

# Caribbean Today

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## DESPERATE DREAMERS

~ A deal to resolve DACA, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program which allows undocumented young immigrant "Dreamers" from the Caribbean and elsewhere to remain in the United States, hangs in a nervous balance, page 3.



Guyanese-born teenager Shemel Mercurius was gunned down in New York by

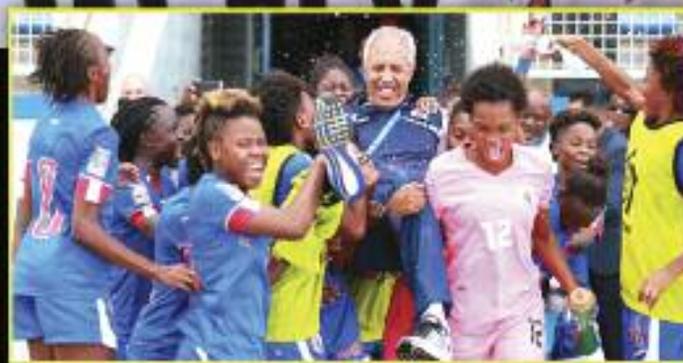
a man whose advances she spurned. Mercurius used her last breath to identify the shooter and a Supreme Court judge sentenced him to 41 years in prison, page 2

From his flip-flopping on a variety of immigration issues which directly affect them, to his use of vulgar language to describe them, Haitians and U.S. President Donald Trump are on a collision



## KICK START

~ Haiti's women's soccer team created history last month by qualifying for the Under-20 World Cup, a massive accomplishment which sparked wild celebration, page 19.



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# 'NO MERCY': Man gets 41 years for murdering Guyanese teenage girl

NEW YORK – A Supreme Court judge has sentenced a Brooklyn man to 41 years in prison after he was convicted of first-degree manslaughter in the shooting of a 16-year-old Guyanese girl who authorities said rejected his advances.

Justice Deborah Dowling imposed the maximum sentence on 26-year-old Taariq Stephens for gunning down Shemel Mercurius in front of her three-year-old cousin in 2016.

Stephens had also been charged with second-degree criminal possession of a weapon and endangering the welfare of a child.

Justice Dowling said there

“did not seem to be a rhyme or reason” for the fatal 2016 shooting as she sentenced Stephens on Jan. 16.

## 'NO MERCY'

“I’m not showing any mercy,” said Justice Dowling, ruling that all of Stephens’s convictions will run concurrently.

“This defendant will now spend many years behind bars for the callous killing of an innocent teenage girl who was taken from her loved ones far too early, and for undoubtedly traumatizing the toddler she was babysitting,” said Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez.

“Nothing can bring



Mercurius

Shemel back to her devastated family, but I hope that today’s sentence will afford them a small measure of solace.”

According to trial testimony, on May 31, 2016, Stephens pushed his way into

a sixth-floor apartment while carrying a .40 caliber submachine rifle. He shot Mercurius.

## LAST WORDS

Gonzalez said Mercurius told police the first name of the man who shot her when they arrived at the apartment. She was taken to Kings County Hospital, where she died 90 minutes after the shooting.

Gonzalez said surveillance footage showed Stephens with the rifle outside Mercurius’s door, and then forcing his way into the apartment after she

rebuffed him. He turned himself into police two days later.

Assistant District Attorney Melissa Carvajal said the shooting was “one of the most tragic cases I’ve ever tried.

She said Mercurius was “tragically and senselessly murdered inside her own home.”

Justice Dowling brushed off Stephens’s claims of innocence, saying “all the evidence indicates it is you.”

- Edited from CMC.



# Bill Clinton to visit Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda

NEW YORK – Former United States President Bill Clinton is scheduled to visit Dominica and Antigua and Barbuda early this month.

Clinton said the invitation to visit the hurricane-battered Dominica, as well as Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Antigua and Barbuda, had been issued by the leaders of those countries.

The countries were battered by hurricanes Irma and Maria when the Category 5 storms passed through the Lesser Antilles last September.

Clinton was among leaders who attended and addressed an international donor conference held in New

York last November to mobilize resources for the countries. He said the Clinton Foundation will be launching an Action Network on Post-Disaster Recovery.



Clinton

well as the long-term recovery in the region.

“Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Caribbean community are in need, and we must answer that call,” said Clinton.

“Together with leaders from government, business, and civil society, we can demonstrate what is possible when we come together and bring our collective will and resources to bear on this crisis. We have a responsibility to act, for the people who are still suffering, and for all the future generations in the region,” he added.

- Edited from CMC.



# U.S. secretary of state to visit Jamaica in February

United States Secretary of State Rex Tillerson is scheduled to visit Jamaica this month to discuss issues related to bilateral and regional security, energy efforts and economic reform.

The U.S. Embassy in Kingston said Tillerson is scheduled to arrive on Feb. 7.

The U.S. senior diplomat is scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Andrew Holness and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Kamina Johnson Smith.

Before he lands in Kingston, Tillerson will travel

to Mexico City, Mexico; Bariloche and Buenos Aires, Argentina; Lima, Peru; and Bogota, Colombia.



Tillerson

A press release from the U.S. Embassy stated Tillerson will engage with regional partners to promote a safe, prosperous, energy secure, and democratic hemisphere.



# NAACP sues U.S. over TPS decision on Haitians

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The largest and oldest civil rights organization in the United States has filed a racial discrimination lawsuit against the United States Department of Homeland Security, current DHS head Kirstjen Nielsen and Elaine C. Duke, the former acting head of the agency, over the decision by the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump to rescind temporary protected status (TPS) for Haitian immigrants.

The lawsuit, which the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund filed in the U.S. District Court in Maryland on Jan. 24, argues that the agency and its leaders’ move “discriminates against immigrants of color”.

The suit has asked the court to void the decision and reinstate the status for thousands of Haitians.

## 'DISCRIMINATORY'

It has been reported that the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, which is a separate organization from the NAACP, is representing the NAACP and its Haitian members.

“The decision by the Department of Homeland Security to rescind TPS status for Haitian immigrants was infected by racial discrimination,” said Sherrilyn Ifill, president and director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund in a statement.

To make its case, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund references in the lawsuit President Trump’s alleged derogatory comments about Haitians and about limiting immigrants from the French-speaking Caribbean nation to increase immigration from European countries.

Various issues have put President Donald Trump and Haitians on a collision course. See our special feature “Haiti and Trump”, starting on page 11.



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# NAILBITER: DACA hangs in balance, Caribbean nationals at risk

A deal to resolve DACA, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program which allows undocumented young immigrants from the Caribbean and elsewhere to remain in the United States, appears to hang in the balance.

Fighting among the two major political parties in the U.S. Congress, plus a president who seems uncertain which path to choose for DACA recipients, has put the program in doubt and threatens some 800,000 immigrants with possible deportation.

According to reports coming out of the U.S. capital last month, representatives of the major political parties are far apart in finding a deal. President Donald Trump has also shifted his position on the issue repeatedly, so no one is 100 percent sure where he stands today.

## SECURITY

Trump, however, has insisted that any deal regarding DACA must include ramped up border security, including the building of a wall at the U.S.-Mexico border. Republican colleagues have backed the president on that point. Democrats have shown willingness to allow support for the \$25 billion wall.

However, Trump has also hinted at a pathway to citizenship for 1.8 million undocumented immigrants, including DACA recipients. And while Democrats support that idea, it has enraged some Republicans, who often refer to such a decision as amnesty.

Last month, the Trump administration released guidelines for a resolution to the dilemma of DACA, which the president said will officially end Mar. 5.

The president is also pushing to end what he calls "chain migration," which is a system where immigrants, once allowed legal residence in the U.S., are able to file for the same privilege for family members. Trump is adamant the privilege not be extended beyond minor children and spouses. He also wants to end the diversity visa lottery program, a system where applicants from a variety of countries can gain legal residence in the U.S.

## NO SUPPORT

Trump's proposal has not received major support from Republicans, who call the plan "amnesty." Democratic Senator Bob Menendez called the president's proposal a "massive, cruel and family-punishing overhaul of our cur-

rent legal immigration system."

So, with next month's deadline looming, some U.S. lawmakers have already determined a permanent DACA deal "dead."

"When Trump proposed something that in orthodoxy was not possible in the Democrat world and got criti-

cized by the right, that was the end of the deal, because how can Trump agree to something more liberal now?" an immigration attorney told CNN.

"... For both sides, the deal is completely unacceptable, so that's what makes this very complicated."

## OFFENSIVE

Democrats have not been heartened by Trump's overall stance on immigrants, especially those from countries with populations of mostly black people. He reportedly called Haiti and Africa "shit hole" countries while praising immigrants from mainly white nations.

However, some lawmak-

ers have insisted that Trump's framework on immigration represents the president finally settling on a policy. Oklahoma's Republican Sen. James Lankford said he would back the plan Trump set out last week.

"Obviously, he just put it

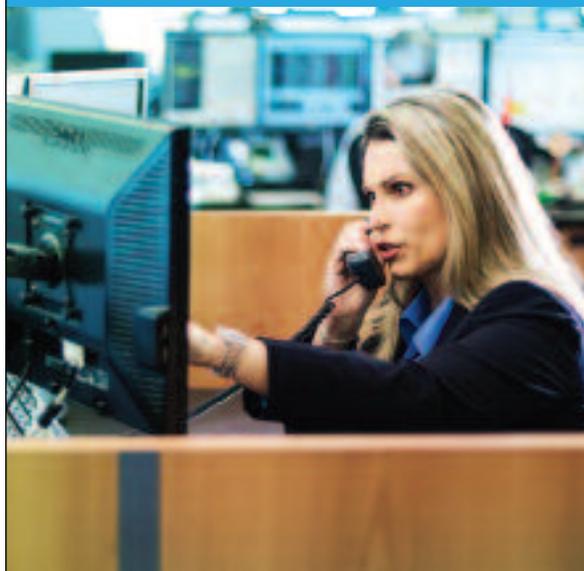
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)



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## Grenada votes Mar. 13

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada – Grenada will vote for a new government next month.

On Jan. 28 Prime Minister Dr. Keith Mitchell announced Mar. 13 as the date for fresh general elections.

Nomination Day is Feb. 20.

In the 2013 general elections, the New National Party (NNP) won all 15 seats, defeating the National

Democratic Congress (NDC) government of then Prime Minister Tillman Thomas.

