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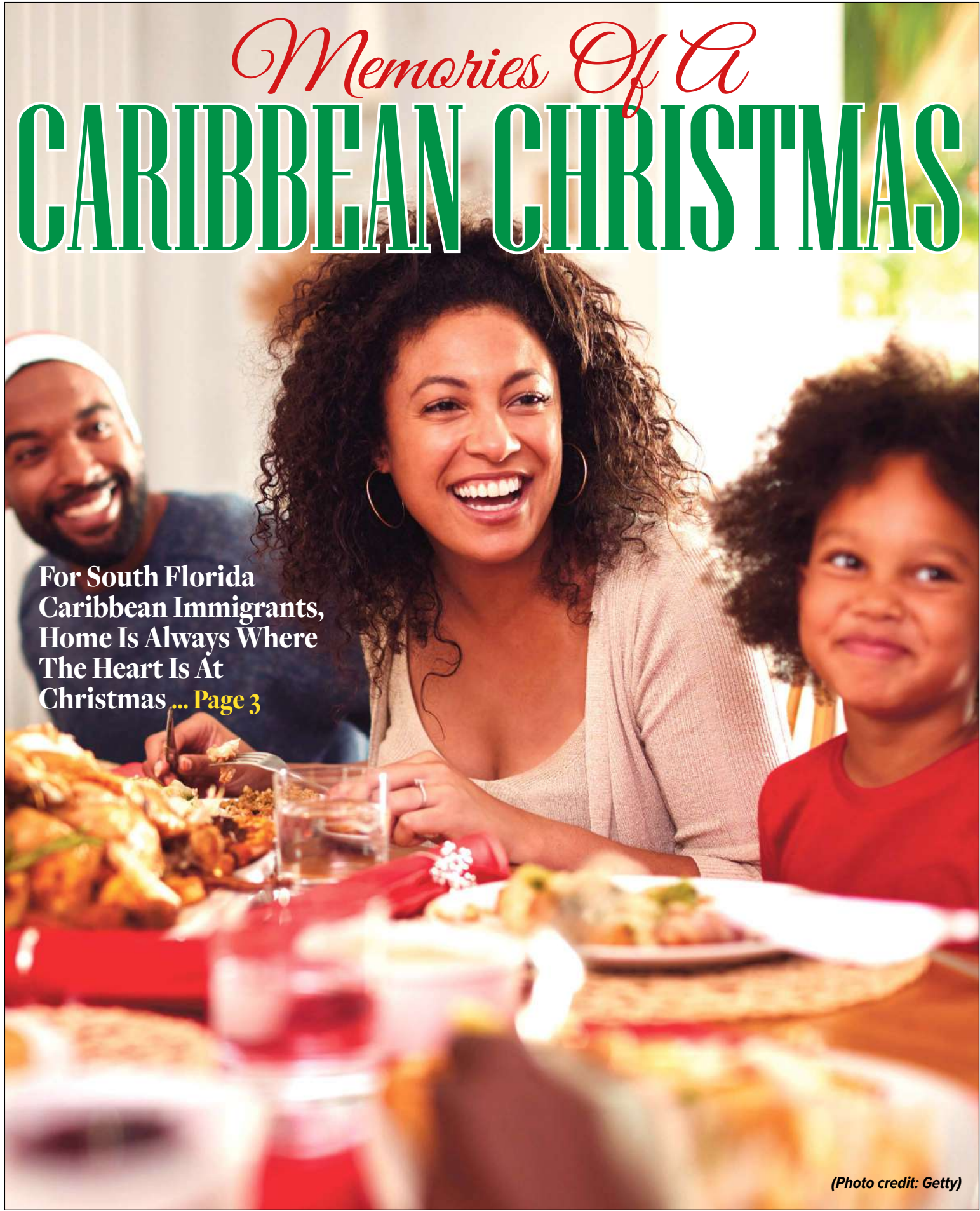
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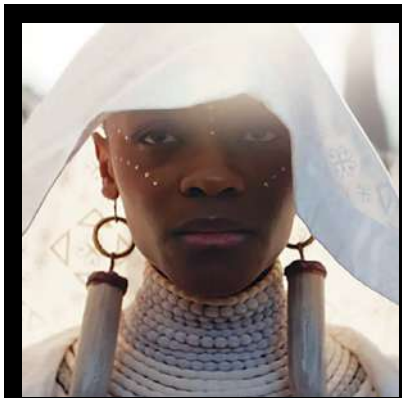
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Memories Of A CARIBBEAN CHRISTMAS

For South Florida
Caribbean Immigrants,
Home Is Always Where
The Heart Is At
Christmas ... **Page 3**



**A Black Panther For Guyana? ...
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(Credit: Marvel Studios/Black
Panther: Wakanda Forever Image)



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(Credit: Pixabay)

(Photo credit: Getty)

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Here Are Some Of The Top Headlines Making Caribbean News This Week

JAMAICA
The Andrew Holness led administration says it is taking measures to place a dent in the network of criminal organizations based mainly in the United States. According to the JLP leader, the discussions are focused on greater security measures at the country's ports, including securing more scanners.

With the gun being the weapon of choice in up to 80 percent of the over 1200 murders committed each year, Holness said steps will be taken to target Jamaican dons in the United States.

"I've put to our US friends, the need to require greater identification for persons sending packages to Jamaica from the US," said the PM. "We will also be opening discussions with our US friends to have special operations to target Jamaican dons overseas who are using their resources and influence to solicit and direct murders here in Jamaica." This comes

as the Jamaica government says it will consider imposing states of emergencies (SOE) in seven parishes across the island, even as the main opposition People's National Party (PNP) insists there is no reason for the government to suspend the basic human rights of half the Jamaican population where states of emergency have been declared.

Government failed on Nov. 25th to get support in the Senate for extending the SOEs.

BAHAMAS
Prime Minister of The Bahamas, Phillip Davis, says he is unaware of any member of the government having any links with the bankrupt FTX, whose collapse in early November sent shockwaves around the globe.

"In fact, I'm agnostic to it. I don't hold any wallet and I'm not aware of any of my Cabinet ministers," Prime Minister David told reporters, labelling also as "unfair" criticisms levelled at the Caribbean Community



In April, Bahamas Prime Minister Philip Brave Davis joined FTX Sam Bankman-Fried and executives at the headquarters groundbreaking of its Bahamas Headquarters. FTX has now collapsed, sending shockwaves around the world.

(CARICOM) country in the international media. "We have no exposure to it. (The) only issue I am concerned about is I have positioned The Bahamas to be the leading jurisdiction in the digital assets space. I am intending to keep that position and the only thing of concern is reputational consequences and I am dealing with that."

The Bahamas headquartered FTX, which was reported to be a significant player in the crypto space, is under investigation by the Securities Commission of The Bahamas (SCB) following its speculator collapse.

FTX, which is registered here as FTX Digital Markets Ltd, moved its headquarters from Hong Kong to The Bahamas last year and the police in Nassau have already announced an investigation into FTX that had been backed by elite investors like BlackRock and Sequoia Capital, rapidly becoming one of the biggest crypto exchanges in the world.

In addition to the SCB probe, the US Justice Department is also investigating FTX.

EASTERN CARIBBEAN
Meanwhile, the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, (ECCB), says it is encouraging members of the public, especially in the sub-regional Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, (OECS), to exercise due diligence and to be mindful of the high level of risk crypto-assets present.

The ECCB, which serves as a central bank for Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, said it is aware of the recent collapse of the Bahamas headquartered FTX, which was reported to be a significant player in the crypto space.

"Crypto assets are inherently volatile and speculative. As such, consumers should be aware of the risk of the loss of their investment, fraud and cyber-attacks, especially in jurisdictions where the sector is

unregulated," the ECCB said.

HAITI

Former prime minister Laurent Lamothe is demanding an apology from Canada after the country linked him to "the egregious conduct of Haitian political elites who provide illicit financial and operational support to armed gangs" on the French-speaking Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country.

"I was totally shocked to learn, through social media, that the Canadian government has decided to sanction me for allegedly financing gangs and supporting criminal activities in Haiti," said Lamote, who served as prime minister under the presidency of Michel Martelly. "It is my belief, that this arbitrary decision by the Canadian government is the result of false information relayed to them by my detractors. I defy anyone to show a single concrete piece of evidence showing my involvement in any type of association with gangs or linking me to any type of financing of criminal activities."

Media reports said that Martelly, who served as head of state from 2011-16, is also being sanctioned by Canada, which also imposed sanctions on Senator Ronny Célestin, the former president of the Chamber of Deputies, Gary Bodeau, and former senator Hervé Fourcand.

GUYANA

The Guyana government has announced an across-the-board increase of eight percent to public servants, teachers, members of the disciplined services, constitutional office holders, as well as government pensioners.

President Dr. Irfaan Ali in a radio and television broadcast on Thursday night said that the increase will be granted retroactively to 1 January 2022. "Work will start immediately to ensure that this increase is processed and paid to eligible employees together with their December salary," he said, adding that further announcements will be made

next week in relation to the specific categories of employees.

BELIZE

Former government minister, John Birchman Saldivar, has described as "left field, baseless, and malicious," the arguments put forward by the United States government for imposing sanctions on him and members of his family amid allegations of his alleged involvement in "significant corruption."

Washington announced that Saldivar "accepted bribes for the improper acquisition of Belizean immigration documents and interfered in public processes for his personal benefit during his tenure as a government official."

"Corrupt acts such as these undermine the integrity of Belize's democratic institutions, and fuel perceptions of corruption and impunity, diminishing confidence in governance," the State Department said.

As part of this action, the department said it is also sanctioning Saldivar's immediate family members, Darlene Karen Saldivar, Johnelle Saldivar, Jevoughn Saldivar, and his minor child.

But in a response, Saldivar, the former national security minister dismissed the Washington's allegations, saying that as a minister of government he conducted himself with honesty and integrity. He said he is at a loss as to why the U.S. Department of State would want to target him and his family without providing absolutely any evidence to explain their conclusion.

DOMINICA

Dominica Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerit has defended his decision to call a snap general election on December 6, two years ahead of the constitutional deadline, dismissing opposition allegations that he is moving towards establishing a dictatorship government in Dominica.

The two main opposition parties – the United Workers Party and the Dominica Freedom party (DFP) – are boycotting the election claiming that promised electoral reform has not materialized. They are urging citizens to boycott the elections until Sir Dennis Byron, the former president of the Caribbean Court of Justice, (CCJ) completes his assignment as the sole commissioner advancing the efforts towards electoral reform.

Sir Byron had proposed presenting the first phase of his report by the end of November with the Parliament tabling the Register of Electors legislation in December and the plan to enact it in January 2023.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

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Memories Of A Caribbean Christmas - Three South Florida Caribbean Immigrants Reminisce Of Christmas In Their Homelands

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL
Edited By Felicia J. Persaud

The term 'melting pot' means a lot more than racial diversity in the Caribbean/West Indies. Different ethnicities indiscriminately savor their cultures differently when it comes to food and drink, and not more than in the Caribbean Diaspora in South Florida.

A lot of that variety is served during Christmas as immigrants look forward to the food and drink, they grew up with as children, whether it's the seasonal sorrel, black cake or fruit cake, fried or steamed fish, or curried goat or mutton.

With the rise of West Indian restaurants and supermarkets in places South Florida, it has become easier for Caribbean immigrants to enjoy cuisine at home, away from home.

Caribbean Today spoke to three Caribbean immigrants on their memories of Christmas.

Valda Lewis

Valda Lewis, who is from St. Michael's in Barbados, lives in Miami which has a small Bajan community. She says she remembers growing up in Barbados the hustle and bustle of the preparation before the big day, including making sure your home was painted, furniture varnished, new curtains and drapes were made or bought, and seat coverings made for your windows and chairs, respectively.

But most of all, she remembers the many delicacies that went with Christmas. "Barbadians enjoy eating and drinking at Christmas. They enjoy roasted pork, turkey, macaroni pie, jug-jug, peas and rice, rum punch, and sorrel," she told *Caribbean Today* recently.

As for her favorite Bajan Yuletide meal, she disclosed that before she quit eating cutting meat, she that meal "used to be baked pork, turkey, and great (fruit/rum) cake."

This Christmas she will still have cake and sorrel like she used to at home, but she is also adding lentil pie and an assortment of vegetables to her Christmas table.

Robert Griffith

Known for its rainforest, rivers and rum, Guyana is actually located in South America. Because of its historical ties to Britain and the Commonwealth, the country is a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and shares traditional Caribbean values including culinary tastes.

Robert Griffith was born in what was then McKenzie, now Linden, to a Guyanese father and Barbadian mother. He remembers

Christmas in his homeland as being big on food familiar to Guyana and the Caribbean.

Popular dishes include Pepper Pot, an Amerindian dish made with cassareep and beef, cow heel, or pork and pig tails; Garlic Pork; homemade bread, and Cook-up Rice, which is prepared with split peas, black eyed peas or pigeon peas and cooked together with pigtails,

beef, tripe etc. in coconut milk. This is mostly served for Old Year's, (New Year's Eve), said Griffith.

Desserts, he said, included the famous Guyana Black Cake, Cheese Straws, Pine tarts and Peanut butter fudge. These were always complemented by a variety of wines made from rice, potato, Jamoon and other fruits. Popular drinks included

the Starfruit-Five Finger drink, Mauby, Ginger Beer and Peanut Butter Punch, Griffith told CT.

