

VCB elated former school to be named in her honour

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Olivia Grange, minister of sport (centre), and Florette Blackwood (left), senior director, sport Development and monitoring division in the Ministry, examine the running shoes worn by Veronica Campbell Brown at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Campbell Brown also presented one of her London 2012 running outfits to Minister Grange to be placed in the National Sport Museum. The presentation was made at the launch of the 2018 VCB 5K Run/Walk Race scheduled for Vere in Clarendon on January 21. (Photo: Dwayne Richards)

One of Jamaica's most recognisable female sprinters, Veronica Campbell-Brown (VCB), will have the wish for her first high school Troy to being named after her some time in the near future.

This was revealed by the Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sports, Olivia 'Babsy' Grange, at the launch of the third staging of the VCB Foundation 5K Run/Walk at the Jamaica Pegasus hotel in Kingston on Thursday.

Grange, who was guest speaker at the event, revealed that a number of

athletes, including Campbell Brown, had been asked what their wish would be to celebrate their achievements for the country, to which the eight-time Olympic medallist had replied with having Troy renamed in her honour.

“We asked several athletes what they would like to celebrate their achievements at the Olympics and World Championships and Veronica said 'I would like Troy, the school I attended, to be renamed in my honour' and so we decided to pursue that. Troy will be renamed in tribute to Veronica Campbell Brown,” Grange announced.

“That school is over 100 years old and so we had to have discussions with the Jamaica National Heritage Trust. This is a Jamaica 55 Legacy project,” she explained.

In addition to having the school renamed, Campbell-Brown should also see her highly anticipated statue being unveiled by the end of 2018.

“We will be signing the contract for the statue shortly with the sculptor Basil Watson and we plan to have your statue ready by the end of this year for its unveiling,” the minister promised.

The sprinter, affectionately called VCB, was thankful for the efforts made by the minister in granting her wish.

“It is an honour to have Troy renamed after me. I am very appreciative of all the support that I have been getting from my country and I want to applaud Minister Grange for her hard work. She is very dedicated and I am very appreciative of the fact that she has worked hard to making this wish come true. It is great,” she said.

The big ticket item in track and field for Jamaicans this year will be the Commonwealth Games to be held in the Gold Coast in Australia in April and Campbell-Brown expressed her desire to be a part of the contingent.

“It is my hope to compete at the Commonwealth Games this year. It is not really early for us because we have the indoor season which runs from January to March, so right after the Indoors we are going straight into the Commonwealth Games. I am not running Indoors so I am just going to focus on the outdoors and hopefully I will be able to go to the Commonwealth Games and compete,” said Campbell Brown.

Though she will be missing from the Indoor circuit, the two-time 200m Olympic gold medallist says she will be ready come April.

“My coach knows how to prepare and get me ready for it so it won't be too early for me, so I will be okay for it.”

The 35-year-old will also be on the Diamond League circuit this season where she will be focusing on efficiency which she believes will result in fast times.

“I will also be competing on the Diamond League circuit, that is also something to look forward to, to compete in the Diamond League races and for me personally it is just to work and improve my craft. I am focusing on being more efficient and I am thinking that should get me the times that I desire. I have a few goals but I do not like to make my goals public. I like to do it and then (talk about it),” Campbell Brown explained.

— Dwayne Richards