This will be the second time that general elections will be held on Mar. 13. On the first occasion in 1990, the NDC won seven seats, the Grenada United Labour Party (GULP) four seats. The NNP won two seats, the same as the National Party (NP).



## Caribbean nationals can again apply for DACA

WASHINGTON, D.C. –

The administration of United States President Donald Trump says it will resume accepting renewal requests for a program that shields from deportation young Caribbean and other immigrants who were brought illegally to the U.S. as children.

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) last month said that “until further notice,” the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), a program implemented by former U.S. President Barack Obama, “will be operated on the terms in place before it was rescinded” in September, when Trump moved to end it.

“Due to a federal court order, USCIS has resumed accepting requests to renew a grant of deferred action under DACA,” the statement read. “Until further notice, and unless otherwise provided in this guidance, the DACA policy will be operated on the terms in place before it was rescinded on September 5, 2017.

“Individuals who were previously granted deferred action under DACA may request renewal by filing Form I-821D (PDF), Form I-765 (PDF), and Form I-765 Worksheet (PDF), with the appropriate fee or approved fee exemption request, at the USCIS designated filing location, and in accordance with the instructions to the Form I-821D (PDF) and Form I-765 (PDF),” the statement added.

### CUT OFF

But USCIS said it is not

# DACA

## Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

accepting requests from individuals who have never before been granted deferred action under DACA.

USCIS also said it will not accept or approve advance parole requests from DACA recipients.

“If you previously received DACA and your DACA expired on or after Sept. 5, 2016, you may still file your DACA request as a renewal request,” the statement read. “Please list the date your prior DACA ended in the appropriate box on Part 1 of the Form I-821D.”

USCIS warned: “If you previously received DACA and your DACA expired before Sept. 5, 2016, or your DACA was previously terminated at any time, you cannot request DACA as a renewal (because renewal requests typically must be submitted within one year of the expiration date of your last period of deferred action approved under DACA).”

USCIS said applicants can, nonetheless, file a new initial DACA request in accordance with the Form I-821D and Form I-765 instructions.

“To assist USCIS with reviewing your DACA request for acceptance, if you are filing a new initial DACA request because your DACA expired

before September 5, 2016, or because it was terminated at any time, please list the date your prior DACA expired or was terminated on Part 1 of the Form I-821D, if available,” the statement noted.

### DISCRETIONARY

“Deferred action is a discretionary determination to defer a removal action of an individual as an act of prosecutorial discretion,” it added.

“Further, deferred action under DACA does not confer legal status upon an individual and may be terminated at any time, with or without a Notice of Intent to Terminate, at DHS’s discretion.”

Last month, Judge William Alsup, of Federal District Court in San Francisco, ruled that the Trump administration must “maintain the DACA program on a nationwide basis” as the legal challenge to the president’s decision goes forward. Alsup said previous beneficiaries of DACA, known as “Dreamers”, must be allowed to renew their status in the program, although the government would not be required to accept new applications from immigrants who had not previously submitted one.



## NAILBITER: DACA hangs in balance, Caribbean nationals at risk

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

on paper,” Lankford told CNN. “This wasn’t just a statement at a press conference offhand. If he’s putting it on paper, that means not only has he signed off on it, his team has signed off on it.”

Democrats are not so

sure, citing the fact that Trump has often changed his mind about policy.

With the early March deadline looming, there are suggestions of a short-term extension for DACA recipients or “Dreamers”, or narrowing the deal before tack-

ling a broader immigration solution down the road.

With less than a month to go before the deadline, nothing seems certain.

- Compiled from multiple sources.




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## TARGETS: ICE zooms in on Caribbean immigration rights leaders

NEW YORK – Two members of the United States Congress from New York last month demanded an urgent meeting with top officials from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency over what they say is the “targeting” of Caribbean and other immigration activists.

In a letter to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Democratic Congressional representatives Nydia Velázquez and Joe Crowley called for a sit down with ICE brass about “the rash of enforcement actions against immigrant rights leaders.”

The letter to DHS Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, dispatched on Jan. 26, which was signed by an additional 29 legislators, came weeks after ICE detained immigrant rights activist Trinidadian Ravi Ragbir, 53, in lower Manhattan on Jan. 11.

The letter also cites

the agency’s treatment of other prominent immigrant rights activists nationwide, including Eliseo Jurado, whom ICE is detaining in Colorado, and Maru Mora-Villalpando, who could soon be deported.

The congressional representatives also mentioned Jean Montreuil — whom ICE recently deported to Haiti.

### CONCERN

“As Members of Congress, we write to express our collective concern regarding Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (ICE) recent targeting of immigrant rights leaders across the United States,” the letter stated. “Despite their goodwill, the majority of these leaders face separation from the communities that they call home.

“Given the rash of enforcement actions against immigrant rights leaders, we respectfully request a meeting



- File photograph

Williams, center with hands up, joins protesters.

with you to discuss the intent of current enforcement actions against such persons,” the letter added.

In a statement, Velázquez and Crowley said: “There’s a clear, appalling pattern of ICE targeting leaders in the immigrant community who are speaking out against President (Donald) Trump’s anti-immigrant agenda.

“This practice is morally unacceptable and has a chill-

ing effect on leaders who stand up for their rights and their neighbors,” they added. “We intend to hold DHS and ICE accountable to find out why this is happening.”

### THREAT

But ICE said that it “focuses its enforcement resources on individuals who pose a

threat to national security, public safety and border security.

“U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement does not target unlawfully present aliens (immigrants) for arrest, based on advocacy positions they hold or in retaliation for critical comments they make,” ICE noted. “Any suggestion to the contrary is irresponsible, speculative and inaccurate.”

A spokesman for Velázquez subsequently said: “ICE can spin these numbers all it wants, but the fact is we’re seeing a rash of instances where immigrants who pose zero threat are being targeted and, coincidentally, they happen to be community leaders.”

### ARREST

On Jan. 11, a Caribbean American legislator in New York was arrested while protesting ICE’s detention of Ragbir, executive director of the New York-based New Sanctuary Coalition, who has lived in the U.S. for over two decades. New York City Council Member Jumaane D. Williams, son of Grenadian immigrants, was arrested during the protest in lower Manhattan alongside Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez and a group of activists.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

## U.S. judge orders T&T immigration activist freed from custody



Ravi Ragbir, center, flanked by N.Y. City Council members.

NEW YORK – A United States Federal District Court judge has ordered the immediate release of a Trinidadian-born immigrant rights activist Ravi Ragbir, calling his abrupt detention last month unconstitutional and cruel.

Judge Katherine B. Forrest, of the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of New York, in an impassioned rebuke of the administration of President Donald Trump’s immigration policy, said Ragbir, 43, who has been ordered to leave the U.S. by immigration officials, should have been entitled to “the freedom to say goodbye.

“It ought not to be, and it has never before been, that those who have lived without incident in this country for years are subjected to treatment we associate with regimes we revile as unjust, regimes where those who have long lived in a country may be taken without notice from streets, home and work. And

sent away,” said Judge Forrest, reading from the seven-page written order she delivered soon after oral arguments.

“We are not that country; and woe be the day that we become that country under a fiction that laws allow it,” she added.

“The court finds that when this country allowed (Ragbir) to become a part of our community fabric, allowed him to build a life with and among us and to enjoy the liberties and freedom that come with that, it committed itself to allowance of an orderly departure when the time came, and it committed itself to avoidance of unnecessary cruelty when the time came.

“By denying (Ragbir) these rights, the government has acted wrongly,” Forrest said on Jan. 29.

### CHEERS

Thunderous cheers and clapping erupted in the 23rd floor courtroom packed to

overflow capacity with clergy and members of the New Sanctuary Coalition of New York City, the immigrant rights organization where Ragbir is the executive director.

Ragbir was released the night of Jan. 29 from the Orange County Correctional Facility in Goshen, Orange County, New York, and will continue to fight his deportation on several fronts.

In a stinging response, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency described Ragbir as “an aggravated felon” in reference to his wire fraud conviction in 2000, saying it was “actively exploring” an appeal.

“The agency is deeply disturbed by the harmful personal attacks some Congress members have leveled against career law enforcement personnel, whose sworn duty is

enforcing laws enacted by Congress itself,” the ICE statement read.

“The agency is similarly concerned with the tone of the district court’s decision, which equates the difficult work ICE professionals do every day to enforce our immigration laws with ‘treatment we associate with regimes we revile as unjust,’” it added.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

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## Trump keeps U.S. prison in Cuba open



Guantanamo Bay

WASHINGTON, D.C. – United States President Donald Trump has signed an executive order to keep open the American military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, after pledging during his presidential campaign to “load it up with some bad dudes.”

Signed moments before he presented his first State of the Union address on Jan. 30, Trump said: “In the past, we have foolishly released hundreds and hundreds of dangerous terrorists only to meet them again on the battlefield, including the ISIS leader, al-Baghdadi, who we captured, who we had, who we released,” referring to Islamic State group leader Abu Bakr

al-Baghdadi, who was released from Camp Bucca in Iraq in 2004.

“I am asking Congress to ensure that, in the fight against ISIS and al-Qaeda, we continue to have all necessary power to detain terrorists, wherever we chase them down, wherever we find them,” Trump said. “And, in many cases, for them, it will now be Guantanamo Bay.”

### REVOKE

Trump’s order revokes one issued by former President Barack Obama in his first days in office that called for the facility to close, which had been a key Obama campaign promise.

Although many prisoners were released from Guantanamo under former President Barack Obama, NPR said Obama was unable to make good on the pledge to close it altogether, due to concerns over the fate of some prisoners deemed too risky for either being freed or moved to U.S. soil.

No new prisoners have

been sent to Guantanamo in more than a decade.

When Obama left office, eight years after signing the closing order, there were still 41 inmates. They remain, including five who had been cleared for release by federal agencies when Trump took office.

While the new directive does nothing to immediately resolve the legal quandary dating to the administration of former President George W. Bush, it does require the secretary of defense to recommend within 90 days a method for determining the fate of individuals captured by the U.S. forces.

The order called the detention operations at the facility “legal, safe, humane, and conducted consistent with United States and international law.”

It also said the risk of recidivism among the remaining prisoners was high, claiming they represented “the most difficult and dangerous cases from among those historically detained at the facility.”

- Edited from CMC.



