

Banks make generous loan to ATA

ANGUILLA—At a press conference and cocktail reception the National Bank of Anguilla and the Caribbean Commercial Bank announced a loan of US\$1 million from each bank for the completion of the Anguilla Tennis Academy (ATA).

Chairing the event was Director of the ATA, Jason Allen, who welcomed the supporters, sponsors and visitors to the event. A special welcome was given to Zina Garrison who has been visiting the island for the past week.

Chief Executive Officer of the National Bank of Anguilla (NBA), Valentine Banks said that he was pleased to assist the ATA and they have been associated with tennis and in particular the tennis programme for many years. Preston Bryan, Managing Director of Caribbean Commercial Bank (CCB), said he had no difficulty convincing the directors to make the loan. He believes the new academy will help many of the youth of the island and he is looking forward to seeing its completion.

Founder and President of the ATA, Mitchelle Lake said that he started the ATA in order to give back to the children of Anguilla some of the advantages that he had through tennis. He paid tribute to Eric Martineau, the father of Anguilla tennis, for introducing the game to him and for all his support over the years. He said that the tennis academy being built at Blowing Point will be the first of its kind for the region and he thanked the many sponsors and supporters in the community for believing in the project. He expressed thanks to NBA and CCB for the loan, announcing that he has pledged of US\$1.6 million and with the funds from the loans to complete the project more money can be raised to pay back the loan within the five years stipulated. Special thanks was given by Lake to Zina Garrison who has coached the children in the tennis programme and done a lot to renew the energy of all involved.

Garrison pledged her continued support to the ATA saying that she will be there whenever they need her. She commented that she has enjoyed her stay in Anguilla and has been accepted and welcomed to the fullest. She thanked the ATA and especially Jason and Mitch for believing in her.

Sponsors for the visit of Garrison are the ATA, CuisinArt Resort, American Airlines/American Eagle, Social Security, Viceroy, Caribbean Juris Chambers, the National Bank of Anguilla, the Caribbean Commercial Bank and Cable and Wireless.

The main building of the Tennis Academy at Blowing Point is nearing completion with just windows, doors and painting to be finished. The six tennis courts and stadium court are to be started before the end of the month.