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Miss Lou

awarded Chilean medal

The Government of Chile has awarded the Gabriela Mistral Commemorative Medal to the Hon. Louise Bennett-Coverley, Jamaica's Ambassador of Culture.

Chile's Consul General, Mr Rene Faraggi, made the presentation to "Miss Lou" recently at the Chilean Consulate in Toronto. In attendance were her close friends and her husband, Eric Coverley.

Mr Faraggi explained that Gabriela Mistral was a Chilean poet who in 1945 became the first Latin American to be presented with the Nobel Prize for Literature.

In observance of the 50th anniversary of that milestone, the Chilean government is awarding the Commemorative Medal to 50 persons worldwide who have "enriched the cultural heritage of their countries, in the same way that Gabriela Mistral has done".

"This simple award represents the recognition of the Chilean nation for your rich contribution, not only to Jamaican literature, but to the world as a whole and for your success as a poet, actress, folklorist, popular singer, entertainer and radio personality," Mr Faraggi told Mrs Bennett-Coverley.

In thanking the Chilean government for bestowing the award on her, Mrs Bennett-Coverley said she was proud to accept the medal and although she had never met Gabriela Mistral, the poet must have made an impact on the world to be awarded a Noble Prize.

Jamaica's Consul General to Toronto, Mrs Margarietta St Juste, also thanked the Chilean government and noted that Mrs Bennett-Coverley was not just a Jamaican folklorist. "She has been accepted by all the Caribbean and is seen as the premier folklorist in the region."

B/N Bennett-Coverley, Louise

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