## Boston Caribbean carnival shooters get life in prison

BOSTON, Massachusetts – Two men convicted in the shooting death of an innocent bystander at a Caribbean carnival in Boston’s Dorchester neighborhood have been sentenced to life in prison.

Keith Williams, 21, and Wesson Colas, 25, who were found guilty of first degree murder on Dec. 28 in the death of Dawn Jaffier, were sentenced last month in Suffolk Superior Court.

Prosecutors said Jaffier, 26, a city youth worker, was shot in the head as a result of an Aug. 2014 confrontation on Blue Hill Avenue in Dorchester. Prosecutors said Williams fired the shot that killed Jaffier, but was aiming for Colas, who they said drew his gun first.

### STATEMENTS

At last month’s sentencing, the victim’s brother Ian Jaffier Jr. told the court the defendants changed his life forever when they killed his sister. He

also thanked the court for serving justice and recognized families whose cases haven’t been solved and who continue to live without closure.

“I feel like if one person is watching this story, if one person puts their gun down, that’s really a win for the whole entire city,” he said.

Ian Jaffier, the slain woman’s father, called his daughter’s shooting death senseless, adding that she strived to be a positive influence on the community.

Williams and Colas were also charged with armed assault with intent to murder, and assault and battery with a dangerous weapon.

A third man, Jordan Reed, 24, of Randolph, Boston, had been charged as an accessory after the fact to Jaffier’s murder for allegedly hiding the gun used in the shootings. He died while the case was pending.

- Edited from CMC.



## ‘U.S. judge orders T&T immigration...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

### ‘GROUND BREAKING’

U.S. federal prosecutors had asked Forrest, who was nominated by former President Barack Obama in 2011, to keep Ragbir in detention, but she rejected the request.

Stephen Yale-Loehr, a professor at Cornell Law School in New York, called the decision “ground breaking.”

“It holds that the Constitution requires the government to give people subject to a final deportation order time to arrange their affairs,” he said, cautioning, however, that the judge’s decision was “long on rhetoric and short on careful legal analysis. I worry that a higher court may reverse.”

Forrest acknowledged that the U.S. government’s labyrinthine statutes allowed for the detention of people with what are known as final orders of removal, meaning that they have no further appeals in the immigration courts and may be deported. But that did not mean the government could deny due process, she said.

“Taking such a man, and there are many such men and women like him, and subjecting

him to what is rightfully understood as no different or better than penal detention, is certainly cruel,” Forrest said. “The Constitution commands better.”

### DEPORTED

Ragbir, who came to the U.S. in 1991, had been a lawful permanent resident when he was convicted of wire fraud in 2000. After he served his sentence he was ordered deported in 2006 and detained by immigration officials, then released on an order of supervision while his case moved through the immigration courts.

In 2011, the New York field office of the ICE granted him a stay of removal, allowing him to remain in the country. Ragbir was given several extensions of the stay, the last set to expire on Jan. 19.

But ICE decided to detain him eight days early and federal prosecutors argued they did so because ICE had obtained travel documents from T&T.

But the activist was flown to a detention facility in Miami, Florida without initially notifying his lawyer and wife. The court later ordered him back to the New York area.

- Edited from CMC.



## TARGETS: ICE zooms in on Caribbean...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

“Many people were taken away by law enforcement ...” Williams then told the Caribbean Media Corporation after his release.

“Protesters like myself were taken in an NYPD (New York Police Department) van.”

- Edited from CMC.



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## U.S. admits DACA applications rejected due to mail problems



Many DACA recipients are losing their legal status.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) agency has acknowledged that more than 1,900 applications to renew temporary work permits from young Caribbean and other immigrants were wrongly rejected for being late.

As the U.S. Congress debates the future of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA), which is set to expire on March 5, the rejected applicants have been scrambling to overcome the government's error.

According to the **New York Times**, many have already lost their work permits, causing a cascade of consequences. Mauricio Noroña,

a lawyer for the Immigrant Community Law Center in Manhattan, New York, called the 1,900-figure, "astounding."

Noroña claimed he saw the devastating effects the mail delays had on one of his clients, whom he declined to name, saying she was afraid of repercussions from the government.

"She lost her job, lost her apartment, and is now temporarily staying with family in her home state," Noroña said.

"More worrisome, our client is at risk of being placed in removal proceedings pend-

ing her DACA renewal, a process that may take months because USCIS didn't commit to expedite affected cases."

**"She lost her job, lost her apartment, and is now temporarily staying with family in her home state. More worrisome, our client is at risk of being placed in removal proceedings pending her DACA renewal, a process that may take months because USCIS didn't commit to expedite affected cases"**

### NO PRIORITY

Steve Blando, a spokesman for the USCIS, said the agency has given people 33 days to re-submit their renewal forms, but would not make the applications a priori-

ty, nor would the agency extend current permits to cover any gaps or even make the permit, when received, retroactive, the newspaper reported.

"There is no expedited processing for deferred action under DACA," Blando noted in a statement. "These DACA requests will be processed in accordance with standard procedures. An individual's deferred action under the DACA policy begins the day USCIS approves the request and is generally valid for two years from the date of issuance."

The delayed applications were first reported in November. Officials initially said that nothing could be done for the rejected applicants, adding that the number was small. But as elected officials complained and the extent of the problem became clear, the agency reversed its position.

Some applications reportedly sat for weeks without being delivered by the U.S. Postal Service. Others arrived on time at designated collection centers in Chicago, Illinois; Dallas, Texas; and Phoenix, Arizona, but were not processed on time because of courier problems.

### PROBLEM

Last month, USCIS said it sent letters to more than "1,700 individuals," and that more than 200 applicants re-

submitted their renewals before the government invited them to do so. Part of the problem, immigration activists say, was that the agency imposed a "received by" deadline, instead of relying on a postmark as it does with most other immigration-related applications.

In September, the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump announced it planned to end DACA on Mar. 5 but urged Congress to find a legislative solution before then. Anyone whose permit expired before March could renew by Oct. 5.

"The fact that that many individuals were affected shows that the deadline they imposed - which we always said was too short and too arbitrary - was too short even for the government to perform its functions properly," Camille Mackler, the director of legal initiatives for the New York Immigration Coalition.

### BLAME

According to USCIS, 154,000 people were eligible to apply for renewal and 132,000 applications were received on time.

However, in an Oct. 18 deposition conducted as part of a federal lawsuit in Brooklyn, New York, 4,000 DACA applications arrived late and were rejected.

The government is taking

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

## U.S. must respect Caribbean, says UWI vice chancellor

KINGSTON, Jamaica – University of the West Indies (UWI) Vice Chancellor Professor Hilary Beckles says the United States needs to respect the Caribbean and Haiti in particular.

Beckles made the statement as the fallout continues over U.S. President Donald Trump's reported remarks about Haiti, El Salvador and African nations.

"The democratic, nation-building debt the American nation owes the Caribbean, and the Haitian nation in particular, that resides at its core, is not expected to be repaid but must be respected," said Sir Hilary in a statement last month.

"Any nation without a nominal notion of its own making can never comprehend the forces that fashion it origins," he said, adding that Haiti's Caribbean vision "illuminated America's way out of



Beckles

its colonial darkness.

"This is the debt President Trump's America owes Toussaint L'Ouverture's Haiti. It's a debt of philosophical clarity and political maturity. It's a debt of how to rise to its best human potential. It's a debt of exposure to higher standards. Haiti is really America's Statue of Liberty.

"The President's truth making troops might not

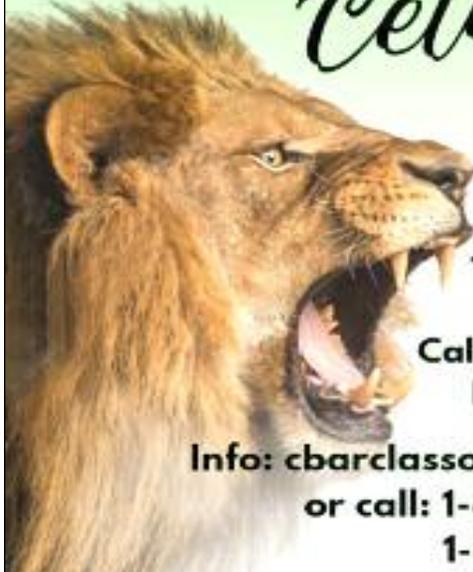
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# Path to U.S. citizenship open for Caribbean 'Dreamers' ~ Trump

WASHINGTON, D.C. – United States President Donald Trump says he is open to a path to citizenship after 10 to 12 years for hundreds of thousands of undocumented Caribbean and other immigrants brought to the U.S. as children.

Trump made the statement on Jan. 24, days after rejecting a bipartisan plan with that as its centerpiece. He told reporters at the White House that he would allow the young immigrants, known as Dreamers, to "morph into" citizens over a period of time.

"Over a period of 10 to 12 years,"

Trump said, "somebody does a great job, they work hard — that gives incentive to do a great job. Whatever they're doing, if they do a great job, I think it's a nice thing to have the incentive of, after a period of years, being able to become a citizen."

## SOLUTION?

In September, Trump ended the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA),



Trump

expires Mar. 5, he has urged Congress to find a permanent solution that could allow them to live and work in the country legally.

However, the fate of the "Dreamers" is at the center of a furious stalemate in the U.S. Congress, where Republicans and Democrats are struggling to find a compromise. According to the **New York Times** newspaper, Trump's positions have been difficult to discern, vacillating between his expressions of sympathy for the DACA recipients and his hardline demands

a program started by former President Barack Obama, saying it was an illegal assertion of executive authority by his predecessor. Even as Trump's actions threatened nearly 700,000 young immigrants with deportation when the program

**"It must be done responsibly, guaranteeing a secure and lawful border and ending chain migration, to mitigate the negative side effects of codifying DACA" – Cotton**

for a crackdown on illegal immigrants. As president, he quickly tried to impose a travel ban on predominantly Muslim countries and gave immigration agents more authority to round up undocu-

mented Caribbean and other immigrants.

## 'BILL OF LOVE'

However, he also once said he wanted a "bill of love" to address the fate of the DACA recipients.

Senator Tom Cotton, Republican of Arkansas, who is a hard line conservative on immigration issues, reiterated that any deal on immigration would have to include Republican demands for tougher enforcement on immigration, stating on Twitter that "it must be done responsibly, guaranteeing a secure and lawful border & ending chain migration, to mitigate the negative side effects of codifying DACA."

