



For Immediate Release:

## Press Release

### **SMALL SPACE, LITTLE EFFORT, BIG IMPACT**

#### ***How 'Pack for a Purpose' and the Sandals Foundation are Helping Caribbean Travellers Spread Gratitude***

**WESTMORELAND, Jamaica, July 19, 2021** – The Sandals South Coast Resort recently had the sublime pleasure of hosting the founder and chairperson of 'Pack for a Purpose', an incredible non-profit which has been changing the face of travel across the world.

In 2010, Rebecca Rothney started the United States based, 'Pack for a Purpose' programme inviting travellers to extend gratitude to the countries they visit by donating five pounds of school, medical, hygiene and other much needed supplies to their country destinations.

What started with 29 partners across 15 countries, today comprise 450 partners in 60 countries facilitating travellers donating over 430,000 lbs. of supplies to underserved communities around the world. With its website providing an in-depth needs list for each destination around the world, travellers have been able to make informed decisions on what to buy and donate.

#### **MAKING THE CARIBBEAN CONNECTION**

In 2011 the Pack for a Purpose made their debut in the Caribbean by connecting with their first partner - the Sandals Foundation.

*"It was Nina Patel, a travel advisor and the owner of 'Vacations That Matter' who introduced the Sandals Foundation to our team at Pack of a Purpose, said Rebecca; she knew of the work of both organizations and thought we could bring great value to each other and more importantly to the Caribbean region."*

*"The impact that that partnership has left on both entities, the multiple communities across seven islands in which Sandals and Beaches Resorts operate, and the guests, has grown tremendously and this has not been by chance,"* says Heidi Clarke, executive director of The Sandals Foundation.

By leveraging the power of the Sandals and Beaches brands and its robust marketing machinery, the Sandals Foundation has an amazing ability to expose people to the Pack for a Purpose program and increase its awareness.

*"Travellers staying at Sandals or Beaches Resorts will hear our team members talk about our work within the communities and encourage them to get involved. Those who want to find out more about what we're doing are also guided to the Pack for a Purpose website to learn how with a small space and a little effort, they can also make a big difference,"* says Clarke. She further noted that many travellers even garner help from their friends and family to source and bring supplies during their trips.

In order to gain additional support for the cause, The Sandals Foundation dispatches pre arrival emails and information packages to guests, informing them of the opportunity to give back by visiting the Pack for a Purpose website to get involved.



Travel Agents are also part of the awareness machinery as they are introduced to the programme at various travel shows and marketing events.

*"Currently, about 50% of our guests are participating in the program, and this number has been growing steadily since the beginning of the partnership, in 2011," says Clarke.*

Benefiting institutions include infant, primary and junior high schools, women's centres, medical facilities, post-secondary institutions, infirmaries, and various communities.

### **PLEASURE AND PURPOSE**

In July, while visiting Jamaica for the first time to celebrate her husband's Scott's birthday and bask in the sunshine and breathtaking beauty of the island's south coast, the Rothneys did not miss the opportunity to live up to their organization's mantra to pack for a purpose.

*"Pre-COVID guests visiting Sandals and Beaches resorts would have had an opportunity to visit schools for the Reading Road Trip, a Sandals Foundation initiative, but with schools being closed now, myself and Scott had the unique privilege of travelling instead to the town of Savanna-La-Mar with Sandals Foundation volunteers from Sandals South Coast to deliver donated supplies to young people from underserved communities within the parish," said Rebecca.*

*"The temperatures were high, but the joy I had by being given that opportunity is the real warmth, it fills my heart even now."*

Other highlights of Rebecca's trip were meeting a family of six at the airport in Raleigh, North Carolina. They were also en route to Jamaica but staying at Beaches Resorts in Oracabessa St. Mary. *"We struck up a conversation and I asked them if they knew about Pack for a Purpose and they said 'know about it? We're doing it! We packed for a purpose,'" Rebecca recounts with a beaming smile.*

*"Then, when I got to Sandals South Coast, I met at least five different couples who had packed for a purpose, amongst them was this lovely couple we met on one of our snorkeling trips, who told us they had actually packed an entire suitcase of supplies for donation. Ironically, the day after meeting this couple I was in Savanna-La-Mar donating loads of supplies including their items."*

Rebecca noted that experiences like these are truly priceless and have provided her with the greatest sense of joy and accomplishment.