Carlos Ottley

Panama inherited a sizable West Indian populace in the early 20th Century when workers from that region went there to help construct the Panama Canal. The city of Colon is home to thousands of descendants

from Jamaica and the Eastern Caribbean. South Florida also has a strong Panamanian flavor. It's where Carlos Ottley from Panama City lives.

According to him, "a typical Panamanian holiday, includes a family get-together where we celebrate and wait for Christmas with music, dance and food."

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

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NEWS



Caribbean Roots UK Advocate Forces Resignation Of Buckingham Palace Staffer

A Caribbean-roots UK staffer tweet complaining of blatant racism at a Buckingham Palace hosted by Camilla, the queen consort and wife of King Charles III has resulted in the resignation of a former lady-in-waiting to the late Queen Elizabeth, II.

Ngozi Fulani, who was born

in the UK but whose parents are from the Caribbean, is the CEO of Sistah Space, an organization that provides specialist services to women of African and Caribbean heritage in the UK affected by abuse.

Fulani was invited to a glittering reception at

Buckingham Palace on Nov. 29th, hosted by the queen consort but the next day, she took to Twitter to say she was the victim of racism.

She did not give the name of the perpetrator, noting only that “Lady SH, approached me, (and) moved my hair to see my name badge.”

She then related that the woman persistently asked about her heritage and would not accept that she was a British national.

“Where do you really come from;” “where do your people come from;” and “when did you first come here?,” Fulani said were the questions.

When Fulani said she answered she was from the London neighborhood of Hackney, the household member insisted: “No, what part of Africa are YOU from?”

“The rest of the event is a blur,” Fulani added in a tweet that was liked over 45.4K times and retweeted over 11.5K times.

Sistah Space said that it “serves no purpose to name & shame” the person in question on its Twitter account, adding “it is the system that needs to be revised.”

“Yes, the person was offensive, but it serves no purpose to name & shame her, it would make us just as bad. We prefer that this be handled



Ngozi Fulani, who was born in the UK but whose parents are from the Caribbean, is the CEO of Sistah Space. She spoke out about the racism she encountered at Buckingham Palace. The staffer subsequently resigned.

start of the Boston visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales. “This is a matter for Buckingham Palace but as the Prince of Wales’ spokesperson I appreciate you’re all here and understand you’ll want to ask about it. So let me address it head on. I was really disappointed to hear about the guest’s experience at Buckingham Palace last night. Obviously, I wasn’t there, but racism has no place in our society. The comments were unacceptable and it is right that the individual has stepped aside with immediate effect.”

The incident comes as amid accusations of racism in the royal family leveled by Duchess of Sussex, Meghan Markle, a biracial American-born actress and the wife of Prince Harry, William’s brother. In a televised interview with Oprah Winfrey in March 2021, Meghan said that a royal family member, whom she did not name, had expressed concern about the skin color of her unborn child.

It also comes on the heels of the Windrush scandal, which began in 2018 concerning mostly Black Caribbean people who were wrongly detained, denied legal rights, threatened with deportation, and in at least 83 cases wrongly deported from the UK by the Home Office.

- *Rewritten from NewsAmericasnow.com*



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Memories Of A Caribbean Christmas - Three South Florida Caribbean Immigrants Reminisce Of Christmas In Their Homelands

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

“We wait for 12 a.m., at which time we eat 12 grapes, and we hug and kiss everyone,” he reminisced with CT. “Music is loud all over the neighborhood and doors are open in every house with neighbors walking and sharing whatever was cooked. Some families allow their children to open the presents at 12; in our family, presents were always opened the following morning after breakfast.”

Ottley’s maternal grandmother was born in Costa Rica to Jamaican parents. His paternal grandfather was from St. Vincent and The Grenadines, so there was no shortage of island culture in his home.

“We are from the Caribbean, so we drink sorrel, rum punch (Coquito), Seco Herrero, and Rum Abuelo,” he said. “And eat turkey, ham, stuffing, potato salad with beets and Panamanian tamales. There is a traditional Rosca de Huevo (big loaf of bread) that we eat that day and for breakfast (on Christmas Day), (and) the table is full of all the items above.”



Caribbean food is always on the table at Caribbean Christmas dinners, regardless of whether nationals are in the US Diaspora or in the region.

Panamanians, Ottley noted, have a sense of community that deepens at Christmas.

“Everyone around the neighborhood and country starts cleaning and painting their houses in preparation for the holidays,” he remembered. “Stores open until late during this time of the year and weekends leading to Christmas Day, there is always some type of celebration going on. Everything culminating or continuing on Christmas Day.”

Added Ottley: “Memories of

Christmas in Panama basically start with Mother’s Day which is December 8th. That is probably the most celebrated and popular holiday in Panama; it starts early and ends very late at night, usually no work that day. Memories include singing Christmas Carols all over the neighborhood, families walking in the street and singing (Villancicos). We used to buy fireworks to explode that day.”



Bahamas Government Defends Digital Asset Regulations In The Wake Of The FTX Collapse



The Bahamas' Attorney General Ryan Pinder addressing the nation on the FTX collapse. (CMC image)

The government of The Bahamas has dismissed as “inaccurate allegations” international criticism of the country’s digital asset regulations following the collapse of FTX.

The Bahamas headquartered FTX, which was reported to be a significant player in the crypto space, is under investigation by the Securities Commission of The Bahamas, (SCB) following its speculator collapse.

FTX, which is registered here as FTX Digital Markets Ltd, moved its headquarters from Hong Kong to The Bahamas last year. The police in Nassau have already announced an investigation into FTX that had been backed by elite investors like BlackRock and Sequoia Capital, rapidly becoming one of the biggest crypto exchanges in the world.

In addition to the SCB probe, the US Justice Department is also investigating FTX as the

FTX Trading Ltd’s new chief executive, John Ray, in US court filings on November 17, said he had “credible evidence” that the Bahamas government “directed unauthorized access” to FTX’s systems, and aided the withdrawal of digital assets.

But The Bahamas’ Attorney General, Ryan Pinder responding to Ray’s remarks described them as “regrettable” and defended the Securities Commission’s decision to protect FTX Digital Markets’ assets for the benefit of clients and creditors.

“It is extremely regrettable that in Chapter 11 filings for bankruptcy protection made in New York, that the new chief executive of FTX Trading Ltd – not the Bahamas-based FTX Digital Markets – but an affiliate company incorporated in Antigua and Barbuda - misrepresented the timely action taken by the Securities Commission, and used inaccurate allegations lodged in the transfer motion to do so,” Pinder said.

FTX Digital Markets had been paced into provisional liquidation earlier this month after experiencing a liquidity crisis, sparked by clients’ simultaneous withdrawal of assets from FTX. Following its liquidation, FTX, its sister company Alameda Research and dozens of other affiliates filed for a bankruptcy petition in Delaware and FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried resigned as chief executive officer. Ray has since replaced Bankman-Fried.

Pinder told Bahamians that

as is provided for under the country’s regulatory framework, “we are already working with a number of specialists and experts, and will continue to do so as the need arises.”

He said there are a number of protective measures which the regulator has taken under the authority conferred by the Supreme Court of The Bahamas.

Pinder also warned that “ill-

informed speculation” will not be helpful to anyone involved, critical also of those persons who have been criticizing the government for being “silent” on matters regarding FTX’s implosion, adding that due to ongoing investigations, officials must be careful in how they respond to questions related to the embattled crypto currency exchange.

Meanwhile, two United States legislators – Elizabeth Warren and Sheldon Whitehouse – are calling on the US Department of Justice, (DOJ) to hold the executives of FTX accountable “to the fullest extent of the law” following the company’s collapse.

- *Rewritten from CMC*



Jamaica Police Nab Lotto Scammer

Jamaica police have nabbed a man, believed to be a major figure involved in lottery scamming. The police report that during a police/military operation carried out in the northern parish of St. Ann recently, the man was detained along with six others.

The operations were conducted in search of illegal guns and ammunition, dangerous drugs, lottery scamming, wanted persons and Persons of Interests.

The cops said. That a prime target – who goes by the alias “Chubby” - was captured during the operations. Several

cell phones with the personal information and addresses of persons living overseas were seized in the operations.

Three of the suspects were arrested at a house in the town of Steer Town, in possession of cellular phones with the identity information and addresses of persons living overseas. The three have since been charged with identity theft and lottery scamming. The other suspects are being investigated by the Lottery Scam Task Force.

- *CMC*



Here Are Some Of The Top Headlines Making Caribbean News This Week

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

CAYMAN ISLANDS

Members of Parliament in the Cayman Islands have elected Katherine Ebanks-Wilks as the new speaker following a vote held during a special meeting of the house. She is the youngest person to sit in the speaker’s chair and only the fifth woman. Ebanks-Wilks, 43, who has been an MP for 19 months, beat the only other person nominated,

opposition member Sir Alden McLaughlin who has served in the legislature for more than 20 years, by ten votes to six, as MPs voted along party lines.

Her election comes after McKeever Bush officially demitted the office of speaker last month, after resigning with immediate effect.

- *Compiled from CMC*



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Groups Urge TPS Extension For Haitians

The United States government is being asked to extend and re-designate Haiti for Temporary Protected Status, (TPS), in light of the French-speaking Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country's "deteriorating security, governance, and humanitarian crises."

In a letter signed by over 400 organizations and sent to President Joe Biden, Secretary of State, Antony Blinken and Homeland Security Secretary, Alejandro Mayorkas, the Haitian Bridge Alliance, (HBA), wrote that armed groups, many controlled by members of the Haitian government, are terrorizing Haiti's capital with kidnappings and other violent crimes, which have spilled into cities across the country.

In the Nov. 22nd letter, the 422 immigration, human rights, faith-based, and civil

rights organizations reminded the administration that Haiti "has experienced a nationwide lockdown for several weeks, with roads and businesses blocked by barricades erected by armed groups.

The groups pointed out that since June 2021, more than 50,000 people have been displaced and forced to leave their homes due to violence and that the criminal gang blockade of Haiti's principal fuel terminal, crippled day-to-day activity throughout the country, paralyzing the economy, interrupting movement, and restricting essential supplies of food, medicine, and fuel for over two months.

The 13-page letter notes the resurgence of cholera cases in the country with the Health Ministry estimating more than 121 deaths and 6,072 suspected cases and added that all of the



Haitians are asking for TPS to be extended again. (File photo)

conditions leading to the Biden administration's original TPS redesignation on May 22, 2021, the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse on July 7, 2021, the August 14, 2021 earthquake and subsequent tropical storm, and the deteriorating crises, still exists and making "a safe return

to Haiti completely impossible."

"Given the deteriorating security and humanitarian crises as described herein that present extraordinary and temporary conditions that make a safe return to Haiti impossible, the Administration should extend and redesignate Haiti for

TPS," the letter urges. "This will allow protection against removal and eligibility for work authorization to all eligible Haitians currently in the United States. We request that the Biden administration redesignate Haiti for TPS, provide a minimum 180-day registration period for both current TPS holders and new beneficiaries under re-designation, and lead a public education campaign in English and Haitian Creole to inform impacted community members."

The letter comes as Border Patrol agents say they are preparing for a massive migration push at the U.S.-Mexico border when Title 42 ends - just four days before Christmas.

- *Rewritten from CMC*



Caribbean Heritage UK Nationals Dominate 2023 Powerlist

Several Black Britons with roots in the Caribbean have made it onto the 2023 Powerlist, an annual directory of the 100 most influential people of African or African Caribbean heritage in the United Kingdom.

The annual chart of the UK's influential people of African, African Caribbean and African American heritage was created in 2007 to honor role models. It is regarded as a leading authority on Black influence in the UK, the Powerlist is open to Black Britons across the globe as well as Black UK residents.

Heading the list is Dame Sharon White, Chair of the John Lewis Partnership, who was born in East London to Jamaican parents and attended Cambridge University to study economics before embarking on a dazzling career in the civil service. At 8th is Paulette Simpson CBE, who was born in Britain but raised between Jamaica and Manchester by her grandmother before studying business at the University of Sterling.

She is Executive, Corporate Affairs and Public Policy, Jamaica National Bank and Executive Director, The Voice. She was awarded a CBE in 2020 – and she is deputy chair of both the Windrush Advisory Panel and the Windrush Commemoration Committee.

Riki Bleau, founder of Since '93 Records is the only Dominican to make it to the 2023 Powerlist.

Also making the list is the son of Dominicans from the Commonwealth of Dominica, music executive, Riki Bleau, founder of Since '93 Records is the only Dominican to make it to the 2023 Powerlist.

"It's really an honor to be on this esteemed list," commented Bleau, adding that "as the son of immigrants it makes me proud to have achieved this and I hope that it can inspire not only UK citizens

of Dominican descent, but born-and-bred Dominicans too that there really is no limit to your talent and that there is a reward for your efforts."

Bleau, who was born in London, is the son of Joseph and Edmay Caprice-Bleau from Scotts Head. He got his start in music at Channel U, a then ground-breaking youth culture platform in the U.K.

Finding his niche in publishing, Bleau signed platinum selling producer, writer and artist Labrinth, genius producer Naughty Boy, noted singer/songwriter Emeli Sandé and mega star Sam Smith. A testament to his success is his 2011 publisher of the year Ivor Novello Award presented by the British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors. Bleau is also part of the management team of Afrobeats superstar Wizkid and Jamaican Dancehall phenom Popcaan, and is founder and co-president of his Sony Joint venture label Since '93 Records.