## SUPPORT

But Trump's remarks drew support from Lindsey Graham, a Republican of South Carolina, who has in recent weeks been at the forefront of efforts to reach an immigration deal. Graham had been one of the architects of the bipartisan plan rejected by Trump.

"President Trump's support for a pathway to citizenship will help us get strong border security measures as we work to modernize a broken immigration system,"

Graham noted in a statement. "Finally, with this statement, we are on track to solving the immigration problem which is the political key to rebuilding our military."

Sen. Richard J. Durbin, Democrat of Illinois, who has been leading the bipartisan talks with Graham, also welcomed Trump's latest statement.

"The President is headed in the right direction here," Durbin stated.

Trump also said he will insist on an end to the diversity lottery system, which encourages immigration from a variety of countries. He referred to the program as a "broken system" that brings the wrong kind of people into the U.S. He said he wanted to negotiate an end to so-called chain migration, but said he would work to allow nuclear families to stay together.

- Edited from CMC.



## U.S. must respect Caribbean, says UWI vice chancellor

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

know, and probably care little for the fact that Haitian people were first in this modern world to build a nation completely free of the human scourge of slavery and native genocide," the UWI vice chancellor stated.

"It might be worthless in their world view that Haiti's leadership made the Caribbean the first civilization in modernity to criminalize and constitutionally uproot such crimes against humanity and to proceed with sustainability to build a nation upon the basis of universal freedom," he continued.

## TRUTH

"The tale of their two constitutions tells this truth," he said. "The American Independence Declaration of 2nd July, 1776, reinforced slavery as the national development model for the future.

The Haitian Independence Declaration, 1st January, 1804, defined slavery a crime and banished it from its borders."

Sir Hilary said Haiti, then, became the first nation in the world to enforce a provision of personal democratic freedom for all, "and did so at a time when America was deepening its slavery roots.

"The USA, therefore, should daily bow before Haiti and thank it for the lessons it taught in how to conceptualize and create a democratic political and social order," he said.

"Having built their nation on the pillars of property rights in humans, and realizing a century later that slavery and freedom could not coexist in the same nation, Americans returned to the battlefield to litigate the century's bloodiest defining and deciding civil war.

Sir Hilary said Haiti was and will remain "this hemi-

sphere's mother of modern democracy; and the Caribbean, the cradle of the first ethical civilization."

## CELEBRATION

"For President Trump, therefore, to define the Caribbean's noble heroes of human freedom, whose sacrifice empowered and enlightened his nation in its darkest days, as a site of human degradation, is beyond comprehension," he said.

"It is a brutal bashing of basic truths that are in need, not of violation, but celebration.

"Haiti, then, is mankind's monument to its triumphant rise from the demonic descent into despair to the forging of its first democratic dispensation," he added. "It is home to humanity's most resilient people, who are the persistent proof of the unrelenting intent of the species to let freedom rain and reign.

"Thankfully, many fine souls dedicated to social justice have risen to 'write this wrong' into the public record."

In taking comfort in recalling a line "drawn on the highway of history," Sir Hilary said: "In this 2018 White House attempt to diminish Caribbean Civilization, let's read aloud a part of William Wordsworth's 1802 celebratory sonnet to Toussaint L'Ouverture of Haiti, the greatest democracy mind of modernity.

"...though fallen thyself, never to rise again/Live and take comfort/ Thou have left behind Powers that will work for thee/Air, earth, and skies/There's not a breathing of the common wind that will forget thee/ thou have great allies/ thy friends are exultation, agonies, and love, and man's unconquerable mind."\*



## U.S. admits DACA applications rejected due to mail problems

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

the blame for nearly half of those.

Hasan Shafiqullah, a lawyer for the Legal Aid

Society of New York, said he thought the number might even be higher. He said one of his clients, whose application was rejected, lost his DACA

protections on Dec. 1, another lost them on Dec. 23, and two more will lose theirs soon.

Without DACA permits, the immigrants cannot legally

work and may not be eligible for college scholarships.

- Edited from CMC.



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# Donald Trump's \$30B wall ransom demand

To many Dreamers, whose lives are in limbo and who may be going through unimaginable stress at the thought of what Mar. 5 will mean for them, the mention by Donald Trump of a path to citizenship for some 1.8 million may seem like a lifeline.

A “dream” finally realized!

But lost in the dialogue, beyond the fact that Trump cannot be trusted, is the biggest modern-day ransom that 45 is trying to boldly pull-off.

Throughout his sordid and racially-tinged campaign, Trump repeatedly and brazenly proclaimed that Mexico would pay for his “big, beautiful wall ... with a door,” all along the United States’ southern border.

Now, over a year later, Trump is demanding \$30 billion in ransom – without blinking an eye – from American taxpayers, in exchange for 1.8 Dreamers to stay in the U.S. and possibly earn citizenship – sometime in the next decade or so. That’s roughly \$20,000 per Dreamer! Yet no one it seems, in the Republican Party, finds this outrageous or even remotely disconcerting; while Democrats, in their haste to help keep Dreamers here, are now happy to even make Trump’s dream of “Berlin Wall” 2018, come true.

## ‘WHITE ELEPHANT’

As a naturalized immigrant, I am all for taking a stance for Dreamers. But as an American taxpayer, I will not help fund a white elephant at the border that will serve absolutely no real purpose.

I will support border security – via electronic monitoring and agents on the ground – but I will not help pay for Trump’s “big, beautiful wall” and I know a lot of people who will not – especially not via this bold modern-day ransom demand.

If Democrats are willing to go along with this White House plan, then let us throw in all non-criminal, undocumented immigrants into the mix, end the decades old problem of illegal immigration within the border and then close-down the loop



FELICIA J. PERSAUD



Trump

holes and the border.

I have no problem with ending the visa lottery in favor of increasing skill-based visas and I also have no problem ending aspects of family migration such as sponsorship of married and older siblings. Sure I know the plan is to put an end to the growing number of black and brown immigrants and change the demographic landscape of the future, but I can blink on that if it means some form of legalization for millions of non-criminal, hardworking, tax paying immigrants, who have been in this country for more than a decades in some cases and who are part of the fabric of this American society.

## REALITY

These are reality-based requests that can be negotiated to match Trump and his White House’s racist agenda to lower migration to the U.S. and shut the border. Skilled immigrants will always be needed, regardless of how much they wish those immigrants would be of a lighter melanin.

As someone who became a U.S. citizen because of a skilled immigration option in the law, I know for a fact that they cannot stop the brains of us immigrants - both brown and black - regardless of how much they see us as from “s...hole” countries.

But Democrats would be remiss to give into Trump’s racist, highway robbery without winning a deal for all undocumented immigrants who can pay a fine, learn English and get some form of legal status to stay in this country even if citizenship may not be on the cards.

*Edited from News Americas. Felicia J. Persaud is CMO at Hard Beat Communications, Inc. which owns the brands NewsAmericasNow, CaribPRWire and InvestCaribbeanNow.*



# Press rises to expose sexual predators, despite opposition from perverted voices

JOAN WILLIAMS

I see a pattern emerging in the quest to expose and change the culture concerning the pervasive sexual exploitation of women.

This has plagued women and children from the beginning of time and made our lives a living nightmare.

This is a direct result of patriarchal domination and the religious doctrines developed by men, that determined that women are men’s property who were put on earth to look after the home and most importantly, provide pleasure for men.

No women suffered more from this doctrine than imported African slaves, who were not only valued as factories for producing an unending supply of workers for the plantations, but also, importantly, for the sexual pleasure of their masters and their teenage sons who were supposed to be taught how to enjoy sex by slave women.

The high percentage of mixed race people in former slave societies is a permanent reminder of those terrible days.

## LEAD

What the press in the United States is beginning to do today, as it has done so many times in the past, is to take the lead to bring about a change of culture. Hopefully this will have worldwide implications for, in general, when America leads the world follows.

We therefore cannot allow ourselves to be sidetracked by the loud, perverted voices who want to resist this cultural change. Predatory men of all political stripes are being exposed by the media.

We have other apologists who are seeking to cloud the issues by putting flirting, sexual harassment at the workplace, adultery between consulting adults, rape and pedophilia all into one barrel.

I have also heard others trying to resurrect Bill Clinton’s confessed adultery, an immoral but non-criminal act, and comparing it to that of the current U.S. president who has openly boasted about groping women, an action confirmed by some 15 women have come forward to affirm that they have actually been his victims.

## MERIT

While every type of sex crime is serious and deserves in-depth investigation, perse-



The media has brought the issue to the forefront.

cution and criminal penalties where possible, every incident has to be dealt with on its own merit.

The current attack on predatory behavior by men who stymie the progress of ambitious women, causing mental trauma and destroying lives forever, may have elicited concerted and perverse attempts to downplay this real problem and provide cover for those who have committed these harmful sex crimes no matter how long ago. This should not be allowed to succeed or detract from the issue.

Among the strategies I see at play by some persons seeking to derail the movement to expose powerful men who previously used their money, dominance in their organizations and even the media, to attack and destroy their victims, is to belligerently denigrate the valiant women who had to suffer in silence for even decades.

An even more pernicious strategy is to try and even paint the independent press as purveyors of fake news and go as far as to try to set them up by having them publish false claims.

## RESILIENT

However, the American press is proving itself to be far too sophisticated and resilient to be taken in by such devious ruses devised by deplorable people but we still need to stand firm and support them.

Women have to be careful, however, not to jump to the conclusion that most men or all men are sexual predators, for those now being accused, though popular and powerful, are a small fraction of the total number of men who hold similar positions in the society.

What distinguishes perverts from the decent men in

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## Honest to Goodness: The real truth is, everybody lies

Liars have to have good memories.

So much has been said about lies and lying that I'd be lying if I said that lying isn't a part of the human mosaic.

Lying seems to be second nature to people, and lies of all forms simply roll off the tongue and out of the mouths of everyone. Yes everyone, for everybody lies - with justification of course.

This fact was expressed in a recent issue of **National Geographic Magazine**, which has the headline on the cover "Why We Lie".

So goes the old joke about people who lie a lot. I must be careful when I label professions, but some really do have a questionable reputation when it comes to lying. One is used car salesmen, who have always been the butt of lying jokes. That's because they always bend the truth, embellish the facts, paint a glowing picture of the cars that they're selling.

