

Caribbean Today

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**Caribbean
Coronavirus
HEROES**



A salute to the people from the Caribbean on the front line of Battle with COVID-19.

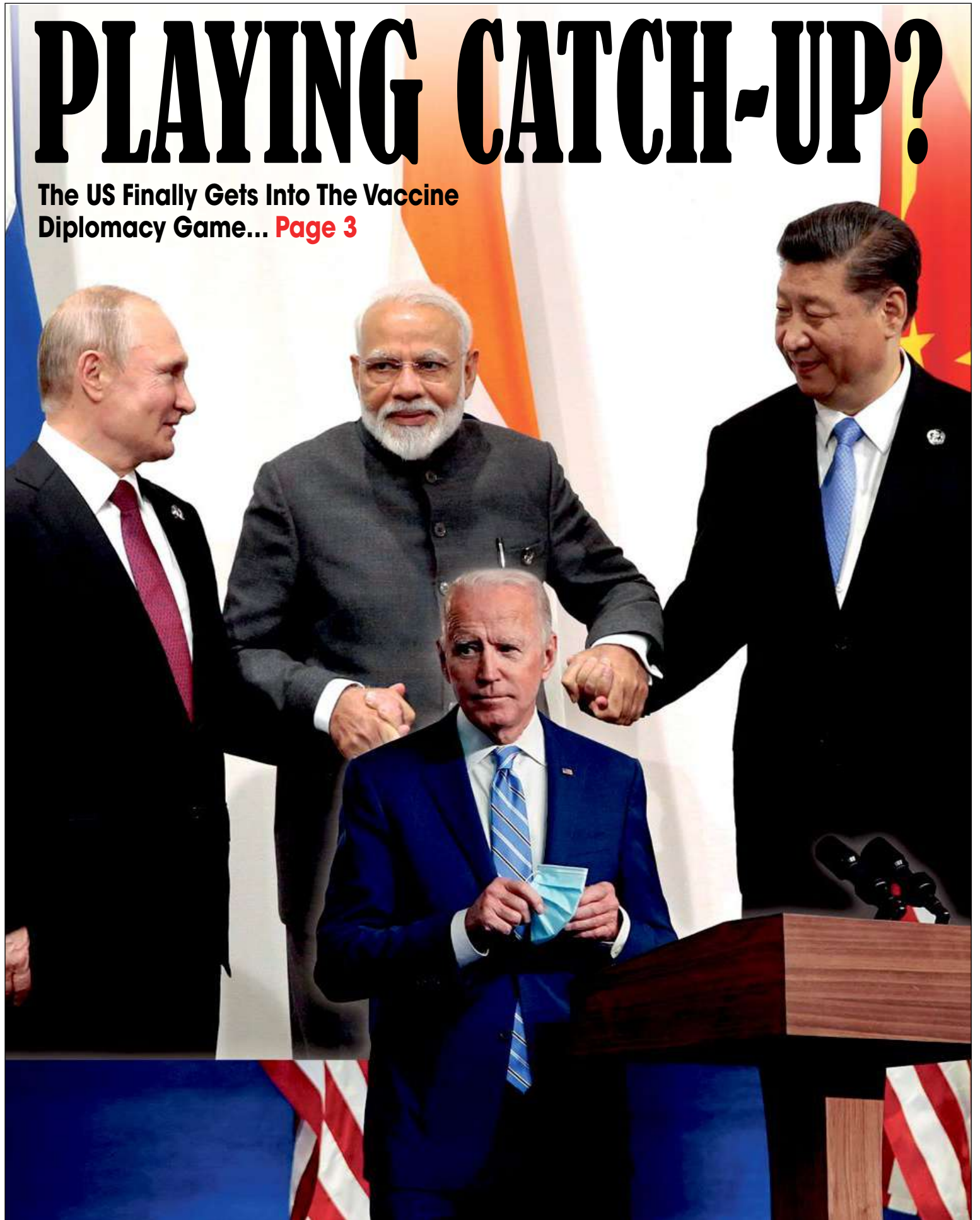
Caribbean Today

Salute To Caribbean COVID-19 Heroes ... B1



**CARIBBEAN
HERITAGE
MONTH**

It's The 15th Annual Caribbean American Heritage Month ... Page 18



PLAYING CATCH-UP?

The US Finally Gets Into The Vaccine Diplomacy Game... **Page 3**

INSIDE

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| News..... 2 | Arts/Entertainment 12 | Health 16 |
| Viewpoint 9 | Food 13 | Sports 17 |
| Local News..... 11 | Travel..... 14 | |

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Regional Caribbean News Round Up

Here's a synopsis of all the major Caribbean news from the region you can use:

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Trinidad and Tobago has seen the deadliest month from COVID-19 since the pandemic began more than a year ago. The twin-island republic now has seen over 500 deaths so far from the virus, with over 260 occurring in May alone. The country also recorded over 10,000 new COVID-19 cases in May alone.

JAMAICA

Nicola Clarke, the woman who was doused with a flammable substance and set ablaze by a jealous spouse, is now in the US to receive reconstructive surgery, skin grafting, and other treatment.

Robert White, managing director of Sanmerna Foundation, the organization that made the overseas treatment transfer possible, said his organization got involved after seeing the story.

"Sanmerna Foundation had seen the story about a jealous boyfriend who doused his girlfriend with gasoline and set her afire. It hurt us so badly that we jumped into action, and we can say today that action paid off," White told journalists shortly before Clarke



Emergency medical technicians mill around ambulances parked outside the Couva Hospital and Multi-Training Facility in Trinidad and Tobago after dropping off COVID-19 patients as the country saw its highest caseloads and deaths in May.

was picked up at Cornwall Regional Hospital by an AmbuCare ambulance and taken to Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay where she was placed on a Trinity Air Ambulance.

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

The Antigua and Barbuda government says it has established a Cabinet-Sub-Committee to help source funding as the island continues to be seriously impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

A government said that the virus "has had a terrible impact on revenue, reducing the same by more than 40 per cent."

According to the statement,

"many borrowing sources have been fully exhausted, locally, and moratoria granted by local banks to the Government will soon come to an end."

It said the government was informed by Ministry of Finance officials "until such time as the revenue situation improves, the days ahead will be extremely challenging" and that a Cabinet Sub-Committee was formed "for the purpose of examining various options."

BARBADOS

The Mia Mottley led administration has announced the formation of a Republican Status Transition advisory committee

(RSTAC) to help plan and manage the transition of the island from a monarchical to a republican system.

Acting Cabinet Secretary, Hughland Allman, will be responsible for servicing the committee.

Barbados has had two previous constitutional review commissions in 1977 and 1994, headed by Sir Mencea Cox and Sir Henry Forde, respectively. Sir Henry Forde's Commission recommended the manner in which Barbados should settle all of the arrangements for the President.

Guided by this, the new RSTAC will be required to discuss rights, responsibilities and aspirations and to specifically include the youth and the Diaspora.

SURINAME

Suriname has asked Cuba whether or not the former finance minister, Gillmore Hoefdraad, who is wanted in relation to a number of fraud-related charges, is in Havana.

Hoefdraad, who served as finance minister in the Desi Bouterse government that lost the elections one year ago, has not been seen in public the day after the inauguration of the new government of President Chandrikapersad "Chan" Santokhi.

A local media house published a story claiming that Hoefdraad had travelled to Cuba via Guyana, Curacao and the Dominican Republic

Foreign Affairs' Minister Albert Ramdin told reporters that while he could not confirm or deny whether the ex-minister is in Cuba, there is an official warrant issued for his arrest.

Hoefdraad, along with the former governor of the Central Bank of Suriname, Robert van Trikt and others are being investigated in relation to alleged malpractice at the financial institution. The former central bank governor, former central bank board member Faranaaz Hausil and Ashween Angnoe, former business partner of Van Trikt, are being held on remand.

GUYANA

The Bank of Guyana (BoG) has projected that the local economy will record a real oil Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of some 20.9 per cent while the non-oil economy is estimated to grow by 6.1 per cent.

The news comes as the country marked its 55th anniversary of independence from Britain on May 26th. This projection is in line with the World Economic Outlook estimating the global economy to grow by 6.0 per cent in 2021 as a result of optimism surrounding vaccine rollouts as well as renewed fiscal and monetary countermeasures in several major economies. However, the spread of new COVID-19 strains, new infection waves and unequal access to vaccines by emerging and developing economies have cast

uncertainty on the robustness of the recovery.

Nevertheless, Guyana's Central Bank in its report stated that while the local economy continued to benefit from oil production, a mixed output performance was recorded in the major sectors as the non-oil economy is still recovering from the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

BELIZE

The Belize government has formally informed bond holders that it will not be able to make a scheduled seven million US dollars coupon payment to its international bondholders.

Belize is looking to restructure a US\$550 million Superbond that emerged from 2006-07 restructuring and now contributes to a 133 per cent debt-to-GDP (gross domestic product) ratio that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) deems unsustainable.

A government statement noted that it is seeking the consent of the bondholders to have the payment deferred to September 19, this year "with the effect that the amended grace period will expire on the same date as the grace period applicable to the next schedule coupon, payable on August 20, 2021"

The statement said that the country's "economy and financial conditions have been acutely affected by the consequences of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

It said that the primary deficit increased to 8.3 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in the fiscal year 2020-21 from 1.4 per cent of GDP in the previous fiscal year.

TOBAGO

Police are investigating the discovery of a fishing boat with the bodies of at least four people, believed to be Venezuelan nationals on May 28, 2021.

The authorities said that one of the bodies was in an advanced stage of decomposition and the boat with the bodies were towed back to the Belle Garden fishing port.

Media reports said local fishermen had spotted the boat drifting six miles off the coast of Belle Garden, early Friday morning. Police said that as many as six people were on board the vessel and all are presumed dead.

The authorities said that special protective equipment would be used in retrieving the bodies since the cause of death is unknown and the island is dealing with the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Venezuelans have been fleeing their country as a result of the political and economic conditions there and illegally entering Trinidad and Tobago.

Rewritten from CMC, Guyana Times, and NewsAmericasnow.com



On August 6, 2021, the island of Jamaica marks the 59th Anniversary of its independence as a sovereign nation. Caribbean Today invites the business community in Jamaica and the United States to celebrate this significant milestone.

OUR INDEPENDENCE SUPPLEMENT! *Jamaica at 59* - to be published in July 2021, will pay tribute to Jamaica's history, culture, growth and development including the achievements and global contributions of a remarkable people. Promote your products and services in this 28-page keepsake edition, to be distributed widely throughout Florida, New York, Atlanta, and the Caribbean.

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How Many Vaccines Will The US Give The Caribbean?

Months after ignoring the pleas for COVID-19 vaccines by their Third Border neighbors, the Caribbean, the Joe Biden administration has now agreed to open up and share a stash with the region and Latin America, as well as with the world.

President Biden on June 3rd said the US will share up to 80 million doses with the world. Of that, at least six million doses will go to both Latin America and the Caribbean.

It is unclear how many will go to the Caribbean exactly through the regional public health agency, CARPHA, as the region has a smaller per capita rate than Latin America, which had been more decimated by the COVID-19 virus than the Caribbean region. The US will also separately give vaccines to Haiti, a White House briefing said Thursday even as Guatemala's President Alejandro Giammattei said on Thursday that the United States will supply half a million COVID-19 doses to the Central American country. That leaves 5.5 million for the rest of the entire region, including the



U.S. President Joe Biden announced his administration's change of plan to now share COVID-19 vaccines with the Caribbean and the world as Caribbean roots Vice President Kamala Harris stands by in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building's South Court Auditorium at the White House in Washington, D.C., on June 2, 2021. (PHOTO: REUTERS/Carlos Barria)

Caribbean.

At a press briefing officials from the COVID-19 response team and public health officials revealed that the Biden-Harris administration will be working closely with CARPHA, the public health authority in the Caribbean, who will be making

some of the key determinations for where the doses are allocated. The Biden administration has been under pressure to share doses from the nation's vaccine stockpile, particularly as the pandemic recedes in the United States while continuing to surge abroad.

On June 3rd as well, the US' Caribbean roots Vice President, Kamala Harris, spoke to Vice President Kamala D. Harris spoke this morning to Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister Keith Rowley, Chairman of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), to

notify him that the Biden-Harris Administration will begin sharing the first 25 million doses of COVID vaccines to their respective countries and others, as part of the Biden-Harris Administration's framework for sharing at least 80 million vaccines globally by the end of June.

The Vice President reiterated that the administration's efforts are focused on achieving broad global coverage, responding to surges and other urgent situations and public health needs, and helping as many countries as possible who requested vaccines. China, Russia and India have been the only countries donating vaccines to the Caribbean, which has largely managed to contain the virus but has seen rise in places like the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago.

The US has so far only shared just over four million doses of vaccines with Canada and Mexico only. The first from the 80 million doses donation will go to Asia.

Latin America is home to 647 million people and the Caribbean to 44 million.

~ *Rewritten from NewsAmericasNow.com*



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A Mother's Tears As She Loses Son To Gun Violence

A Caribbean immigrant former Florida State Senator is in deep mourning after losing her 23-year-old son to the gun violence plaguing Miami-Dade county.

Haitian-born former Democratic Florida Sen. Daphne Campbell used social media to grieve after her son Jason Dwayne Campbell was shot dead at 8:28 a.m. on Tuesday, June 1st, the start of Caribbean American Heritage Month in the U.S.

According to police reports, Jason was shot at the Montecarlo of Miami Condominiums, at 494 NW 165 St., in Miami-Dade County's Golden Glades area.

"Carry a child for nine months with difficulties and end up having C-Section and after 23 years, you received bad news (that) someone shots, kills your son," the former senator wrote on social media. "I did not know a mother should bury a child rather a child should bury their parents. I know God said I wouldn't leave you nor forsaken you. Oh God I loss my baby son"



Haitian-born former Democratic Florida Sen. Daphne Campbell, l. and her slain son, Jason Dwayne Campbell.

"Please my people, my friends, my supporters, my brothers, all my Facebook Friends, pray for us. I need a lot of strength. Oh God be with my baby son "RIP MY BABY BOY." Mommy loves you so, so much! Rest in peace and I will see you one day! Baby boy Jason RIP!! You will never forgotten," she added mournfully.

Detectives are investigating the shooting. Miami-Dade detectives are asking anyone with

information about the shooting to call Detective R. Mascarena at 305-471-2400 or Miami-Dade Crime Stoppers at 305-471-8477.

Campbell, 64, had represented the 38th district, including Miami Beach, North Miami, and other parts of northeastern Miami-Dade County, since 2016. She was born in Cap-Haitien, Haiti.

~ NewsAmericasNow.com



Dominica Magistrate Names New Date In Case Of Indian Fugitive Businessman

A magistrate in the Caribbean island of Dominica on Thursday ordered Indian fugitive businessman Mehul Choksi to return to court on June 14th. The Dominica High Court, which was hearing a habeas corpus petition filed by Choksi, had ordered him to be presented before the magistrate to face charges of illegal entry. A habeas corpus petition is filed for producing before a court a person who is under arrest or in unlawful detention.

Choksi's lawyer Vijay Aggarwal argued that his client is in "illegal detention" because he was required to be produced within 72 hours before Magistrate Candia Carrette-George.

The Dominica prosecution cited the ongoing extradition proceedings in the courts of Antigua and Barbuda, where he is staying since 2018 after leaving India, as one of the main arguments to keep Choksi under detention. Prosecutor Sherma Dalrymple told the court that Choksi is a "flight risk" and does not have any ties in Dominica that prevent him from fleeing the country if bail is granted.

But defence counsel Wayne Norde said Choksi was not a flight risk considering his health and the pending extradition proceedings in Antigua

Choksi was arrested on May 23 for alleged illegal entry to the Caribbean island country. Choksi is a patient at the Dominica China Friendship Hospital where he is being treated for an underlying condition and came to court in a wheelchair.

Agarwal, the lawyer for Choksi, has insisted his client can only be legally deported to Antigua



Mehul Choksi arrived in court in a wheel chair. (Dominicanewsonline image)

and Barbuda from Dominica.

Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne said he has asked Dominica not to return him to Antigua. Reports in the international media have also indicated that India will use diplomatic channels to get Choksi back in his homeland to face the courts.

The news comes as Dominica News online quoted sources as saying that Choksi was indeed with a woman when he landed in Dominica, but she was not his girlfriend.

The paper says the sources claim that she was a part of a team involved in his abduction, torture and arrest after meeting him during morning and evening walks in Antigua and befriending him.

The paper said the woman called him to an apartment to meet her on May 23rd, 2021 where a group of people abducted him and took him to Dominica where he was arrested.

He alleged through his lawyers that people with links to India were the ones who abducted him in collaboration with Antigua

officials.

According to Choksi's lawyers, the Indian businessmen was then beaten up, tortured and taken to Dominica in a vessel where he was arrested.

Prime Minister Browne has accused the Opposition in Antigua of supporting Choksi to secure campaign finances, a claim the UPP has denied.

All this comes as the United Workers Party Leader in Dominica, Lennox Linton, said the removal of Choksi from Antigua and Barbuda, to Dominica, was intended to facilitate his transfer to India without having to wait on the outcome of the on-going extradition.

Linton said in a statement Monday that Dominica has been conscripted to unlawfully violate the constitutional rights of an Antiguan citizen for crass political purposes.

Choksi is wanted by the Indian judicial authorities for criminal conspiracy, criminal breach of trust, cheating and dishonesty including delivery of property, corruption, and money laundering in a 13,500 crore loan fraud in Punjab National Bank. He moved to Antigua and Barbuda where he has been staying since January 2018 after receiving citizenship under the Citizenship for Investment program there.

Choksi also has two cases against him in courts of Antigua and Barbuda – extradition and revocation of the citizenship he purchased.

~ NewsAmericasNow.com



UN Fund Appeal For St. Vincent Reaches Just Over 9 Million

A \$29.2 million UN Funding Appeal for Saint Vincent has reached just 31 percent of its goal since its April launch or just under 10 million.

The fund increased by US \$3 million Wednesday as the US Joe Biden administration pledged the new amount to help support humanitarian response and recovery efforts from the La Soufriere volcano.

Support has also been received from the European Union, the Governments of Canada, United Kingdom, Spain, Germany, Belgium, Malta, Australia, and the UN Central Emergency Response Fund.