Over the decades, Bleau has cemented himself as a curator of Black British music, lifestyle and culture and his influence and reach has grown steadily. His experience in the international space can be of great benefit to local industry players and he is actively looking forward to making his mark on the Dominican music industry having already begun the process by meeting with Executive members of the Association of Music Professionals (AMP), Discover Dominica CEO Colin Piper and Minister for Trade Ian Douglas.

Bleau was listed under the category Media, Publishing, Entertainment and Sports, joining the likes of footballers Raheem



Riki Bleau, founder of Since '93 Records is the only Dominican to make it to the 2023 Powerlist.

Sterling whose roots are Jamaican and Marcus Rashford, whose family hails from St. Kitts; as well as actors Sir Lenny Henry, of Jamaican heritage.

Also under this category are Akala – a poet and activist with a Jamaican background and Vanessa Kingori MBE, Chief Business Officer, Condé Nast Britain and Vogue European Business Advisor, who was born in Kenya and raised in St. Kitts.

Also making the list in Art and Fashion is Jamaican roots Dame Pat McGrath, DBE, a make-up artist and founder, Pat McGrath Labs.

Apart from the top ten on the list, the other awardees are ranked in no particular order and are organized under the headings, Arts, Fashion and Design; Business, Corporate, Financiers & Entrepreneurs; Politics, Law and Religion; Public, Third Sector and Education; Science, Medicine and Engineering and lastly, Technology.

The Powerlist 2023 is published by Powerful Media and is sponsored by PwC, BP, the Executive Leadership Council, The London Stock Exchange Group, Meta, and Mastercard. The 2023 cohort was celebrated on Friday

October 28th at the Powerlist Black Excellence Awards hosted by Colin Salmon at London's Savoy hotel.

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"It's really an honor to be on this esteemed list," commented Bleau, adding that "as the son of immigrants it makes me proud to have achieved this and I hope that it can inspire not only UK citizens of Dominican descent, but born-and-bred Dominicans too that there really is no limit to your talent and that there is a reward for your efforts."

Bleau, who was born in London, is the son of Joseph and Edmay Caprice-Bleau from Scotts Head. He got his start in music at Channel U, a then ground-breaking youth culture platform in the U.K.

Finding his niche in publishing, Bleau signed platinum selling producer, writer and artist Labrinth, genius producer Naughty Boy, noted singer/songwriter Emeli Sandé and mega star Sam Smith. A testament to his success is his 2011 publisher of the year Ivor Novello Award presented by the British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors. Bleau is also part of the management team of Afrobeats superstar Wizkid and Jamaican Dancehall phenom Popcaan, and is founder and co-president of his Sony Joint venture label Since '93 Records.

Over the decades, Bleau has cemented himself as a curator of Black British music, lifestyle and culture and his influence and reach has grown steadily. His experience in the international space can be of great benefit to local industry players and he is actively looking

forward to making his mark on the Dominican music industry having already begun the process by meeting with Executive members of the Association of Music Professionals, (AMP), Discover Dominica CEO Colin Piper and Minister for Trade Ian Douglas.

Bleau was listed under the category Media, Publishing, Entertainment and Sports, joining the likes of footballers Raheem Sterling whose roots are Jamaican and Marcus Rashford, whose family hails from St. Kitts; as well as actors Sir Lenny Henry, of Jamaican heritage.

Also under this category are Akala – a poet and activist with a Jamaican background and Vanessa Kingori MBE, Chief Business Officer, Condé Nast Britain and Vogue European Business Advisor, who was born in Kenya and raised in St. Kitts.

Also making the list in Art and Fashion is Jamaican roots Dame Pat McGrath, DBE, a make-up artist and founder, Pat McGrath Labs.

Apart from the top ten on the list, the other awardees are ranked in no particular order and are organized under the headings, Arts, Fashion and Design; Business, Corporate, Financiers & Entrepreneurs; Politics, Law and Religion; Public, Third Sector and Education; Science, Medicine and Engineering and lastly, Technology.

The Powerlist 2023 is published by Powerful Media and is sponsored by PwC, BP, the Executive Leadership Council, The London Stock Exchange Group, Meta, and Mastercard. The 2023 cohort was celebrated on Friday October 28th at the Powerlist Black Excellence Awards hosted by Colin Salmon at London's Savoy hotel.

- *NewsAmericasNow.com*



A Mixed Mid-Term Bag For Caribbean Candidates

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL
Edited By Felicia J. Persaud

The Sunshine State was not a happy hunting ground for Democrats with Caribbean heritage in the mid-term elections just as it wasn't for Democrats in general.

Two Jamaica-born candidates lost their bids to become the first from their country to sit in the United States House of Representatives.

Karen Green, a Democrat, lost to Republican Cory Mills in the Florida District 7. Mills won easily with 177,802 votes, (58.5%), to Green's 125,914, (41.5%).

Carla Spalding, like Green, was born in Kingston, Jamaica's capital. Running as a Republican against incumbent Democratic Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman-Schultz, the former US Navy member lost with just 104,819 votes or 44.9% to Wasserman-Schultz's 128,680 or 55.1%.

Democrat Naomi Esther Blemur, born in the US to Haitian parents, lost out to become Florida's Agriculture Commissioner to Republican and former State Senator, Wilbert Simpson.

And in Broward County, Jamaican-born Democrat Richard Campbell was bested by African American Ken Thurston, who easily won re-election as Lauderhill's Mayor.

LONE WINS

However, first generation



Caribbean roots Maxwell Alejandro Frost, a community organizer, has officially become the first Gen Z member elected to Congress.

Haitian American, Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick, capped an outstanding year by retaining the Florida 20th Congressional District for the Democrats, routing Republican Drew Montez Clark with 136,192 votes or 72.3% to his 52,150 or 27.7%.

It was her fourth turn at the polls, starting with a razor-thin runoff win over veteran Dale Holness in November 2021. This makes her the lone Haitian American from the state of Florida in the House.

Meanwhile, also making history in Florida, was 25-year-old Caribbean roots Maxwell Alejandro Frost, a community organizer, who has officially become the first Gen Z member elected to Congress after winning a House seat in Florida's 10th Congressional District. The seat once held by Val Demming, who lost her bid for Senate in the Nov. 4th elections. Frost's roots extend to Cuba through his grandmother

Yeya and is a first-generation Afro-Cuban American.

In Miami, Haitian immigrant Marleine Bastien, a longtime community organizer and activist, won her race to make history as the first Haitian woman to hold a Miami-Dade County Commission seat. Her win in the hotly contested race that once featured four Haitian Americans largely reflects the path of South Florida's Haitian community in many ways, some say.

With all precincts reporting, all in-person votes counted and a full tally of mail-in ballots, Bastien had 59% of the 37,430 votes cast compared to 41% for Bien-Aime.

And Jamaican immigrant Denise Grant also won – claiming a second term on the Lauderhill Commission.

NATIONALLY

In Maryland, Jamaican American Westley 'Wes' Watende Omari Moore made history as he became the state's first black governor with 908,074 votes or almost 60 percent of the 91 percent counted.

Moore, 44, a former investment banker, author, and television producer, whose Jamaican immigrant parents were both media professionals, defeated Republican Dan Cox.

In New York, Jamaican American Yvette Clarke won over Menachem Raitport with a whopping 82.2% or 111,162 of the votes.



Jamaican Born, Miami Dade College Professor Receives Silver Musgrave Medal In Literature



Professor Geoffrey Philp is the author of more than 12 books of poetry and fiction.

Retired Miami Dade College, (MDC), professor and alumnus, Caribbean immigrant Geoffrey Philp, was recently awarded a Silver Musgrave Medal in Literature by the Institute of Jamaica at the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica. Awarded annually in recognition of excellence in art, science and literature, the Musgrave Medal is named in memory of Sir Anthony Musgrave, the founder of the Institute and the former Governor of Jamaica.

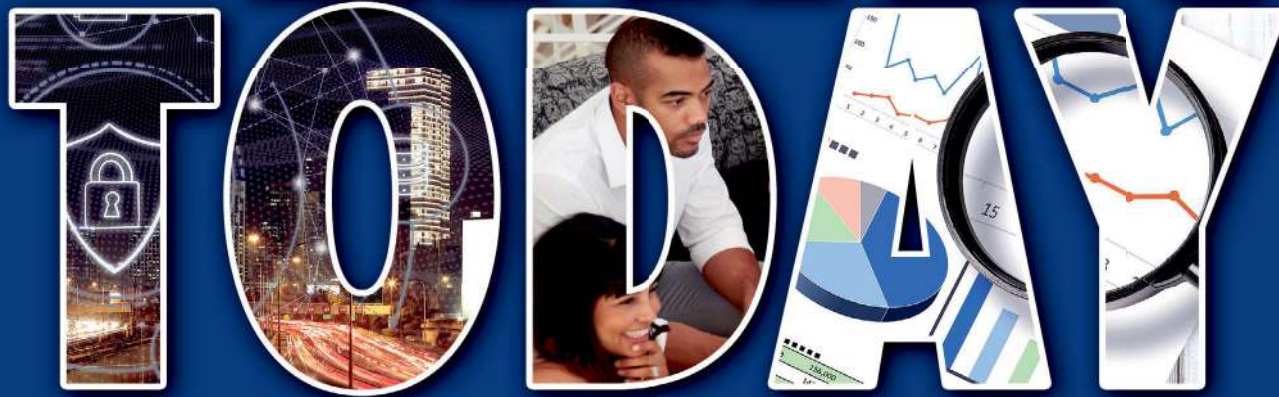
"Miami Dade College gave me a second opportunity to earn a college degree," said the Jamaican born professor. "It was the first place where I won prizes for my poetry. These prizes gave me the validation that I was a poet and the confidence that I could write for an American audience."

Philp is the author of more than 12 books of poetry and fiction. His poems and short stories have been published in World Literature Today, Oxford Book of Caribbean Verse, sx salon, Caribbean Writer, Oxford Book of Caribbean Short Stories, Pree and Johannesburg Review of Books.

Throughout his career, Philp earned many awards for his work, including the Marcus Garvey Award for Excellence in Education (2022) and a Luminary Award

from the Consulate of Jamaica (2015). His poem, "A Prayer for my Children," is featured on The Poetry Rail at The Betsy, an homage to 12 writers that shaped Miami culture.

His forthcoming collection of poems, "Archipelagos," borrows from Kamau Brathwaite's "Middle Passage" lecture, Aime Cesaire's "Discourse on Colonialism," Sylvia Wynter's "1492" and Amitav Ghosh's paradigm in The Nutmeg's Curse to explore the relationship between Christianity, colonialism and genocide in the Plantationocene. He is currently working on a graphic novel for children titled "My Name is Marcus," and a collection of poems "Letter from Marcus Garvey."



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Miami Dade College

From A Fruit Fly To Entomology - Dr. Pauline O. Lawrence

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

Aah, for the love of mangos ... a nice big yellow one filled with juice that drips down your chin when you bite into it! Well, you might not be the only one enjoying it. The worm inside it, some of which you may have eaten, is also living and thriving on its nutrients.

This worm, or maggot, comes from the fruit fly. This is where Pauline O. Lawrence's curiosity and career in entomology had its genesis.

Tomatoes And Brown Sugar

Born and raised in Jamaica, her curiosity bubbled up as a child growing up in her parents' large garden in Buff Bay, Portland.

"I used to eat the tomatoes while they were still on the vine. I would bite off the little nipple that would ripen first and eat it with brown sugar. My father would ask, 'what's happening to the tomatoes, something is eating them,'" the now

Professor Pauline O. Lawrence revealed in a recent conversation with Caribbean Today.

"And I said to him, 'Papa, it must be some insects.' But one day he caught me nibbling at one and he said, 'So this is the insect eating my tomatoes.' So, my punishment was to get a jar and collect all of the insects I could find," Dr. Lawrence reminisced with a laugh.

With her link to agriculture, and her Girls Guide training, Lawrence had no problems completing her task which only served to heighten her interest in the sciences and the natural environment. She would go on to UWI Mona where she earned a BSc (Honors) in Zoology from the Faculty of Natural Sciences, which is now called the Faculty of Science and Technology.

"After I graduated from the University of the West Indies, (UWI), I went to work at the Ministry of Agriculture," Dr. Lawrence disclosed. "Our job was to travel around the island and look at the distribution of infected fruits, how many crops were affected ... We worked to find a way of controlling the insects because pesticides could not do it. So, I got interested in biological control."

Her natural instinct and aptitude would lead her to the University of Florida (UF) in 1969 where she began graduate work at the main campus in Gainesville before moving on to Homestead. Lawrence was the first Black female student in entomology and the first female student to live and study on the UF/IFAS TREC campus.

Asked how she was received

in the racially divided southern United States at that time, Lawrence noted: "When I came, I really was not too familiar with the strict racial divide. I had a wonderful mentor, Dr. Samuel Apeji, a Nigerian in the Ministry of Agriculture, Jamaica who was very influential in my coming to Florida. He said to me, 'don't leave the campus.'"

Lawrence pointed out that she did not have any problems, but it was very clear that the



L to R: Mr. Jorge Abreu, Director of Agriculture, presenting the Proclamation on behalf of Commissioner Kionne McGhee of Miami-Dade County (Dist.9), Florida to Dr. Pauline O. Lawrence, c.; and Dr. Edward "Gilly" Evans, Director of UF/IFAS/TREC, Homestead. The Proclamation declared November 5, 2022 "Dr. Pauline O. Lawrence Day." (Photos courtesy of Pauline Lawrence/ufl.edu)

only Blacks around her at the university were janitors and maids. She was the only black female student in entomology.