The others are lawyers. Oh, how they have been accused of perpetual prevarication. So much so that another moniker for lawyer is liar. I didn't make that up, but it's a universal saying.

But the truth is, everybody lies to some degree or another, and the reasons are varied. The main one being to appear better, more successful, loftier, in other people's eyes.

### SCIENCE

National Geographic explains the science behind our complicated relationship with the truth. It outlines that honesty may be the best policy, but deception and dishonesty are part of being human. In other words, people are born to lie. Of course there are differ-

ent degrees of lies, even though the Bible says that all sins are equal before the Lord. But mankind puts a spin on it to justify their lies by saying, "That's a big fat damn dirty lie," as opposed to, "Oh, it's just a little white lie."

Learning to lie is a natural stage in child development, says the research, and psychologists at the University of Toronto have explained how children become more sophisticated liars as they age. Even when caught with their hands in the cookie jar and their mouths covered with crumbs, they will deny it.

But it doesn't take advanced research to discover that children lie, even though parents put it down to a child's vivid imagination.

### IT'S O.K.

But scientists say that it's O.K. - it's a part of the human development - plus they also proved that the brighter children lied more.

Why lie though? Why do we have this propensity to not only bend the truth, but shatter it to bits? Some of the reasons are personal transgression: to cover up. By doing so, we hide what wrongs we may have done.

Avoidance: to escape. "Did you sleep with my wife last week?"

"No boss, that never happened."

Pathological: to ignore and escape reality.



"I just finished a round the world trip with the Sultan of Brunai."

Social or polite: to avoid rudeness.

"No madam, your makeup looks stunning."

Altruistic: to help people.

"No ma'am, it's no problem changing your tire for you."

Humor: to make people laugh.

"My foot is so big that I tripped over it last night."

Self impression: which shapes one's position and image of ourselves.



TONY ROBINSON

## Press rises to expose sexual predators, despite opposition

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

positions of authority is their penchant to abuse power, something most powerful men never do. I therefore disagree with those who declare that one solution simply lies in more women being elevated to senior positions.

I am all for women who wish to do so, to become managers based on their ability. But women can also abuse power and have been exposed for doing so. Therefore, that cannot be considered the solution.

We must instead salute the good journalists, many of whom are men, who seek out and work with the victims to bring irrefutable evidence to expose that small minority of even some of their most popular and powerful colleagues and the organizations that shielded them over the years.

By encouraging and allowing the brave women to share their stories, the media has put a roller coaster into motion that is unstoppable because the predatory men now have to pay a real price, not only in terms of being named and shamed but also losing their livelihood and positions of power.

"I have the most important job in the company, systems engineer."

Personal advantage and economic advantage:

"I can do it better than her with my vast experience."

Take your pick regarding why you lie from that list above. I guarantee that you fall into at least one of those categories if not all of them. And if you say otherwise, I suggest that you're lying.

### BIG LIES

We have so many examples of persons who have lied their way into jobs, claiming that they were PhDs when they didn't even have a high school diploma. Many were discovered, caught in their lie, but some still managed to slip through the cracks and go undetected.

Quite a few so-called "big people" tell big lies too and National Geographic quoted lies from United States presidents that were absolute whoppers.

Other persons lie to escape danger or other dire situations.

"Did you sleep with my best friend?"

"Oh no my dear, never."

Shaggy's song, "It wasn't me," addressed this, and rose to become one of the best selling international hits of all time.

### AGE OLD

Women lie about their age,

and especially about their past, diminishing the years, and also the amount of lovers that they had.

"I only had one boyfriend before you honey, I swear it."

But men lie in the opposite direction, especially to their friends.

"I slept with over 600 women."

Lies, lies, damn lies, but all for a purpose, self preservation or ego boosting.

If you lie in court, it's called perjury, which is a serious offense that can have severe consequences. If a politician lies, it's called a campaign promise. That's right, you can have future lies too.

"Vote for me and I promise you a chicken in your pot every Sunday."

Some people lie to protect other's feelings, and justify it too, citing compassion.

"No honey, you aren't fat, just a bit plump."

"Oh sweetheart, don't worry, size doesn't matter."

All lies, but done because we're human and born to lie.

It's just in our nature. Listen, I'm not lying, honest, for the highly respected National Geographic Magazine verified the same thing that I have said. Don't bend the truth too much though.

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tion which will take decades before it is totally effective in all sections of the society. For while high-profile white-collar female workers in top professions now have a voice, it will probably take decades before women in lower paying and menial jobs will have the confidence to come forward in numbers to expose their exploiters. For in many instances, in their field of work, there are numerous takers for their jobs and most times they are the sole breadwinners in their families or may often be insecure in their immigration status.

A method has to be found to shine the searchlight on their plight too, and that of the estimated 20 million to 36 million sex slaves living in hell today throughout the world.

This is an awesome task. So hopefully this cultural revolution will continue to shine in every dark corner throughout the world until all women are free.

*Edited from an article contributed by Joan Williams, author of "Looking back ... the struggle to preserve our freedoms".*



~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

*Various issues have put President Donald Trump and Haitians on a collision course.*

## R-E-S-P-E-C-T: Legislators demand rights for Haitian immigrants in U.S.

Haitian American legislators, who met in South Florida late last month, are demanding that civil rights for Haitian immigrants be honored following remarks by United States President Donald Trump, who reportedly referred to Haiti and African nations as “shit-hole countries.”

The Haitian American elected officials have also expressed deep concern about recent decisions by the Trump administration, claiming they are impacting the immigration status of Haitians currently residing in the U.S. and those who are visiting.

Discussions on strategic planning and various legislative issues, including a call to action, began on Jan. 26 and continued the following day at the National Retreat of the National Haitian American Elected Officials Network (NHAEON) in North Miami.

“The Haitian community throughout the country has endured pain,” New York

State Assembly Member Rodneyse Bichotte, the first Haitian American from New York City to be elected to the State Assembly, told the **Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC)**.

“It has been on the receiving end of unjust rhetoric and anti-immigration policies, and it faces challenges of communal vitality.

“With the termination of H2A/ H2B visas and the recent expiration of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 50,000 Haitians, our community has been rocked to its core,” added the representative for the 42nd Assembly District in Brooklyn, New York.

“I represent one of the largest concentrations of Haitians in the United States. I am happy to come together with my colleagues in NHAEON this weekend to chart a path forward for Haitians in this country.

“We will call on this

administration to reverse course and implement policies that are humane and just, especially as it relates to the Temporary Protected Status Program, and immigration,” Bichotte said.

### ‘DEVASTATING’

She said these policies are currently having a “devastating impact on our community and need to be remedied.”

Alix Duselme, a North Miami councilman, said in a city in the U.S. where many Haitian Americans call home, “I am delighted to host my colleagues from across this nation as we gather to discuss critical issues impacting a large portion of my constituents and policies affecting our beloved



Haitians protest Trump's remarks.

- File photograph

racism and xenophobia. Consequently, these illegal decisions necessitate such a retreat to defend Haitian interests,” Duselme said.

### ‘HISTORICAL’

New York State Assembly Member Kimberly Jean-Pierre, who represents Suffolk County, Long Island, New York, said “this reunion is historical and critical to shaping our beloved country Haiti and to continue to serve Haitians and Haitian Americans throughout the United States of America.

“I am excited to be amongst a group of elite Haitian professionals this weekend,” she said.

Her colleague, Clyde Vanel, representing Queens, New York, said: “Now, more than ever, we must work collectively across the nation to foster the much-needed

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)

## Haitians voice outrage over Trump's remarks

WEST PALM BEACH, Florida – Hundreds of Haitians last month lined the West Palm Beach approach to Donald Trump's so-called “Winter White House” demanding an apology from the United States president for his alleged racist remarks about their country.

The group of about 400 protesters, including doctors,



Haitians in Florida were angry over president's alleged remarks.

pastors, students and attorneys, almost all of Haitian descent, gathered in the spirit of a U.S. federal holiday recognizing the nation's most recognized activist Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Jan. 15 was also a day on which Trump was likely to see them as he zipped by in his motorcade.

The **Palm Beach Post** newspaper reported that those who stood at the southwest corner of Southern Boulevard and Flagler Drive said they were driven to protest by Trump's reported disparaging remarks last month, including

“Why do we want all these people from ‘shithole countries’ coming here?”

### APOLOGY

Trump also reportedly asserted that America should instead bring in more people from countries such as Norway, which is overwhelmingly white.

“We know the country (Haiti) is not a ‘shithole’ country,” said Charlemagne Metayer, a Lake Park zoning board member who came to the U.S. in 1985, became a citizen and is father of four.

“We help America to fight. Some of us work two or three jobs to make a living. We are hard-

working people. We deserve an apology from the president,” Metayer said.

Byrnes N. Guillaume, an attorney and one of the protest organizers, said the expectations don't end with an apology.

“We want an immigration policy to be unbiased - one that does not favor people from Norway over Haiti. And we want people who are of like minds to vote,” Guillaume said.

### SIGNS, SONGS

The protesters carried signs declaring Haiti is not a “shit-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)

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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

**Caribbean Pan-Africanists declare Trump 'persona non grata' after alleged racist remarks about Haiti**

Trump 'not welcome.'

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados – About 90 Pan-African organizations and leaders in the Caribbean have declared United States President Donald J. Trump “persona non-grata” for reported racist remarks he made last month about Haiti and African nations.

The leaders said that Trump made himself unwelcome with his vulgar insults against Haiti and African countries, saying that they likely speak for the entire African diaspora.

The declaration was authored by the “pan-Africanist and socialist popular forces of Barbados,” and submitted to the people and

civil society organizations of the Caribbean for their endorsement and adoption.

Among the organizations and leaders supporting and endorsing the declaration are: the Clement Payne Movement of Barbados; Caribbean Movement for Peace and Integration (CMPI); Caribbean Pan-African Network (CPAN); Peoples Empowerment Party (Barbados); Pan-African Federalist Movement – Caribbean Region Committee; International Committee of Black Peoples (Guadeloupe); Jamaica-Cuba Friendship Association; Emancipation Support Committee of Trinidad and Tobago;

Organization for the Victory of the People (Guyana); Black Consciousness Movement of Guyana; and the International Movement for Reparations (Martinique).

**‘NOT WELCOME’**

“We, the under-signed representatives of the sovereign people of the Caribbean, hereby declare that President Donald Trump of the United States of America is ‘persona non-grata’ in our Caribbean region,” the declaration stated.

