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JUTC's plane crash heroine US-bound

Annette Howard, the Jamaica Urban Transit Company (JUTC) bus operator whose heroics on the night of December 22, 2009, after an American Airlines jet overran a runway at the Norman Manley International Airport, is set to reap some material reward for her self-less action that won her wide-scale public acclaim.

In the face of extreme personal danger, Miss Howard, who was first on the crash scene, scrambled to get over 100 of the distraught airplane passengers onto her bus and drove them to safety at the airport police station.

Now Miss Howard, along with her two sons and her mom, happily departed for Miami, en route to Orlando, on Thursday, May 20, for a three-day visit to Disney World, in fulfillment of a wish she expressed to Prime Minister Bruce Golding during a courtesy call at Jamaica House on December 31. The PM gave instruction then, for the necessary efforts to be made to help Miss Howard to accomplish her long-time dream.

Through a concerted effort led by Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, Hon. Daryl Vaz; Transport and Works Minister, Hon. Mike Henry; and JUTC Managing Director, Paul Abrahams, a five-day trip was realised for Miss Howard and her family. This involved securing United States visas for the family members and sponsorship to cover the cost of air transportation, hotel accommodation and tickets to Disney World. Their other travel expenses were met by the JUTC.

The visitors, along with a family member from Florida in the capacity of a chaperone, were accommodated at Holiday Inn Orlando, located within the Walt Disney World Resort, from where they had access to all the Walt Disney theme parks.

The visitors returned to Jamaica on Monday, May 24.