Lawrence added that Caucasians on campus were very polite and extremely impressed with her sophisticated level of English. But it was her focus, confidence, and love of the natural sciences that helped carve out a career in academia.

Parasitic Wasp

Under the guidance of her major professor, Dr. Baranowski at the UF Tropical Research and Education Center, (TREC) in Homestead, Lawrence dug deeper into the study of fruit flies, looking at ways of controlling them with biological control agents. This agent turned out to be a parasitic wasp that carries a special virus inside its body to destroy the fly's immune system and prevent the fly from killing the growing baby wasp.

Lawrence explained: "It's a tiny wasp, like an ant. There is a little structure coming from the end of it like a tail. It's an egg depositor, we call it an ovipositor. It lays its eggs inside the body of the worm, the fruit fly larvae."

"The Wasp's specialty is to find the larvae inside the fruit," she added. "So we were watching her as she touched the fruit with her antennae or feelers at the top of her head and located the larvae even though she couldn't see it. She would push her ovipositor through the fruit like a fine needle, put it into the body of the larvae and lay her eggs. So, her babies would feed on the tissues of that maggot.



Dr. Pauline O. Lawrence addressing guests at the groundbreaking. (Photos courtesy of Pauline Lawrence/ufl.edu)



L-R: Dr. Marsha McGriff, UF Chief Diversity Officer and Senior Advisor to the President; Dr. W. Kent Fuchs, UF President; Dr. Pauline O. Lawrence; Dr. Carlton G. Davis, Distinguished Professor (Ret); and Dr. J. Scott Angle, Senior Vice President for UF/IFAS. (Photos courtesy of Pauline Lawrence/ufl.edu)

Instead of a fly coming out when the fruit falls to the ground you have a little wasp coming out. And those wasps would go and find more flies. So that's how biological control works."

In that process, Lawrence discovered this brand-new virus inside the body of the wasp and how it works to kill fruit flies. Her discovery helped to explain how this wasp which is being used all over the world is so successful at controlling fruit flies.

Giving Back

Lawrence earned her doctorate from UF in 1975, started as Assistant Professor in 1976 earning full professorship in 1989. She is currently Professor Emerita in Physiology and Biochemistry in the Department of Entomology and Nematology at the University of Florida after fulfilling her dream of studying the fruit fly and making major contributions to the field.

As student, faculty, and donor, Lawrence has given back to the university in many ways. And now, demonstrating its gratitude, The University of Florida in Homestead is honoring Dr. Lawrence with a new dormitory building being named after her at the UF/IFAS Tropical Research and Education Center, (TREC). The Pauline O. Lawrence Student Residence will be the first UF building named after a Black person.

"I am grateful that the Board of Governors and Dr. W. Kent Fuchs, the university president saw merit in doing this when Dr. Scott Angle,

Senior Vice President for the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) and Dr. Edward "Gilly" Evans, Director, Tropical Research and Education Center (TREC) in Homestead presented the case. All were exceedingly supportive," she told CT, tears in her eyes. "I am humbled when I think of the slaves who

undertake this important work."

It is because of this and the many who helped propel her that Dr. Lawrence is also giving back to the land of her birth. She and her husband, Dr. Carlton G. Davis, have established scholarships for deserving students in entomology at UF and in the life sciences and biotechnology at the University of the West Indies, Mona. They also offer scholarships to students at Hampton high school in Malvern, St. Elizabeth.

And this Christmas, she and her husband will celebrate the season just as she and her family did in Jamaica, being thankful for the opportunities and celebrating those who will follow.

"We are going to have a Caribbean Christmas," Dr. Lawrence shared with Caribbean Today. "I'm going to decorate the house, have a few friends over. I usually sit at the piano and play some old hymns and Christmas songs, which we used to do when my parents were alive."



bled and died, adding their tears, work, and sweat in this soil."

"But I am also hopeful," Dr. Lawrence added. "Because at the groundbreaking I saw many young people from all over the world, especially the young women, who said my work helped to reinforce their drive."

"I hope it reminds all the future graduate students coming through the center that entomology and other scientific disciplines are open to everyone, regardless of background," Lawrence added.

"The dorms are part of a larger vision for TREC in which graduate students are an integral part of the research and teaching community at the center," said Edward "Gilly" Evans, the center's director in a UF blog. "Graduate students are an essential part of what we do at research and education centers. At TREC, they play a critical role in our research supporting agriculture and natural resources in South Florida, all while receiving mentorship and professional development from our faculty."

"Naming memorializes the contributions of faculty, students, donors - and Dr. Lawrence is all three - who have helped build the foundation for excellence at UF," J. Scott Angle, UF's senior vice president for agriculture and natural resources and leader of UF/IFAS added on ufl.edu.

"This moment in our university's history reminds us that we strive for preeminence by making our institution more inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible for all people. Dr. Lawrence's career is an inspiration for us to

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Why Did Hispanic Voters In Florida Shift So Far Right? The Answer Lies In One Word!

Latino talking heads and so-called analysts are scratching their heads and having a hard time explaining away the results of the Nov. 8th mid-term elections in Florida, that showed a marked shift to the right again by many Hispanic voters.

The biggest shock of the night on Tuesday, Nov. 8th, was the fact that Republican Ron DeSantis, was able to turn a once blue county – Miami Dade – bright red, thanks to Latino voters there from Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela.

Yes, Venezuela, despite DeSantis' human trafficking of a number of asylum seekers from the same South American country less than two months ago. One expected the opposite – a backlash – but that did not come as the Trump mini-me rode the Hispanic wave to victory.

An exit poll shows that a whopping 58 percent of Latinos voted for DeSantis over the Democratic contender, Charlie Crist. Crist managed to get only 40 percent of the Latino vote according to the same poll.

Compare that to 2020, when Joe Biden picked up 53% of Latinos voters in Florida compared to 46 percent who went for Trump and 32 percent went for Trump nationally to 65 percent for Biden. That red percentile line has now increased to 39 percent nationally according to Tuesday's exit poll.

So, what led to Latinos in

the Sunshine state especially, to shift so far right in this election?

The answer lies in the false ads that were run in Florida during the elections, and which was repeated by voters in Miami-Dade a day after the elections.

Asked by a CBS Miami reporter on Nov. 9th, who they supported, voter after voter interviewed in Miami's Little Havana, as well as areas that are popular havens for Venezuelan and Nicaraguan immigrants and naturalized US citizens, repeated one word: "Socialism."

They all told the reporter they had lived through socialism and did not want a repeat; and they feared Democrats will push that agenda here in the United States. As they relayed it to the reporter, they felt they had no choice but to vote Republican since Democrats are embracing socialism or leftist policies.

Are Democrats paying attention to this false narrative that is being piped to what was once their solid base or are they off in the clouds somewhere? Two years ago, in the aftermath of the 2020 elections, when there was again a marked shift towards the right by



FELICIA J. PERSAUD

Latino voters, Equis Labs stated that Hispanics' concern about socialism has worked "to create space for defection" of voters.

In the post 2020 elections, the polling firm found that 4 in 10 Latinos who voted then are concerned about Democrats embracing socialism. Fear of Democratic embrace of socialist or leftist ideas was highest among U.S. born Cubans, followed by mainland born Puerto Ricans, at 57 percent, the poll found. Latin Americans who are not of Cuban descent or Puerto Rican were equally concerned about socialism in the Democratic Party and fascism in the GOP.

The fear increases in subsequent generations of U.S. Latinos, growing from a concern among 45 percent of immigrant Latinos to 59 percent of fourth-generation Latinos, according to the survey.

Stephanie Valencia, co-founder and president of Equis Labs, tied the socialism concern or fear to the near absence of contrary messaging on social media apps such as What's App and YouTube, where many Latinos get political news. In its report Equis called the GOP's messaging on socialism propaganda that is sometimes reduced to disinformation.

"This uncontested propaganda with these closed media ecosystems are feeding this

modern red panic, and there is a weaponization of the American Dream," Valencia said in 2020, adding that the GOP is peddling socialism as the opposite of the American Dream and something that will destroy the dream, creating fear around the socialism label.

In Miami, Cuban American María Elvira Salazar won back her Congressional seat State Sen. Annette Taddeo, over a "horrendous" attack ad accusing Taddeo of rubbing elbows with black, Democratic socialists.

The ad was part of a \$1.7 million reservation in English- and Spanish-language airtime the Republican Congressional Leadership Fund (CLF) made to help Salazar keep her seat representing Florida's 27th Congressional District.

The video says Taddeo was "spotted huddling with the Miami chapter of a socialist group that supports the Cuban communist regime" and "joined them to rally for socialist-style spending that could bankrupt the country."

It was the same tactic that led

to Salazar's election in 2020, when she unseated the 27th District's Democratic congresswoman, Donna Shalala. She branded Shalala – as falsely and toxically a "socialist" in the mold of all the left-wing Latin American dictators so many Latinos in South Florida have fled. She ran ad after ad claiming it and hurled that same bogus epithet at the Black Lives Matter racial justice movement and claimed Shalala, Joe Biden and the Democrats get their orders from its leaders. The move won in 2020 and its won again in 2022 – bigger for sure.

The question, is – are Democrats even listening or are they too busy playing the nice guys and patting themselves on the back for not losing as badly as they thought? A loss is a loss regardless of the margin. Time to wake up as voters of color are defecting on lies!

The writer is publisher of NewsAmericasNow.com – The Black Immigrant Daily News.



Bad Child Or Bad Parents



Someone once said: "There are no bad children, only bad parents." The challenging thing about being a parent is that it does not come with a manual or handbook. Instead, parents simply have to play it by ear, wing it, and try to figure it out as they go along. More than often, they call upon what they learned from their parents.

In fact, there's an old saying that goes: 'The best payback for a bad child, is for them to become parents.' But there's also a twist to that, for many new parents do the exact opposite of what their parents taught them in order to 'give their children an easier life.'

Many nowadays parents had a difficult time growing up. Their parents were perhaps not financially well off, they were very strict, often depriving them of basic childhood pleasures and freedoms, plus the rod that was never spared.

As a result, when those children become parents themselves, they try to overcompensate and give their kids free rein to do whatever they want to do, with no restrictions. "I give my children whatever they want, they are not going to suffer as I did," is their mantra.



TONY ROBINSON

As a result, those children grow up with a warped sense of reality, compounded by a sense of entitlement, as they feel privileged, and that the world owes them. There are parents who do not allow their children to do any household chores whatsoever, because that

was their reality while growing up. That child grows up with no sense of responsibility.

I remember as a child, I had to wash my dad's car, shine his shoes, mow the lawn using a manual push mower, trim the shrubs, take out the garbage, wash whatever dishes that I used and go to the meat shop with a shopping list from my mother. Not so nowadays, as many mothers are vehemently opposed to their children doing any such activities.

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Notice is hereby given that a General Election will be held in the City of Miramar, Florida, on **Tuesday, March 14, 2023**, for the following seats:

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Any qualified Broward County elector whose principal place of residence is in the City of Miramar and who has resided continuously in the City for at least one year immediately preceding the first day of the qualifying period shall be eligible to qualify as a candidate and hold office.

The qualifying period for candidates in the City of Miramar will begin at **noon, Tuesday, January 3, 2023** and end at **noon, Tuesday, January 10, 2023**, during normal business hours at the Office of the City Clerk in the Miramar Town Center, 2300 Civic Center Place. Miramar Town Center is open 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday and is closed on Fridays. However, during the qualifying period on Friday, January 6, 2023, staff will be available to accept documentation from candidates at the Miramar Cultural Arts Center, 2400 Civic Center Place from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. There will be candidate qualifying fees of **\$516.75** for the Office of Commissioner and **\$609.11** for the Office of Mayor.

The election shall be held in accordance with the Charter of the City of Miramar, Florida, and the State of Florida Election Laws.

For further information, please contact the Office of the City Clerk at (954) 602-3014.

Denise A. Gibbs, CMC
City Clerk

Voters Of Colour And Women Saved The Democrats From Disaster

BY PETER WHITE

Despite new laws to keep people from voting and gerrymandering election districts to take away the power of minority communities, the Republican “red wave” that pollsters predicted ahead of the recent mid-terms didn’t happen. Ethnic Media Services debriefed six experts on their reactions to the election results and what should be done to prepare for the 2024 election.

“Voters of colour were very concerned about the state of their lives beyond the economy,” said Sergio I. García-Rios, assistant professor at the University of Texas at Austin and former director of Polling and Data at Univision News. “A second concern in all of our polls was gun safety, and mass shootings and also security along the border.”

García-Rios said that President Biden’s message about saving democracy resonated with voters of colour concerned about rising extremism. But they also sent Democrats a message: “We’re disappointed with both parties.”

That theme was picked up by Christine Chen, executive director of Asian Pacific Islander American Vote, (APIAVote), who says the number of Asian American voters who eschew both parties is

growing. APIAVote conducts an annual survey of Asian American and Pacific Islander voters.

“We noticed that there’s an increasing number of independent voters among the Asian American electorate, 35% overall, and the Chinese actually had the largest percentage... at 47%.

Even the Vietnamese, who support Republicans at a higher rate than any other Asian ethnic group, are losing party identification to independents,” Chen said.

Driving many black women were concerns around safety, said Karma Cottman, who leads Ujima, which focuses on violence targeting women in the black community. “Safety for us as women, safety for us as members of the black community, overlaid with what safety looks like in terms of physical and financial safety so we are able to take care of our families.”