“We further declare that as a ‘persona non-grata,’ President Donald Trump is NOT welcome in any territory of the Caribbean; and we hereby confirm that we – the Caribbean people – will petition our governments, vehemently protest against any Trump visit, and engage in popular demonstrations designed to prevent President Donald Trump’s entry into any portion of the sovereign territory of our Caribbean region,” it adds.

Trump denied using the vulgar language, but at least two senators at the meeting confirmed he did.

**Ambassador urges Trump to visit Haiti**

Altidor

WASHINGTON, D.C. – An invitation has been extended to United States President Donald Trump to visit Haiti in the aftermath of reports that he made a derogatory comment about the French speaking Caribbean community (CARICOM) member state.

The invitation came from Paul Altidor, Haiti’s ambassador to the U.S., during an interview with CNN on Jan. 15.

According to Altidor, the words reportedly said by the president were an insult to Haiti’s dignity.

“The words, they did hurt the community, they did hurt the country of Haiti,” said Altidor. “... It hurt because one, it’s an insult to our dignity but more importantly it’s because too much of Haiti is misunderstood.”

**NO EXCUSE**

The Haitian ambassador, in issuing the invitation, said it “doesn’t excuse an apology for what was said” and that “such words shouldn’t be coming out of anybody’s mouth, let alone the president of the United States.”

During a meeting with lawmakers here last month, Trump reportedly made the comment about immigrants for Haiti, El Salvador and African

nations. However Trump later tweeted that he “never said anything derogatory about Haitians, other than Haiti is, obviously a very poor and troubled country.”

Meanwhile, St. Lucia Prime Minister Allen Chastanet has also weighed in on the issue. Chastanet told reporters in St. Lucia on Jan. 15 that Trump’s statements were “very unfortunate.” He said CARICOM had issued an appropriate response.

According to Chastanet, Haitians are still trying to recover from a devastating earthquake and hurricane Matthew one year ago.

“If anything, they need our sympathy not that level of criticism,” he told reporters.

- Edited from CMC.

**Haitians voice outrage over Trump’s remarks**

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

hole” and “Let’s make America Great Again, NOT All white again”.

Phoebe Crane, a 70-year-old white woman visiting from Indiana, waved a pink sign declaring: “Proud Grandparent of a Haitian!”

Many people in the crowd were dressed in bright red and

blue, colors of the Haitian national flag. At times, protesters broke out in song. In between, they called and answered: “What do we want? Apology,” the Post reported.

The protest was a first for 27-year-old Sheena Marceline, a nursing student from West Palm Beach.

“I’m Haitian born, but I’m an American citizen,” said the

young woman, who arrived in Florida when she was seven.

Marceline said her father fled Haiti after his politically-active brother was assassinated in the 1990s.

“We are good people,” Marceline added. “We had to leave the country because of our political beliefs.”

**R-E-S-P-E-C-T: Legislators demand rights for Haitian immigrants in U.S.**

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

change for Haitians in the United States.”

Councilwoman Valerie M. Cartright, of Brookhaven, New York, on Long Island, said the gathering of Haitian American legislators “comes at a critical time in the history of America.

“However, Haitians now find themselves as the subject of hateful political rhetoric and unsupported policy decisions here in the US,” she said.

“There is no better time to come together with members of NHAION in an effort to strengthen the protection of the human rights of Haitian people and shape immigration policies that are in the spirit of

our long-standing policy of providing humanitarian assistance to those in need.”

**BRIGHT SIDE**

Samson Borgelin, commissioner of District D, North Lauderdale, Florida, said “as negative remarks about Haiti and its people become a pre-occupation for many, we, Haitian American elected and appointed officials, must look at the bright side, foster team spirit, breed optimism, promote resilience, renew faith and inspire confidence in ourselves and in others.

“The younger generation must know their identity and heritage in order to be proud of their roots. It is no accident

that we as members of NHAION are where we are, and doing what we are doing. Who knows whether we have come this far for such a time as this? With positive attitude from all these gems of officials, we can make a world of difference for generations to come both in the United States of America and our beloved mother Republic of Haiti.”

Commissioner Christina Romelus, District 3, Boynton Beach, Florida, said she was “humbled to join this network of Haitian American elected officials from across the United States here in North Miami on this historic occasion.”

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## Embalmers want gov't help to stop fluid abuse

KINGSTON, Jamaica – Calvin Lyn, president of the Jamaica Association of Certified Embalmers, is urging the Ministry of Health to investigate reports that criminals have been using embalming fluid as an inhalant resulting in them carrying out extremely violent attacks.

"I believe that should the revelations be in place, that restrictions will be there to make the accessibility of embalming fluid, including Formaldehyde, difficult," Lyn told **RJR** news, saying "there are distributors, importers, who are selling the formaldehyde left, right and center."

He said as such, the government's enforcement activities must focus on the supply chain of embalming fluid.



Lyn

noted that criminals were getting high on embalming fluid, which is said to be influencing the brazen manner in which they carry out crimes.

The media reports indicate that the criminals are spraying embalming fluid on marijuana or tobacco cigarette and when dried, criminals smoke it before committing murders.

The media reported that the criminals were obtaining the fluid from funeral homes.

Lyn told radio listeners that he is disappointed that the Ministry of Health had not addressed the issue since it became public, given the fact that "when we are importing ... embalming fluid we have to get a permit from the Ministry of Health at least.

"I am not saying where these killers get their embalming fluid from...but it is for the authorities to step in," he added.

- Edited from CMC.



### GETTING HIGH

Recent newspaper reports

## St. Lucia to write E.U. over blacklisting

CASTRIES, St. Lucia – The St. Lucia government says it will submit another letter to the European Union as the island moves to join two other Caribbean community (CARICOM) countries that were recently removed from a global list of tax havens.

"We are sending that letter again to them to reiterate St. Lucia's position," Prime Minister Allen Chastanet told reporters recently. "There is a review committee, I believe, in the early part of February and once the committee accepts St. Lucia's letter, then the process of coming off the list and going into what's called a grey list starts.

"And then there's continued dialogue about what they find offensive and hopefully we could get this thing sorted out."

The E.U. wants the island to sign the letter of commitment before discussions can begin on removing the island from a list of nations blacklisted for allegedly facilitating tax avoidance practices.

### 'GREY LIST'

Once the letter is submitted, St. Lucia will then be placed on a so-called "grey list", which is made up of countries that have committed to change their rules on tax



Chastanet

transparency and cooperation.

The E.U. last month announced that Barbados and Grenada were among eight jurisdictions that had been removed from a new list of global tax havens following commitments made at a high political level to remedy E.U. concerns.

The decision by the European Council leaves nine jurisdictions, including Trinidad and Tobago and St. Lucia, on the list of non-cooperative jurisdictions out of 17 announced initially on Dec. 5.

Caribbean countries have in the past been critical of being included on these lists, insisting they have done everything as outlined by various European organizations like the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

## NEW BLOOD: T&T elects first woman head of state

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad – The Electoral College has elected the first woman as the sixth head of state of Trinidad and Tobago with both the prime minister and Opposition Leader Kamla Persad Bissessar saying she was the best person suited for the position.

Retired Justice Paula Mae Weekes, was the sole nominee to replace President Anthony Carmona, whose five-year term of office ends next month.

Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley said the former Court of Appeal judge here and in the Turks and Caicos Islands had been a trailblazer and is poised to become the first female Head of State of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

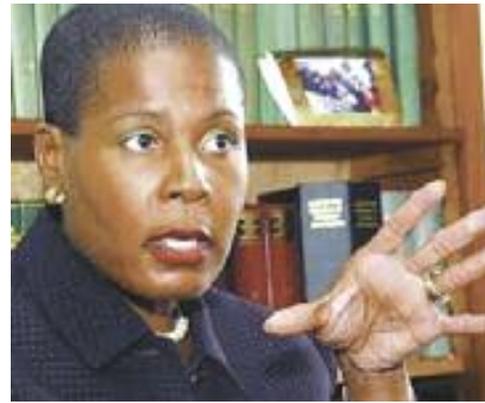
"As a young nation, we can indeed be proud of the fact that our democracy and all our governance systems are open to all our citizens, Rowley told the Electoral College comprising legislators from both the House of Assembly and the Senate last month.

"Today, for the first time, a woman is set to hold the highest office in the land."

### 'FITTING TIME'

Rowley said while T&T is no stranger to having women hold high office, he wanted to use the historic occasion for young people to sit up and take notice.

"This is a fitting time, as



Weekes

good a time as any, for our young people and indeed each and every citizen, to recommit to being the best that we can be," the prime minister added. "Justice Weekes' story serves as a living example that nothing is beyond our reach.

"The simple truth is that with hard work, dedication, discipline and good character, in this land of Trinidad and Tobago, no accomplishment, no accolade, nor position is beyond reach."

In her congratulatory statement, Persad Bissessar, the first woman to be elected to head a government here, said: "We took the decision to support, given that Madame Justice Paula Mae Weekes's record; her experience and her qualifications demonstrate that she was most suitable and deserving of the office."

### QUALIFICATION

Weekes was elected less than 48 hours after the country bade farewell to Professor George Maxwell Richards, the

fourth head of state, who died last month after suffering a heart attack. She was appointed to the Court of Appeal in the British Overseas Territory in Sept. 2016 for a term of three years. Weekes becomes the second prominent regional jurist to be elevated to the post of head of state, following the decision of the

Barbados government to name Madame Justice Sandra Mason as the island's eighth governor general last month.

Weekes is a former justice of appeal of the judiciary of T&T, where she served for 11 years until her retirement in 2016. She was appointed a puisne judge of the Supreme Court of T&T (Criminal Jurisdiction) in 1996 where she presided for nine years before being elevated to the Court of Appeal.

Prior to her appointment to the bench, Weekes served with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions for 11 years and in private practice from 1993. She is a graduate of the University of the West Indies and the Hugh Wooding Law School.

Weekes became a fellow of the Commonwealth Judicial Education Institute in 2000.

- Edited from CMC.



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## ARTS/ENTERTAINMENT



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## Guyanese-born actress stars in 'Black Panther'

LOS ANGELES, California - A Caribbean-born British actress is among the cast for the movie "Black Panther", which is set to officially hit theaters on Feb. 16.

In the movie Letitia Wright, 24, plays "Shuri", the sister of the King of Wakanda and the 'Smartest Person in the World'.