Aid is being channeled to eight critical sectors - Food Security; Logistics; Health; WASH; Shelter Housing and Infrastructure; Protection; Education and Early Recovery.

According to Resident Coordinator for United Nations



A view of the decimated Red Zone area of Sandy Bay in St. Vincent. (NewsAmericas.com image/Seymour Hinds.)

Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, Didier Trebucq, the cash will bolster ongoing efforts in Logistics, Food Security, WASH and Health, which are even more critical with the start

of the 2021 hurricane season.

“The UN has been supporting humanitarian and recovery efforts in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines from the onset of this crisis. As we seek to further upscale our assistance, this can only be possible through the continued collaboration with our development partners,” he said. “I am grateful for the timely and important contribution of the US Government to the UN appeal, which enables the UN agencies to deliver critical lifesaving support to the people

of Saint and the Grenadines. I wish to call on members of the international community to join forces with us to help to amplify recovery and rehabilitation efforts in Saint Vincent.”

Reiterating the United States Government’s continued commitment to the volcano-ravaged Caribbean nation, U.S. Ambassador to Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean, and the OECS, Linda Tagliatalata stated: “The United States Government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is pleased to provide an additional US\$3.8 million in humanitarian assistance for the people affected by the eruption of the La Soufriere volcano in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.”

The funds, she added will provide thousands of people in St. Vincent with emergency food assistance, access to safe drinking water, hygiene supplies, and other critical care items. “The United States will walk the road to recovery with the government and people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, as we are neighbors, partners, and friends,” the ambassador said.

The support comes as

displaced residents who are leaving shelters in St. Vincent and the Grenadines are now worried about how they will survive.

Roger Meirs told News Americas he has no job and his property in the Red Zone is cracked and unstable while Veronica Hoyte said she is unable to farm and has no idea what she will do.

The country’s Deputy Prime Minister has reiterated that the red zone areas of the country where many shelter residents are from, remains off-limits.

This as UWI Seismic Unit says the La Soufriere volcano continues to be in a state of unrest and escalation in activity can still take place with little or no warning.

Invest Caribbean + The Ritzury Group is still raising money to now help Sponsor a family, Sponsor a farmer or Sponsor a small business owner as they try to relocate. Please help by logging on to the Saint Vincent Volcano Disaster Relief on GoFundMe.

~ NewsAmericasNow.com



Woman With Connection To Lord Ashcroft Denied Bail In Belize Cop Killing Case



Jasmine Hartin, I., the partner of the son of Lord Ashcroft, has been charged with manslaughter by negligence in the shooting of Superintendent Henry Jemmott on a pier in the resort town of San Pedro.

A woman and the partner of the youngest son of well-known British magnate, Lord Ashcroft, has been jailed without bail in Belize after being charged with manslaughter by negligence, following the shooting death of a police superintendent.

Jasmine Hartin was arrested on Friday, May 28th following the discovery of the body of Superintendent Henry Jemmott on a pier in the resort town of San Pedro.

According to Belize 5 news, quoting her attorney, Hartin was denied bail following her arraignment hearing on May 31st. She remains in police custody, pending remand to the Central prison in Hattieville. Her attorney, Godfrey Smith, says he will appeal for bail to the Supreme Court today.

Hartin, 38, is the partner not wife, of Andrew Ashcroft. Police commissioner Chester Williams said that initially Hartin refused to give a statement to the police. The police report said the Jemmott was shot just behind his right ear. Hartin and Jemmott were drinking and socializing on a pier in the wee hours of Saturday morning before Jemmott’s body was found floating in the water with a bullet

wound to the head and his service weapon nearby, police said. He was fatally shot with his own gun and a postmortem has confirmed the headshot was the result of a homicide – not an accident, not a suicide.

Hartin, a US national, lives in Belize with Andrew Ashcroft and is the director of lifestyle and experience at the Alaia Belize resort, where she was staying before Jemmott’s death.

Her father-in-law is Belize’s former ambassador to the United Nations and his lawyer, the country’s former attorney general, reportedly visited Hartin in jail Saturday. Reports are that Hartin was found on that pier splattered in the officer’s blood and that she suggested to first responders that the bullet might have come from a passing boat.

Jemmott according to Belize media reports had worked in various aspects of policing and was recently the officer commanding San Ignacio Police Formation. And in May of this year, he was transferred to Belize City to take over command of precinct two.

~ NewsAmericasNow.com



Salute to

THE BAHAMAS!

In June, Caribbean Today will spotlight the Bahamas- 700 islands, cays and inlets located in the Atlantic Ocean. With a population of over 385,000 people, this nation continues to influence its Caribbean cousins and The United States mainland, Florida in particular. The Bahamas is located in the same island chain as Cuba, Hispaniola (Dominican Republic and Haiti) and is one of the richest countries in the Americas per capita. Come with Caribbean Today as we focus on the great people of The Bahamas and learn of their contributions to the Caribbean region and the U.S. Let us show you why the land of the conch thinks life is better in The Bahamas.

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ADVERTISING DEADLINE: JUNE 25, 2021

Guyanese Celebrate Little Guyana Avenue In Queens, NY

For decades it's been referred to as 'Little Guyana,' but as of Saturday, May 29, 2021, its now official.

New York City officials co-named the corner of Liberty Avenue and Lefferts Boulevard in Richmond Hill, Queens, NY "Little Guyana Avenue."

The co-naming ceremony was held to celebrate the contributions of the Guyanese community in New York City

and came three days after the country and its nationals in the Diaspora marked its 55th anniversary of independence from Britain.

According to the latest census data, Richmond Hill has the largest Guyanese community outside of Guyana. The community is made up of immigrants who have businesses, big and small, along Liberty Avenue and neighboring streets.

The event was made possible by Councilmember Adrienne Adams and District Leader Richard David.

"I am ecstatic, thrilled, and thankful and our ancestors are happy. Pride took a front-row seat as Guyanese from near and far gathered regardless of the pouring rain for the co-signing of "Little Guyana Ave.," commented Pat Jordon Langford, president of the Guyana Tri-State

Alliance.

"We're recognized, we're here, we made a difference, uplifted the community," said Bihari Lall, of the Gitto Farmers Market. "There's little Italy, Chinatown, now there's Little Guyana."

"Today's a special day, because it brought recognition to my community," said Ryan Koobial, of Kaieteur Liberty Restaurant. "I gotta' thank my parents for coming to this country and building a foundation for us."

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio joined the festivities and donned a Guyana flag mask. He addressed hundreds of attendees who were waving their flags and celebrating in the rain. "A community so worthy of respect, of appreciation in this finally being seen, finally being understood, finally being acknowledged, finally being understood... this is your day for



The corner of Liberty Avenue and Lefferts Boulevard in Richmond Hill, Queens, NY is now officially "Little Guyana Avenue."

all you've done for this city and nation," the mayor said.

"We brag about how we come from all over the world," added Rep. Gregory Meeks. "Your presence here in Richmond Hill has made Queens a better place."

~ NewsAmericasNow.com



Trade Remains Resilient Between US And Jamaica

Trade between the US and Jamaica has remained resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic. That's according to Chargé d'Affaires at the United States Embassy in Kingston, John McIntyre.

McIntyre was speaking recently during a membership mingle hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce of Jamaica.

Referencing US Department of Commerce data for the first quarter of 2021, he said, US companies exported over US\$400-million dollars' worth of

goods and services to Jamaica.

For the same period, McIntyre said Jamaican companies exported over US\$100-million dollars' worth of goods and services to the United States.

He said Jamaican exports to the United States increased by 16 per cent in the first quarter of 2021, over 2020, and encouraged more exports to the United States.

~ Rewritten from the Jamaica Observer



Jamaican Teen's Death Under Investigation

The drowning death of a Jamaican teenager in Oatka Creek in Scottsville, New York is now under investigation.

Tyreec Johnson, 18, otherwise called 'Trigga,' of Rochester, New York, reportedly drowned in Oatka Creek

According to the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, deputies responded to a report that a male teen was "possibly drowning" in Oatka Creek in Canawaugus Park. He reportedly went to the creek with a group of friends and swam to the middle of the water. He subsequently began to struggle, and several persons reportedly attempted to assist him, but they reportedly all failed in their efforts. Fire personnel eventually removed Johnson's body from the water, and he was pronounced dead.

The incident remains under investigation, the Munroe



Dead is Jamaican teen Tyreec Johnson.

County Sheriff's Office stated. Johnson is a past student of Glenmuir High School in May Pen, Clarendon, Jamaica.

Rewritten from Loop Jamaica



Get Ready For The Jamaican Digital Currency

A digital currency is coming to Jamaica next year.

That's the word from the Bank of Jamaica (BOJ), which says it anticipates that the introduction of a Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), scheduled for 2022, will serve to bolster government service delivery and boost financial inclusion for a greater number of Jamaicans.

BOJ Governor, Dr. Richard Byles, said that the challenges arising in relation to the deployment of funds to beneficiaries under the multibillion-dollar coronavirus (COVID-19) Allocation of Resources to Employees (CARE) Program, highlights the need for the CBDC.

"The simple act of trying to get government support out to those who [were] most in need became very difficult, because many Jamaicans are not part of the financial network and also because

a lot of the banking [arrangements are] still not digitized," he said. "I think that there is a greater need for financial inclusion and digitization of the Jamaican economy, and that is one of the issues that we hope to rectify with the CBDC."

The Bank of Jamaica will undertake a seven-month CBDC pilot through December 2021, utilizing its Fintech Regulatory Sandbox.

The Sandbox is designed to provide a platform to encourage innovations in financial services and promote competition and financial inclusion, as well as inform the framing of new or amendment of existing regulations.

Republic of Ireland-based technology provider, eCurrency Mint Incorporated, will support the BOJ in testing the CBDC during the pilot phase and the subsequent full rollout in 2022.

CBDC is a fiat currency, which means it can be exchanged,

dollar for dollar, with actual cash, and is issued to licensed deposit-taking institutions (DTIs) on a wholesale basis.

Individuals, households and businesses can use it to pay for goods and services as obtains with cash.

According to the BOJ, the benefits to be derived by citizens, businesses and the government from the adoption and introduction of a viable digital currency solution include increased financial inclusion and another means of efficient and secured payments.

Additionally, the BOJ says CBDC represents an opportunity for DTIs to improve cash management processes and costs. The Bank will, however, continue to issue notes and coins to facilitate all economic activity.

~ Rewritten from CMC



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Caribbean Celebrities Are New “Disaster Fighters” For 2021 Hurricane Season

A slew of leading Caribbean celebrities has adopted the new title of “Disaster Fighters” ahead of the 2021 Atlantic Hurricane Season, which climate scientists forecast will be above normal.

Top West Indian cricketers and music stars are joining arms as the new “Disaster Fighters” with The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), the regional inter-governmental agency for disaster management in the Caribbean Community, (CARICOM).

The creative campaign to fighting disasters this season, kicks off today, May 31, 2021, one day ahead of the start of the hurricane season, and aims at reiterating the importance of Caribbean nationals to be prepared, especially in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

West Indian cricketers, DJ Bravo, Darren Ganga and Stacey-Ann King of Trinidad and Tobago; Jamaica’s Chris Gayle; St. Lucia’s Darren Sammy, and St. Kitts & Nevis’ Kieran Powell, have joined forces with retired celebrity cricketing great, Sir Gary Sobers of Barbados and former cricketer turned music star Omari Banks of Anguilla, as well as musicians Mr Killa of Grenada, Tafa Mi Soleil of Haiti and Ricky T and QPID



Caribbean celebrity Disaster Fighters

of St. Lucia, for the May 31st campaign kick-off.

The new CDEMA groundbreaking initiative, supported by the Africa Caribbean Pacific – European Union Natural Disaster Risk Reduction (ACP-EU NDRR) Program, the Canada Caribbean Resilience Facility, the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (managed by the World Bank), and Binance Charity, aims at increasing

community preparedness and resilience to risks, such as hurricanes, volcanoes, COVID-19, and other natural hazards affecting the Caribbean region, through a catchy disaster prevention song and music video that will be promoted on social media.

The month-long campaign that coincides with

the beginning of the annual hurricane season and will feature important preparedness messages alongside the campaign song and music video on Tik Tok, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, as well as the campaign’s website, disaster-fighters.org.

In an unprecedented move for the campaign, CDEMA will implement its first-ever Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs) marketplace to raise donations and support disaster preparedness and disasters in the region. Participating musicians, cricketers and other celebrities will donate signed balls, t-shirts and various memorabilia including exclusive, limited-edition collectibles, that will be auctioned to the public as part of the initiative’s fundraising efforts. Items will include unique, personalized messages from the “Disaster Fighters” celebrity team.

Fans and the public are encouraged to show their support for the initiative by purchasing collectibles signed by their favorite celebrities to assist CDEMA in the important and meaningful work it does.

“Many Caribbean countries have been battling

the compound impacts of drought, COVID-19, volcanic eruptions and now hurricane season,” said Elizabeth Riley, Executive Director (ag), CDEMA. “We wanted to use an innovative, inclusive approach to ensure that communities are empowered with the necessary plans, information and tools to tackle the disaster impacts that we as a region have been facing.”

Tahseen Sayed, World Bank Country Director for the Caribbean, added: “The past year has been very challenging for the Caribbean. Although much of the region has managed the health effects of the pandemic through early actions, the socioeconomic impacts have been severe. It is more important than ever this year for Caribbean countries and people to be well-prepared for the hurricane season. We are pleased to support this innovative new campaign from CDEMA that aims to help communities protect themselves and their livelihoods.”

For more log on the initiative and the marketplace log on to disaster-fighters.org



First Indigenous Woman Named Head Of State In This CARICOM Nation

For the first time in the history of one Caribbean country, an indigenous woman, has been named the head of state, albeit ceremonial.

Belize has sworn in educator and indigenous woman, Froyla T’zalam, as the country’s first female and third Governor General. T’zalam replaces Sir Colville Young, who demitted office at the end of April.

Prime Minister John Briceño saying she brings with her more than just 20 years of experience in Belize’s rich Maya history. The ceremony was steeped in historical significance with the Acting Chief Justice Michelle Arana, a Garifuna woman also of indigenous descent, stand side by side with T’zalam as the oath to office was proclaimed.

She told the country that with her new platform, she intends to be a champion not only for Maya people, but for all citizens of Belize.

“Although we were not financially wealthy, we had our values. My parents did not raise us to see ourselves as poor. We had food and shelter; I was surrounded by family with lots



Froyla T’zalam, taking the Oath of Office as Belize’s new Governor General

of rooms to run around as well as chores to teach me how to be responsible,” T’zalam said. “These chores imbibe in me an appreciation for the benefits of hard work. While the installation of a Mopan woman as a Governor General can be seen as a symbolic milestone, it should not be seen as wilfully ignoring our colonial past. Rather, it is a new chapter in Belize’s evolution as a country for all and by all.”

The new governor general has a master’s degree in rural development and a bachelors in anthropology.

~ *Rewritten from CMC*



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Raising Crops And The Next Generation Of Farmers

Behind Louise Lawrence's friendly smile and pleasant manner is a steely resolve.

That resolve is necessary as she navigates a typically male-dominated field as a farmer in St Ann, on Jamaica's verdant north coast. Beyond just succeeding as a female farmer, Louise has even chosen to take on a leadership role.

Lawrence is the leader of the Watt Town Greenhouse Farmers Group, which boasts 20 farmers, including 11 women. She has chosen farming, in particular greenhouse farming, to make a living. She admits that it was not her first choice of a career, but she now believes farming is her calling.

"Were I to live my life over again, I would have started farming earlier," Lawrence said.

She is one of the farmers that received a greenhouse through the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI), funded by the World Bank and implemented by the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF). Over 160 farmers in three parishes benefitted from this project, and over a hundred other farmers have benefitted indirectly. Not only does REDI support those who choose farming, but the program also connects them with ready markets to encourage their success.

Collectively, the Watt Town Greenhouse Farmers Group operates 22 greenhouses in



Louise Lawrence is a proud ambassador for the REDI initiative. (World Bank photo)

addition to open field farms. Louise directly operates one greenhouse and also oversees the operations of three other greenhouses, one owned by her husband. And she is good at it – in only six years as a farmer, Lawrence has already received awards and recognition for her greenhouses.

The second phase of the project, known as REDI II, was approved in November 2019 with US\$40 million in financing from the World Bank.

Lawrence reports that JSIF recently provided the farmers, through REDI II, with personal protective equipment, including masks, hand-held thermometers, and hand sanitizers, to curb the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

She underscored the point that "COVID is real," and as a

community leader, Louise helps to spread the message of keeping socially distant, wearing a mask and frequent handwashing.

Her vigilance is, in part, because Lawrence and her team have been hit hard by the pandemic. They used to sell collectively to a distributor who then sold their produce to hotels. With fewer tourists visiting Jamaica, the demand for their produce has been low.

However, Lawrence says that a cold storage facility, built by JSIF, has been particularly helpful as it extends the life of their produce while they seek other buyers. Some farmers have turned to other income-generating opportunities, like selling phone credit to enable children in the area to attend school remotely.

Currently, Lawrence is

concentrating on growing tomatoes as she has had some issues lately with sweet peppers. And while markets have been reduced because of the pandemic, Lawrence says that she continues to make a good living.

She is encouraging more people to get involved with agriculture and says that while the work is hard and the money may not be steady, the reward of feeding the nation, and by extension, the world, cannot be underestimated.

Just as JSIF provided her with the knowledge necessary to begin her career as a farmer, she is also passing that knowledge on to others who are interested.

Lawrence says one of the youngest farmers in her collective is 21-year-old Emanuel Downer who she calls a hard worker, willing to pitch in and work with others. He is making progress, she said, and is now building a house. She says that some of the young people often become discouraged, but Louise is undeterred and continues to share with those eager to learn, especially as so many have lost jobs.

She has walked in their shoes. At one point, Lawrence was unemployed after spending time as a teacher, and other previous careers.

She credits the REDI program, and the support of JSIF, for setting her on a path where she could send her

children to school, giving them an opportunity for greater success. She believes that her son, Jovan, may one day follow in the footsteps of his mother and father in agriculture. Her two daughters have happily chosen their careers outside the field, Mitsue is a health inspector, and Keneice is a teacher.

Louise Lawrence is a proud ambassador for the REDI initiative as she has seen how it can transform lives. Because of farming, she is financially independent, and her children are all making their own way in the world.