### **SMALL SPACE, BIG IMPACT**

*"I believe people are kind are generous but they need the information to do that effectively. You don't want to take things that aren't needed because that's a waste," says Rebecca. "Our website gives travellers the information that they can be 100% sure that the gift of gratitude that they're taking to the community is exactly what that community needs."*

The partnership with Pack for a Purpose has been a welcome support to the Sandals Foundation's mandate to empower Caribbean people and make the region a better place to live. Through continued growth, Pack for a Purpose can attract more participation and together, help meet practical needs within communities.



For loyal Sandals Resorts guest, Shannon Hopper, giving back has become an integral part of her vacation itinerary.

*“After many trips to Jamaica, my husband and I feel that it is our home away from home! We are so fortunate to be able to travel here and enjoy the beauty and hospitality of the island. But it’s also important to realize that while we enjoy a beautiful paradise, this is not the reality for many of the residents. Donating supplies or some of our vacation time is the least we can do to help the country we have grown to love so much”.*

Persons travelling around the world can visit the Pack for a Purpose website <https://www.packforapurpose.org> and simply select their country destination. A list of supported partners and projects with supply needs will be available for viewing.

Persons who might not be staying at a partner location can still get involved by simply reaching out to Pack for a Purpose which will then connect travellers with the closest partners in their vacation locals where they can then drop off their donations.

*“Ultimately we want travellers to remember that when they choose to pack for a purpose, the trip they take goes much farther than the miles they travel,”* says Rebecca.

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## Captioned Photos



### **PackforaPurpose1**

Rebecca and Scott Rothney (center) and Sandals Foundation volunteers showcase some Pack for a Purpose items donated by the Rothneys and other guests.



### **PackforaPurpose2**

Rebecca Rothney, Founder and Chairperson of Pack for a Purpose assists Sandals Foundation volunteers in issuing school supplies, toys and feminine products to youth from underserved communities in Westmoreland.



### **PackforaPurpose3**

The Endless Family Travels Travel Agency encouraged all 37 ladies from their Endless South Coast 2121 group to Pack for a Purpose for their recent trip to Sandals South Coast.



#### **PackforaPurpose4**

Sandals guests, Shannon and Mitchell Hopper are among hundreds of travellers who continue to spread gratitude by packing for a purpose whenever they travel.



#### **PackforaPurpose5**

Seen here kids at a basic school in rural Westmoreland are on the receiving end of brand new school supplies and learning manipulatives donated by travellers through the Sandals Foundation and Pack for a Purpose.



#### **PackforaPurpose6**

[L-r]Regional Public Relations Manager for Sandals in Ocho Rios, Lyndsay Isaacs is captured presenting female hygiene products to Vilma Moncrieffe, Manager for the St Ann's Women's Centre. The donation forms part of an initiative by Sandals Foundation and Pack for a Purpose to assist in the reduction of period poverty across the Caribbean.

#### **About the Sandals Foundation**

The Sandals Foundation is the philanthropic arm of Sandals Resorts International (SRI), the Caribbean's leading family-owned resort company. The 501(c)(3) non-profit organization was created to continue and expand upon the charitable work that Sandals Resorts International has undertaken since its founding in 1981 to play a meaningful role in the lives of the communities where SRI operates throughout the Caribbean. The Sandals Foundation funds projects in three core areas: education, community and the environment. One hundred percent of the monies contributed by the general public to the Sandals Foundation go directly to programs benefiting the Caribbean community. To learn more about the Sandals Foundation, visit online at [www.sandalsfoundation.org](http://www.sandalsfoundation.org) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