She was born in Georgetown, Guyana.

The movie features T'Challa, played by actor Chadwick Boseman, who returns home to the African nation of Wakanda to take his rightful place as king. When a powerful enemy suddenly reappears, T'Challa's mettle as king - and as Black Panther - gets tested when he's drawn into a conflict that puts the fate of Wakanda and the entire world at risk.

Faced with treachery and danger, the young king must rally his allies and release the full power of Black Panther to defeat his foes and secure the safety of his people.

Shuri is described by the movie's producer as the "head of the Wakanda Design



Wright as 'Shuri'.

Group" and "the smartest person in the world," even at age 16.

The movie highlights black people in positions of power or positions of technological know-how, "a big part of the film," according to producers.

### START

Wright moved with her family at age seven to London. Her interest in acting came when she saw "Akeelah and

the Bee" and found the lead character a positive role model.

She sent e-mails to different agents about her acting experience. She picked up small parts. Wright appeared in "My Brother the Devil" in 2012, where she was recognized by Screen

International as one of its 2012 Stars of Tomorrow.

Michael Caton-Jones then cast her in "Urban Hymn" in 2016.

Wright was then cast in the film adaptation of the novel "Ready Player One". Soon after, she was added to "Black Panther" as part of the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Wright received a nomination for a British Independent Film Award for "Most Promising Newcomer".

- Edited from News Americas.



## DREAM ON: Camila Cabello raises Caribbean immigrants' profile at Grammy Awards

Caribbean American entertainer Camila Cabello used last month's Grammy Awards to celebrate immigrants.

"Havana" singer Cabello, who has Cuban and Mexican roots, honored United States history of welcoming immigrants during the show.

As she introduced the band U2, she mentioned



Cabello made a case for immigrants.



Rihanna performed the show.

"Dreamers", the undocumented group of youngsters brought to the U.S. without their knowledge or consent, but who have made America their home.

"Tonight, in this room full of dreamers, we remember that this country was built by dreamers, for dreamers, chasing the American dream," Cabello said.

### HOPE

"I'm here on this stage tonight because, just like the Dreamers, my parents

brought me to this country with nothing in their pockets but hope. They showed me what it means to work twice as hard and never give up. And honestly no part of my journey is different from theirs. I'm a proud Cuban Mexican immigrant born in eastern Havana, standing in front of you on the Grammy stage in New York City and all I know is, just like dreams, these kids can't be forgotten and are worth fighting for."

"Dreamers" are waiting on the U.S. Congress to decide on law which will determine their fate. Some 700,000, part of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, are at risk of being deported.

The Grammys had additional Caribbean flavor, including onstage performances by Jamaican Shaggy and Barbadian Rihanna.



## Haitian Compas Festival finds new home for 20th anniversary

One of South Florida's biggest celebrations of Haitian culture will be staged in a new location this year.

The 20th anniversary of the Haitian Compas Festival, which features the sounds of the French Caribbean nation's music, will be staged on May 19 at Mana Wynwood.

"Our 20th anniversary is a big deal for us and though we have changed our venue a few times in two decades, we really wanted to give the public something fresh and new this year," festival founder Rodney Noel was quoted in a recent press release as saying.

"Mana, seemed like the perfect fit for us. We are excited about bringing the festival to Wynwood."

### REPRESENTING

"It's always been about the music and culture for us, the fact that we can celebrate Haitian Flag Day together

shows South Florida how big our community really is and lets us represent in the biggest way we know how," added Jean Michel Cerenord, another festival organizer.

Mana Wynwood is located in the heart of Miami's Wynwood Art District at 2217 N.W. 5th Ave. Organizers vowed the change of venue will only make the already special festival better.

"We have become the official Haitian Flag weekend destination," said Noel. "The Haitian Compas Festival is more than just a one day festival, it's almost a week of festivities. From pre-parties like the popular 'All Black Affair' to the festival itself, tourists from around the United States, Canada, the Antilles and Haiti make their vacation plans in May just to attend. 20 years in the making we are a community tradition."



## Successful Women in Business



In March Caribbean Today will spotlight Successful Women In Business. Join Caribbean Today as we showcase these hard working women who have left their mark on the business community in South Florida. If you would like to nominate someone please send your nominees to [Editor@caribbeantoday.com](mailto:Editor@caribbeantoday.com) or [Peter.Webley@caribbeantoday.com](mailto:Peter.Webley@caribbeantoday.com)

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## POTLUCK: Simple crowd pleasing dining ideas for all seasons



Be ready to serve something delicious on short notice.

Not sure what to make for your next potluck? Here are some simple, crowd-pleasing recipes:

**Appetizers** - Small-bite hors d'oeuvres are perfect potluck fare. Dips or spreads served with veggies and chips are quick to make and travel easily.

Try a cashew French onion dip for a non-dairy version of the traditional favorite. Be sure to soak the cashews ahead of time to achieve a super-smooth texture.

If you're able to keep food warm, a hearty spinach artichoke dip with pita bread will satisfy guests' cravings for comfort foods. Or, take a new twist on a conventional recipe with a cauliflower hummus.

It's extra creamy and has an added boost of veggies from the addition of roasted cauliflower.

**Side dishes** - Casseroles will feed a crowd and most can be served at room temperature.

Made with russet potatoes and onions, a cheesy potato casserole with cornflake topping won't last long at any gathering. It's a satisfying substitute for traditional hash browns at brunch, and is great for all ages.

Alternately, a vegetarian butternut squash casserole is a light, sweet complement to heavier potluck fare.

Or, if you're short on ingredients or inspiration, a frittata filled with cheese, veg-

gies and protein (whatever you have on hand) will work. Bake or slow cook the frittata the night before and add a quick sprinkle of herbs or chives before packing it to go.

**Desserts** - If you have a sweet tooth, it only makes sense to volunteer to bring your favorite dessert.

If baking for a cookie exchange or large gathering, start early and freeze the cookies until party day. Cakes,

pumpkin and apple pies are also easy to make ahead and freeze. Simply wrap a freshly baked, cooled cake or pie in plastic wrap and place in a freezer bag. Before an event, defrost in the bag at room temperature.

If your dish has multiple components, separate warm and cold items during transport and use insulated carriers to maintain optimal temperatures.

Make something that

doesn't require a ton of prep time and equipment once you arrive, unless you've asked the host in advance. Bring trivets or serving utensils, if needed, and don't assume the host will have extras.

- Edited from *StatePoint*, which also provided the photograph.



## Make it quick! Jerk chicken pasta

### MINNA LAFORTUNE

Pasta is ideal for making quick meals. One of my favorites is jerk chicken pasta and vegetable medley.

The recipe for this dish is as follows:

#### Ingredients

- 4 cups cooked pasta
- 1/2 of a whole cooked jerk chicken (remove the meat from the bone and cut in small pieces)
- 3 cups cut up raw cabbage
- 1 cup frozen corn (thawed)
- 1 cup frozen green peas (thawed)
- 2 ounces coconut oil
- Salt
- Cayenne pepper to taste

- 1/2 cup chopped onions
- 1/2 red sweet pepper
- 2 chopped cloves of Garlic
- 1/4 cup soya sauce

#### Method

Heat the oil in Dutch pot. Sauté chopped onions, sweet peppers and garlic.

Add the chopped jerk chicken meat.

Add the chopped cabbage. Add the pasta, using a fork mix all ingredients.

Cover and cook for five minutes.

Add corn and peas and mix all ingredients and cook for five more minutes.

Add salt and cayenne pep-



Jerk chicken pasta

per. Mix in soya sauce and cook for five more minutes. Serve hot.

- Edited from *News Americas*.



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## Cayman signs deal for immigration fast track in Miami

GEORGE TOWN, Cayman Islands - The government of the Cayman Islands has signed a deal with United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to establish a customs and immigration fast track system at the Miami International Airport for U.S. visitors coming to the British territory.

At the signing last month between Deputy Governor Franz Manderson and CBP Executive Assistant Director Todd Owen it was disclosed that the aim is to enable air passengers to clear the Cayman Islands official entrance process before take

off, so that when they land at Owen Roberts International Airport they can quickly pass through to baggage claim.

The new process is in the pilot phase. It will initially be a Sunday only service, one of the busiest days, for just Cayman Airways passengers, but it could be expanded to Saturdays and possibly to American Airlines.

### ON TRACK

According to Premier Alden McLaughlin, the fast-track airport clearance has been on the cards for some time. At a press conference held following the signing, he

said technical issues, as well as the hurricanes during this past season had delayed the implementation but he was pleased it was now on track.

The new arrangement means that starting in March, Cayman immigration and customs officers will start working in Miami to pre-clear visitors. The premier added that there will be no reciprocal arrangement for Caymanian passport holders visiting the U.S. due to the low number of travelers and the high cost of hosting U.S. security and border control at ORIA.



## U.S. signs new open skies pact with Dutch Caribbean islands

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The United States Department of State says the U.S. and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, with regard to the Dutch-speaking Caribbean islands of Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba (BES Islands), have signed a new bilateral open skies agreement.

Last month, the U.S. State Department said the agreement "reflects the dissolution of the Netherland Antilles and the new legal status of the BES Islands as special municipalities of the Netherlands."

"This agreement replaces in part the 1998 Air Transport Agreement between the United States and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, with respect to the Netherlands Antilles," it added.

"The new agreement will



The bilateral agreement replaces an old pact.

enter into force soon after an exchange of diplomatic notes between United States and the Netherlands."

The State Department said the agreement "strengthens the economic partnership between the United States

and the BES Islands by continuing to foster opportunities for air travel and commerce in the future.

"Open Skies agreements eliminate government intervention in the commercial decisions of air carriers about routes, capacity and pricing, thereby enabling carriers to provide more affordable, convenient, and efficient air service for consumers and businesses," the statement noted.

The U.S. has open skies agreements with more than 120 partners around the world.

- Edited from CMC.



## U.S. moves to prohibit Haiti, Belize worker visas

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The United States has moved to prohibit Haitians from applying for the visas which permits them to temporarily work in the U.S.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), has given notice that Haitians, as well as nationals from another Caribbean community (CARICOM) member state, Belize, and the South Pacific nation of Samoa are no longer eligible for the H2A and H2B visas.

The visas allow businesses to bring in workers from other countries. The H2A visa is for agriculture and the H2B is for non-agricultural seasonal work

in places such as resorts.