Louise has now set new aspirations, that of homeownership. With a solid track record of achievement and determination, she has shown that she can take on any challenge.

~ *Rewritten from CMC*



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Caribbean Freedom Fighter Honored In Ghanaian Museum

A Caribbean slave liberator was recently honored by the Assin Manso open air museum in Ghana.

Suriname-born Kap'ten Broos was a freedom fighter there, who in the 19th century, led the "Baka Busi S'ma" (People from behind the Bush), a band of enslaved Africans who had escaped slavery, in an attack on the colonizers' plantations from their stronghold at Rorac.

This impenetrable spot was located behind the Rac-a-Rac plantation on the Suriname River, a few hours sailing upward from Paramaribo. With Broos on that trip were his brother, Kaliko, sister Madrijntje, as well as his mother Ma Uwa and his grandmother Ma Amba, who had been born in Africa.

Broos is the only slavery hero from Suriname of whom an actual photo exists. The black and white photograph was supposedly taken in 1862, when he travelled to the capital of Paramaribo, to sign a peace accord with the then Governor of Suriname.

It was at this ceremony he was granted the title of Kap'ten and given Rorac, which is still owned by the descendants of

his and Kaliko's. Some say that given that he conquered the land during his resistance against the colonizer, he should be considered a "Granman" or King and not a chief.

Assin Manso is located at the Slave River in Ghana, where captured Africans were given one last bath before they were marched to human markets that dotted the Cape Coast. It was a hellish and treasonous hike that many did not survive. Cape Coast Castle and Fort Elmina, the two most well-known markets were located at a 60-kilometer distance.

Assin Manso is considered a sacred place and visitors may only enter barefoot. The Ghana Tourism Authority erected an Ancestral Gravesite here, where -among other things- the remains of an enslaved African that had been taken to Barbados for instance, have been buried.

Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley in 2019 visited Assin Manso in 2019 and brought back with her the



Late Surinamese slave liberator Kap'ten Broos as he hangs in the Ghanaian museum. (Marvin Hokstam Photo)

remains of this unknown enslaved African site.

The site also features pictures of well-known historical figures in an Exhibition of Liberators. Among them Harriet Tubman of the Underground Railroad, Jamaica's Queen Nanny, Sojourner Truth, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X and Ghana's first democratically chosen president Kwame Nkruma who led his country to independence from Britain in 1957.

The initiative to have King Broos' photograph at this site got underway when Otmar

"Kodjo Koemabala" Watson, an acquaintance of Surinamese journalist Marvin Hokstam's and director of the Afro cultural foundation, Untold, in the Netherlands, visited Assin Manso last year.

While touring the facility Watson discussed the possibility of having a Surinamese anti-slavery hero added.

The portrait of King Broos in the museum is the work done by Dutch Surinamese artist, Remy Jungerman, who is also a descendant of Broos' sister Madrijntje.

In "CAPTAIN BROOS," which he produced in 2006, he superimposed the historic photograph of Granman Broos on a silkscreen, with vertically to his right a group of Maroon Granman.

The ceremony to mount the photograph in the Exhibition of Liberators, was led by Okomfo Nana Efu, a priestess of the Afro Surinamese Winti faith, who is also known as Marian Markelo.

Broos came to be placed alongside the photograph of Marcus Garvey.

~ *Rewritten from CMC*



How About TPS For Palestinians?

President Joe Biden and the US continues to stand by their 'man' Israel, regardless of the blatant wrong meted out to Palestinians that triggered this latest round of assault.

Now as Palestine and Israel lurch closer to war in the Middle East, and the US continues to back Israel while trying but failing to appear unbiased, the least the Biden administration can do is consider giving Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Palestinians living without legal status in the US, despite the fact that they are considered to be "stateless."

After all, they are about 250,000 living in the US and far less without legal working papers. It is the least the US can do. This will allow those that came in as visitors and those who are undocumented, to remain here legally, enabling them to get work permits, Social Security numbers, driver's licenses, etc.

TPS after all is, according to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), is granted by the Secretary of

Homeland Security based on "conditions that temporarily prevent the country's nationals from returning safely, or in certain circumstances, where the country is unable to handle the return of its nationals adequately."

Those temporary conditions can include "ongoing armed conflict (such as civil war) and other extraordinary and temporary conditions."

Individuals who entered the United States with a temporary visa and stayed once their visa expired can apply for TPS once approved, as well as those who entered the U.S. illegally. Those in the U.S. holding a valid nonimmigrant visa are also eligible for TPS, which they might do if, for instance, their visa was about to expire. Once granted TPS, individuals must re-register during each re-registration period to maintain their status.

Temporary protection would provide Palestinian refugees a recognized legal status and allow them to work, to travel freely, to live where h/she chooses, to reunite with family members, and to travel outside and return with special permission.

The U.S. CIS Service has only rarely recognized "Palestinian" as a nationality so it would be a historic moment if the Biden administration takes such a bold stance.

After all, The Biden administration had, before this escalation in conflict between Israel and Palestine, said it will restore diplomatic relations with the Palestinian Authority, ending a Trump policy.

It had also reaffirmed support for a "mutually agreed, two-state solution" between Israel and the Palestinians, "in which Israel lives in peace and security, alongside a viable Palestinian state." And said it will restore U.S. assistance programs that support economic development and humanitarian aid for the Palestinian people."

President Biden can now make history by announcing TPS for Palestinians in the US. It would allow the world to see that this administration is not status quo and biased like too many others, but ready to take a small step towards unbiased actions in 2021 to righting decades old wrong.

However, I won't hold my breath for if history has taught us anything, it's that any the US administration is hold its nose and sacrifice millions at the altar of bullyism and xenophobia. Joe Biden's continue silence proves this.

~ The writer is publisher of *NewsAmericasNow*



Family Folly



It's often said that it's better to have good friends rather than family, for at least you can choose your friends, but family, you're stuck with. I count myself as being very fortunate to have been blessed to have grown up with a wonderful family, close and extended.

We were surrounded by teachers, as my mom and my aunts were of that profession, plus post mistress, uncles and cousins who were principals of schools, parsons, doctors, lawyers, bank managers, engineers, bus conductors, a varied mix that possessed one thing in common, integrity.

They were by no means perfect, but we were a tight knit unit that always looked out for each other, courtesy of the grandparents who instilled old time values that were passed down through the generations.

I really looked forward to spending time with kith and kin in the rural country, relishing those summer holidays running up and down in the bush taking in nature. The point is family life can be beautiful and rewarding if you have the right family. But it can be hellish if it's filled with crosses and folly.

When the family war is between the family members it's disconcerting, damaging, debilitating and devastating. From birth to death, it's nothing but quarrels, jealousy, envy, badmind, spite, malice and even murder, right within the family. People who are exposed to this naturally assume that it's the norm, for that's all they know.

Brother fights against brother, sister against sister, mother against daughter and sons against father. As for the cousins, they are like foot soldiers in a warzone. The bible speaks of this: "And a man's enemies will be the members of his household, they will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against

mother, mother-in-law against her daughter in law and daughter in law against mother in law." A house divided cannot stand.

Now I am not waxing evangelical here or blustering biblical, but the harsh truth is, we are seeing a level of family conflict nowadays that is more than concerning. Okay, we always had the family folly brought on and fueled by land and property disputes. Everyone wants a piece of the pie and willing to kill or die for it as they claim what they believe is rightfully theirs. "Aunt Madge left that acre for me and nobody else. Put one foot on it, and I chop it off."

Very often these disputes lead to machetes being brought into play, all over dead-left land that fuels family folly. My grandmother used to say: "When the breed is bad, it just bad, and nutten can fix it." In other words, some families are just destined to be warlike, doomed to discord, damned to destruction.

The saying used to be that blood is thicker than water. Really? Mercifully these family wars are in the minority, but they are prevalent enough to be of concern. There are also the minor conflicts where malice infuses itself into the fabric of families, resulting in sisters not talking to each other for years, or children abandoning the rest of the family, never to be seen again. This bad feeling runs so deep that not even family funerals they attend.

It's a family affair, it's a family affair. One child grows up to be somebody that just loved to learn, and another child grows up to be somebody you'd just love to burn. That's a very old song by Sly and the Family Stone that's still relevant today.

Happily, I still see glimpses of harmony in some families nowadays, with love being the overarching feature, albeit mostly over the Internet. But 'dog nyam yu supper' if you're immersed in a family folly and can't escape.

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FELICIA J. PERSAUD



TONY ROBINSON

The Post Pandemic Crisis Facing Education In Jamaica ~ The Quest For A Solution

BY DR. WINSTON WHYTE

The adage, "it takes a village to raise a child," is now more applicable to my country Jamaica than ever before. In the four decades since I left Jamaica, there have been many changes in government and many promises to the people, especially at election time. However, there have been minimal changes in the equity and equality of the education of children throughout the island. In fact, the situation has gotten worst for about two thirds of the population.

In her 2021 sectoral presentation, the Honorable Fayval Williams, Minister of Education, Youth and Information, spoke about the state of Jamaica's schools. She pointed to lack of discipline in the classroom as leading to a decrease in learning time.

Minister Williams also said that learning was affected by disruption in family values, exposure to violence at homes and in the community, as well as an inequity in spending at the different levels of education with more spending at the tertiary level. The minister supported her position with graphs, most of which were out of date, and showed, that although Jamaica spends more

on education than Barbados as a proportion of the GDP, the outcomes fall below expectations.

She showed that Jamaica spends the same amount as Finland at the tertiary level but has a lower return on investment. Jamaica provides equitable access to education at the pre-primary and primary levels but not at the secondary and tertiary levels. The minister concluded that loss of hours of student/teacher contact time was due to indiscipline. The data suggests that Jamaica is investing primarily in those who have the financial means to access education. In general, the poor remain poorly educated, a situation that seems accepted by administration after administration, because neither political party seems to want an educated and informed electorate.

The 2021-2022 school year is expected to bring fresh challenges in addition to those that have existed for far too long. Education authorities will be called on to accept roles and undertake responsibilities that extend beyond the role of academia. There will be, for example, needs and failure so exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Let us therefore not put another Band-Aid on educating our children.

Let's triage the situation properly, surgically remove the

tumors that impede learning, apply the correct medicine, or suture, and allow the wounds of the past to heal and not fester. I totally agree with Madam Minister that the problems are grave, but they are not insurmountable. I also agree that efforts have been made by all parties to solve the varying dilemmas.

For the sake of continuity in teaching and learning, political leaders need to agree on a ten-year bipartisan education plan. Our children's schooling would therefore no longer be at the mercy of partisan political games. The Ministry of Education's plans would be assured of continuity across administrations.

The country's education vision and mission would specifically relate to Jamaican conditions and would reflect stakeholders' dreams and aspirations. Each school would design its own action plan targeting its population and the unique needs of the school.

Teachers would use this action plan to formulate a student development plan based on each child's competencies, circumstances, interests, potential, limitations, aspirations, areas for improvement based on previous performance.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10A)

VIEWPOINT



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Clean And Green – The New Economy Set To Transform The Caribbean

BY DEODAT MAHARAJ

Seismic shifts are taking place in the global economic architecture as countries accelerate efforts to transition clean and green economies. In 2015, at the United Nations Climate Change Conference known as COP21, world leaders signed the landmark Paris Agreement. This pact signaled the collective ambition of 196 countries to contribute to the goal of limiting global warming and effectively addressing climate change. The implication for the global economy was immense given the need to transition away from fossil fuels.

To achieve this reduction, countries have developed targets to bring down emissions associated with fossil fuels known as the nationally determined contributions (NDCs). The United States, one of the major hold outs in this transition has taken a welcome about turn with the Biden Administration which has already established ambitious targets. The decision of the United States to fully embrace a cleaner and greener economy would only hasten the transition.

It should be noted that those who have embraced the shift to renewables also recognize the massive economic opportunities it presents in what will be a new economy. Given our own climate vulnerability and economic challenges as small island developing states, we have no option but to do the same. There is also a strong economic case for doing so given our own economic performance and the need for new options.

According to the World Bank, over the period 2009 – 2019, the economies of small states in the Caribbean grew by less than half of one percent or at an average rate of 0.38%, to be more precise. By comparison, the average growth rate of all small states globally over the period was 3.08%. The COVID-19 pandemic has only served to exacerbate our challenges, with double-digit economic contractions projected for most countries in our Region. In essence, we are underperforming compared to others even though we are all confronting common challenges.

On the positive side, we have recognised the need to make this change. In fact, since 2013 CARICOM countries have agreed on a regional energy policy which aims at achieving set targets for decarbonization and energy efficiency while enhancing energy security. In addition, Caribbean countries, like many others, developed NDCs and became party to the Paris Agreement. Caribbean countries have also largely recognized that it is strategically advantageous to embrace the new economy offered by low carbon industries and sectors.

What impact will the new economy have?

First and foremost, the new economy offers tremendous potential in job creation. The transition will present opportunities for higher paying jobs and the reduction of poverty. In a joint report published in 2020 by the International Labour Organization and the Inter-American Development Bank, it



was estimated that decarbonization will lead to the net increase of jobs in the Caribbean by 3.1%, that is, the creation of approximately 400,000 jobs. Jobs are a precious commodity and, on that basis, alone we have a strong case.

There is also the accompanying advantage of growth. The International Renewable Energy Agency estimates that for every US dollar invested in energy transition, an additional US 93 cents of GDP growth will occur above the business-as-usual scenario. Within the renewable energy industry, firms are emerging who can execute engineering, procurement, construction, operation, and maintenance services. Energy services companies are developing that can provide demand-side management services and jobs.

Outside of the core activities of the renewable energy industry, engineering, construction, legal, financial, logistics and transportation services will all be needed to support the development of renewable energy projects. In fact, no economic sector will be left untouched by energy transition. The electrification of the transport sector will call for the roll out of charging infrastructure powered by renewables. A movement

to a green economy will spur much needed innovation. Most important, it will help lower production costs in a Region where energy costs are amongst the highest on the planet and a deterrent to new investments.

Recognizing the enormous potential for this new economy Caribbean Export has been contributing to this transition through both technical and financial assistance. More specifically, we have implemented energy management capacity building interventions at the firm level. Since 2017, 26% of our grant funding with support from the European Union has gone to renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. We are also leveraging our connections with partners and firms, to help develop networks of financiers, technology producers and services providers. We view this as an important step in supporting the greening of businesses.

Investments in Renewable Energy

Caribbean Export as the lead regional institution with the

remit for attracting foreign direct investment to our Region, we are acutely aware of the scale of investment which will be required to effectively support energy transition. Consequently, we have teamed up with the Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies to make the steering of investments in this sector as a high priority. This will include a focus on solar photovoltaics (PV) and wind, two of the most relevant technologies for our Region. In this regard we have been steadily building up a network of partners with a view to fostering investment in our region. It should be stated that the regulatory bottlenecks must be addressed as a priority to achieve success on the scale required.

In summary, transition to the new economy opens a world of opportunity for us especially in creating precious jobs and generating much needed growth. We recognize that success will be hinged on building a broad-based partnership to deliver results for Caribbean people. We at Caribbean Export are determined to play our part and remain committed to this agenda.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Deodat Maharaj is the Executive Director of the Caribbean Export Development Agency and can be reached at: dmaharaj@carib-export.com



The Post Pandemic Crisis Facing Education In Jamaica ~ The Quest For A Solution

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9A)

The ten-year strategic plan for education will require input and involvement of all stakeholders. For example, teachers' colleges and universities will be called on to provide in-service training for teachers. Students, teachers, and parents will have access to a cadre of social workers, psychologists, and guidance counsellors. The ministry will seek the resources to enable it to meet students' needs for nutrition, transportation, and academic remediation. Teachers will receive incentives and training, will have access to lesson plans structured to achieve the goals of the curriculum. A school-based budget system would be utilized to allow principals the autonomy and flexibility in adjusting the budget to meet the needs of their unique population.

The perils of COVID-19 can have a positive effect on our education system. We can use the challenges of this pandemic to provide a supportive learning environment which addresses the needs of all children, especially those with the greatest challenges. It is my view that the success of Jamaican schools' rests on six principles:

1. Common mission, vision, values, and goals

2. High expectations for all students and a strategic process of prevention and intervention for underachieving students
3. Collaborative teams that share responsibility for assessing needs
4. Use of data to drive decisions and continuous improvement toward measurable results
5. Active participation and engagement of family and community
6. Leadership capacity at all levels

The poet Aristotle France said, "To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan but also believe." For the above principles to be successful, educators must dream. They must believe not only that all students can learn but also that they can teach all students.

