The Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to dedicate Anguilla’s new MRI Machine took place on Wednesday, March 1st, amidst a flurry of applause for the kind gesture of its donors, particularly Mr. Richard Schulze and the Schulze Family as well as Mr. Gary and Mrs. Connie Sharpe.

Pastor Howard Simon of the Seventh-day Adventist Church offered an ardent prayer of thanksgiving, expressing gratitude to God for the goodwill favour of the donors. He also prayed for the proper functioning and maintenance of the machine, and that its use would be beneficial in contributing to the health of the patients whom it would effectively serve.

Welcome remarks were given by Acting CEO of the Health Authority of Anguilla, Mr. Malcolm Webster. After welcoming Government dignitaries, medical personnel, the donors and all present, he alluded to Edward Kennedy who once said, “Quality health care is a right and not a privilege.” In consideration of the health care services that will be provided by the MRI machine, Mr. Webster then spoke of quality health care.

“As countries commit to achieving health care for all, it is imperative to be careful in considering the quality of the health services offered. There is a growing acknowledgment that quality healthcare services should be effective, providing evidence-based healthcare services to those...
who require them. Quality healthcare should be safe, avoiding harm to patients for whom the care is intended.

“Today, we add to our imaging modalities. The benefits of imaging include but are not limited to better diagnosis. Medical imaging helps physicians to understand the complications of the human body and enables them to make better medical decisions.

“In Anguilla, we are grateful that we have had CT scanner capabilities for many years now. But people have always asked why we did not have MRI. It has always been a burning question. But today we can finally put that burning question to rest.

“The introduction of MRI,” Mr. Webster continues, “provides better soft tissue contrast than CT. It can better differentiate between fat, water, muscle, and other soft tissue better than CT. These images provide information to physicians and can be useful in diagnosing a wide variety of diseases while explaining the patient’s physical condition.

“We are grateful that today is a celebration day for the health services in Anguilla. No longer will we have to airlift patients outside of Anguilla for CT or MRI services. Being able to perform Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) locally, in a timely manner, will enable us to provide Anguilla’s patients with quality health care in a more effective and expeditious way that would result in less casualties.”

Mr. Malcolm Webster then gave a commendation to the Premier, the Honorable Dr. Ellis L. Webster, by saying, “This grand occasion would not have been possible without the work of our Honourable Premier Webster and his team. This donation has been facilitated by Mr. Gary and Mrs. Connie Sharpe of Health Care Logistics, and made possible by Mr. Richard M. Schulze, the
principal of the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation Aurora Anguilla Resort & Golf Club. To them, we say heartfelt thanks.”

(Left: Mr. Richard M. Schulze)

“Today,” Mr. Webster continued, “we are here to celebrate the opening of a 1.5 Tesla Philips Magnetic Resonance Imaging machine. On behalf of the Board, the Managers, the Staff of the Health Authority, and the people of Anguilla, we extend a hearty thank you to all who made this possible.”

Mr. Webster acknowledged the presence of officers of the Rotary Club who had been instrumental in getting the MRI machine to Anguilla. Thanks were also extended to APANY in New York for the role it played as a patriotic organization in helping to procure the machine.

Brief remarks of gratitude and synopses of the new MRI capabilities of the Health Authority were also given by Dr. Lishaw Ward, Director of Medical Services, as well as by Ms. Rochelle Rogers, Acting Permanent Secretary of Health. Chairman of the Board of the Health Authority of Anguilla, Mr. Clyde Bryan, spoke with thanks on the behalf of the Board. He said that the provision of the MRI machine for Anguilla is indeed a milestone achievement.

Mr. Gary Sharpe commented briefly. He said he realizes that there are many ways to tithe. But, the key thing one must do every day is to do something good to make the world a better place. His wife, Connie, commented sharply and to the point: “Behind every good man is a good woman,” she jovially boasted.

Mr. Richard M. Schulze, in his comments, said: “It is an honour, a pleasure, and a privilege to be here for the ribbon cutting ceremony for this machine that will transform medical care and treatment. However, the real level of appreciation for this machine should be attributed to Premier Webster. We came together in a very meaningful way, and we have had the opportunity to share, in principle, the act of moving forward together.”

“I am a big believer that any successful business must be focused on those people that it serves. Whether it is the patient, client, customer, guest, or student, a business is to provide the best possible outcome for the people that it serves. Every business that does this usually wins big.”
“To that end,” he said, “I can honestly say that I have come to understand Mr. Webster’s own impression of improving the medical services at the hospital. These impressions were centered on obtaining an MRI machine. He frequently stated how many patients were being sent to countries outside of the island for MRI outcomes. At times these patients were sent back home without the MRI attention because the machines were often not functional. It was, therefore, easy for me to make the decision to get this machine, which is clearly necessary for the benefit of the community.”

In his address, Premier Webster noted that a healthy nation is a wealthy nation. And one of the most important ways to empower a nation is to ensure that it has access to quality health care. Today marks a step in that direction.

“Our commitment to providing access to health care is reflected in our budgeting for a second surgeon, a psychiatrist, the dialysis unit, and, in the near future, orthopedic and cardiology services. We need to furnish the hospital with modern equipment, and Mr. Schulze also has a commitment to helping us make that happen. For this 1.5 Tesla Philip MRI scanner, we wish to thank Mr. Schulze and our other donors who have so generously provided it. This means that we are coming. We have not yet arrived, but we are getting there and that is what we said would happen – change.”

The Premier recounted the various steps that were taken to get the MRI machine to Anguilla over the course of the past two years after its order was placed. He acknowledged, on behalf of the people of Anguilla, his heartfelt gratitude to the donors, particularly Mr. Schulze and Mr. Sharpe for such an admirable gesture made toward the benefit of the people of Anguilla.