



# Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation

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## J.A.M.I.N. Program Celebrates 10 Years of Mangrove Education and Restoration in Jamaica

FALMOUTH, JAMAICA — A local conservation effort is proving that young people can make a real difference in preserving Jamaica’s mangrove forests. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the [Jamaican Awareness of Mangroves in Nature \(J.A.M.I.N.\)](#) program, a transformative environmental education program that teaches students about the mangrove ecosystem and how to restore it. A collaboration between the [Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation](#) and the [University of the West Indies Discovery Bay Marine Laboratory \(DBML\)](#), the program has empowered over 1,000 students to take conservation into their own hands, raised awareness of mangrove conservation in Falmouth and nationally, and planting nearly 2,500 mangrove trees, actively restoring this critical ecosystem.

Mangrove forests are vital to coastal resilience, acting as natural storm barriers, stabilizing shorelines, improving water quality, and providing essential habitat for marine life. However, according to NEPA, Jamaica has lost 2,000 hectares of mangroves in 15 years since 2010 due to deforestation, development, and other human activities—leaving coastal communities more vulnerable to storm surges, erosion, and food insecurity. The J.A.M.I.N. program teaches students about the importance of these ecosystems through hands-on, project-based learning and active restoration efforts.

Amy Heemsoth, Chief Operating Officer and Director of Education at the Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation, has been leading the program since its inception. Reflecting on its success, she said, “For the past 10 years, J.A.M.I.N. has not only educated students about mangrove forests but has also empowered them to become active participants in their restoration. Seeing students return to plant the mangrove propagules they’ve nurtured all year is an incredibly rewarding experience. They leave with a deep appreciation for their environment and the knowledge that they can make a real difference.”

Through J.A.M.I.N., students don’t just learn about mangroves—they become stewards of their environment. Over the years, the J.A.M.I.N. program has worked with students from schools across Jamaica, including William Knibb, Titchfield, Port Antonio, Happy Grove, St. Hilda’s, Holland, and Marcus Garvey high schools. Participating students spend the academic year learning the biology and ecology of mangrove forests, conducting scientific experiments, and growing their own mangrove propagules to plant in the wild.

This year’s milestone 10th anniversary coincides with students’ final field trip of the year, where they will plant mangroves at Jobson Bay Eco-Beach Park, a pristine coastal site run by Sea The Change Foundation. Thanks to the generous support of Playa Hotels & Resorts, which covered all costs for this year’s program, students were able to

gain invaluable hands-on experience in science and conservation.

“J.A.M.I.N. has been a game-changer for environmental education in Jamaica,” said Dr. Camilo Trench, Lecturer and Academic Coordinator at DBML, who has been instrumental in keeping the program running over the past 10 years. “By immersing students in the science of mangrove ecosystems and engaging them in conservation efforts, we are fostering a generation of environmental stewards who will help protect our country’s natural heritage.”

One of the educators who has worked with the J.A.M.I.N. program for all 10 years, Fulvia Nugent, a biology teacher at William Knibb Memorial High School, knows the impact this program has had on her students.

“J.A.M.I.N. has transformed the way my students understand and appreciate nature. They don’t just learn about mangroves in a textbook— they grow them in our classroom, care for them throughout the year, and then wade into the mud to plant them in the wild. This program has instilled in them a sense of responsibility for their environment and an enthusiasm for science that extends beyond the classroom.”

By equipping students with knowledge and hands-on experience, J.A.M.I.N. is shaping future conservation leaders and fostering a deep connection between young Jamaicans and their natural environment. As J.A.M.I.N. enters its second decade, the Living Oceans Foundation and DBML remain committed to expanding its reach. With each new student, each new mangrove planted, and each lesson learned, the future of Jamaica’s mangrove forests grows stronger.

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#### **Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation:**

The Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation is a nonprofit environmental organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the health of the world’s oceans. Through science, outreach, and education, the Foundation works to conserve coral reefs and other tropical marine ecosystems, enhance ocean literacy, and inspire conservation action. As part of its commitment to *Science Without Borders*®, the Foundation provides educational resources and programs to empower people worldwide to protect our living oceans for future generations. Learn more at [www.livingoceansfoundation.org](http://www.livingoceansfoundation.org).

#### **Discovery Bay Marine Lab:**

The University of the West Indies, Discovery Bay Marine Laboratory (DBML) and field station is a facility of the University of the West Indies dedicated to supporting research and the teaching of marine and biological sciences. The facility also seeks to apply the knowledge gleaned to the management of the natural resources in Jamaica’s coastal zone. Learn more at <https://www.mona.uwi.edu/cms/dbml.htm>.

#### **Sea the Change Foundation:**

Sea the Change Foundation’s mission is to protect and preserve Falmouth’s marine ecosystems by fostering climate action, environmental awareness, sustainable practices, and community engagement. Through research, education, and collaboration, we strive to create a thriving and harmonious coastal environment in this emerging tourist destination. Learn more at: <https://spurropen.com/prm.php?vu=event&eid=17651&>

**Playa Hotels & Resorts:**

Playa Hotels & Resorts is dedicated to sustainability and enhancing the well-being of its destinations through Playa Cares, a comprehensive sustainability management system. It tackles destination-specific environmental and social challenges through strategic partnerships with organizations and individuals committed to sustainable development, Playa Cares fosters active participation, capacity building, and cultural transformation. By encouraging the replicability of successful initiatives and cross-project collaboration, Playa Cares strives to be an open source of inspiration, driving positive and lasting impact across its destinations. Learn more at [www.playaresorts.com](http://www.playaresorts.com).

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