All stakeholders will need to act and plan, holding to the faith that together we can correct the education deficiencies of the past and catapult the country into being rated amongst the high achievers in the Caribbean.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. Winston Whyte is a Jamaican-born, US-based educator who can be reached at winstonwhyte1@gmail.com



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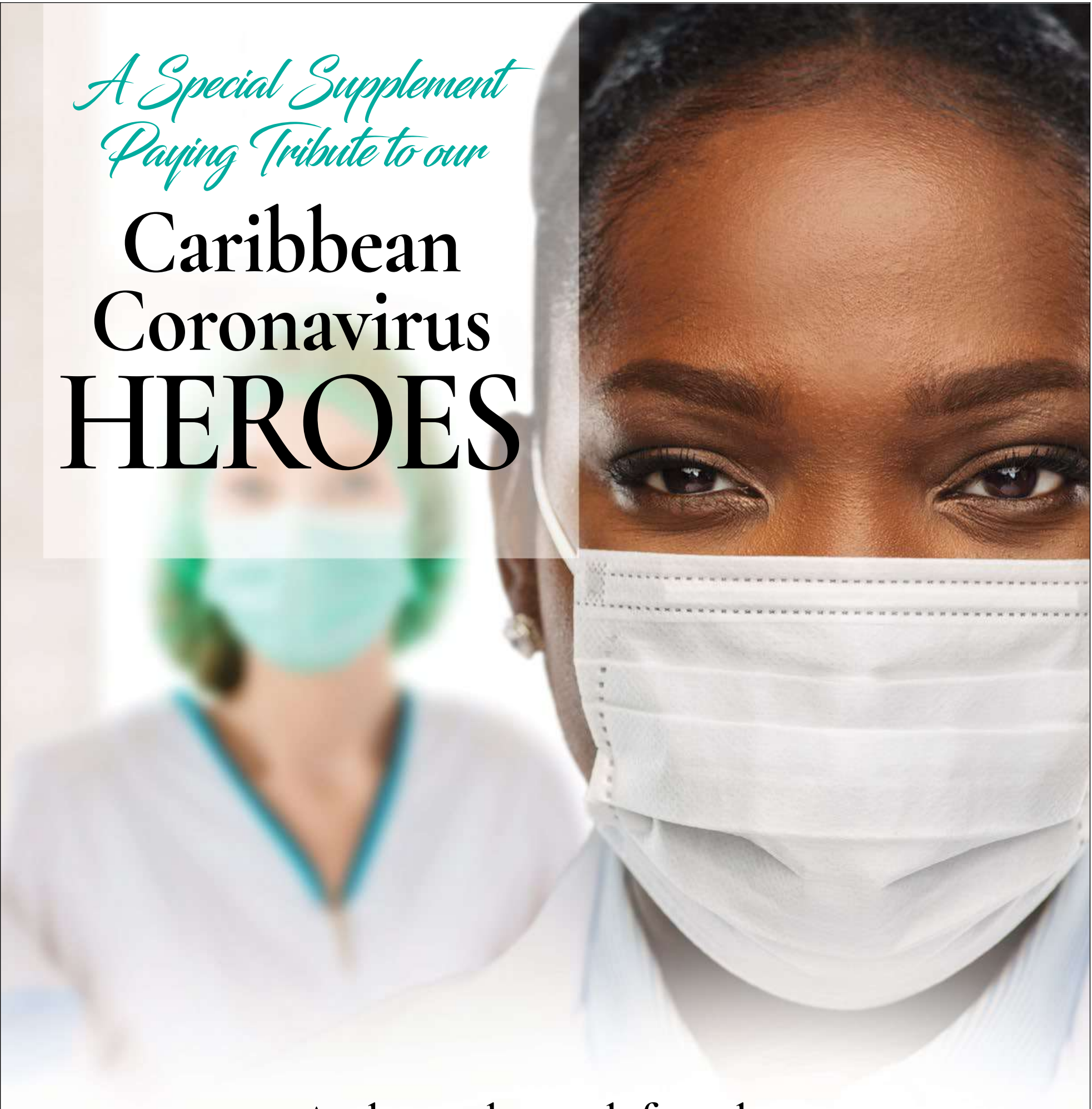
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A Message To All Caribbean Americans



Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava

BY DANIELLA LEVINE CAVA
Mayor, Miami-Dade County

Miami-Dade County owes an immense debt of gratitude to our Caribbean COVID-19 heroes and sheroes, who worked on the front lines of a once-in-a-century pandemic despite the immense risk that doing so posed to both you and your families.

Your service and dedication to this community helped to save countless lives and continues to serve as an inspiration to us all. You were the ones who braved the uncertainty that the early days of this pandemic brought about, and you were the ones who administered the

vaccinations that finally brought it under control.

Because of you, our community can now heal after over a year of suffering, and it is my honor to commemorate all of the brave souls who made this possible.

As we continue down the road to recovery which you helped to pave, please know that our entire community is deeply thankful for all that you have done, that we stand united behind our Caribbean community, and that we recognize the fact that Miami-Dade County would not be all that it is today without you.



Broward County Mayor Urges Caribbeans American To Get Vaccinated

The large Caribbean-American community in Broward County is being urged to get vaccinated by Broward County Mayor Steve Geller.

At a recent press briefing, Mayor Geller singled out the Caribbean-American community for being hesitant to take the shot since the start of vaccinations in December.

“We’ve seen vaccine hesitancy particularly among the English-speaking and French-speaking Caribbean-American communities,” he stated.

“We have seen in Broward County, some of our southern zip codes and some areas of West Broward show an alarming discrepancy in the percentage of people vaccinated. Again, it does not matter your age, ethnicity, or national origin. I am urging everybody to protect themselves, their loved ones and their community. Get vaccinated. COVID is not over.”

He added that since state Governor Ron DeSantis rescinded COVID-19 restrictions, many South Florida residents seem to think that the country is at the end of the pandemic.

“When you have roughly 60 percent of the adult population



The large Caribbean-American community in Broward County is being urged to get vaccinated by Broward County Mayor Steve Geller.

vaccinated, you would expect the [COVID-19] numbers to continue to improve. However, I have sensed almost a sense of giddiness that the COVID crisis is now completely over. It is not completely over. It has been substantially improving and if we continue to use common sense precautions, it is our hope that we can beat this,” he stressed.

Some 60 percent of Broward County’s adult

population have been vaccinated, according to Mayor Geller but at least 70 percent of the population needs to be vaccinated to achieve herd immunity.

Several vaccination sites are still open in South Florida as local leaders say they are now shifting focus to pop-up sites in an attempt to provide access to different communities.



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Vaccinating The Underserved And Hard-To-Reach Populations Through Strategic Outreach



A patient gets vaccinated by the CHI team.

Tasha Robinson sat in the observation area of the COVID-19 vaccination site, set up by Community Health of South Florida, Inc. (CHI) at Naranja Park. Although her mouth was covered by her mask, she smiled excitedly with her eyes. Just minutes prior, Tasha had received the shot outside the CHI's mobile medical van.

"I feel so much better. I feel safe and relieved," said Robinson.

Two years ago, she had a stroke and is still recovering

from the effects. As she sat in her wheelchair, she shared her renewed outlook of hope and optimism, thanks to the COVID-19 vaccination.

"I don't want to get sick anymore," she said. "I just want to do my best to stay healthy."

CHI has administered the free vaccine to more than 6,900 people in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. What makes the non-profit healthcare company's approach unique is two-fold. First, CHI has been reaching out to underserved

patients and community members without health insurance and few resources. Second, the federally qualified health center has utilized its outreach team and mobile medical van to go into public housing complexes, community parks, and even homeless encampments to vaccinate.

"We have always believed that health care should be accessible to everyone, regardless of income, race or class," said Brodes H. Hartley, Jr. CEO of CHI.

"Our vaccination efforts have worked to ensure the most vulnerable populations are reached along with everyone else. It's what we do. We have been putting patient care first for 50 years."

Among those vaccinated by CHI, 46 percent were Hispanic, and 25 percent were Black. Minorities have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, and CHI has pushed to ensure those

all get vaccinated this is not going to go away. I really don't want my grandchildren for the rest of their lives growing up with this over their heads and having to wear masks."

CHI has been at the forefront of the pandemic response. It was the first to offer drive-through COVID-19 testing in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties, and it continues to lead the way with its vaccination efforts.



Blacks lag behind other groups in getting vaccinated.

populations do not get left behind.

Beverly Drinkwater also received her vaccination at the same event as Robinson. "It means giving me, hopefully, peace of mind," said Drinkwater. "Until we

Those looking to get vaccinated can request to be put on the list by visiting the CHI website, chisouthfl.org or calling (305) 252-4820.



Parents Can Rest Easy With Childhood COVID Vaccine

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

"Vaccinating children for COVID-19 is a key component to reaching the two-thirds threshold necessary to obtain herd immunity and stop the pandemic from continuing to spread and mutate," says Dr. Miguela Caniza, Director of the St. Jude Global Infectious Diseases Program at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Dr. Caniza's statement came following the U.S. Food & Drug Administration's (FDA) announcement on May 10, 2021 that opens the door for children 12-15 to receive the Pfizer vaccine for the prevention of COVID-19. An officially released FDA letter to Pfizer noted: "On May 10, 2021, having concluded that revising this EUA (Emergency Use Authorization) is appropriate to protect the public health or safety under section 564(g) (2) of the Act, FDA again is reissuing the letter in its entirety to authorize emergency use of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine for the prevention of COVID-19 for individuals 12 through 15 years of age, as well as for individuals 16 years of age and older."

The FDA says the decision was taken based on results of a continuing Phase 1/2/3 trial involving approximately 46,000 participants, including 2,260 subjects 12-15 years of age that revealed no safety concerns. The "FDA concluded that it is reasonable to believe that Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine may be effective in individuals 12 through 15 years of age."

Endorsing the decision, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices made an interim recommendation for the use of the Pfizer vaccine in this age group.

Pfizer has already started Phase 1 trials for efficacy and reactions in children six months to 11 years and are hopeful for positive indications sometime later this year.

REST EASY

Parents who have been concerned about their children being infected and waiting for the go ahead to have them inoculated, can now rest easy. Jamaican American Joy Belnavis is one such parent. She took action as soon as the announcement was made to



Kai Belnavis receiving his first dose of the Pfizer vaccine.

have her 14-year-old son, Kai, vaccinated.

"When they said it was open for children his age group, I was happy. But, I thought he would be apprehensive because he doesn't like needles. Surprisingly though, he was the one who came to me and said he wanted the vaccine. So, he got it a few days after we spoke about it and he was fine," Belnavis said.

She continued: "I just felt it was important because whenever we are around people,

vaccinated or not, Kai has to wear a mask to protect them, and himself. Some people say the vaccines were rushed, but I feel that it was done securely, they went through all the steps. I wasn't worried, although I was a little concerned because he has allergies, but he wasn't affected at all. I feel a lot more at ease, and certainly confident about travelling now."

Asked about his vaccine experience Kai noted: "I didn't feel anything until the next day when my arm felt a little heavy.

And, when I was actually getting the shot, I didn't feel anything. My best friend at school also got the vaccine," Kai said smiling.

Although COVID-19 causes less severe disease, better prognosis, and unlikely death in children than it does in adults, youngsters are still vulnerable to some extent. According to the American Society of Pediatrics, more than "3.9 million children have tested positive for COVID-19 since the onset of the pandemic...and for the week ending May 13, children were 24.0 percent of new reported weekly COVID-19 cases."

Like all viruses that affect human beings, we will have to live with Covid-19 while finding ways to mitigate its debilitating effects and the potential for new variants.

Said Dr. Caniza: "The COVID virus has come to stay with us and our best defense against minimizing long-term impacts on our society is to achieve herd immunity. As the research continues to bear out the safety and efficacy of COVID vaccine use in children, it is likely these vaccines will become part of the current 14 routine vaccination in childhood."



Tribute to our COVID-19 HEROES



Spotlight On Caribbean American COVID-19 Heroes At Community Health Of South Florida, Inc.

Throughout the pandemic, Caribbean American health care heroes have been at the forefront of the battle against the deadly COVID-19 virus, and many are at the Community Health Of South Florida, Inc. Here are four you should know as we salute them this Caribbean American Heritage Month.

DR. JHEANNEL WHITE

Jamaican doctor Dr. Jheannel White is a graduate of the Brodes H. Hartley Jr. Teaching Health Center at CHI, and soon to be the physician at West Perrine Health Center, 18255 Homestead Ave, Miami, FL 33157.

She is devoted to caring for



Dr. Jheannel White

the underserved community of South Florida and believes in taking the time to fully address a patient's needs.

White received her Medical Degree from the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus in Jamaica, her native country. She gained extensive clinical experience treating a diverse patient population.

Dr. White is committed to providing compassionate patient care and enjoys developing lasting relationships with her patients. She respects and values the different cultures of patients and understands that each patient is unique.

DR. ELIZABETH PHILIPPE

Dr. Elizabeth Philippe is a Haitian immigrant and the Associate Graduate Medical Education Director of Community Health of South Florida Inc.'s Brodes H. Hartley, Jr. Teaching Health Center. She is also CHI's Chief of Family Medicine.



Dr. Elizabeth Philippe

In 2005, she joined CHI as an attending physician and as the medical director for its school-based health program. She is fluent in English, French and Creole, with a proficiency in Spanish. Dr. Philippe enjoys her work as a provider at CHI where she helps train resident physicians and cares for patients. She has an interest in HIV/AIDS and youth development programs

Dr. Philippe became inspired to help people in underserved communities after graduating from the State University Medical School of Haiti in 1984. She discovered this passion when she was completing a one-year requirement in a disadvantaged area her native country. To further her goals, she pursued her studies at Yale University where she obtained a master's degree in public health in 1986.

After working for a short period of time at the New York State Department of Health, Dr. Philippe returned to Haiti in 1987 to work as the Medical Director in the Albert Schweitzer Hospital's Community Health Department.

In 1990, she served as the National Coordinator for the Haitian Ministry of Public Health's Maternal and Child Health Program. Soon after, she joined the World Health Organization/Pan American

Health Organization and was actively involved with its national immunization program.

In 1995, Dr. Philippe returned to the United States and enrolled at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine as a fellow in a National Institute on Drug Abuse-sponsored program in epidemiology and prevention of substance abuse. Following graduation, she was accepted as a resident in the family medicine program at Jackson Memorial Hospital in 1999. A board-certified family medicine practitioner, Dr. Philippe completed her residency training in 2002 and then worked as an attending physician and preceptor at Jackson Memorial Hospital.

DR. GERALD PIERRE

Haitian-born Dr. Gerald Pierre is a beloved OB/GYN doctor at CHI's Martin Luther King Jr./Clinica Campesina Health Center, 810 W. Mowry Dr. Homestead, FL 33030.

Dr. Pierre is board certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. He is also a fellow of both the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the National Health Services Corps.

Deeply rooted in the South Florida community, the Haitian immigrant is passionate about



Dr. Gerald Pierre

Community Health of South Florida, Inc. In fact, he has donated more than \$25,000 to CHI to help build the Children's Crisis Center, a center at CHI for children with severe behavioral health issues.

While Dr. Pierre was born and raised in Haiti, he moved to United States to complete his bachelor's degree in biology from Bard College in upstate New York. Dr. Pierre earned his medical degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tenn. He later went on to Executive MBA Studies at the University of Central Florida. Dr. Pierre completed an internship in obstetrics/gynecology at Hubbard Hospital before going on to his residency, also in obstetrics/gynecology, at Vanderbilt University, both in Nashville. Following his

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5B)

GET THE FACTS. GET THE VACCINE.

FACT

COVID-19 vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA in any way.

FACT

The COVID-19 vaccines went through the same testing as other vaccines. Mass government funding made it possible to run the required three phases of clinical trials at the same time.

FACT

None of the authorized and recommended COVID-19 vaccines in the United States contain the live virus that causes COVID-19 and cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

FACT

If you already had COVID-19, reinfection is still possible, and the vaccine can offer more reliable immunity than a previous infection.

FACT

There is currently no evidence that the COVID-19 vaccine causes any problems with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta.

Our best shot FOR A STRONG, HEALTHY COMMUNITY.

*Facts based on information from the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Please seek out credible sources of information to make your decisions about the vaccines.



miamidade.gov/vaccine

Spotlight On Caribbean American COVID-19 Heroes At Community Health Of South Florida, Inc.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5B)

residency, he was the clinical director and director of OB/GYN at the Community Health Services Inc. in Hartford, Conn. He then worked in private practice in Bloomfield, Conn. Actively involved in the community, he previously served as a board member and treasurer of the Nap Ford Community Charter School. He is fluent in English, French and Creole and has a working knowledge of Spanish.



Gregory Fignole

University School of Medicine in Haiti.

Proud of his Haitian roots, he completed a required year of work in an underserved area of Haiti, in 2007 he moved to the United States. Here, he attended the American Medical Academy in Miami in 2008 where he earned a degree in Emergency Medical Services.

Fignole worked for five years as an emergency room technician at Kendall Regional Medical Center and Homestead Baptist Hospital. Later, after obtaining his nursing degree at Florida International University, he worked at Westchester General Hospital until the summer of 2014. He then joined MedXM, an insurance company, doing Health Risk Assessments.



GREGORY FIGNOLE, ARNP

Haitian-born Gregory Fignole is an ARNP in Family Medicine at Community Health of South Florida Inc. CHI's Martin Luther King Jr./Clinica Campesina Health Center, 810 W. Mowry Dr. Homestead, FL 33030.

He is committed to making a positive impact in educating the community about healthy living, especially the Haitian community. After completing some of his clinical hours at CHI, he decided to join the team in March 2015 to work as a provider in family medicine.

He graduated from Florida International University in 2014 as a Family Nurse Practitioner. Prior to that, in 2006 he graduated from Notre Dame

On-Site COVID-19 Testing Now At Miami Airport

On-site COVID-19 testing at Miami International Airport is now available to passengers, employees and visitors at two convenient locations, just in time before the summer travel season begins

The Central Terminal facility, operated by Communitel and Family Rehab, Inc. and located at MIA's Concourse E ground level median in front of Door 11, provides Antigen and Rapid PCR tests with results within 15 minutes and PCR tests with results within 40 minutes. The facility is open daily from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. and based on flight schedules, for walk-ins and scheduled appointments. For testing costs or to schedule an appointment, call 305-225-6266. Customers will receive a written test result, or results can be emailed upon request.

"As travel continues to increase and re-start between Miami-Dade County and countries around the world, helping passengers meet the travel requirements of their destinations without having to leave the airport is a huge benefit to travelers at MIA," said Mayor of Miami-Dade County Daniella Levine Cava. "Congratulations to MIA and its service providers, for making testing even more convenient for our residents and visitors."

"We are thrilled to partner



On-site COVID-19 testing at Miami International Airport is now available.

with Miami-Dade County and MIA to offer a convenient and reliable COVID testing center at the airport. Passengers can now get a hassle-free rapid test in minutes just a few steps from the terminal," said Dr. Inti Fernandez, Medical Director, Family Rehab, Inc. "As flyers continue returning to Miami, we stand ready to make their travel experience as safe and easy as possible."

At both facilities, there is no age requirement but patients under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Discounts for MIA employees who present an airport ID are available.

MIA's South Terminal testing facility, operated by Nomi Health and located near the Concourse H TSA Checkpoint on the departures level at Door

20, provides Antigen, PCR, and (coming soon) Rapid PCR tests daily from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. for walk-ins and scheduled appointments. PCR test results are provided within 24 hours, Rapid PCR test results within one hour with an oral swab will soon be available, and Antigen results are available within 15 minutes. Notifications and results are provided to customers via text and/or email. For testing costs or to schedule an appointment, visit the Nomi Health website.

To find out the COVID-19 testing requirements by country, visit the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) Travel Centre at iatatravelcentre.com/world.php.



Florida's energy future is on the horizon. And we will never stop moving toward it. We simply envision continuing to deliver energy that's not just the most reliable, or the cleanest, but also the most affordable. That's America's best energy value working for you and for Florida.

