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DR CLAUDINE BECKFORD'S PHILANTHROPY

An annual Jamaica holiday giveaway for children and families

For the past four years, Dr. Claudine Beckford, Founder and CEO of BeckThom Associates, LLC, a firm based in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, has collected and shipped hundreds of pounds of clothing, food, and household items to children and families in need across Jamaica. She says she would have it no other way.

The giveaway is organized almost single-handedly by Beckford, who has lived in Washington, DC, for more than 40 years. She is quick, however, to share the credit.

"About 50 percent of the donated items came from some of the most caring and kind-hearted people, individuals who not only gave, but volunteered their time to come to my home and pack eight commercial-size boxes weighing 350 to 400 pounds each," she said.

Pre-loved and new items arrive from co-workers, church brethren, and colleagues, transforming what has become an ongoing Christmas giveaway into a gratifying experience for the children and families who receive them.

Asked what drives the effort, Beckford points to faith, community, and gratitude.

"First, I am a child of God who wants me to be the best version of myself. Secondly, I genuinely believe that no one can live alone. It makes me happy to help someone going through difficult times, whether mental, physical, or financial," she explained. "Finally, I try my best not to forget the family, friends, co-workers, and others who have encouraged and empowered me through the ups and downs. I thank them for lending me their shoulders to stand on."

She says she also hopes to set an example for her children, the next generation, and others around the world by simply helping someone else in need.

"Don't forget where you are from and always give something back."

HER LATE MOTHER

In October 2023, Beckford will graduate from Columbia Southern University with a doctorate in business — the first such degree in her family. [The degree was conferred as scheduled in October 2023.] It is the latest chapter in a journey that began in Denham Town and continued in Tivoli Gardens, where she grew up with her mother, father, and six siblings.

"I enjoy learning, researching, and writing," she said about her decision to pursue doctoral study. "I wanted to bring these three essentials of academic work together to expand my company and become one of the most sought-after firms in business and human resources management in a highly competitive marketplace."

Beckford operates under her company's name, BeckThom Associates, LLC, which provides subcontracting services to the United States federal government. "For over 20 years, I have been building my career as a strong, strategic business and human resources consultant," she said.

But it is not all work. Beckford declares that she is "rooted and grounded in living life to the fullest."

"This project took me four years to complete, but I believe the timing is just right," she said, adding that she finds great satisfaction in the appreciative smiles on the faces of children and adults alike.

She recalls that her late mother used to say, "Don't forget where you are from and always give something back."

It is counsel Beckford has taken to heart, and one she now extends outward, encouraging others to give to children and families in need throughout Jamaica, if they can.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Titles and firm identity reflect February 2023. BeckThom Associates, LLC is the registered legal name of the company, which operates today under the trade name BeckThom HR Consulting, LLC. Dr. Beckford served as Founder and CEO at the time of publication and has held the title of Founder and Principal Consultant since 2025.