Cottman pointed to down ballot elections, noting strong support for black female candidates. “We were voting up and down ballot for black women,” she said.



Voters of colour and women turned out for Democrats in the recent mid-terms.

Voter intimidation, meanwhile, did not prove to be a major issue this election, says Gowri Ramachandran, senior counsel of the Brennan Center’s Democracy program. “We had law enforcement leaders in some communities coming out and saying, look, intimidation of voters and of election workers is not going to be tolerated,” she said.

Exit polls showed Republicans gaining ground in support among African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans. While support for Democrats remained high among women and young voters, Cottman echoed those who say Democrats spent too much time trying to flip predominantly white districts instead of investing resources in communities of color.

While Democrats maintained

control of the Senate following a narrow win this weekend by Nevada’s Catherine Cortez Masto, control of the House remains in question, though Republicans have the advantage.

Common Cause National Redistricting Director Kathay Feng says extreme gerrymandering was a decisive factor in Republicans’ strong showing in states like Ohio and Florida and will be key should they retake the House.

In red states where the state legislature controls redistricting and Republican governors approve the maps they draw, the fight for fair maps is a David vs Goliath proposition. But in North Carolina and Minnesota, courts forced district maps to be redone. And in New Mexico, Native Americans threatened to blockade the commission if it didn’t redraw the Navajo districts. They did so.

Feng, who has been at the centre of efforts to challenge partisan gerrymandering through litigation and state-based organizing around ballot initiatives and legislation, says citizens have been able to get maps drawn fairly where election commissions do the redistricting.

“Across the board we saw many improvements,” she noted, pointing to states like California, Michigan and Colorado.

In Michigan, voters passed a measure in 2018 to create an independent Redistricting Commission. It has made a big difference there. State Representative Joe Tate is likely to become the first black speaker of the Michigan House. In Detroit and nearby suburbs, an African American is going to be representing this district for the first time in Washington. And in Michigan’s 12th Congressional District, incumbent Democrat

Rashida Tlaib, who is Palestinian American, will be representing her newly configured district.

In Colorado, the Citizens Redistricting Board meeting for the first time drew a Congressional district with a 40% Latino population. “And that district, the Congressional 8th, elected for the first time a Latina representative to be part of the Congressional Colorado delegation,” Feng said.

“It’s significant to note that in each of these states there has been tremendous participation by communities of colour to come out and talk about where those communities are, to talk about the growth, and to make sure that the lines are truly reflective of those communities,” she added.

Feng drew a sharp comparison with the growth of Latino populations in Texas and the black population in Florida. “Those communities were sliced and diced up so that the growth was not represented, or the historic representation was essentially dismantled. So, we see a significant difference between the states that have commissions of some form or another and those that do not,” she said.

Feng likened redistricting to fixing democracy’s clogged plumbing.

“You don’t want to know what’s in there. You don’t want to look at it. And when it bursts, it’s a mess. And that’s why you’ve got to fix it before you have that disaster... and because so many communities participated in redistricting, this time round, we saw a lot of that plumbing get fixed.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: This article was originally published on Ethnic Media Service.



Bad Child Or Bad Parents

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

As a result, we have a generation of children who have no sense of responsibility. Talk to those parents about this and you’ll get a plethora of excuses. “Oh, he has school work to do;” “She’s studying and tired;” or “Why should my children have to do any of that menial stuff?” Do you ever wonder why so many children, way up in their thirties and even forties, still live with their parents? Again, if you speak with the parents, especially the mothers, you’ll get a bag of excuses. “He can’t find a job that suits his skills,” “Every place she works they don’t like her,” or “He’s waiting for the right opportunity to come his way.”

As sure as night follows day, those children will not do well in relationships, for their upbringing was so skewed and misguided that they do not know how to get along with a partner.

Compound this with the fact that the girls have no household skills. “How you mean you can’t cook, you can’t wash, you don’t

know how to iron a shirt and can’t even string a needle?”

The same applies to men too, who grew up so dependent on their mothers that they are totally inept if and when they go out into the real world. They ultimately expect their woman to offer the same services to them. “Listen, you don’t need me as a wife, you need a mother to take care of you.”

What is true, is that because of misguided parenting, we now have a generation of weak young men who are still attached by an invisible umbilical cord, and some selfish and needy young women who think that men owe them the world.

There’s the old story of the man about to be executed who bit off his mother’s ear as he chided her for not being strict with him and always allowing him to have his own way. Bad child or bad parent?

EDITOR’S NOTE: Tony Robinson can be reached at seido1yard@gmail.com.



Seven health insurance stats that may surprise you

Many people find health insurance confusing, expensive and out of their reach. For those reasons, and others, they may not have any kind of health insurance to help keep them and their families healthy and protected from expensive medical bills.

Here are seven easy stats to help simplify health insurance – and maybe help you realize it’s easier to get than you think.

\$10 – Think health insurance is always expensive? Think again. This year, four out of five people could pay \$10 or less each month for insurance through the Health Insurance Marketplace, sometimes called Obamacare, thanks to financial assistance, according to the Department of Health and Human Services.

9 out of 10 – In Florida, 9 out of 10 of people enrolled in an individual or family health plan through the Marketplace received help from the government that lowered their monthly insurance bill.

\$5,000 – If your job offers health insurance coverage, but your family is uninsured because it costs more than you can afford, check to see if your family qualifies for financial assistance to help pay for a Marketplace plan. In 2022 a new federal rule expanded access to subsidies to family members who can’t afford employer coverage. A typical family of four with an income of \$53,000 could save more than \$5,000 with this financial help.

174,000 – The state’s leading health insurer, Florida Blue, estimates that more than 174,000 people in Florida are uninsured even though they qualify for health insurance that’s \$0 each month, thanks to financial assistance. That’s right – people are missing out insurance that would cost them nothing each month. Are you one of them?

\$10,000 – The average visit to an emergency room in Florida is \$10,000 according to Florida’s Agency for Health Care Administration. No one



plans to get sick or injured, but unfortunately, it will likely happen to each of us at some point during the year. And COVID-19 has taught us that even if we’re healthy, you never know when a serious illness can strike.

2.7 million – Florida has more people enrolled in health insurance through the Marketplace than any other state in the country. More than 2.7 million people have signed up for plan in our state, including some of your friends, family and neighbors.

\$0 – There are thousands of licensed health insurance agents and navigators across the state who will charge you nothing for their expert guidance. You can find agents and navigators in your local community who can help you determine which health insurance plan is right for you and your family, enroll in a plan and apply for financial help – and you should never be charged for their help.

If you have questions about how health insurance works or where to find help signing up for plan, check out GetCoveredFlorida.com.

New for Broward County in 2023!

Get a Florida Blue HMO myBlue Connected Care plan with money-saving benefits like:

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Florida Blue  | **H M O**

¹ To be eligible for \$0 monthly cost, your Marketplace monthly advance premium tax credit must be equal to or more than the premium.

² Reward amounts available for individual ACA members 18 years or older. Reward amounts will apply to premiums and excess amounts may be redeemed subject to the reward program's terms and conditions.

³ A total of two (2) urgent care visits for non-HSA plans at Sanitas and/or GuideWell Emergency Doctors are \$0. After that, the urgent care cost share applies.

⁴ Value Choice Provider is a designation Florida Blue HMO gives to some in-network providers.

Policies have limitations and exclusions. The amount of benefits provided depends upon the plan selected and the premium may vary with the amount of benefits selected.

HMO coverage is offered by Health Options, Inc., DBA Florida Blue HMO. These companies are Independent Licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. 111257 0822

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



www.caribbeantoday.com

Black Panther Actress Invited To Guyana

Black Panther actress, Letitia Michelle Wright, aka Princess Shuri, is being invited to visit the country of her birth by the CARICOM South America nation's head of state.

Guyana President Irfaan Ali has written to Wright, who was born in Guyana but migrated to the UK at age 7, to congratulate her on her successful career and Black Panther 2 and to invite her to visit.

"The Government of Guyana would be honored to host you," Ali said in a letter dated November 15. "I was moved by an interview which you did and in which you mentioned the country of your birth and how much you wanted to make the people of Guyana proud. I thank you for the recognition which you have brought our country and the immense feelings of pride which your superb onscreen performances have evoked. As President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, I would like to extend an invitation to you to visit Guyana. The Government of Guyana would be honored to host you."

"The people of Guyana



Black Panther actress, Letitia Michelle Wright, was born in Guyana.

will be more than delighted to welcome you warmly to your beloved Motherland. I trust that your schedule and plans will permit such a visit at the earliest opportunity," he added. "Please accept my best wishes for your continued success. May you continue to make our country proud!"

Wright was born on October 31, 1993, in Guyana and her family moved from Guyana to London, England seven years later. In 2018, she attained global recognition for her portrayal of

Shuri in the Marvel Cinematic Universe film Black Panther, for which she won an NAACP Image Award and a SAG Award. She reprised the role in Avengers: Infinity War (2018), Avengers: Endgame (2019), and Black Panther: Wakanda Forever (2022), which is now playing to rave reviews in theaters globally.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



New Instant Classic From Beres Hammond

Beres Hammond, the Lover's Rock icon with the quintessential voice that fans worldwide hold above all others in the genre, has delivered a new instant classic ballad for fans in time for the holidays.

"I Need Your Love," conveys the sentiment of love from a man to his special lady, Beres' flawless performance holds true to his signature vocals and poetic ability to tell beautiful stories of love. The artist's newest single holds him in lustre as one of Jamaica's greatest practicing singer / songwriters.

Produced by Beres Hammond and Tony Phillips for Harmony House Records, the song was recorded in the UK at Stingray Studio) as well as in Jamaica at Harmony House Studio.



Beres Hammond has released a new single in time for the holidays. (VP Record image)

"I Need Your Love" was released on November 25th, 2022, on all streaming platforms. In 2020, Beres released the poignant single "Call To Duty," which calls for the protection of children, as well as "God is Love," featuring Popcaan, (2021), and "Mih Deya Again," featuring Wickerman, (2022).



Over A Dozen Caribbean Singers Among 2023 Grammy Nominees

Over a dozen Caribbean singers are among the 2023 Grammy nominees for the 65th GRAMMY Awards which were announced recently.

Puerto Rican rapper and singer, Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio, better known as Bad Bunny, has created history as his album "Un Verano Sin Ti," has become the first Latin Album to be nominated in the Grammy's Album of the Year category.

The album has also been nominated in the Best Música Urbana Album category while Bunny has also been nominated for the Best Pop Solo Performance for "Moscow



Jamaica's Kabaka Pyramid has secured his first Grammy

Mule."

Other Puerto Rican singers dominated this year. Puerto Rican singer and songwriter Rauw Alejandro was nominated in the Best Música Urbana Album category for "Trap Cake, Vol. 2" as was Daddy Yankee for "Legendaddy" and Farruko for "La 167."

Mark Anthony was nominated in the Best Tropical Latin Album for "Pa'lla Voy"

while "Lado A Lado B," by Víctor Manuelle, who is also from Puerto Rico, is also up for the Best Tropical Latin Album nomination as is fellow country man, Tito Nieves, for "Legendario."

Cuba's Cimagro was also nominated in the Best Latin Rock or Alternative Album category for "El Alimento." The other Caribbean stars nominated this year are for the Best Reggae Album category and include an all-Jamaican line-up. They are Kabaka Pyramid for "The Kalling," Koffee for "Gifted," Sean Paul for "Scorcha," Protoje for "Third Time's the Charm" and Shaggy for "Com Fly Wid Mi."

The 65th GRAMMY Awards will air live on Sunday, Feb. 5, from Los Angeles' Crypto.com Arena, and it

will broadcast live on the CBS Television Network and stream live and on-demand on Paramount+ at 8-11:30 p.m. ET / 5-8:30 p.m. PT+. The special ceremony's broadcast

time, hosts, presenters, and performers will be announced soon.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



Reggae Makes An Appearance At The Macy's Day Parade



Sean Paul at the 2022 Macy's Thanksgiving Parade. (VP Records image)

For the first time in genre history, the genre of reggae was performed at the annual Macy's Thanksgiving parade.

The American tradition was marked with performances by Grammy-winning stars Sean Paul and Ziggy Marley, who were both featured at the 96th annual event.

Attended by 3 million people and watched by millions more on network television,

Sean Paul and Ziggy Marley, performed fan-favorite songs "Temperature" and "Baby Shark." The American tradition, complete with balloons, marching bands and performers lined the streets of Manhattan.

Additional celebrities who performed are Paula Abdul, Mariah Carey, and Jordin Sparks.





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Trinidad Producer Curates Miami MoCAAD Show

Trinidad & Tobago born curator, Donnamarie Baptiste, is truly making her mark as a curator who is championing and shaping the contemporary art of the African Diaspora.

Baptiste recently curated The Museum of Contemporary Art of the African Diaspora, (Miami MoCAAD)'s latest interactive public art experience to make art more accessible to South Florida as it moves towards a tech-forward hybrid museum.

Baptiste is highly experienced in arts management, exhibitions, and events. She has worked with artists, organizations, and corporations across disciplines and genres on brand strategy, public art, special artist projects, and high-profile events and organizes exhibitions in traditional and non-traditional spaces. She has held roles in programming, sponsorship, marketing & communications, operations, and production with organizations that include Photo Miami, Art Basel, The Armory Show, and Creative Time. Her clients include a mix of tech, art, design, luxury brands, and spirits.

