Jason Henzell, O.D., has championed sustainable tourism, education and community empowerment in Treasure Beach, St. Elizabeth. Through BREDS, Henzell has supported infrastructure development, youth programs, and health initiatives that have become a model for grassroots/led impact in rural Jamaica. Most recently, his commitment to community upliftment saw him at the forefront of Hurricane Beryl Recovery Initiatives. He is being recognized for his long standing commitment to community development and education in Jamaica’s South Coast. Henzell also serves as Chairman of Newell High School and the JHTA South Coast chapter.

Joe Bogdanovich
A music industry veteran and cultural pioneer, Joe Bogdanovich has played a pivotal role in elevating Jamaica’s global entertainment presence. As the force behind Reggae Sumfest he has promoted Jamaican music and culture worldwide while investing in local talents and creative industries. Through the DownSound Records Foundation, he has supported educational and youth focused initiatives across the island.

Both honorees exemplify AFJ’s mission of supporting community development, education, and health care in Jamaica. Their efforts align with AFJ’s focus on public-private partnerships and grassroots empowerment.

The 2025 AFJ Hummingbird Gala is an annual fundraising event that brings together philanthropic leaders, members of the diaspora, corporate sponsors and friends of Jamaica to support impactful programs in education, healthcare, and economic development. This year's event will feature a cocktail reception, curated silent auction, three course dinner, the award

ceremony and a special performance by Agent Sasco. The night culminates with a celebratory Afterparty.

Caron Chung, Executive Director of the AFJ states, “We are thrilled to honor Jason Henzell and Joe Bogdanovich, two individuals whose work has transformed lives and strengthened communities across Jamaica. Their vision and unwavering commitment to uplifting others align perfectly with AFJ’s goal of creating lasting, positive change on the island we love.”

For over 43 years, the AFJ has provided well-needed support in education, healthcare, and economic development. Proceeds from the Gala will support AFJ’s grant making efforts across Jamaica.

Sponsorship and ticket information are available here.

About the AFJ
The AFJ is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit built on the principles of service and philanthropy. For over 43 years, the organization has been rendering assistance in the areas of Education, Healthcare, and Economic Development. The AFJ Grant Cycle begins at the end of each year and grants are disbursed in April of the following year.

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