

Charlemont to be renamed Asafa Powell High

Just a year after its launch, the Asafa Powell Foundation has begun to honour its pledge to assist athletes and schools as they uphold proper values and attitudes laden with a focus on academics, especially at the primary and secondary level.

The biggest single beneficiary of the foundation, which gives out cash awards, was St Jago High's 14-year-old Kevaughn Rattray, who broke the Boys Class Three 100m record at the Boys and Girls Championships. He received \$30,000. Odean Skeen of Wolmer's Boys' accepts a cash award from Asafa Powell for winning the Class Two sprint doubles at last season's Boys and Girls Champs. (Photo: Garfield Robinson) For outstanding athletes in each class at Boys and Girls Champs, the Foundation gave \$20,000 each, for accumulating the most points. Vere Technical's Diana Johnson and Jamaica College's Rohan Walker won the sprint doubles in Class Three, as too did Vere Technical's Shericka Jackson and Wolmer's Boys' Odean Skeen in Class Two. Sixteen-year-old Skeen, the Youth Olympic Games 1000m champion, was happy with his contribution. "It shows that if you work hard, you'll get success and it makes you think about giving back too," added Skeen, who will enter his first season of Class One next year. Meanwhile in Class One, dominant Manchester High middle-distance runner Natoya Goule and Calabar's Chad Wright, who won the shot put and discus, also received \$20,000 each, but were not on hand to accept the awards. The Gibson Relays Class Four winners of Wolmer's Boys' and St Jago's girls received cash awards of \$60,000. Meanwhile Powell, who turned 28 last Tuesday and has run a record 65 races under 10 seconds, said he just "wanted to give back". "I grew up with my parents giving back to the church. I was brought up that when you're in a position to give, you should," he added, encouraging other athletes to also give back. Meanwhile, Foundation chairman Delano Franklin said they were targeting the welfare of athletes aged 12 to 25, with emphasis on "hard work, discipline, good behaviour and respect of self and others, especially among other young people 6 to 30". Each year, he said, the Foundation would adopt a school at the start of the academic year. Powell's alma mater, Charlemont High, would be the beneficiary this year. Franklin said while details of the adoption have not been finalised, Charlemont, which has been recommended to the government for a name change to the Asafa Powell High School, would receive assistance initially in the promotion of values and attitude at the institution. In terms of the Charlemont name change, Franklin said the recommendation was sent to the Prime Minister and Sports Minister Olivia Grange has responded. The Asafa Powell Foundation was launched on November 17, 2009.