CHANGING THE CURRENT. FPL.

Tribute to our COVID-19 HEROES



Caribbean American COVID-19 Hero ~ Dr. Luiz Hernandez



Dr. Luiz Hernandez

Another Caribbean COVID-19 hero you should know is Dr. Luiz Hernandez, a Dominican Republic-born nursing professor at Broward College.

Dr. Hernandez earned a dual college degree to become a mechanical and electrical engineer in the DR before moving to South Florida. Here

he decided to make a career change to nursing.

When he discovered this new passion, he went on to earn his Associate of Science in Nursing, Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Master of Science in Nursing, and eventually his Doctor of Nursing Practice in 2016.

His passion became teaching the very new nursing students in their first few courses of nursing school.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought challenges to the entire world, and nursing education was no exception. Dr. Hernandez teaches some of the first set of courses in the nursing program at Broward College. The coursework he teaches requires much hands-on training and face-to-face nursing labs to learn the skills that are so incredibly important at the beginning of the nursing program. Dr. Hernandez also prides himself on creating relationships with students and reading facial expressions to help him understand their level of engagement and understanding. He quickly realized he needed to adapt to the current situation of virtual/remote learning to help his students in any way possible.

He exceeded all expectations to advocate for his nursing students. He helped lend students small equipment and necessary supplies to teach them virtually and allow them to practice vital skills from home. Eventually they were able to establish safe, small groups of students spread out over many classrooms to practice clinical skills and demonstrations. This meant 12-hour workdays that consisted of running from classroom to classroom, but Dr. Hernandez was committed to ensuring his students got the

education they needed.

This spring, Dr. Hernandez was able to take student groups to the hospital setting for the first time in over a year. They adapted to new guidelines, but he is grateful to be back and teaching the future of the

nursing profession in a hospital environment. He sees this as an opportunity to be a part of the solution, educating nurses to fill the many vacancies created by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Caribbean American COVID-19 Hero ~ Rachel Chavez



Rachel Chavez

During the early days of the pandemic, when little was known about how COVID-19 was transmitted and its full effects, Caribbean-roots nurse Rachel Chavez, RN, was there helping to educate her nurses on the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control.

When the number of positive cases in Broward County spiked and the dedicated COVID-19 beds began to fill up at Broward Health Imperial Point, Chavez was there to encourage her nurses.

When nurses were in tears over patients who succumbed to COVID-19, Chavez was there to lend emotional support.

As the nurse manager in charge of Broward Health Imperial Point's dedicated COVID-19 unit, Chavez and her medical team cared for 510 COVID-19 patients in 2020. Through it all, Chavez kept the staff supported and motivated. "It has been my honor to lead my department to practice at the height of what they are trained to do by enhancing the level of care and service that we provide to the community,"

Chavez said.

When COVID-19 vaccinations became available to frontline workers, Chavez directed and managed the hospital's internal vaccination clinic helping to vaccinate more than 1,000 caregivers and staff.

"Rachel is a true example of what it looks like to 'lead with passion,'" said Netonua Reyes, MSN, RN, the chief nursing officer and chief operating officer at Broward Health Imperial Point. "She is dedicated, caring and committed to the overall success and growth of her team."

Nurse Chavez leads about 70 caregivers in Broward Health Imperial Point's Progressive Care Unit (PCU). The 49-bed PCU provides medical intervention and care for acutely ill patients who have a wide range of complex, progressive, rapidly changing, medical or surgical disorders. These complex cases require an interdisciplinary approach and a high intensity of nursing care and non-invasive monitoring.



Caribbean COVID-19 Hero ~ James McCrae

Bahamas-roots James McCrae is a nurse manager and leader who oversees the Surgical Telemetry Unit and Critical Care Unit at Broward Health North. McCrae provides exceptional service to patients, their families and staff, especially during the height of the COVID-19 crisis.

He leads an amazing team of caregivers who have staffed the hospital's primary "COVID positive units" this year- 9th floor and CCU. Not only has McCrae maintained a spirit of inclusion, positivity and "change-welcome," he has instilled that spirit within his staff, and they have risen to the challenge of caring for our sickest patients during this past year's very frightening and uncertain pandemic.

McCrae says his most memorable moment/experience during COVID-19 was seeing staff grow into true COVID nurses and the first discharge of a COVID patient.

His most challenging moment or experience he said was dealing with the hospital's first COVID death and ensuring staff was safe with appropriate P.P.E.

McCrae is a strong staff advocate and consistently recognizes and rewards his staff. The staff in turn, have an "all in"



James McCrae

attitude and a spirit of "readiness" because of being their leader.

McCrae is often found on his telemetry unit, or in his ICU caring for patients. He is a "sleeves pushed up" manager who leads by example. He is an ICU trained nurse who has excelled both on and off the hospital grounds.

McCrae is a military veteran. He has dedicated his life to

service both domestically and abroad, defending our country from local and foreign threats. He is a humble and genuine person as well as a kind and extremely competent caregiver. Most certainly McCrae is very deserving to be recognized as Broward Health North's Healthcare Hero.



Caribbean COVID-19 Hero ~ Dr. Wentworth G. Jarrett

The journey I took to being a physician started with the motto of my high school Calabar in Kingston, Jamaica: "The Utmost for the Highest."

So, my personal journey became doing the most for my highest calling -mankind. Becoming a doctor gave me the opportunity to participate in the process of life with so many persons - young and old.

As a family physician, I have had the privilege of celebrating the joys of births, graduations, puberty, retirements, marriages, and unfortunately sometimes sad departures. I have treated or guided preventative measures, medical treatments, assisted with deliveries, worked in emergencies, and helped to mitigate the various health crises we humans face.

Since Medical School at the University of the West Indies (UWI) in 1977, residency at University of Miami



Dr. Wentworth G. Jarrett is a Jamaican-born family medicine doctor in Miami, Florida and the primary Family Physician at Dr. Jarrett's Wellness Center. He has been practicing medicine in South Florida for more than 20 years.

Family Medicine Residency, and subsequently private practice, I have been exposed to a tremendous deluge of data, pathology and concepts

along with treatments and strategies for health maintenance and wellness.

My journey led me to understand some of what we could do to influence health and actually make a difference. My training and work with Professor John Golding really opened my eyes to deadly viral diseases and our responsibility to protect each other. There I saw the results of the polio epidemic that left innumerable victims of that horrible disease crippled with alarming deformities.

The realization that our childhood vaccinations for polio, measles, mumps, rubella, smallpox, later on hepatitis, haemophilus influenza, meningitis, and now more recently respiratory syncytial disease are among some of the few miraculous interventions we can do as physicians to prevent some of the dreadful viral and bacterial scourges that put all our wellbeing at risk.

Polio is no more, smallpox, hideous lab-based bioweapons, ebola, and some insect borne diseases are now in check. As

Doctors we treat with an eye to prevention and also mitigation of diseases. We sometimes fail despite best efforts, but attempting has is the cornerstone of what we do.

COVID-19

No one could have imagined the scope and devastating reach of this current COVID-19 pandemic. We have always lived with Corona viruses, but this tragedy has touched every aspect of our lives. Families devastated, schools disrupted, economies destroyed, jobs evaporating. This has touched everyone - rich, poor, all age groups, every ethnicity, and has particularly affected the minority populations worldwide. The current slate of therapeutics is not great and the dissolution to strange unproven home remedies and gimmicks has been alarming.

However, there are some promising therapies if administered early. A few examples are monoclonal antibodies, subcutaneous Remdesivir, oral treatments, and some supplements that are somewhat difficult to obtain. The clear goal has been to prevent infection and mitigating complications.

Clinical research has shown efficacy of the currently available vaccines with more coming on stream. This should be the goal of everyone. Get vaccinated as soon as you can, ignoring the naysayers, the peculiar non-researched doubters.

The risk of a large pool of unvaccinated people, left unchecked could cause mutations of the apolitical virus that really does not care what we think. This could potentially render our current options non-effective.

We need the vaccine to be available to all at-risk populations and those with limited resources such as the Caribbean, Latin America, Asia, South Pacific. I have seen the result of unchecked disease in the past, and currently with this monster.

We must, as the privileged custodians of life with an opportunity to participate, get vaccinated. And I am doing my part by offering the Moderna vaccine in my private practice. Continue to do the common sense things until hopefully, we can limit transmission with herd immunity and return to some semblance of normality.



Caribbean COVID-19 Hero ~ Gina Kenol

2020 was a harrowing year for everyone, especially for healthcare workers. Haitian immigrant Gina Kenol, a registered nurse at Jackson Memorial Hospital, faced many challenges both at work and home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Working during the pandemic was incredibly stressful," reminisced Kenol, who was born in Haiti. "In nursing school, we were taught what to do during a global health crisis, but nothing could have prepared us for COVID-19."

When COVID forced hospitals to restrict visitation, nurses took on the added role of a temporary family member to their patients.

"When I would visit patients, they wouldn't want me to leave," Kenol said. "Those moments of human interaction were all the contact they had with other people."

Life away from work was also stressful for Nurse Kenol. Before entering her house after work, Kenol would have to remove her scrubs and immediately shower because she feared potentially exposing her family.

She also remembers



Gina Kenol

strangers acting fearful around her when they realized she worked in a hospital. "One evening after I left work, I went to pump gas, and a woman who was pumping went back in her car after she noticed my uniform," said Kenol.

Despite the challenges, Kenol insists she is proud to be a nurse – and is hopeful the pandemic is nearing its end.

"With the number of vaccines available to the public and the number of people vaccinated, I believe we'll be able to return to back to life as we knew it before COVID," she told Caribbean Today.



HONORING OUR HEALTHCARE HEROES

Our Patients Say It Best...

When I came in with a heart attack to the ER, you were God's instruments with your immediate attention and amazing team work.

-Sal

So grateful for all of your love and dedication to keep new moms and newborns healthy and safe.

-Nancy

Thank you so much for your careful attention, kindness, and care. It helped make my hospital stay a bit more bearable.

-Nataly

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Caribbean COVID-19 Heroes Nationally



Jamaican-born nurse, Sandra Lindsay, who became one of the most famous nurses in the United States after receiving the COVID-19 shot in the US delivered remarks to Harris at the ICN/CAAN global Caribbean inauguration tribute to Kamala Harris. (ICN/CAAN screengrab)

NURSE SANDRA LINDSAY

The first person to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine in the US was a Caribbean nurse born in Jamaica.

Nurse Sandra Lindsay is a director of critical care at Northwell Health in New York who in January, appeared on the virtual global Caribbean inauguration celebration tribute from Invest Caribbean to honor Kamala Harris.

Lindsay, 52, an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) nurse at Long Island Jewish Medical Center in Queens, received the first vaccine on December 14, 2020.

"I believe in science," Lindsay stressed. "As a nurse, my practice is guided by science; and so, I trust that. What I don't trust is that, if I contract COVID, I don't know how it would impact or those who I come in contact with," Lindsay continued. "So, I encourage everyone to take the vaccine."

DR. MICHELLE CHESTER

Guyanese-born Dr. Michelle Chester made history as well by becoming the first practitioner to administer the first COVID-19 shot in the US. She is New York's Northwell Health Director of Employee Health Services and administered the shot to Nurse Lindsay.

Dr. Michelle Chester, the corporate director Employee Health Services at Northwell Health, was born in capital of Guyana, Georgetown. After migrating to the US, she attended Far Rockaway High School and then Rutgers University.

"We all should give this vaccine a chance to propel us into the new beginning of ending Covid-19," Dr. Chester said after administering the first the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine at the Long Island Jewish Medical Center in the Queens, New York to Nurse Lindsay

The 52-year-old immigrated to the US 30 years ago and, she went to community college and then to Lehman College in the Bronx for her nursing degree.

emergency medicine at Lenox Hill Hospital in Manhattan.

As a frontline emergency medicine physician, he stepped up in December 2020 to become the second person in the US to take the Pfizer COVID-19 shot.

Dr. Duroseau said he was eager to send a message, especially to Black people, that vaccination is safe.

"I think we need to fear the Covid-19 virus more than we need to fear the vaccine," said Dr. Duroseau.

Dr. Duroseau is the current Chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine at Lenox Hill Hospital (LHH), NS/LIJ. As Chair, Dr. Duroseau provides overall leadership of the department, with



Dr. Yves Duroseau

Dr. Duroseau joined LHH from the Kings County Hospital Center in Brooklyn, NY, where he was the Director of Service in the Department of Emergency Medicine. Prior to his post at Kings County Hospital Center, Dr. Duroseau served as the Medical Director of the Department of Emergency Medicine and as an Attending Physician at St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City. He has also served as a per diem physician with North-Shore LIJ since 2011.

He has held several academic appointments. Most recently as an Assistant Clinical Professor at the State University of New York, and has held academic appointments with New York Medical College and New York University Medical Center. He is a Peer Reviewer for the Academic Emergency Medicine journal. He has published on his experience and successes with the use of Lean methodologies in transforming Kings County Hospital's Emergency Department.

Dr. Duroseau's commitment to service is demonstrated

through his founding of the mentorship programs, Doctors as Mentors at St. Vincent's Hospital and Bridging the Gap at New York University and New York University Medical School, both intended to support minority students interested in or pursuing careers in medicine. He has also served in numerous hospital and academic committee roles centered on quality, information technology, philanthropy, Lean management, hospital programming, and other initiatives.

Dr. Duroseau earned his medical degree and Master of Public Health degree as well as completed his residency in emergency medicine and internship in internal medicine at The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences in Washington, D.C. He has completed postdoctoral research in Medical Informatics at The National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Emergency Medicine.



Dr. Michelle Chester

She went to work at Lenox Hill Hospital in Manhattan and rose through the ranks until she became the director of critical care nursing at Long Island Jewish Medical Center, part of the Northwell Health network, in 2016.

responsibility for strategic planning, development, clinical services, quality, professional performance, and medical education.

Dr. Duroseau is also the Co-Chair of the Performance Improvement Coordinating Group (PICG) for Lenox Hill Hospital. The PICG is responsible for overseeing all quality initiatives for the hospital.

DR. YVES DUROSEAU

Haitian roots Dr. Yves Duroseau is the chair of



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They include:

DR. WAYNE J.M. FRASER

Jamaican-born Dr. Wayne J.M. Fraser is a Diplomate with the American Board of Family



Dr. Wayne J.M. Fraser

Practice and a family medicine specialist at Total Health Medical Centers.

“I always loved the study of biology, and anything related to the human body, it was my dream to become a doctor. I saw it as a way of providing service to others,” he told CT. Dr. Fraser attended the University of the West Indies Medical School in Jamaica and completed his residency in Family Medicine at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Hospital.

DR. SONIA SMITH, MD

Jamaican American Dr. Sonia Smith is a Board-Certified doctor who specializes in



Dr. Sonia Smith, MD

Family Medicine at Total Health Medical Centers.

“I was socialized to Medicine from childhood.

I love science and saw how what doctors do in the field of medicine, touches people’s daily lives,” she told CT. “I wanted to do my part, and becoming a physician affords me that privilege. I received my medical degree from St. Christopher College of Medicine, Luton, UK.”

Dr. Smith completed her residency in family medicine at Columbus Regional Medical Center in Georgia. Her family originates from Jamaica.



Dr. Freud Telemaque

DR. FREUD TELEMAQUE

Cuban-Haitian American Dr. Freud Telemaque is an internal medicine specialist at Total Health Medical Centers. He has roots both in Cuba and Haiti. “Being a doctor has always been my dream,” Dr. Telemaque told CT.

“I studied medicine in Haiti at University de Notre Dame and completed my residency and PHD there as well. Caring for my patients drives me to be my best and I get my drive from my family. My father is an engineer and my mother a retired educator. My grandmother on my father’s side is Cuban and on my mother’s side Haitian, so I get the best of multiple cultures.”

For more information call Total Health Medical Centers at (954) 748-6665 in Lauderhill, Florida or (954) 796-8181 in Coral Springs, Florida. Log on also to their Facebook page at [facebook.com/totalhealthmedicalcenters](https://www.facebook.com/totalhealthmedicalcenters) to learn more, meet the physicians, and hear amazing patient stories or log on to totalhealth4me.com/



THE HEROES ARE DIVERSE,
but their mission is identical.

We thank everyone throughout our health system—and throughout our community — who came together to fight this pandemic. Your efforts have been heroic. And while we still have a little further to go, it’s uplifting to finally see brighter skies on the horizon.



Caribbean COVID-19 Heroes Nationally

NURSE PATRICIA CUMMINGS

Registered Guyanese-born Nurse Patricia Cummings had the opportunity to administer the coronavirus vaccine to then US Vice-President-elect Kamla Harris and her husband Doug Emhoff with the vaccine last December at the United Medical Centre in Washington, D.c.,

“It was a Christmas gift. I received a call on Christmas Day, and I was asked if I would be okay with taking on that task. And I was like ‘Are you kidding me? Would I be okay?’ I would never pass up such an opportunity. Of course, I was very nervous, but I never once second-guessed it,” Cummings stated.

Cummings revealed that she had to keep the information secret and she almost told her mother just before leaving her home.

After receiving the vaccine, Harris posted on social media: “On the frontlines of this fight are nurses like Patricia, who administered my vaccine yesterday. As the daughter of immigrants from Guyana, Patricia has been working tirelessly to protect and save



US Vice-President-elect Kamla Harris (left) with Guyanese Registered Nurse Patricia Cummings shortly before she was administered the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. (Photo: Kamala Harris/Facebook)

lives. To Patricia and all the nurses battling this pandemic - thank you.”

Cummings, who is currently pursuing a master’s degree in Nurse Executive Leadership at Walden University, said: “I am more convinced than ever about the

career path that I have chosen.”

Cummings has been a nurse for over 15 years and was born in Bartica and spent most of her early childhood in Berbice and Georgetown before moving to St. Lucia at 10 years old. She graduated St Joseph’s Convent, Castries at

16 and her parents migrated to the USA shortly after.

Cummings said she was inspired to become a nurse after hearing stories from her aunt, who worked in the field. She thanks her parents Paul and Patricia Cummings for instilling the value of education

and putting your best foot forward in her and their oldest son, who is a psychiatric nurse.

The mother of two urges everyone to protect themselves against the virus and to take the vaccine if they have an opportunity to receive it.



