

THE TRIBUNE **health** BODY AND MIND



Doing something could save someone's life

By **ALESHA CADET**
Tribune Features Reporter
acadet@tribunemedia.net

IN EFFORT to further promote community awareness, the Atlantis Health and Safety Department team last Saturday hosted a successful CPR Training event at the Southwest Plaza.

"It was in the year 2010 when the Health and Safety department recognised the overwhelming need for the community to be capable of responding appropriately in emergency situations. It was with that thought our training centre was born, providing additional resources for the public to obtain accredited life saving certifications," said Aisha Cooper - Neely, Health & Safety Director at Atlantis.

Also in conjunction with the American Heart Association, one of the centre's international affiliations, the Atlantis Health and Safety Department recognised September as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) month for the Caribbean, Latin America, Spain and Portugal.

Aisha believes it was important for all those in attendance on Saturday to know how easy it is to acquire CPR training and become certified. "Through our experience, we have recognised that there is a lot of fear attached to learning the skill for multiple reasons and we want to assist with dispelling this," she said.

According to the Mayo Clinic, (CPR) is a lifesaving technique useful in many emergencies, including heart attack or near drowning, in which someone's breathing or heartbeat has stopped. The American Heart Association recommends that everyone, untrained bystanders and medical personnel alike, begin CPR with chest compressions.

"It's far better to do something than to do nothing at all if you're fearful that your knowledge or abilities aren't 100 percent complete. Remember, the difference between your doing something and doing nothing could be someone's life," the website stated.

Highlights of the Atlantis Health and Safety Department CPR training session included a video presentation, CPR manikin demonstrations, pamphlet information provided and



ATLANTIS Health and Safety Department held a CPR Awareness seminar at the south west plaza on Saturday. Photos: Terrel W. Carey/Tribune Staff



prize opportunities for participants.

"With non-communicable diseases leading a cause for premature deaths, it is evident that medical emergencies will occur frequently outside of the medical environment, thus the importance for Bahamians to obtain these skills. Our Bahamian statistics done in 2010 noted that cardiovascular diseases between the years 2008 and 2010 account for 17 per cent and 24 per cent of premature deaths for males and females between the ages of 30 - 69 respectively," said Aisha.

Combined, the Director said there were a total of 920 premature deaths stemming from diseases such as: Ischaemic Heart Disease, Hypertensive Disease, Cardiovascular Diseases, Heart Failure, and Rheumatic Disease.

"We believe that more people trained in our community would positively impact the rate of survival and the willingness of persons to respond appropriately wherever and whenever a medical emergency occurs. With more of these events and others, we hope to motivate the corporate world, schools and individuals to realize the need within their environment and local

communities, leading them to become certified," said Aisha.

While CPR Training is a normal part of Aisha's day-to-day operation at the Atlantis Resort, she said initiatives such as this provides the department with an opportunity to be of greater impact within local communities. It helps to impart knowledge that can enhance emergency response and possibly increase the survival rate in critical care situations.

"This is extremely significant, not just for our team, but certainly Atlantis by extension, who continues to be a corporate and community steward. We'd also like to thank our sponsors, in particular, the Southwest Plaza for graciously providing the space and other accommodations to host," said Aisha.

Going forward, readers can look forward to more health and safety events. One to take place on Saturday - October 7 at the Holy Family Parish Hall in conjunction with the Catholic Diocese - Knights of Columbus blood drive from 1pm - 6pm, and also during the month of October, weekly updated information related to CPR provided via the Atlantis Health and Safety Department.