Born in T&T to musician parents, she has spent most of her life between Florida, New York City, and the USVI. After studying Humanities in the Caribbean, she moved to Miami and subsequently to New York City. Currently, she is based in Miami, providing arts & culture management consulting



Trinidad & Tobago born curator, Donnamarie Baptiste, recently curated The Museum of Contemporary Art of the African Diaspora, (Miami MoCAAD)'s latest interactive public art experience to make art more accessible to South Florida as it moves towards a tech-forward hybrid museum.

to national and international creative clients while supporting the local art community as a board member of Oolite Arts. They are working to bring a world-class arts institution to Miami.

Baptiste's most recent work focuses on community-based initiatives, including cultural planning, exhibitions, corporate philanthropy, and collaborations between international artists and local creative communities.

The Miami MoCAAD's innovative art experiences merge art, technology, and oral histories

via murals activated by oral history QR codes that stand as new monuments to resiliency, beauty, and legacies of Black Miami. Murals activated by QR codes tell a community's story, provide a collective thought space, and can be brought to life through the technology of QR codes. The project is set to bring people together to celebrate and explore the history and cultural vibrancy of the Overtown community.

Miami MoCAAD recently kicked-off Soul Basel at Their Creative Conversation and

Celebration on November 27, 2022, at the Ward Rooming House in Historic Overtown.

The Museum also unveiled a mural it had commissioned Overtown native and muralist/artist Reginald O'Neal to do as part of the Kickoff Celebration of Soul Basel. O'Neal created the mural on the side of the union hall building owned by the predominantly Black International Longshoremen's Association Local 1416 in Historic Overtown.

Residents and visitors can scan QR codes and view interviews that tell the history and key contributions ILA Local 1416 has made throughout the community since its founding in 1936. The second mural is almost ready, and just getting some final touches on it. The Black Longshoremen of Miami has a huge rich history, and we are excited to be able to share it.

"The ILA Local 1416 is an important part of African American history. It has always been a place where people can find familial support, economic safety, activism, and political organization in the ongoing fight for equity," commented curator Baptiste. "I'm honoured to help tell the story of The International Longshoremen's Association Local 1416 and incredibly proud of this project."

"Art is a critical piece in sharing knowledge, creating change, and powering progress," commented Miami-Dade Mayor Daniella Levine Cava. "By

telling stories through art, we connect to larger audiences and raise awareness about the most important issues of our time. What Miami MoCAAD is doing by combining art with technology will revolutionize the way we communicate to our community. I cannot wait for the Soul Basel experience honouring the International Longshoremen's Association. The ideas it will spawn are sure to inspire our residents to reflect on the history of the African diaspora, especially in our county."

"For 80-plus years, the ILA has provided brother/sisterhood, mentorship, and structure in the Miami community," said O'Neal. "As an Overtown native, I have always heard about the Shoremen and passed by their headquarters across from the "Lyric Theater" but never understood what was going on in detail. As I got older and became a muralist, I dreamt of painting the wall on the north side of the building, and I am more than honored that the ILA and Miami MoCAAD are allowing me to do so. In deciding what to paint, I got to know a little more about the Association and what they represent, and in the idea, I attempt to encapsulate that."

For more information about Miami MoCAAD, visit miamimocaad.org and Miami MoCAAD's mural website at murals.miamimocaad.org.



Tis' The Season To Be Jolly

The Polar Express train ride, a South-Florida favorite, returns on Brightline for its fourth year.

The beloved holiday experience runs until Dec 29, from MiamiCentral station. This holiday classic comes to life when the festive Brightline train departs on a journey led by a cast of talented actors.

Set to the sounds of the motion picture soundtrack, passengers relive the magic of this story as they are whisked away on THE POLAR EXPRESS™ for a one-hour trip to meet and interact with Santa.

Magic memories provided by Polar Express will also



be available for guests to commemorate the season.

Tickets are moving quickly

and can be purchased at miamithepolarexpressride.com

MARKET PLACE

Each weekend in December, MiamiCentral will be home to a fun and festive holiday market.

According to a Brightline spokesperson, guests, riders, and families ready to jump on the Polar Express can all enjoy a selection of local vendors offering holiday gifts, treats, chocolates, and even gift wrapping. The market will feature rotating activities, including an edible cookie decorating station, pictures and story time with Mrs. Claus, and a station for letters to Santa.

The Holiday Market will be open December 9, 10, 11,

16, 17, 18, 23, 24 with Friday hours 11 a.m. - 8 p.m., Saturday and Sunday hours 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. and hours on December 24, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Purchasers have the option to select monthly, quarterly, or annual memberships and can purchase at Mary Mary, located in each Brightline station.

According to Brightline, the monthly membership starts at \$19, quarterly memberships are \$49 per quarter and annual memberships cost \$99 per year.

- *Rewritten from local10.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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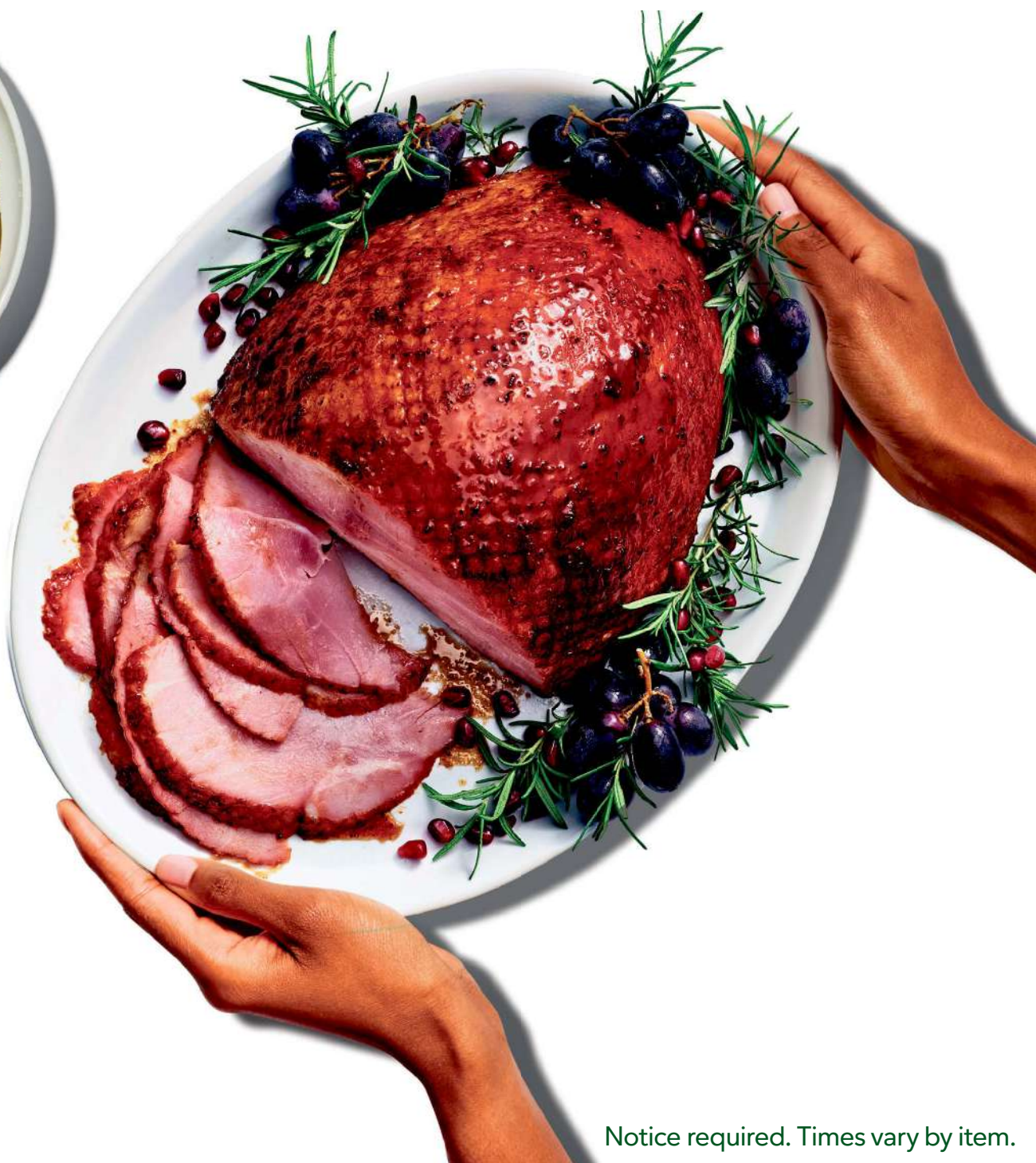


Peter A. Webley
Publisher



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Notice required. Times vary by item.

Eat, Drink And Be Merry With Caribbean Cake And Pudding

Caribbean cakes and puddings will be filling those Christmas tables as many plan their Christmas and holiday baking in advance. Here are a few suggestions that will have all eating, drinking and being merry this holiday season.

Black Cake

Black Cake is a favourite in many Caribbean countries, including in Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, especially at Christmas. Here's how to make it.



Black Cake

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs. brown sugar
- 1 lb. butter
- 12 eggs, beaten
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 teaspoon mixed spices
- ¼ pound mixed peel
- 1 tsp vanilla
- Red Wine
- Soaked ground mixed fruits and nuts

METHOD

Make a caramel by adding about one pound of the brown sugar to a pot and heating until it begins to melt.

Add at least a cup on wine and simmer until a dark colour is obtained.

Grease and double line an 8-inch cake pan.

Cream the rest of the sugar and butter until smooth or add to an electric mixer and let it do the work for you.

Add eggs one at a time (beaten or unbeaten) and mix.

Add in the soaked fruit and nuts and stir well.

Add enough caramel to make it as dark as desired. Sift flour, baking powder and spice together.

Add a little at a time and fold in.

Mix into a soft dropping consistency by adding a little more of the wine or rum.

Pour the mixture into the prepared pan and bake in a slow oven at 300 degrees F, for 2 hours on the middle shelf.

Pour some of the remaining wine or rum over immediately after cake is baked.

Repeat 3 or 4 times.

Serve at room temperature. Cake can be kept and preserved all year round by reading rum.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



Caribbean Fruit Cake



Caribbean Fruit Cake

For the Fruits you will need to make this ahead of time:

INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 lb raisins
- 3/4 lb currants
- 3/4 lb prunes
- 1/4 lb candied cherries
- 1/4 lb mix citrus peel
- 1/4 lb almond or peanuts (optional)

METHOD

Wash and grind all

ingredients.

This can done with a food mill or food processor.

Mix in about 2 cups of rum and allow to sit for at least 2 weeks. Store in an airtight container.

FOR THE CAKE

- 1 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cups sugar
- 2 sticks butter, room temperature
- 4 eggs
- 1 tsp baking powder
- pinch salt
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tbsp orange zest
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp almond extract
- 1 cup fruit mixture

METHOD

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour a 9-inch cake pan. Set aside. In a bowl, mix flour, baking powder, salt, nutmeg and orange zest set aside.

Place butter and sugar in a large bowl and mix until fluffy and light in colour.

Add eggs one at a time, mixing well after each addition to make sure egg is incorporated. Please don't rush this step, adding the eggs too soon or too many at one time can cause the mixture to separate.

Next add vanilla extract and almond extract to mixture, mix until incorporated.

Add flour and fruit mix and mix just until combine.

Place into prepared baking dish.

Bake for 45-50 minutes.

Remove from oven and allow to cool.

*You can add about 1 tbsp of rum over the top as soon as it out of the oven to enhance the rum flavour.

- Jehancancook.com



Christmas Pudding

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup margarine
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 4 medium eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla essence
- 1 teaspoon rose water
- 1 teaspoon lime juice and rind
- 1 cup prunes
- 1 cup mixed peel
- 1 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup cherries
- 1/2 cup currants
- 4 tablespoons Grace Browning
- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons mixed spice

METHOD

Grease and line a 9-inch cake tin. Cream margarine and sugar



Christmas Pudding (Gracefoods.com image)

until light and fluffy.

Add eggs one at a time and beat well after each addition.

Add vanilla, rose water, lime juice and rind.

Add blended fruits and

browning.

Incorporate the flour that has been sifted with the baking powder and mixed spice. Use a little wine to adjust consistency, if necessary.

Scrape batter into the lined cake tin and cover using foil paper then with the lid of the cake tin.

Place cake tin into a large pot with a tight-fitting lid. Steam on stove top for approximately 2 hours or rest the cake tin in a container with water in the oven at 180°C (350°F) and steam for approximately 2 hours.

- Gracefoods.com



Second Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille To Open In St. Pete

Boasting tasty views of Boca Ciega Bay and a Caribbean-inspired menu, St. Pete's second Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille is finally ready to open its doors at 8790 Bay Pines Blvd.

A post from Doc Ford's Instagram says that its Jungle Terrace location will debut during the second week of December. Joe Harrity, the director of marketing for the restaurant, tells Creative Loafing Tampa Bay that an exact grand opening date isn't set in stone yet.

The casual, Florida-based restaurant chain is known for its waterfront views, large outdoor patios, seafood-focused menu, and of course, an extensive cocktail selection.

A few popular entrees from Doc Ford's include macadamia nut-crusted grouper, banana leaf-wrapped snapper and baby back ribs, while options on its shellfish bar include shrimp cocktail, raw and baked oysters and peel-n-eat shrimp by the half-pound dressed in butter, Old Bay and fresh key lime juice. Soups, salads and sandwiches make up the lighter fare on Doc Ford's large menu. And while fruity rum drinks are certainly the stars of its cocktail menu, this waterfront restaurant also sells a variety of margaritas,

bloody marys, mojitos, mules, beer and wine.