COVID-19 And Mental Health

BY DR. BELINDA J. McINTOSH

Trauma and stress are leading causes of vulnerability to depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about an unprecedented level of stress that is being felt across generations and on a global scale. Whether the impact of this stress is felt acutely, chronically, or intermittently, identifying symptoms of depression and emotional distress and reducing barriers to obtaining support and treatment will be critical in the coming months and years.

The COVID-19 pandemic, the official pandemic response, and media coverage of the pandemic have given rise to significant stress. In addition to the loss of loved ones to COVID-19, many people suffered worsening personal health due to the effects of COVID-19 infection or inadequate treatment or preventative care for other health conditions. Financial strain, food insecurity, job loss, social isolation, and educational losses are among the myriad negative social effects of the pandemic. The impact of the pandemic on mental health is

evidenced by concerning rises in substance abuse, depression, and anxiety as well as increased demand for mental health services.

Protracted or recurrent exposure to stressful situations significantly increases the likelihood of developing depressive and anxious symptoms both acutely and later in life. Although most people who are exposed to trauma do not develop a mental illness, the risk is greater for people who are vulnerable either due to hereditary factors or prior exposure to stress. A public health approach to addressing stress and depression due to COVID-19 should include campaigns to normalize the impact of stress on mental health, reduce stigma and other barriers to help-seeking, and provide information to help people identify warning signs of depression such as loss of interest, fatigue, insomnia, irritability, and hopelessness. In addition, availability and access to resources for obtaining care and support must be increased to meet the demand.

Even as parts of the world appear to be recovering from the worst phases of pandemic



Dr. Belinda J. McIntosh

and vaccines are providing significant hope for future relief, waves of illness, grief, and fear continue to play out in parts of the country and the world. Even in areas that are recovering, the psychological

impact of the pandemic may be felt by many people for a long time to come.

The ongoing need for mental health resources to address depression and stress-related conditions due to

COVID-19 presents a major challenge to public health, particularly in communities of color where stressors associated with systemic racism and socioeconomic inequality already confer increased risk of developing depression and trauma-related disorders.

Higher levels of stress and reduced access to healthcare are correlated with the disproportionate rate of COVID-19 deaths in communities of color. Because these communities are typically also underserved when it comes to mental health, awareness of the psychological impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic provides a call to action on increasing access to mental health resources especially in communities of color.

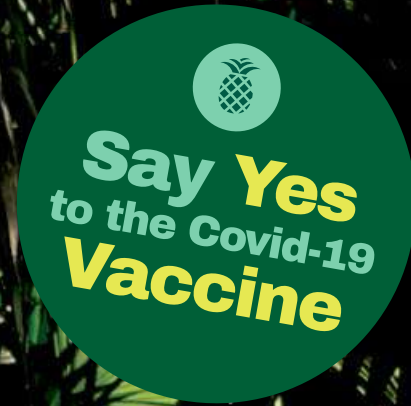
Information on Depression is available from the National Alliance on Mental Illness at nami.org. If you or someone you know is experiencing suicidal thoughts, help is available 24/7 by calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).





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Yvonne Johnson, M.D., Chief Medical Officer

Let's bring back the hugs. Let's bring back the smiles. Let's beat this pandemic together.
If you have any questions or doubts related to the vaccine, visit BaptistHealth.net/SayYes for more information.

Griffiths, Patterson, Boldon, Lyttle & More Tell The Caribbean Story For Island SPACE Museum

Singers Marcia Griffiths and Kevin Lyttle, Athlete Ato Boldon and former Jamaica Prime Minister PJ Patterson will come together for a common cause on Sunday, June 27, 2021, at 6 PM EDT when Island SPACE Caribbean Museum presents Magic at the Museum.

Attendees will be wowed by these and other high profile Caribbean personalities who will lend their voices to the telling of the Caribbean story through narratives, music, dance, dramatizations, poetry and more.

“This is more than just a showcase of talent, it is a high-quality production that tells our story, our way,” said Lloyd Stanbury, vice president of the board of directors.

“In a fitting close to Caribbean-American Heritage Month, we are bringing the

current exhibits and museum themes to life. For example, Magic will include a moving and powerful rendition of Bob Marley’s Redemption Song by Marcia Griffiths, Wayne Armond of Chalice, former Third World drummer Willie Stewart, Reggae’s first Grammy Award Winner Mykal Rose and other guest artists,” Stanbury added.

Guests will explore themes such as festivals and carnivals, music, culinary traditions and sports as shared by leaders in these areas. The story of Caribbean governments will be



Reggae icon Marcia Griffiths at Circle House Studios recording an exclusive version of Redemption Song alongside Wayne Armond of Chalice, Willie Stewart of Third World, Mykal Rose of Black Uhuru for the inaugural Magic at the Museum event at Island SPACE Caribbean Museum. (Photo courtesy of Island SPACE)

partly presented by former Prime Minister Patterson. Later on, Inner Circle of “Bad Boys” fame, Kevin Lyttle, Patricia “Miss Pat” Chin of VP Records and Gordon Henderson from the Dominican/Guadeloupean Exile One, will be featured in an intriguing mini

documentary on the influential music of the Caribbean.

Viewers around the world can gain free virtual access to Magic at the Museum by registering at islandspacefl.org. The showcase will also air via streaming partners Reggaeville, VP Records and Jamaicans.com. On-site at the museum in Plantation, Florida, an exclusive group of dignitaries, sponsors and VIPs will walk a pre-event red carpet and then watch the magic unfold in person.

“While the event is free, it is a fundraiser, and the audience will be asked to donate. There are also pre-event opportunities to support the museum through sponsorship, becoming a member and/or volunteering through the website,” Stanbury said.

North America has long been home to millions of citizens of Caribbean descent living in

metropolitan areas like South Florida, Toronto, and New York City. Nearly 50% of Broward County’s foreign-born population, and in Miami-Dade about 32%, have roots in the Caribbean. As these populations grow in numbers, economic power, political representation and cultural and artistic influence, a fitting way to highlight the impact of people from the Caribbean is a museum and space for historical reference.

Island SPACE Caribbean Museum is open Thursdays through Saturdays from 11 a.m. through 7 p.m. and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. General entry fees are \$10 per adult and \$5 per child. Donations, sponsorships, memberships and volunteer commitments are encouraged. Learn more at islandspacefl.org.

Haitian Women's Group Welcomes Extension Of TPS

The New York-based Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees (HWHR) has welcomed the Joe Biden administration’s decision to re-designate Temporary Protective Status (TPS) to over 100,000 undocumented Haitians living in the United States.

“Members of Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees joined the National TPS Alliance in 2017 to protect TPS and vow to fight for a permanent solution for TPS holders from all countries that have been granted the status,” said Ninaj Raoul, HWHR’s Executive Director. “Our members will continue to push forward together with our allies from all countries granted TPS and their fellow dreamers who are DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) recipients, until the passage of the Dream and Promise ACT, which will win permanent residency for all TPS holders and DACA recipients.”

On May 21, 2021, the Biden administration announced a new 18-month designation of Haiti for TPS.

Secretary of US Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas said that the new TPS designation

enables Haitian nationals – and individuals without nationality who last resided in Haiti – currently residing in the United States, as of May 21, 2021, to file initial applications for TPS, “so long as they meet eligibility requirements.

“Haiti is currently experiencing serious security concerns, social unrest, an increase in human rights abuses, crippling poverty and lack of basic resources, which are exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic,” Mayorkas said in a statement. “After careful consideration, we determined that we must do what we can to support Haitian nationals in the United States until conditions in Haiti improve so they may safely return home.”

Raoul noted that, while on his campaign presidential campaign trail in 2020, Biden “made several promises to the Haitian community”

She said that among them was “re-instating Temporary Protective Status for Haitian nationals living in the US, a status that was wrongfully terminated by the Trump administration.” Raoul added that TPS for Haitians was originally granted by the



Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees rallying for TPS.

Obama administration in 2010, just days after the deadly earthquake, which devastated Haiti on January 12, 2010.

Roughly 250,000 lives were lost, many more injured, and over one million people were displaced.

“The racially-motivated decision to end TPS for Haitians, and other countries granted the status, was challenged by litigation, where several different cases were filed in US district courts,” Raoul said.

She said among these lawsuits was Ramos v. Nielson, which was filed by nine plaintiffs who were TPS holders from El Salvador, Haiti, Nicaragua and Sudan – “the first four countries to have the TPS status terminated by Trump.”

Raoul said “HWHR fought hard in the campaign for the re-designation of TPS for Haitians,” alongside other immigrant rights organizations nationwide, including the Miami, Florida-based Family Action Network Movement (FANM) and Haitian Bridge Alliance in San Diego, California.

She said another promise that Biden made on the campaign trail was to halt deportations to Haiti during his first 100 days as president. But, Raoul said that, in

the first two months of the Biden administration, “they sent 25 flights to Haiti, deporting record numbers of Haitians and causing more family separations.”

She, however, said HWHR continues to advocate for “a true halt of deportations to Haiti, where people are experiencing increased political violence.

“This re-designation of TPS allows over 100,000 Haitian immigrants to stay in the US and work to support themselves and their families here and in Haiti,” Raoul said.

~ CMC

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Kalleem London ~ A Rising Hip-Hop Star Merging Genres

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

“If you think about the devil creating a room called temptation, it’s Hip-Hop — beautiful women, a lot of money, a lot of drugs, everything that could distract you. But you have to be steadfast, that is not what I’m here for.”

Wise words from Kalleem London, Hip-Hop artiste on the rise. In the United States just a few short years, the Jamaican-born London is fast making a name for himself in an industry marked by fierce competition, and at times, brutality. Sure of his path, the young performer admits that some of his music videos may glamorize negative images associated with the genre, noting “If you want to get a job that requires you to wear a suit, then wear a suit.”

Now Atlanta-based, the deejay knew he wanted to make music his career at age 16 while attending 6th Form at St George’s College in Kingston. Music was always in his blood he explained. As a youngster at Prep school, London was part of a group called The Backstreet Boys. But, at puberty when his voice changed, he thought about it and the next logical step? Hip-hop, not dancehall.

“I said to myself, I’m in love with music, so how is it I never wanted to be a dancehall act? For one, I never think I looked enough like a ‘gunman’ to pull off the image to be a dancehall artiste. So, I started to study rap, how they talk, how they say their words, down to the linguistic aspect,” London told Caribbean Today. “I started paying attention to how Americans pronounce the letter ‘T’ like the letter ‘D’. So, if I am going to rap, I thought, I would have to sound authentic. I did my research, and it took a lot of practice to get to where I am today. So yes, from Prep school to 16 I made the decision even though mom told me to finish college first. I did go to UWI, but I had to follow my path.”

SURPASSED

Today, London is basking in the success of his music videos released on YouTube. Bad Mon, an anthem to the ideals of Jamaican youth, has surpassed 350,000 YouTube views, while Perseverance, a vote of inspiration to push through life’s complexities, is on the same trajectory with more than 100,000 views. The uniquely other-worldly feel of Extraterrestrial and mesmerizing beats of Drunk together have garnered more than



Rising Jamaican-born Hip Hop star Kalleem London.

240,000 streams on Spotify.

What makes London different is the many voices one hears in his music stylings. He seamlessly merges rap, pop, R&B, and reggae creating a sound that is uniquely his own brand, his own signature. With total creative control, the artiste writes his own music and lyrics, directs the videos, acts as creative director, and stylist on all his projects.

His interest goes way beyond entertaining though, this young man is serious about grasping the business behind the music. In fact, while he was at UWI (University of the West Indies) London signed up for courses in Music Business Management taught by one of his

mentors, Ray Hitchins. He went on to take voice training and hired a vocal coach. The merging of his rap stylings would then give him an edge to create from a different space.

“I take inspiration from so many sources. In college, for instance, I did literature. So, I have this background in writing and creating stories. If I’m writing an emotional song I sit in a dark room and think about how someone would feel if they were going through an emotional experience. For party music, I have to dress up, I have to feel it. I become the characters in my music. My music is Kalleem personified,” he laughs.

Surprisingly, most of London’s influences are not musicians.

“They are people that make me understand that failure is not a real thing, and you can create the life you want just by believing, by acting on the ideas. Among those I take inspiration from is Aliko Dangote, the richest black man in the world. I also like Napoleon Hill, best known for his book Think and Grow Rich. Leonardo DaVinci, the Renaissance artist who painted the Mona Lisa, he added so much value to it. I don’t know how he did it, but I’m a trying to learn.”

GRAMMY BOUND

He credits his Caribbean heritage for his focus and tenacity, noting that attending traditional Jamaican schools gave him a rounded sense of polish, but with grit. His supportive family too, he said, helped give him the push he needed.

“If God put me in such a home where my family really believe in me and help push me forward, I have no time to waste. I feel like the Jamaican blood that runs through me, gives me the grittiness that always seeks and grabs life now. I feel like I have an edge,” he said.

London is clearly Grammy-bound. He sees himself with five of those music trophies by the end of the next five years. But it’s not just about him.

“I have to go back to Jamaica, the community where I am from, the schools that helped shape me, any poor communities that need help. I am especially interested in uplifting the homeless. I want to create a foundation to support these people,” London underscored.

In the meantime, he is doing all the hard and creative work to get there. Currently working on a six-music video project, lookout for more raw talent with an eclectic mix of genre fusion.



This Reggae Star Urges Jamaican Govt., Diaspora, To Do More For Reggae/Dancehall

A Grammy-winning reggae artist has appealed to the government of Jamaica to government and its Diaspora, to do more to support and promote the island’s music.

Reggae/dancehall artiste Shaggy made the call as a special guest on the third in the series of “Lets Connect with Ambassador Marks,” an online diaspora town hall meeting hosted by the country’s ambassador to Washington.

The singer and songwriter, born Orville Burrell, also urged the government to do more to help educate artistes on how to be more business savvy. He recommended that there be more seminars and workshops for artistes, which will guide them in how to manage their music operations both locally and internationally.

“The artistes have to start handling themselves in a more professional manner. Because if you’re not ‘gonna do it professionally and have a professional team... Then you’re going to look like [an unorganized] ‘patty shop’ operation, and you’re gonna be treated like a poppy show,” Shaggy said.

He revealed that some years ago, he along with promoter Sharon Burke of Synergy, had begun such a programme but it unfortunately had to be curtailed as a result of the COVID-19



Shaggy

pandemic.

However, he urged the government to join forces with him with a view to resuscitating this important programme.

Ambassador Audrey Marks for her part, supported the need for continuing education on business operation and marketing among artistes, noting that this will help them to navigate the difficult minefield of the international music business.

Meanwhile, Shaggy also claimed that many Jamaicans at home and across the Diaspora do not support local musicians in the same way they support other international artistes

He said that “as influential as Jamaican music is on the global stage, there is an underwhelming lack of support for the music from Jamaicans.”

The Jamaican diaspora

needs to do more in this regard in order to support Jamaican music, and by extension, the Jamaican culture, Shaggy said.

He further pointed out that “at this point, Reggae/Dancehall has less than 6% of the global market share, which he lamented, “does not really give us a seat at the table.”

But if we can do something as impactful as what we are doing with this record, entitled “Go down deh,” with the Jamaican label [VP Records] and with Jamaican artistes to promote dancehall, that certainly changes the cycle and certainly changes the tone and gives us a lot more leverage for us to have more in depth conversations with some of the powerhouses from Google, Live Nation, Apple, Spotify to Pandora etc.,” Shaggy declared.

Ambassador Marks agreed, emphasizing that the diaspora’s strength is in their buying power. She went on to encourage members of the diaspora become subscribers and stream more local music, which could change the trajectory of the genre.

The newly released single, “Go Down Deh” from the “Dancehall Queen,” Spice, features Sean Paul and Shaggy, and is dominating the global reggae charts.

~ NewsAmericasNow.com



Dancehall Coming To Good Morning America This Caribbean American Heritage Month

Dancehall music and three top stars are coming to Good Morning America this Caribbean American Heritage Month.

GMA has announced its sizzling hot lineup for the 2021 Summer Concert Series including global reggae/dancehall superstars Spice, Shaggy and Sean Paul performing their hit single, “Go Down Deh,” on the June 11th broadcast.

The song is currently being heard in 61 countries and 165 Cities across 254 radio stations worldwide. Also dominating Reggae charts around the globe, the track has been added to rotation on popular channels such as BBC 1Xtra (the UK), Irie 98.9 FM – Cayman Islands, Massive Aruba 103.5 and G98 FM in Toronto.

On YouTube, the music video has amassed 6.3 million views and is in the top 5 on trending. Directed by Jay Will (credits include: M.I.A, Lee Scratch Perry, Kayne West, Shaggy, Major Lazer) – the video premiered on BET and BET Soul with additional play from REVOLT TV, VH1 and Yo! MTV. The video sits atop Tidal Reggae and Dancehall Video hits.

Throughout the summer,



Spice center, with Shaggy at l. and Sean Paul at r. in ‘Go Down Deh.’

“GMA” will bring viewers performances from the biggest stars in music including: Bebe Rexha; Shaggy, Sean Paul & Spice; Chance the Rapper; Chloe Bailey; DJ D-Nice & NE-YO; G-Eazy; Lady A; Jimmie Allen & Brad Paisley; Karol G; Pitbull; The Wallflowers; Green Day’s Billie Joe Armstrong, Fall Out Boy & Weezer; Glass Animals; Dierks Bentley; Leon Bridges; Sofia Carson; Old Dominion; Tinashe; Sebastian Yatra; Sheryl Crow; Bastille; Maluma and Anitta.

The series starts with K-Pop group BTS who will perform on Friday May 28th and continues with Bebe Rexha on June 4th, followed by Spice, Shaggy and Sean Paul on June 11th.



Caribbean Recipes

This month, as we look forward to the summer, we spotlight on a few unique Caribbean recipes that can be served as a snack, an appetizer, a light lunch or a dessert. Give them a try and drop us a line and let us know or share your own unique recipes with us.

Accra INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb malanga/tania cut into 2.5cm (1" pieces) (malanga can be bought in any Hispanic supermarket)
- 2 scallions chopped
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 tablespoons parsley chopped
- 1 teaspoon thyme leaves only
- 2 tablespoons green peppers chopped
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon salt plus more to taste
- ½ tablespoon scotch bonnet pepper or Habanero. Chopped, seeds and membrane removed
- 1 – 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon olive oil if baking
- 2 cups vegetable oil if frying only

METHOD

Peel all Malangas and cut pieces into smaller 2.5cm (1") cubes.

