

International disability advocate Sarah Newland Martin dies at 75

by [Dawn Araujo-Hawkins](#) in the [July 13, 2022](#) issue



(Facebook)

Sarah Newland Martin, an internationally recognized disability advocate and leader in the Jamaica Baptist Union, died June 8 following complications related to surgery.

She was 75.

A member of Bethel Baptist Church in Kingston, Newland Martin was the longest-serving head of the Young Men's Christian Association—a position she held from 1988 until her death. She was active in the Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network and also served as chair of the Jamaica Baptist Union's ministry to persons with disabilities committee.

Newland Martin, whose legs were amputated when she was young, was also an accomplished swimmer, winning almost 40 medals, including a gold medal at the Paralympics. In 1965, she was named the Jamaica Sportswoman of the Year for being the only woman with a disability to complete a two-and-a-half-mile race across Kingston Harbor.

In an editorial, the *Jamaica Gleaner* declared that the entire nation owes a debt to Newland Martin: "With her passing, the disabled community has been deprived of a great advocate. . . . Farewell, Sarah."