

Shaggy & Friends aims at state-of-the-art lab

When the sights and sounds of the Shaggy and Friends concert come alive on January 4, 2014, it will be with the goal of furnishing the first catheterisation laboratory for children in the English-speaking Caribbean.

The Shaggy Make A Difference Foundation, organisers of the event, says that the lab will be used to enhance the diagnostic capabilities of the hardworking doctors at the Bustamante Hospital for Children, which is also the only children's hospital in the English-speaking Caribbean. Chairman of the foundation and reggae artiste Shaggy is the first to say that the goal is "a very big one". "When the idea of the concert and the foundation came about, I knew that our ideas were big ones, but our motivation is even bigger. The model we set up for the Shaggy and Friend's concert, makes sure that every single patron contributes to saving the life of a child at Bustamante. That's the simple truth, our patrons save lives," he said. Shaggy explained that proceeds from the upcoming concert will be added to those of the 2012 staging to purchase the equipment needed. He added that international charities Chain of Hope and Gift of Life have both partnered with the Shaggy Make A Difference Foundation to make the lab a reality. "Our patrons have so far donated more than 400 pieces of equipment by buying tickets. That's the brass tax of the situation. Yes, it is a concert, and people do come out and enjoy themselves but, at the same time, they are giving back ... they really are," Shaggy said. Rebecca Packer, executive director of The Shaggy Make A Difference Foundation, agrees. "Honestly, we are just facilitators. We put together the concert so that Jamaica can give back. It's not about me, or the foundation. It is about the tens of thousands of Jamaicans who take their time and effort to purchase tickets. Each and every patron at our show is a bonafide hero," Packer said. Overall audit To date, The Shaggy Make a Difference Foundation, with the help of many Jamaicans, has raised a total of just under US\$1,000,000 for the hospital, and has covered the costs for an overall audit to be done on all the medical equipment (working or otherwise) at the Bustamante Hospital for Children. Shaggy & Friends 2014 will have three access tiers - silver, gold and platinum. The different tiers will cost \$5,000, \$10,000 and \$20,000, respectively. The concert will take place on the lawns of Jamaica House. Tickets are being sold at all Cannonball Café locations, LG Service Station, Petcom Dunrobin, Petcom Ocho Rios, The Jamaica Pegasus hotel, Music Mart and the Liguanea Drug & Garden Centre. Persons can also visit [Facebook.com/shaggyandfriends](https://www.facebook.com/shaggyandfriends), or call the concert's ticket info line at 366-9691 for more information.