Add to food processor. Add all ingredients also to food processor with the exception of oils.

Blend all ingredients to a smooth mixture including olive oil if BAKING ONLY.



Accra

Put mixture in a bowl, cover and let marinate in the refrigerator for 30 minutes or longer.

Blend all ingredients to a smooth mixture.

Remove and add to a bowl without olive oil if FRYING ONLY.

Cover and let marinate in the refrigerator for 30 minutes or longer.

Remove mixture from refrigerator and let stand at room temperature. If frying mix with flour and with 2 dinner spoons shape the accra and fry golden brown in hot oil. Serve hot.

If baking – When ready, butter 2 – 3 ramekins.

Fill ramekins with Accra mixture, do with butter and bake at 190°C / 375°F / Gas Mark 5 for 30 to 35 minutes.

You may change the temperature of the oven to broil for the top to crisp, but no more than 5 minutes. Serve hot.

Pastechi

It's known as patties in Jamaica but in the Dutch Caribbean islands, especially in Curacao, it is Pastechi.

INGREDIENTS

- 5 cups of flour
- 5 tbsp. of butter
- 5 tbsp. of shortening (Crisco)
- 3 tbsp. of sugar
- Salt to your taste
- 1 to 2 eggs (depending on the size of the eggs)
- 1 to 1.5 cups of cold water



Pastechi

METHOD

Combine all ingredients in a bowl and start kneading the dough until it's totally smooth and no longer sticky. If it's still sticky, you can use small amounts of flour to fix this. Let your dough rest for half an hour, covered with a cold kitchen towel at room temperature.

Make small golf- or tennis ball sized balls out of the dough, depending on how big or small you want your pastechi's to be. Roll the balls out to create a flat, thin circle out of every ball.

Fill with anything you want. This can be cheese, meat, tuna, ham & cheese or any veggie mix that you might be in the mood for. Keep in mind to keep the filling as dry as possible or otherwise it will dissolve the dough and don't overfill.

Fold the dough over to form half a circle and seal it with a fork or by folding the edge approx. 1 cm in from one tip to the other. This helps you to create the edge that pastechi's are so famous for.

Fry in hot oil until golden brown. Serve warm.

Mithai

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound of All Purpose flour
- ¼ pound of butter
- 1 teaspoon of ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon of ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon of ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons of granulated sugar (optional)
- ¾ cup of warm water

- 4 cups of oil for frying
- For the sugar syrup
- 2 cups of granulated sugar and 2 cups of water
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract

METHOD

Combine all of the dry ingredients (flour, ground cinnamon, ground nutmeg, ground cloves, salt and granulated sugar, if using) in a mixing bowl and mix together well. I love using a whisk for this step.

Then using a fork or your fingers, cut or rub the butter into the combined dry ingredients until a crumbly texture forms.

Next add the warm water and knead into a stiff ball. It may look like you don't have enough water for this step. Don't be tempted to use more than what is listed for this recipe. Just keep kneading until all the dry ingredients are folding into the dough.

Then cover the dough ball with a damp paper towel and let rest for at least 30 minutes.

After 30 minutes divide the dough ball into 4 pieces. Then working a piece of dough at a time roll until the

dough is about ¼ inch thick.

Next cut the dough into ½ inch thick strips. I like to cut my strips in half so that they are about 4-5 inches in length, but you can make your strips how long or short you like

If you like your mithai to have a rounded look, gently roll each strip between your hand and the work surface until the edges become slightly rounded (see pictures above)

Frying the crunchy mithai

Add 4 cups of oil to a large saucepan, then place on medium heat.



Mithai

When the oil comes up to temperature and is hot but not smoking, add the mithai strips. Try not to add them in clumps as they may stick together.

Fry on medium-medium low heat until the mithai is golden brown then remove from the oil and place in a bowl lined with a few sheets of paper towel. The paper towels will "soak up" any excess oil from frying.

Repeat until all of the dough has been rolled out and fried.

Making the syrup

Combine the sugar and water in a small saucepan then mix together until the sugar dissolves.

Then place saucepan on medium heat and bring to a boil.

Continue to boil until the syrup reduces and is at the soft ball stage or 235 °F (see notes for testing soft ball).

Coating the mithai

When the syrup reaches the soft ball stage, pour the syrup over the fried mithai and toss until the sugar crystallizes. I do this in small batches to ensure that all of the mithai are evenly coated with sugar.

Bon Appetite!

~ All Recipes from
NewsAmericasNow.com



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Caribbean Marketplace Celebrates Rebound In Tourism Virtually

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

The annual Caribbean Travel Marketplace (CTM) gathering where regional hospitality and tourism professionals meet with colleagues and international buyers and sellers, opened for the first time virtually last month with more than 100 companies representing 24 Caribbean countries and similar numbers for buyer companies seeking to connect with regional properties and services.

Hosted by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA), the organization's acting Director General and CEO, Vanessa Ledesma, reported buoyant interest.

"From our discussions with travel suppliers, and as we communicated with prospective buyers, we are seeing definitely that renewed and new interest in the region, as some buyers who would not have traditionally had the Caribbean in their portfolios are now looking to include the Caribbean because of the demand in the region," Ledesma said.

Former CHTA CEO, now Special Advisor, Frank Comito, confirmed that bookings for the upcoming calendar quarters and increased length of stay are very promising.

"We are also seeing longer stays as well. For example, Dominican Republic's length of stay has gone up from eight nights to ten nights. Confirmed tickets booked for Q2 and Q3 in 2021 on airlines into the Caribbean, represent 34 percent of all international departures from the US versus 17 percent for the same

period in 2019. So, the Caribbean is the leading destination for US international travel in terms of percent share of confirmed tickets booked," Comito noted.

PROACTIVE COVID-19 MEASURES

According to the travel professionals, part of the optimism is based on the proactive measures taken by countries across the region to manage the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We've been building on a six-year tourism health partnership with the Caribbean Public Agency and that partnership has enabled us to come out of this situation than we would otherwise because of our experience of working on matters like Zika, Chikungunya, and other health-relation events, as well as recovering from natural disasters," explained Comito.

He outlined the Caribbean's health policy guidelines, training, and readiness that began in March 2020 including the Health Safety Stamp and Recognition Programme awarded to properties that meet new Covid safety regulations, allowing them to operate.

"Our work has resulted in the Caribbean having one of the lowest per capita rates of Covid-19 reported incidents, hospitalization, and deaths in the world, a record we are committed to maintain as we move to responsibly reopen travel," said Comito.

He reported that the rate of infection per 100,000 population for the Caribbean Public Health Agency's member states is



significantly lower (617.4) as compared to Latin America (3,658.1), the US (9,117.3), and the UK (6,249.9). As well, COVID vaccination rates are picking up in the region, adding to the travel recovery.

Some destinations are even eliminating the need for a PCR test if visitors are fully vaccinated. Director General of The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism and Aviation, Joy Jibrilu, confirmed this new rule.

"Effective 1 May 2021, anyone who is fully vaccinated and have passed the 14-day immunity period to ensure that they have full immunity, they are still required to make an application for a travel health visa, but they are no longer required to do the RT-PCR (real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction) test 5 days in advance," said Jibrilu. "In addition, once on island, they are no longer required to take the 5-day rapid antigen

test."

In fact, 90,000 persons applied for travel health visas to The Bahamas in April. And those numbers, since the announcement that fully vaccinated people are welcome to the Bahamas without a RT-PCR test, have risen sharply according to the Director General.

REBOUND

Jamaica is also seeing a rebound in tourism since opening its borders June 2020. Part of the bounce-back is attributed to the island's Jamaica Cares program, basically a health insurance that covers visitors to the island.

According to Edmund Bartlett, Jamaica's Minister of Tourism: "Jamaica Cares is a ground-breaking travel protection and emergency services program that provides visitors with cost of medical care, evacuations, field rescue, case management, and patient advocacy in all circumstances up to and including

natural disasters. As it relates to COVID-19, the protection plan also covers testing for symptomatic travelers, quarantine and isolation in a medical facility or in sanctioned quarantine facilities, and evacuation, if necessary."

Importantly, this health insurance is at the cost of all non-Jamaican passport holders, at US\$40 per person.

Bartlett noted that despite 2020 being a challenging year for Jamaica, 90 percent of the planned tourism investments are still on track. Approximately 4,800 rooms will be added by the end of 2023, with about 7,000 rooms overall by 2025 based on the current level of investment approvals and inquiries. Indeed, these numbers reflect the push and optimism taking place across the Caribbean.

"We are enjoying, in the whole region, some of the best occupancies we have ever seen for this time of the year. Forecasts and projections are looking very strong, particularly for this summer," said Karen Witt, Caribbean Travel Marketplace Chair. The immediate coming months are really filling up nicely with very high occupancies. And, even into the winter we're seeing a little bit of residual. I think the confidence is back."



Fully Vaccinated Travelers To Dominica Will Now Face Only 2 Day Quarantine



Fully vaccinated travelers to Dominica will now face only a two-day quarantine under new updated rules from the government.

When they arrive in Dominica, they'll then be transported to quarantine at a "Safe in Nature" certified hotel or accommodation for a minimum of two days.

A PCR test will be administered to them on Day 2 after arrival and if negative, the traveler will be medically cleared.

However, even fully vaccinated travelers will continue to have to provide proof of a negative test within 72 hours before arrival.

Dominica has been open for tourism since last summer. The island has had a strong record amid the pandemic, with not one COVID-related death in the country but a total of just 178 cases.

~ *Rewritten from Caribbean Journal*



Uncertainty Surrounding The Tourism Recovery In The Caribbean

There is extreme uncertainty surrounding the tourism recovery in the Caribbean, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) says.

The IDB, in a new report, noted that most global tourism reports predict a two-to-four-year period for a full recovery to 2019 levels. "However, the Caribbean could either lead or lag the global recovery, depending upon the specific circumstances in the main Caribbean source countries and in Caribbean destinations themselves," the report's authors added.

The new report titled "Imagining a Post-COVID Tourism Recovery: Regional Overview" analyses key drivers of tourism demand in the short term, including the evolution of the pandemic and the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination roll-out, the economic environment of source countries, the split between business versus leisure tourism, and airline capacity, among others.

"Over the longer term, Caribbean countries must spur innovation and reinvigorate their tourism offerings," said Olga Gómez, the tourism lead specialist at the IDB. "It is no



longer enough to depend on the lure of splendid beaches. Tourism destinations need to invest in improving their competitiveness, aligning their tourism products to the broader local and global economic trends, and exploring new and traditional emerging market segments such as global nomadism or nature-based tourism."

The report also stressed the importance of boosting innovation and supporting transformations that align tourism destinations and products with post-pandemic global demand trends.

The Washington-based financial institution said that

even for the less-tourism-intensive economies of Guyana and Suriname, where the tourism sector economic contribution is relatively small compared to the regional and worldwide averages, there is room for improving the sector's contribution to growth and employment in the coming years.

Overall, 2020 represented a contraction of international arrivals of 76 per cent for The Bahamas, 67 per cent for Barbados and 69 per cent for Jamaica. This is in line with the estimate by the UN World Tourism Organization of a 67 per cent contraction for the broader Caribbean region.



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HIT & RUN FATALITY

VICTIM/PEDESTRIAN
Rupert Webley
B/M, 68 years old

On Sunday, May 2, 2021, at approximately 9:25 p.m., the above-pictured victim/pedestrian began crossing at **SW 184 Street and SW 112 Avenue, Miami, Florida,** when the subject vehicle, a Hyundai silver in color, struck and killed him. The driver of the subject vehicle fled the scene without rendering aid and/or reporting the crash.

SUBJECT VEHICLE DESCRIPTION: HYUNDAI SILVER IN COLOR. NO OTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME.

Anyone with information on the above **HIT & RUN FATALITY**, the whereabouts of the subject vehicle and/or its driver is requested to contact Miami-Dade Police Department Traffic Homicide Detective J. Childers at (305) 471-2425. If you wish to remain anonymous, then contact Miami-Dade County Crime Stoppers at the following:

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ISSUE DATE: 5/11/2021 RN SUPERVISOR: Sgt. Francisco Armendariz MDPD C/N PD210502138114

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HEALTH



www.caribbeantoday.com

Investigation Launched Into A Surge Of COVID-19 Cases In This Caribbean Island



BVI ferry operators have been asked to adopt an additional measure to help with contact tracing.

An investigation has been launched into a reported surge in cases of COVID-19 found in passengers travelling through the Road Town Ferry Dock in the British Virgin Islands.

According to National Epidemiologist, Harmony Massiah, several cases are coming through the Road Town Ferry Dock “and we are conducting investigations to determine if they are any predictive factors that might be increase in the risk of persons coming in through that area.”

She added that the factors that caused the surge can be from any number of sources, such as places of travel origin, passengers pre-mixing before boarding, and travelling in an enclosed space, among other things.

The epidemiologist implored persons to maintain due diligence

as a measure of mitigating the spread of the virus by wearing masks and social distancing.

“Even though you might be familiar with someone on the vessel, you should limit any talk or conversations you may have with them because you don’t exactly know what it is they may be harboring,” she encouraged.

Meanwhile, ferry operators have been asked to adopt an additional measure to help with contact tracing. Massiah said operators have been asked to ensure the seats are numbered so persons can be easily contacted if they had been sitting near a person who is found to have been carrying the virus.

~ *Rewritten from CMC*



Get Vaccinated And A Chance To Win US\$10,000 On This Island

The Cayman Islands Tourism Association (CITA) has offered the population a chance to win US\$10,000, as well as 280 other prizes worth a total of US\$15,000, as part of an initiative to encourage persons to get vaccinated for COVID-19.

The CITA along with the charity R3 Cayman Foundation announced the prizes during a recent meeting of its members.

CITA president Marc Langevin said it was vital to reach the target of vaccinating 70 percent or more of its population, so that the borders can reopen safely to tourists, and the tourism sector had a part to play in that by encouraging its employees to get inoculated as soon as possible.

Langevin said CITA has been asking its members to provide weekly updates on how many of their staff have been vaccinated, and that “right now, as an industry, we are at 75 percent.”

He added that certain sectors within the industry had higher percentages than that, like restaurants, which are showing a 90 percent vaccination rate.

“It is your leadership that is creating those numbers. You have



Sixty-one percent of the population in the Cayman Islands is vaccinated. (Cayman Compass image)

been leading by example.”

In a statement, the R3 Cayman Foundation said, “As part of our recovery mandate, we want to help our local tourism industry to recover from the tremendous job losses that have been caused by the pandemic so that those affected can regain employment and thereby provide for themselves and for their families.

“Assisting the jurisdiction to achieve a high vaccination rate by fully utilizing the available vaccines resources is one way to achieve this, whilst at the same time protecting our community as far as possible from COVID-19.”

The prize draw is separate from the government’s ‘Vaccination Challenge’ version, which is also offering a wide variety of prizes for people who get their first vaccinations by June 9th.

Earlier this month, when the local vaccination rate started to slow down, the government launched a ramped-up drive in a bid to ensure that all the remaining vaccines on island, which are set to expire at the end of June, will be used by then.

~ *Rewritten from CMC*



The COVID Pandemic And Vaccine - What We Know Now

BY DR. LORRAINE WILLIAMS-RAHMING

It has been about 18 months since the start of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic in Wuhan China in December 2019. Until early 2020 with the beginning of the widespread roll out of the available COVID-19 vaccines, the virus remained pretty much unchecked across the globe.

Today, the virus continues to spread with intermittent surges and with new variants developing and spreading among primarily unvaccinated persons and/or in communities where the vaccination rates are low. Last month Latin America and the Caribbean surpassed the 1 million tragic death mark - accounting for 31 percent of the world’s deaths although we account for 8.4 percent of the world’s population. According to the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) report in May 2021, 1 percent of those tragic deaths occurred in the Caribbean.

So, if we took a look back, what do we know?

1. COVID-19 disease is caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2. The virus is one of the many coronaviruses known to affect man often causing severe disease and death. While we remain unsure about the origin of this pandemic, that is, whether it was a lab accidental spread versus a transmission from an

animal (for example, bat), it is clear that we are a global society because it didn’t take long for this virus to spread to every continent of the world and its many islands unless the borders were tightly closed and remained so.

2. The virus is spread via respiratory droplets into the nose, mouth and eyes of susceptible individuals. The presence of uncontrolled hypertension, diabetes mellitus, obesity or the presence of an immunocompromised state, e.g., cancer has been known to affect the severity of the disease and one’s ability to survive. This is the reason for the mask mandate and the need for shields in larger crowds.

3. The virus remains an equal opportunity bug affecting the young and old, male and female along with persons of every race and socioeconomic status. While this remains true, one’s ability to survive the disease process has been based on one’s baseline health status and willingness and ability to access care early.

4. COVID-19 affects different people in different ways. The most common symptoms still include: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigued muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or

runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea. Any progressive change in the ability to breathe, chest pain or increased confusion should prompt immediate attention.

5. Basic public health measures remain a very effective means of slowing the spread of the disease. Basic hand-washing and/or the use of alcohol hand sanitizers with at least 70% alcohol does kill the virus. Mask wearing, shields and social distancing of at least 6 feet decrease the transmission of virus between persons in close proximity to each other.

6. There is currently no cure for COVID-19. The goal therefore is prevention. For those who do get infected, 80% still have a mild course of disease which resembles cold symptoms.

It is very important then to isolate oneself to decrease risk of spread and community surges. Close contacts may also need to quarantine.

Conservative measures with increased fluids, rest and the use of vitamin C, zinc and natural immunity boosters, example echinacea and goldenseal, may help improve one’s general health status. The use of aspirin may also be recommended for those in high-risk groups. Your doctor may also recommend other medicines to slow the virus, treat complications or limit the immune response as a result of viral

spread. Often a telephone call to your doctor will provide you with general instructions and advise specific to your medical condition.

7: While there are several vaccines available to the Caribbean- Pfizer, Moderna, Astra Zeneca, Johnson and Johnson as well as Sinovac. The roll out has been slow and delayed because of access and the general unwillingness of the public to receive the vaccine. In our global community and for a uniform control of the disease, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (CDC) has stated that ideally we need between 70-80% persons vaccinated in order to develop herd immunity and slow the spread of the virus. That number is going to be required of every nation in order to resume our lives and economies. Success however will depend on the generosity of the first world nations and a general concern for humanity along with the diligence and commitment of our independent political leadership and health departments.

