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## Big boost for Alpha

BY AALIYAH CUNNINGHAM  
Observer writer  
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Friday, October 04, 2019

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Slightly Stoopid

Alpha Institute, formerly the Alpha Boys Home, will benefit from US\$50,000 raised for the 2019-2020 academic year, by high-profile entertainment figures.

Speaking with the **Jamaica Observer's Splash** yesterday, Joshua Chamberlain, head of partnership and advancement at the school, said 10 boys between ages 16-21 are the beneficiaries.

"The scholarships are to assist the students with funding their academic studies, vocational work, transportation to get them to and from school, nutrition, work experience, and counselling to make them ready to learn. We also provide them with emergency support, in case. It really tries to anticipate all the things that students need to complete their studies," he explained.

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According to Chamberlain, the money was raised through the school's 'March for Music' campaign.

"We realised how powerful it would be if we focused our energy on just developing young musicians, so we dedicated the entire month of March towards raising the funds. We got assistance from The Bob Marley Foundation; Lauryn Hill; Slightly Stoopid, which is a reggae band; VP Records; Steve Wilson; GeeJam Resort; and more," he disclosed.

Previously, the Bob Marley Foundation made a US\$10,000 donation to Alpha. In 2017, Sean Paul donated US\$11,000 to the school's music technology department, which is named in his honour. It includes a fully equipped recording studio.

Another initiative that will benefit students at the institution is the Lonely Whale Scholarship courtesy of the Ghetto Youth Foundation.

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"What is good about this scholarship is that the students will use their musical training to create Public Service Announcements regarding ocean health and they will also get a chance to showcase their work at Ocean Heroes Bootcamp in Canada. This is also a paid venture, so they receive a stipend as they work," Chamberlain explained.

The Alpha Boys Home was founded in 1880 as a space for wayward boys. One of its most famous mentors was Sister Mary Ignatius Davies, who lived at the school from the age of 17 until her death at 81 in 2003.

Past students include saxophonist Tommy McCook and trombonist Don Drummond of The Skatalites; drummer Leroy "Horsemouth" Wallace; singer Johnny Osbourne and Yellowman.

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