Jungle Terrace's Doc Ford's restaurant is adjacent to Boca Ciega Bay, as its nautical customers are welcome to park their boats at one of its eight transient slips. The 6,750-square-foot restaurant will be able to sit 320 patrons on both of its floors. And don't worry, there's a bar on each level.

"This restaurant is a different style than the one on the St. Pete Pier I would say. This Jungle Terrace location is an old-fashioned stilt building, and has the character that our Ft. Myers location has," Harrity says. "The pier is definitely more modern."

Both the Ft. Myers Beach, Captiva Island and Sanibel Island Doc Ford's locations sustained serious damage after Hurricane Ian. Harrity says their Captiva Island location is permanently closed, while its Sanibel restaurant is slated to reopen before the end of the year and its Ft. Myers Beach eatery will be rebuilt by spring 2023.

For more information head to @docfordsjungleterrace on Facebook.

- CLTampa.com



Martinique's Rhum Named Best In The World



Martinique's Rhum Neisson took home the crown as the world champion of rum award.

For the second year in a row, Martinique's Rhum Neisson took home the crown as the world champion of rum, with its Neisson 21 90th Anniversary edition besting Flor de Cana's Generaciones to take home the title.

A team of eight global rum

experts gathered in Christopher Davis' renowned Rhum Room in St Barth to judge a final field of 60 rums across eight categories in a blind tasting. The final two categories are the most elite in any rum competition worldwide: Uber-Premium Molasses and Uber-Premium Rhum Agricole, with every rum in each category selling for more than \$400 at retail, a true collection of heavyweight rums.

Neisson's 21-year won Double Gold in the Uber Agricole category. Then Flor de Cana's stunning V Generaciones, a 30-year edition, won Double Gold in the Uber Molasses.

It was a rematch of 2021, when the same two rum houses faced off for the title, and again

Neisson came out on top, another win for Neisson, arguably the most sought-after boutique rum distillery on earth.

It was the culmination of a remarkable field of rums, including six categories of Rhum Agricole, the magnificent sugarcane-juice rums of the French Caribbean, with brands like Montebello, La Favorite and HSE performing strongly.

"This is the best field of rums we've had yet in competition in St Barth, part of a truly spectacular week of rum events in the Caribbean's most glamorous island," said Alexander Britell, editor and publisher of Caribbean Journal and co-founder of the Caribbean Rum Awards St Barth. "The Caribbean Rum Awards St Barth has truly become the region's premier rum festival."

- CaribJournal.com



HEALTH NEWS



4 Things You Need to Know About Open Enrollment

Open enrollment season is upon us. Whether you're choosing benefits for the first time, adding coverage for a new family member or facing a passive enrollment, it's likely your benefits decisions will look a little different this year.

According to a June 2022 Consumer Sentiment Study by Lincoln Financial Group, 45% of employees expect inflation will impact their benefits decisions this year. In today's constantly changing economic climate, people are looking for stability and protection — for their family, their finances and their health — with more than 85% of those surveyed indicating they would like to better understand what they can do to protect against the impact of inflation.

"Benefits offered at the workplace can help provide

financial stability when it comes to the unexpected," said James Reid, executive vice president, president of Workplace Solutions at Lincoln Financial Group. "It's important to take a holistic look at your options and the resources available, and then make the elections that will help protect your today and help secure your tomorrow." Lincoln Financial Group offers four tips to keep in mind during open enrollment:

1. Life changes

Make sure the benefits you enroll in are changing too. Just like your personal situation can change from year to year, the benefits you enroll in should change with you. Maybe you had a new baby or are thinking about buying a house — now is the time to ensure you are protected for the future and that the

benefits you choose make sense for your current situation.

2. Take a complete look at your benefits including supplemental coverage.

Lincoln's June 2022 Consumer Sentiment Study also showed that Americans' interest in supplemental coverage offered by an employer has increased over the past year: 89% of consumers reported being interested in Critical Illness insurance, and 86% would be interested in Hospital Indemnity and Accident insurance. Accident insurance can help pay for expenses that aren't covered by health insurance, like high deductibles. And critical illness insurance provides funds to cover day-to-day expenses while someone is recovering from an illness, including mortgage

payments, childcare, food and more. Check to see if these coverages are offered by your employer and if they make sense for you and your family.

3. Education Is Essential

Choosing the right benefits during open enrollment can be a complicated process — having access to digital enrollment guides and pamphlets can make the process much easier and give you the time needed to fully review and select coverage. Reach out to your employer for information on the coverages and tools they have available; digital calculators can help estimate life insurance and disability coverage needs, and tell you the impact each coverage will have on your paycheck.

4. Focus On Financial Wellness

To plan for the future, it is important to have an accurate picture of where you are today. A good place to start is with financial wellness tools, which many employers offer their employees. With these tools, you can create a personalized action plan and improve your financial wellbeing, whether that's a plan to pay down debt or create an emergency savings fund. And for those struggling with competing financial priorities, Lincoln Financial's debt calculator can help, available at lincolnfinancial.com under Planning.

This open enrollment period, take time to make decisions that will help protect your financial future.

- StatePoint



Alarming Surge Of Paediatric RSV



The journal Lancet Respiratory Medicine published a study in November estimating that 1 in 50 children under age 5 around the world die from RSV.

for Disease Control (CDC) is reporting large numbers of flu cases across the country, especially in Georgia and Florida. RSV could spike later.

"We hope that everything doesn't coincide at the same time as RSV surging, but we are seeing an uptick in flu cases as well," Dr. Soni said.

The journal Lancet Respiratory Medicine published a study in November estimating that 1 in 50 children under age 5 around the world die from RSV. It is the second leading cause of death after malaria and kills between 100,000 and 200,000 babies under the age of one every year.

Dr. Mina Hakim usually sees more RSV patients in January or February. He is a paediatrics specialist at South Central Family Health Center in Los Angeles. "It's very unusual to see it this early," he said. He worries what will happen in the next few months

"This is coming to a point where it's overwhelming our ERs

hospitalization rate," Hakim said. RSV spreads like the flu - from tiny droplets that are inhaled, unwashed hands, or from hard surfaces where the virus can live up to six hours. But why is RSV surging now?

Dr. Manisha Newaskar, Clinical Assistant Professor of Pulmonary Medicine at Stanford Medicine Children's Health, said most babies catch RSV before they are two years old and get over it but precautions taken during the COVID pandemic kept babies from being exposed to it.

"We were taking utmost precautions, right? We were wearing masks, we were washing hands, we were not sending our kids to school if they were having even a sniffle. So that's what was causing fewer cases and now that things have opened up, the world has gone back to its normal pace," Dr. Newaskar said.

"The most common symptom is a stuffy nose and babies breath through their nose and that makes them struggle."

Babies may have a fever and Tylenol can help reduce it. But what lands them in the ER is difficulty breathing from swollen

airways. RSV babies fuss, don't eat, and get dehydrated.

Newaskar said that if an infant is less than six months old with cough, congestion, or fever, parents need to keep a close eye on the baby's symptoms and see a paediatrician if they get worse. There is a diagnostic test that can determine if the baby has the flu, RSV, or COVID. The flu comes on quickly, RSV in stages, and all three viruses have similar symptoms.

RSV is a virus and antibiotics won't help. What does is suctioning mucus from the nose with a bulb and using a humidifier to keep airways moist. Newaskar noted that doctors give the Synagis vaccine to preemies and other high-risk infants to prevent severe RSV disease.

"Studies have found that kids who are exposed to smoking at early stages are more likely to be in the hospital due to RSV, as are babies who have not been breastfed, Hakim noted. "Three months of breastfeeding can decrease your risk for severe bronchitis from RSV." Hakim, 90% of whose patients are below the poverty line, added that working mothers stop breastfeeding because the realities of life make them return to work sooner than other populations.

Doctors advise the same prevention measures people use to avoid COVID.

Newaskar said that good basic hygiene like covering your cough and frequent hand washing can keep babies from getting sick. "If your child is sick, don't go to school, right?...even if they are having mild symptoms, it's best to keep them home to prevent the virus from going around in the school," she urged. If you're planning to travel over the holidays, make sure you're up to date on our COVID boosters and get a flu shot. "So at least you have protected yourself against two major viruses," she said.

- Ethnic Media News



BY PETER WHITE

A common virus with flu-like symptoms is infecting very young children in large numbers, leading to a spike in the number of emergency room visits and hospitalizations in recent weeks.

Respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, was first identified in 1956; there is no vaccine although clinical trials are underway with pregnant women, said Dr. Priya Soni, a Paediatric Infectious Disease Specialist at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles.

"There is no treatment or therapeutic antiviral for RSV virus," Dr. Soni added, speaking at a national Ethnic Media News briefing last week. Babies are getting ill because they have smaller airways and they're not able to clear secretions like older adults.

"For us, our virus can be just a mild cold but in babies they can get bronchiolitis and other complications," she said.

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Here's What You Should Know About That Fight For Student Debt Relief



Student loan borrowers want student debt cancelled. (Paul Morigi/Getty Images)

The U.S. Department of Education on November 22nd, announced an extension of the pause on student loan repayment, interest, and collections. The extension will alleviate uncertainty for borrowers as the Biden-Harris Administration asks the Supreme Court to review the lower-court orders that are preventing the Department from providing debt relief for tens of millions of Americans.

Payments will resume 60 days after the Department is permitted to implement the program or the litigation is resolved, which will give the Supreme Court an opportunity to resolve the case during its current Term. If the program has not been implemented and the litigation has not been resolved by June 30, 2023 – payments will resume 60 days after that.

“Callous efforts to block student debt relief in the courts have caused tremendous financial uncertainty for millions of borrowers who cannot set their family budgets or even plan for the holidays without a clear picture of their student debt obligations, and it’s just plain wrong,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. “I want borrowers to know that the Biden-Harris Administration has their backs and we’re as committed as ever to fighting to deliver essential student debt relief to tens of millions of Americans. We’re extending the payment pause because it would be deeply unfair to ask borrowers to pay a debt that they wouldn’t have to pay, were it not for the baseless lawsuits brought by Republican officials and special interests.”

On August 24, President Biden and Secretary Cardona announced plans to provide targeted student debt relief to borrowers with loans held by the Department of Education. Borrowers with annual income during the pandemic of under \$125,000 (for individuals) or under \$250,000 (for married couples or heads of households) who received a Pell Grant in college would be eligible for up to \$20,000 in debt cancellation. Targeted student debt relief

addresses the financial harms of the pandemic, provides borrowers with smooth transition back to repayment and helps borrowers at highest risk of delinquencies or default once payments resume.

To date, over 26 million people have provided the Department with the necessary information to be considered for debt relief, and 16 million borrowers have been approved. But court orders are blocking the Department from discharging student loan debt and accepting additional applications.

The Department of Justice has requested that the Supreme Court lift the lower court’s injunction against the program and suggested that if the Court does not do so, it could take up the student debt relief case, to provide borrowers the clarity and relief they are depending on.

Borrowers can use the additional time to ensure their contact information is up to date with their loan servicers and consider enrolling in electronic debit and income-driven repayment plans to support a smooth transition to repayment. More information can be found at StudentAid.gov.

In addition to providing relief specifically targeted to alleviating the continuing economic effects of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, the Biden-Harris Administration has also taken other steps to support students and borrowers, make higher education more affordable, and improve student loan servicing, including providing nearly \$48 billion in targeted loan relief to over 1.8 million borrowers. Actions within that include:

- Revamping the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program in October, which has provided \$24 billion in loan relief to 360,000 borrowers. The Department’s Limited PSLF Waiver helped eligible borrower count all prior payments made by student borrowers toward PSLF, regardless of the loan program.
- Giving borrowers with Direct Loans or Department-managed Federal Family Education

Loans (FFEL) more credit toward forgiveness. The Department’s one-time account adjustment counts for all months spent in repayment, including payments prior to consolidation and regardless of whether they made partial or late payments or are on a repayment plan toward income-driven repayment (IDR) and PSLF forgiveness.

- Establishing a fair and

accessible bankruptcy discharge process to help struggling borrowers discharge their student loans.

- Providing \$9.1 billion in relief for 425,000 borrowers who have a total and permanent disability.
- Approving \$14.5 billion in borrower defense claims to nearly 1.1 million borrowers, including extending full relief to approved claims and

approving new types of claims.

- Providing \$1.26 billion in closed school discharges to 107,000 borrowers who attended the now-defunct ITT Technical Institute.
- Restoring eligibility for financial student aid to almost 7.5 million borrowers to help them complete their credential or degree.



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How About A Cruise This Holiday?

If you are looking for a holiday alternative to staying home or hosting, how about a cruise?

Cruise lines are offering a range of celebrations and specialty voyages for travelers who want to book a last-minute getaway.

Royal Caribbean is offering a range of holiday cruises, including a five-night sailing to the Caribbean and the Bahamas from Florida's Port Canaveral on Dec. 5 on the line's Mariner of the Seas ship, and a three-night cruise from Los Angeles on Dec. 16 that will visit Ensenada, Mexico, on Navigator of the Seas, according to its website.

Available rooms on the Dec. 5 sailing start at \$219 and at \$242 for the Dec. 16 cruise, per person based on double occupancy. The fares include most meals, some drinks, and the majority of onboard entertainment.