Among vaccinated persons, the risk of developing severe COVID-19 disease and/or hospitalization, or death remains fairly low as the vaccines thus far have been proven to be safe, effective and reduce the risk of severe illness and hospitalizations.

Among the Caribbean countries, our vaccinations rates remain abysmally low for now

ranging from 0.1% to about 30% according to the New York Times world vaccine tracker dated 6/3/21. We are all going to have to do better- our political leaders, our health departments and we the people if we are going to halt the spread of this virus and return to our new normal life. Coronavirus is going to be here for a while, but we now have one treatment option that can prevent us from dying. Yet, vaccinations and increased access are no good if we don’t take it.

With more than 2 billion doses administered worldwide - it can no longer be considered experimental. The only contraindication to the vaccine is a previous allergy to another vaccine or to components of the vaccine. Special precautions are required for those with severe allergies and those individuals should seek advice from their personal doctor.

We each have the ability and responsibility for each other in this global community. The life you save may be yours or the life of one your family members. This is our shot, but we have to take it!

EDITOR’S NOTE: Dr. Lorraine Williams-Rahming, MD, MPH, FACS was born in the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago and practices in Thomasville Georgia. She is also an assistant Professor of Surgery at Florida State University.



West Indies Gets Ready To Face South Africa In Historic Match-Up

The West Indies team will face South Africa this week in a historic series match-up.

The visit by the Proteas will mark their first bilateral series against West Indies in nearly 12 years, following their 2-0 win back in 2010. South Africa will face the hosts in two Tests at the Darren Sammy National Stadium in St Lucia from June 10th-22nd and five T20 Internationals at the Grenada National Stadium from June 26th to July 3rd.

The tour was originally scheduled for last year but was scrapped following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced Cricket West Indies to halt their entire domestic schedule.

The West Indies squad will be led by Kieron Pollard and includes left-hander Shimron Hetmyer and fast bowler Oshane Thomas, both of whom have struggled with fitness issues in recent months.



West Indies will face South Africa from June 10th.

The full squad is: Kieron Pollard (captain), Nicholas Pooran (vice-captain), Fabian Allen, Dwayne Bravo, Sheldon Cottrell, Fidel Edwards, Andre Fletcher, Chris Gayle, Shimron Hetmyer, Jason Holder, Akeal Hosein, Evin Lewis, Obed McCoy, Andre Russell, Lendl Simmons, Kevin Sinclair, Oshane Thomas, Hayden

Walsh Jr.

The South Africa tour will kick off a bumper international home schedule which will also see Australia travel for a white ball series in July and Pakistan tour for a Test and white ball series in July and August.

~ *Rewritten from CMC*



The Full Caribbean Premier League Squads For 2021 Are In

The 2021 edition of the Caribbean Premier League, (CPL) will not be held until August, but the League has already released the full squads for all the teams following the concluded draft.

The Knight Riders have traded out their star all-rounder Dwayne Bravo to the St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots ahead of the CPL 2021 Draft and bagged wicketkeeper batsman Denesh Ramdin in return. And the St. Kitts Patriots have signed star cricketer, Chris Gayle.

Nepal's leg-spinner Sandeep Lamichanne will turn up for the Trinbago Knight Riders in CPL 2021. Meanwhile, the St. Lucia Zouks will play without their seasoned pro Daren Sammy, who is now the franchise's brand ambassador and mentor.

The 2021 CPL is set for August 28th to September 19th. Last year, the Trinbago Knight Riders captured the championship by winning all league matches as well as knockout games.

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• LEEWARD ISLANDS

HURRICANES – Colin Archibald, Sheno Berridge, Keacy Carthy, Jahmar Hamilton, Amir Jango, Kofi James, Kian Pemberton, Ross Powell, Jeremiah Louis, Devon Thomas, Damion Williams, Tyron Williams, Terance Ward, Nino Henry, Daniel Doram.

• **WINDWARD ISLANDS VOLCANOES** – Sunil Ambris, Alick Athanaze, Keron Cottoy, Kenneth Dember, Larry Edward, Kavem Hodge, Ryan John, Obed McCoy, Desron Maloney, Preston McSween, Kimani Melius, Denis Smith, Devon Smith, Darius Martin, Gilon Tyson.

• **JAMAICA SCORPIONS** – John Campbell, Sheldon Cottrell, Akim Fraser, Patrick Harty, Brandon King, Andre McCarthy, Jamie Merchant, Marquino Mindley, Paul Palmer, Rovman Powell, Jeavor Royal, Odean Smith, Oshane Thomas, Nicholson Gordon, Alwyn Williams.

• **GUYANA JAGUARS** – Kelvon Anderson, Christopher Barnwell,

Tagenarine Chanderpaul, Chandrapaul Hemraj, Shimron Hetmyer, Leon Johnson, Gudakesh Motie, Keemo Paul, Veerasammy Permaul, Romario Shepherd, Vishaul Singh, Kevin Sinclair, Nial Smith, Anthony Bramble, Keon Joseph.

• **TRINIDAD & TOBAGO RED FORCE** – Bryan Charles, Terrance Hinds, Imran Khan, Anderson Phillip, Khary Pierre, Jason Mohammed, Uthman Muhammed, Isaiah Rajah, Denesh Ramdin, Jayden Seales, Keegan Simmons, Jeremy Solozano, Tion Webster, Jyd Goolie, Kirstan Kallicharan.

• **BARBADOS PRIDE**– Shamarh Brooks, Roston Chase, Jonathan Carter, Dominic Drakes, Shane Dowrich, Justin Greaves, Keon Harding, Chemar Holder, Kyle Hope, Shayne Moseley, Raymon Reifer Ashley Nurse, Jomel Warrican, Akeem Jordan, Joshua Bishop.

~ *NewsAmericasNow.com*



This Caribbean Diver Is Going To The Summer Olympics



Yona Knight-Wisdom of Jamaica, who competed in the Men's 3m Springboard final in Tokyo, Japan recently, is going to the Summer Games as well.

A Caribbean born diver is heading to the Olympic Games in Tokyo, Japan this summer after he qualified this week. Yona Knight-Wisdom, 25, qualified after finishing 12th in the 3m Springboard at the FINA 2021 FINA Diving World Cup that concluded in Tokyo, Japan on May 6th.

He scored 383.70 points in the finals of the competition that was won by Germany's Martin Wolfram who scored 467.75 points.

Despite not winning a medal, Knight-Wisdom said he was proud of his achievement and praised both his coach Jen Leeming and Great Britain's James Heatly.

"As proud as I am for what

I've done this week, I definitely can't take full credit," he said on Instagram at the conclusion of the competition. "What @coachleeming has done for my diving and for our entire squad at home over the past 12 months through the lockdowns and setbacks, is nothing short of heroic.

"Thanks so much for helping me rediscover how to dive with confidence even at times when my belief wavered, your belief and energy kept me accountable every day."

~ *NewsAmericasNow.com*



Six Caribbean Athletes Medal At Gateshead

Six Caribbean athletes medaled recently at the Diamond League athletics meeting at Gateshead International Stadium in England.

Shanieka Ricketts of Jamaica took the gold in the women's triple jump with a 14.29m final jump, surpassing Portugal's Patricia Mamona (13.62m), who was second, and Britain's Naomi Ogbeta (13.32m), who took third.

"It was brutal," commented Ricketts on her win. "I am just so happy I didn't end up injured. It was really hard to focus on technical things and not very conducive to getting good jumps. I just wanted to get myself into the position to have an extra jump and

then the only thing that mattered was to get the best jump."

Stephenie Ann McPherson, also of Jamaica was second in the women's 400-m while Danniell Dodd-Thomas was second in the women's shot-put competition with a throw of 18.46 and Janieve Russel was third in the women's 400-m hurdles in a time of 57:16.

Trinidad and Tobago's Keshorn Walcott was second in the men's Javelin Throw with 77.78 while Tajay Gayle was third in the men's long jump competition.

~ *NewsAmericasNow.com*



Jamaican Jockey Shines With Triple Wins

Jamaican Andre Martin reeled off a triple at Century Mile to make headlines on the opening day of the new season in western Canada.

He won race five with 2-5 choice Last Endeavour, followed up in race six with 3-2 chance Cigarillo before claiming the penultimate race on the 10-race card with favorite Greek Geek.

Martin made the most of his seven rides, to make the headlines. He opened his account aboard chestnut colt Last

Endeavour, beating the three-year-old maidens by a length in a five-furlong sprint in a time of 59 seconds flat.

Favorite Major Shepard, ridden by Barbadian Desmond Bryan, posted the early fractions before fading in the late stretch under constant pressure from Last Endeavour.

Martin's second



Jamaican Andre Martin

win also came in a five-furlong dash when he made all the running with bay filly Cigarillo to crush the three-year-old fillies by five lengths in a time of 58.69 seconds.

His third success was not as simple, however, but he still managed to carve out a half-length victory with four-year-old bay gelding Greek Geek in a five-furlong event, reaching the wire in 57.81.

Up against the three-year-olds and upward, Greek Geek

stalked pacesetter Flat Out Leader from second before engaging in the lane and getting the better of the exchanges. Century Mile, along with Hastings in Vancouver, are the only horse racing venues currently active, with the remainder closed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

~ *Rewritten from CMC*



Caribbean Immigrant Makes History At White House Press Briefing



Caribbean immigrant Karine Jean-Pierre made history at the White House press briefing.

Caribbean immigrant Karine Jean-Pierre made history at the White House press briefing on May 25, 2021.

Jean-Pierre became the first Black and Caribbean immigrant as well as openly gay person to address reporters on behalf of the US president.

It was a new chapter in the White House briefing room as she opened also with a nod to Caribbean American Kristen Clarke, who was confirmed with and sworn in Tuesday as the first

woman and first woman of color to lead the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice.

The briefing was widely seen as an audition by Jean-Pierre, who was born in Martinique to Haitian parents, before migrating to the US, for the top job of presidential spokesperson. The incumbent, Jen Psaki, who has been briefing almost daily, said recently she intends to leave the post after a year.

Jean-Pierre is currently

principal deputy press secretary. "It's a real honor to be standing here today. I appreciate the historic nature, I really do, but I believe that being behind this podium, being in this room, being in this building is not about one person. It's about what we do on behalf of the American people," she said. "Clearly the president believes that representation matters, and I appreciate him giving me this opportunity, and it's another reason why I think we are all so proud that this is the most diverse administration in history."

Since joining the Biden White House, Jean-Pierre has been a fixture in the room for Psaki's briefings and has sometimes delivered her own, away from the cameras, aboard Air Force One.

Jean-Pierre is one of several persons who are part of the administration whose roots extend to the Caribbean, including of course, the US' first black, Asian, and Caribbean American vice-president, Kamala Harris.

~ NewsAmericasNow.com



State Department Opens National Caribbean American Heritage Month Celebrations



Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs at the US State Department, Laura Lochman, officially opened the kick-off of National Caribbean American Heritage Month Celebrations on June 1st.

Lochman was part of the event's opening, presented by the Institute of Caribbean Studies, (ICS) virtually on Zoom under the theme "Our Shared History, Our Shared Future."

Other guest speakers

included Ambassador Nestor Mendez, Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States; Dr. Didacus Jules, Director-General of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and Dr. Claire Nelson, founder of the ICS.

Since 2006, June has been designated as National Caribbean American Heritage Month by Presidential Proclamation.



Biden White House Finally Issues Caribbean American Heritage Month Proclamation

Some five hours after News Americas pointed out on Tuesday, June 1st that the Joe Biden administration with a Caribbean roots vice-president had failed to issue a proclamation to mark the official start of National Caribbean American Heritage Month 2021, the White House finally did.

National Caribbean American Heritage Month in the United States was signed into law by President George W. Bush 15 years ago and has been proclaimed by every administration since.

The day began on June 1st with "A Proclamation on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Pride Month, 2021" followed National Immigrant Month.

Finally, at around 2 p.m. EST on June 1st, "A Proclamation on National Caribbean-American Heritage Month, 2021," was issued. By contrast, a Proclamation on Asian American and Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander Heritage Month, 2021, which is held every May, was issued on April 30th.

The White House

also issued several other proclamations subsequently, including 'A Proclamation on Black Music Appreciation Month, 2021,' 'A Proclamation on National Homeownership Month, 2021,' 'A Proclamation on National Ocean Month, 2021 and A Proclamation on Great Outdoors Month, 2021,' further diluting the significance of CAHM.

In the CAHM proclamation, President Joe Biden stated: "I am honored to celebrate this National Caribbean-American Heritage Month alongside Caribbean-American barrier-breaking public servants in my Administration — including Vice President Kamala Harris, Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, and Domestic Policy Advisor Susan Rice — all of whom continue to be sources of pride and inspiration for Caribbean Americans across the country."

Vice President Harris' father was born in Jamaica while US DHS Secretary Mayorkas was born in Cuba. Rice's maternal grandparents were Jamaican immigrants to

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 19A)

Fight the bite!

Use insect repellent on skin and clothing to keep mosquitoes away while outdoors.

DRAIN & COVER

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What Google Data Tells About Caribbean American Heritage Month

It's another Caribbean American Heritage Month in the United States, coming just on the heels of Asian American Heritage Month. But so far, Google data and searches shows minimal interest, despite the fact that it's the 15th year since the

Month became a reality and was proclaimed officially by former US President George W. Bush. The number of searches for the topic "Caribbean American Heritage Month," in worldwide shows 278 for the past 30 days, while searches for the term

"caribbean american heritage month" was 290. Interest has peaked mostly in the past 7 days with the majority of the searches being in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Florida, New Jersey and New York. The majority of persons,

some 70 percent, queried: "When is Caribbean Heritage Month," while 50 percent equally searched for "caribbean month" and "caribbean heritage month." Some 100 in Georgia also looked up 'caribbean American heritage.'

The day with the most interest was June 1st at 8 a.m., when the Google meter ticked up to 100, the most interest. ~ NewsAmericasNow.com

Biden White House Finally Issues Caribbean American Heritage Month Proclamation

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18A) Portland, Maine.

The CAHM proclamation by The White House also recognized Caribbean Americans like artists James Weldon Johnson, the poet who wrote the anthem, Lift Every Voice and Sing; celebrated neo-expressionist painter Jean-Michel Basquiat; John B. Russwurm, the first Caribbean-American editor of a U.S. newspaper; Caribbean-American jurist Constance Baker Motley, the first Black woman appointed to the Federal bench; and former Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm. It ignored Alexander Hamilton, America's greatest immigrant and the US' first secretary of the treasury, who was born on the Caribbean Island of Nevis.

The full proclamation is as follows:

"A Proclamation on National Caribbean-American Heritage Month, 2021

America's diversity is and always has been the defining strength of our Nation — in every generation, our society, spirit, and shared ambitions have been refreshed by wave after wave of immigrants seeking out their American dream. Throughout our history, Caribbean Americans have brought vibrant cultures, languages, traditions, and values that strengthen our country and add new chapters to our common story. In recognition of Caribbean Americans' countless gifts and contributions to our Nation, we celebrate National Caribbean-American Heritage Month.

Caribbean Americans have made our country more innovative and more prosperous; they have enriched our Nation's arts and culture, our public institutions, and

our economy. I am honored to celebrate this National Caribbean-American Heritage Month alongside Caribbean-American barrier-breaking public servants in my Administration — including Vice President Kamala Harris, Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, and Domestic Policy Advisor Susan Rice — all of whom continue to be sources of pride and inspiration for Caribbean Americans across the country.

Caribbean-American intellectuals and artists like James Weldon Johnson, the poet who gave us the anthem, Lift Every Voice and Sing; celebrated neo-expressionist painter Jean-Michel Basquiat; and John B. Russwurm, the first Caribbean-American editor of a U.S. newspaper, have left a lasting impact on our country. Caribbean-American jurists like Constance Baker Motley, the

first Black woman appointed to the Federal bench, and the Nation's first Latina Supreme Court Justice, Sonia Sotomayor, have made innumerable contributions to the American justice system. Shirley Chisholm, the daughter of Caribbean immigrants, blazed new trails as our Nation's first Black Congresswoman — and the first Black woman to launch a major-party bid for the Presidency. Public servants like Antonia Novello, our Nation's first female Surgeon General, and Colin Powell, our first Black Secretary of State, have followed in her footsteps, charting new paths of their own in service to the American people.

Despite the powerful legacy of achievement of Caribbean Americans, many members of the Caribbean-American community continue to face systemic barriers to equity, opportunity, and

justice. Systemic racism has uniquely impacted Black and Latino immigrant communities, including Caribbean Americans, leading to disparities in health care, education, housing, criminal justice, and economic opportunity. My Administration is committed to addressing those entrenched disparities — and to bringing our Nation closer to its promise that all people are created equal and deserve to be treated equally throughout their lives. That is why I have launched a whole-of-government approach to advancing racial justice and equity.

During National Caribbean-American Heritage Month, we celebrate the legacy and essential contributions of Caribbean Americans who have added so much to our American fabric.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR., President of the United

States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2021 as National Caribbean-American Heritage Month. I encourage all Americans to join in celebrating the history, culture, and achievements of Caribbean Americans with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-fifth. JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR."

There are millions of Caribbean Americans in the United States whose heritage runs back to slavery. They include slaves from Barbados who were brought to the US to work on South Carolina plantations; the founder of Chicago, Jean-Baptist-Point Du Sable and America's Greatest immigrant and the US' first secretary of the treasury, Alexander Hamilton.

Today, Caribbean Americans make up a large percentage of the black voting population and are put at over 10 million nationally conservatively and are in every facet of life in America. They were at the frontline of the battle against COVID-19 with the first person in the US to receive a COVID-19 vaccine being a nurse born in the Caribbean even as thousands lost their lives to the disease.

The month-long observance is meant to promote the rich culture and heritage of the Caribbean American people and their contribution to the United States of America.

~ NewsAmericasNow.com



Most of us try to attract other people by the friends we keep and the way we carry ourselves. If you are going to a party or a formal function, don't you dress well? We all want to promote a favorable impression of ourselves to other people we meet and talk to. If we agree on that, then think of this. Why should it be any different for your business? If you want to project a favorable image of your company, in order to win customers, you should keep your company with good friends and...dress your company well in...

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Peter A. Webley
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