And Azamara will decorate its ships for the holidays beginning in December, readying them for all manner of festivities. Crew members will perform carols, and the line will serve snacks

like Christmas cookies, as well as special holiday menus in the main dining room and specialty restaurants on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, according to press materials provided by the line. There will also be a priest on board for religious services.

Azamara Onward will sail a 14-night Caribbean cruise from Miami on Dec. 22 that will visit destinations including George Town in Grand Cayman, Cartagena, Colombia and Samaná in the Dominican Republic.

On New Year's Eve, the line also hosts its White Night party on the pool deck – where guests are asked to wear all white – featuring food, music and dancing.

Available rooms start at \$1,999 for the Dec. 20 cruise and \$3,599 for the Dec. 22 sailing, per person, based on double occupancy. The fares include most food, drinks such as sodas and select alcoholic beverages, plus gratuities, among other amenities.

- USA Today.com



US Warns Dark Skinned Americans About Travel To The DR

The U.S. Embassy in the Dominican Republic is warning dark skinned Americans about travel to the DR.

The Embassy in a statement said that U.S. citizens that in recent months travelers to the Dominican Republic have reported being delayed, detained, or subject to heightened questioning at ports of entry and in other encounters with immigration officials based on their skin color.

"Reports of disparate treatment of U.S. citizens by Dominican authorities are a matter of ongoing concern to the U.S. Embassy," the statement added.

The release comes as Dominican Migration, (DGM), agents have been conducting widespread operations aimed at detaining those they believe to be undocumented migrants, especially persons of Haitian descent.

In some cases, the Embassy said authorities have not respected the individuals' legal status in the Dominican Republic or nationality.

"These actions may lead to increased interaction with Dominican authorities, especially for darker skinned U.S. citizens and U.S. citizens of African descent," the statement added. Americans can report any such incidents immediately to the



The warning comes as the DR was named the "Most Visited Destination" this year according to ForwardKeys.

Embassy emergency number (809) 567-7775 and to the Defensor del Pueblo at (809) 381-7777.

The Embassy advises U.S. citizens to:

- Carry your passport with you.
- Carry a charged cell phone and notify the Embassy immediately if you need assistance.

The US also noted that there are reports that detainees are kept in overcrowded detention centers, without the ability to challenge their detention, and without access to food or restroom facilities, sometimes for days at a time, before being released or deported to neighboring Haiti, where gangs are waging a war on Haitians, including those in poorer areas.

However, the Dominica

Republic accused the United States government of providing "no evidence" to back its claim that the Spanish-speaking country engaged in "a systematic pattern of violations of the rights of migrants" especially those from the neighboring French Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country of Haiti.

"Isolated cases may occur, as in any country in the world, which, if reported to the competent authorities, would be duly investigated and punished, if proven to be true," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement regarding Washington's accusation.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



Caribbean Airlines Returns To Grenada

Caribbean Airlines Ltd, (CAL), has increased their flight schedule to daily service between Maurice Bishop International Airport, (MBIA) and Piarco International, Trinidad, effective November 26, 2022.

Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell welcomed the increased intra-regional flights noting the extreme hardship in recent times to move freely between the islands. The Monday and Friday CAL service will depart Grenada in the

evenings at 8:15 p.m. and arrived at Piarco International at 8:55 p.m., offering connectivity to the carrier's red eye New York service.

The Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday flight service will depart MBIA at 11:20 a.m. and arrive in Port of Spain at noon, offering convenient connections to the Toronto flight service.

Wednesdays and Fridays depart at 9:15 a.m. with the Wednesday service operating via Barbados and arriving at Piarco

International at 12:10 p.m., and the Friday non-stop service to Piarco arrives at 9:55 a.m.

Petra Roach, CEO of the Grenada Tourism Authority also welcomed the timely addition of flight options, noting that many are eager to travel during this holiday period. "We are delighted with the commitment of CAL to increase flight frequency between Grenada and Trinidad, our top performing market in the Caribbean."





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Who Will Win The World Cup?

The FIFA 2022 World Cup in Qatar is far from over. There are several more matches to go, as the round of 16 is in full swing. So, who will win? That's the question on the minds of many soccer fans, especially diehard fans. But it remains to be seen who will make it all the way to the finals. Will it be Brazil, France or Portugal, or will there be a shocker? We will all have to wait and see.

In the meantime, if you are watching or want to get in on the action, here's the schedule for the rest of the matches, including the finale on Dec. 18th.

WHERE TO WATCH

TV channels en Español: Telemundo, Universo, Peacock
Streaming en Español: Peacock (all 64 matches)



The 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar will conclude on Dec. 18th. (Sorin Furcoi/Al Jazeera image)

TIMES: 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. (EST)

SCHEDULE

Round of 16 schedule

Match 55 – Tuesday, December 6: Winners Group F vs Runners up Group E – Education City Stadium, Al Rayyan – 10am

Match 56 – Tuesday, December

6: Winners Group H vs Runners up Group G – Lusail Iconic Stadium, Lusail – 2pm

Quarterfinal schedule

Match 58 – Friday, December 9: Winners Match 53 vs Winners Match 54 – Education City Stadium, Al Rayyan – 10am

Match 57 – Friday, December 9: Winners Match 49 vs Winners Match 50 – Lusail Iconic Stadium, Lusail – 10am

Match 60 – Saturday, December 10: Winners Match 55 vs Winners Match 56 – Al Thumama Stadium, Doha – 10am

Match 59 – Saturday, December 10: Winners Match 51 vs Winners Match 52 – Al Bayt Stadium, Al Khor – 2pm

SEMIFINAL SCHEDULE

Match 61 – Tuesday, December 13: Winners Match 57 vs Winners Match 58 – Lusail Iconic Stadium, Lusail – 2pm

Match 62 – Wednesday, December 14: Winners Match 59 vs Winners Match 60 – Al Bayt Stadium, Al Khor – 2pm

THIRD-PLACE PLAY-OFF

Match 63 – Saturday, December 17: Losers Match 61 vs Losers Match 62 – Khalifa International Stadium, Al Rayyan – 2pm

FINAL

Match 64 – Sunday, December 18: Winners Match 61 vs Winners Match 62 – Lusail Iconic Stadium, Lusail – 10am.

- *Rewritten from NBC.com*



Former FIFA Veep Vows To Keep On Fighting US Extradition Despite Privy Council Ruling

A defiant former FIFA vice-president says he will continue to fight his extradition to the United States to answer corruption charges, even after London's Privy Council ruled that the extradition proceedings are not unlawful.

Trinidad and Tobago born Austin 'Jack' Warner, the former football administrator, businessman and politician,

also defended the decision by football's world governing body FIFA, of which he is a former vice-president, to give preference to South Africa, Russia and Qatar to host World Cup Finals. The award of the 2018 World Cup Final to Russia was among the issues at the center of corruption allegations against the 79-year-old Warner who is facing 12 charges of

wire fraud, racketeering and money laundering.

The Privy Council, Trinidad and Tobago's highest court of appeal, recently dismissed Warner's lawyers' contention that the extradition proceedings in the magistrate's court here were unlawful, thus paving the way for the matter to resume.

"I continue to have

confidence in my team led by Fyard Hosein Senior Counsel, and I have advised them to continue to press my case on the three remaining stages of these proceedings," Warner said in a post on his Facebook page following the Privy Council ruling. "I have lived in this country for nearly eighty years, and I am confident that I will continue to receive the

love, affection, and respect that people from all walks of life have always extended to me. I am certain I will prevail in the end."

- *Rewritten from CMC*



Former West Indies Wicketkeeper Dead At 72



Late West Indies Wicket Keeper, David Murray. (CMC image)

Former West Indies wicketkeeper David Murray, widely considered one of the region's finest ever glovemen, is dead.

Murray died on Nov. 25th in his homeland of Barbados. The son of the late legendary Sir Everton Weekes, featured in 19 Tests and 10 One-Day Internationals between 1973 and 1982, scoring 601 runs at an average of 21 in the longest format and 45 runs in ODIs.

Murray, the father of former Barbados wicketkeeper-batsman Ricky Hoyte, effected 62 dismissals in Tests and 16 in ODIs, during a career marred by the infamous rebel tours of South Africa.

Murray made his international debut in an ODI

on the 1973 tour of England in a side led by Rohan Kanhai and comprising the likes of Clive Lloyd, Lance Gibbs, Roy Fredericks and Alvin Kallicharan.

He went on to make his Test debut five years later on Australia's tour of the Caribbean in the absence of Deryck Murray, whose enterprise in part helped to keep him out of the Test side.

Murray scored a Test-best 84 in the 1978 series away to India, one of his two half-centuries on the tour that also saw him plunder a career-best first-class score of 206 not out in a three-day match.

Overall, he gathered 4503 runs in 114 first class matches at an average of 30 with seven

hundreds.

"On behalf of CWI I want to offer my sincere condolences to Ricky, and other members of David's family and friends," Cricket West Indies president, Ricky Skeritt, said in a statement. "David was a gifted wicketkeeper and a stylish middle-order batsman. He loved the game of cricket, and played with a smile on his face. He will be remembered as a member of the great West Indies squad which dominated world cricket for over a decade. Devoted West Indies Cricket fans still remember David's fantastic glove-work and footwork behind the stumps to Michael Holding and other members of

the fearsome West Indies fast bowling attack of his time."

In its tribute, regional players union, WIPA, hailed Murray as "a giant of a man".

"An excellent wicketkeeper, a great human being, a giant of a man; David Murray will surely be missed," said WIPA president, Wavell Hinds. "On behalf of the membership and the executive, I wish to convey our sincere condolences to our dear brother Ricky Hoyte, Murray's family and friends, and the entire cricketing fraternity."

- CMC



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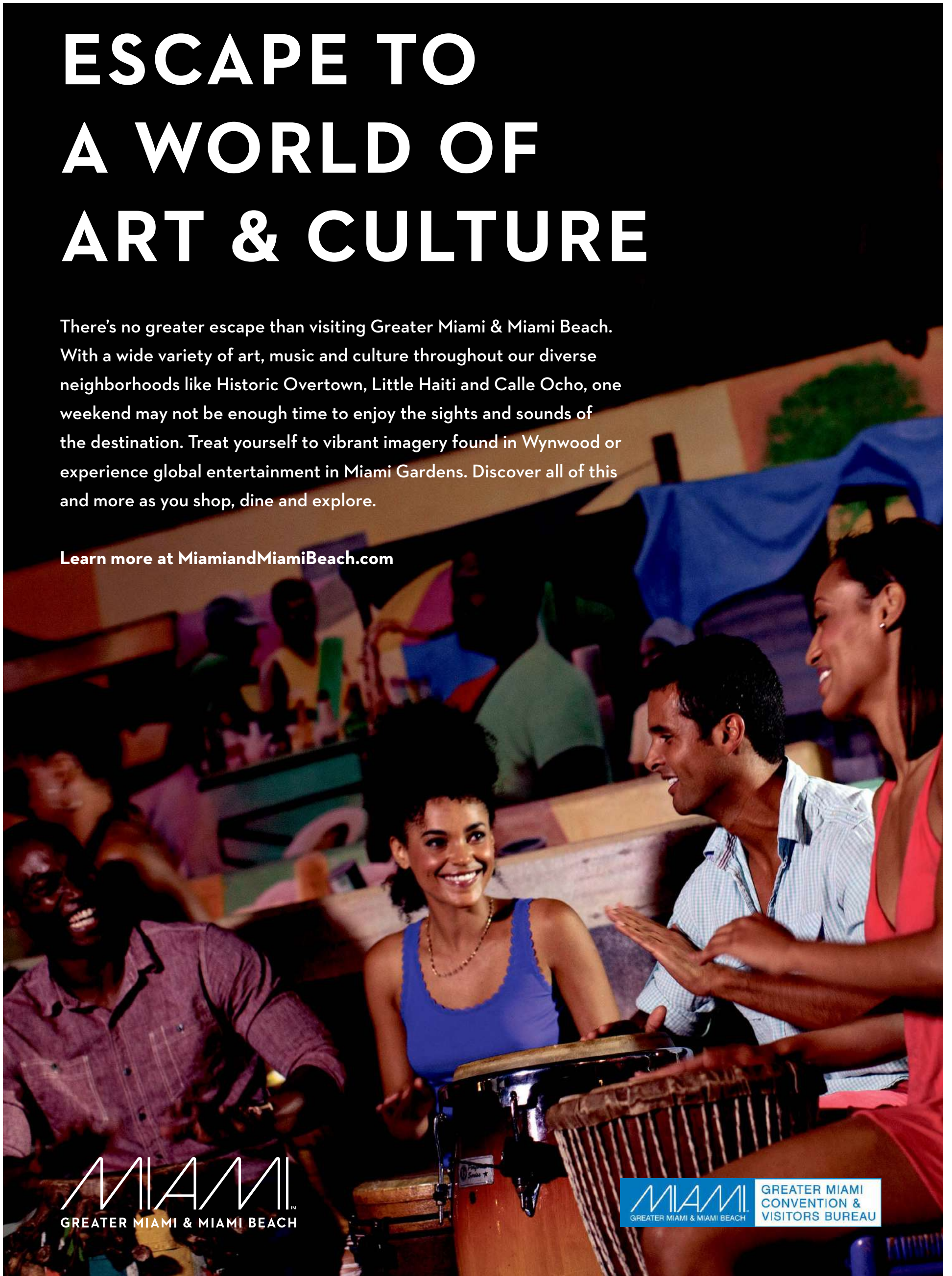
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