In the notice published online, DHS said Haitians applying for the visas "present extremely high rates of refusal" and Haitians who have been granted H2A and H2B visas "have demonstrated high levels of fraud and abuse and a high rate of overstaying the terms of their H2 admission."

The prohibition came less than a week after senators said U.S. President Donald Trump insulted Haiti in a White House meeting and was accused of referring to African nations as "shithole countries."



## Jamaica names new director of tourism

Donovan White has been selected to fill the position of director of tourism at the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB). His appointment was announced late last month by Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett.

White, a Jamaican national, whose term as head of the country's tourism marketing agency will commence officially on Feb. 15, served recently as vice president of Cable & Wireless

Business, Jamaica. Prior to that, he served as vice president of marketing, sales and media services at Columbus Communications Jamaica Limited (FLOW).

White has also held the positions of general manager of Caledonia Outdoor Advertising Limited and Digicel Group Limited, working as marketing director for

Jamaica, Guyana and the Northern OECS. He also served as vice president for sales and marketing at CVM Communications Group Limited.

### SAVVY

"(White) brings a solid business acumen and marketing savvy to the Jamaica Tourist Board, having developed, managed and executed vertically integrated marketing and branding strategies for a range of industry sectors including media, telecoms, advertising and technology," Bartlett noted in a JTB press release.

John Lynch, chairman of the JTB, noted: "Donovan brings the right experience and the respect of the marketing and business sectors to this important position."

Donnie Dawson will continue to serve as JTB interim director until White assumes office.



White



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## COMING ATTRACTIONS



A visitor to the Jamaica Tourist Board's booth, right, gets information about the Caribbean island from Kenton Senior, JTB's business development manager for northeast United States, during last month's New York Times Travel Show in New York City.

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# HEALTH



## Caribbean vaccination under the microscope

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) says it is addressing the exploration vaccination in the Americas, including the Caribbean.

Questions about the past, present and future of immunization in the Americas are addressed in the special issue of the Pan American Journal of Public Health.

PAHO said the region of the Americas was the first in the world to eliminate polio, rubella, congenital rubella syndrome and measles, all diseases that can be prevented with vaccination.

Since Briton Edward Jenner first discovered vaccination in 1796, vaccines have saved tens of millions of lives, PAHO said.

PAHO said achieving high rates of vaccination coverage



Caribbean has led the way on eliminating some diseases.

has been central to the region's success in eliminating vaccine-preventable diseases.

"These high coverage rates are in turn largely due to governments' declaring vaccines to be a public good and providing them free of charge to the entire population," it said.



## CARICOM praises Dominican-born PAHO director

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The 15-member Caribbean community (CARICOM) group has praised the leadership of Dominican Dr. Carissa Etienne, who has begun a second term as director of the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO).

CARICOM Secretary General Irwin LaRocque said her re-election was as a result of her sterling performance during the first five years.

"Reward for good work is more hard work," he told the ceremony here as he lauded her leadership of administrative and management changes to improve the efficiency of PAHO.

LaRocque commended its successful response to public health emergencies such as zika, chikungunya and cholera in the Americas, which resulted in a dramatic decline in the number of reported cases of those diseases.

### REDOUBLING

Dr. Etienne was first elected director of PAHO by the countries of the Americas in Sept. 2012 during the 28th Pan American Sanitary Conference. She was re-elect-



Etienne

ed for a second term in Sept. 2017, and began serving that term on Feb. 1.

"In this region, most of our countries have reached the stage where many of the easy public health gains have already been achieved which means that each incremental improvement in the health of our peoples requires a redoubling of our efforts, in order to reach those most vulnerable and marginalized individuals that still lack health care," Dr. Etienne said in her address.

She said that increasing overall investment in health will not be enough to meet this challenge, according to

PAHO.

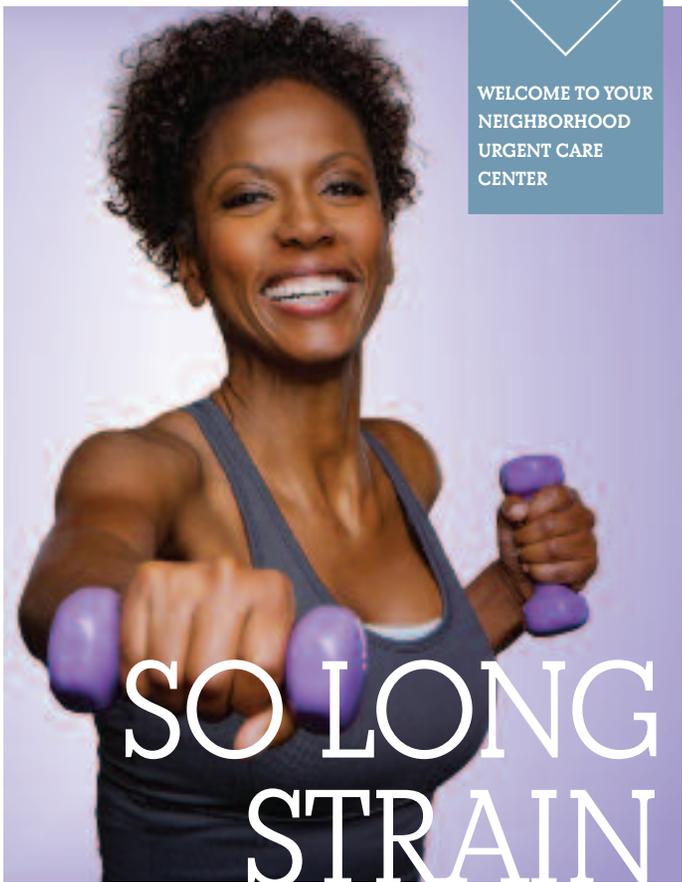
"Targeted interventions that make a tangible difference in the lives of underserved populations will be the key to our success," Etienne said, noting that over the next five years, she will work with PAHO member-countries to advance toward "health for all."

### FIRST

Dr. Etienne, the first Caribbean-born woman to lead the hemispheric health organization, said she would also focus on preparing health services in the region "to withstand the effects of climate change."

"A key part to ensuring that the health sector responds adequately to natural disasters lies in the development of resilient health systems," she said.

LaRocque expressed "heartfelt appreciation" for the continued assistance PAHO continues to render to the region, noting that role of health organizations, such as PAHO, is critical in disaster management and recovery.



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# Haiti scores historic qualification to U-20 Women's World Cup soccer

Haiti finished third in the CONCACAF Under-20 Women's Championships last month to qualify for the 2018 World Cup.

Haiti earned a spot in France after scoring a stunning 1-0 win over Canada in Trinidad and Tobago, a dramatic reversal of the 4-0 loss the French-speaking Caribbean nation suffered against their North American rival earlier in the competition. The achievement came in a milestone year for the women's game.

"It's very important because this year marks the 40th anniversary of women's football," Haiti head coach Marc Collat said. "As a country, we're certain everyone is going to remember it."

## BIG GOAL

Haiti's performance in the

tournament, featuring teams from the North and Central America and Caribbean region – CONCACAF – will be remembered for Sherly Jeudy's first half goal, which proved enough against Canada.

"Defensively, they did what I required them to do and I'm very happy about that," said Collat.

Haiti became the first ever Caribbean nation to qualify for the U-20 Women's World Cup. However, the team hopes to press on for more accomplishments.

"It's a relief, but it is going



Jamaica's goals against Nicaragua weren't enough.

- Photograph by CONCACAF Media

to make us train harder and even in better condition going forward from here to represent CONCACAF at the World Cup," Collat said. "We can't think about the past. We

have to think about the future."

## FAILURE

Meanwhile, Jamaica and T&T failed to win a game and

were booted from qualification.

Jamaica, featuring players based in the United States, managed to stave off a third straight defeat by playing to a 2-2 draw against Nicaragua in its final group game of the CONCACAF championships. That result left Jamaica bottom of Group B on a single point. Unbeaten U.S. topped Group B with Mexico second. Both advanced to the semi-finals.

T&T lost three straight matches in the tournament, going down 2-1 to Costa Rica in its final Group A fixture, to finish bottom of Group A without a point. Canada won all three matches to top the group with nine points. Haiti finished second to also qualify for the semi-finals.



# Bolt turns to soccer, gets trial with top German club

Former super sprinter Usain Bolt of Jamaica will put his famous feet through another major challenge when he goes on trial with an elite German soccer club next month.

Bolt, who retired from track and field following the 2017 IAAF World Championships, is scheduled to train with Borussia Dortmund.

"In March we're going to do a trials with Dortmund and that will determine what I do with that career, which way it goes," Bolt reportedly explained to the **Daily Express**.

"If they say I'm good, and that I need a bit of training, I'll do it."

Unlike during his peak as a track star, Bolt admitted he is a bit apprehensive about his new career move.

"It makes me nervous," he said. "I don't get nervous



Bolt

but this is different, this is (soccer) now. It'll take time to adjust, but once I play a few times I'll get used to it. It was the same when I started track and field. I was nervous for a while until I started getting used to the crowd, people and everyone around and it falls into place."

## DREAM

The 31-year-old, who won

eight Olympic gold medals, has a long-term view of eventually playing for his favorite club Manchester United in the English Premier League and is hoping Sir Alex Ferguson, former manager of the club, will assist with his dream.

"One of my biggest dreams is to sign for Manchester United,"

Bolt said. "If Dortmund say I'm good enough, I'll crack on and train hard. I've spoken to Alex Ferguson and I told him he needs to put in a good word. He told me if I get fit and ready, he will see what he can do."

Bolt insisted he has "a chance" of becoming a soccer player at the highest club level.

"I watch a lot of football, I understand it, I play it," he said. "With training, I could be good."



# Caribbean picks rare in 2018 MLS SuperDraft

Young Caribbean-born players were scarce among the top picks in the last month's MLS SuperDraft, and only one managed selection overall.

Whereas in recent years Caribbean players frequented the top picks, this year only Jamaica's Andre Morrison was chosen in the first four rounds of the draft. The defender was selected by reigning MLS champion Toronto F.C. with the final pick of the third round, 69th overall.

Morrison, a 6' 2" 24-year-

old from the parish of Clarendon, attended the University of Hartford in Connecticut. He was invited to last month's MLS Player Combine, a tryout featuring mainly United States college players.

In 2017 Morrison was an America East All-Conference First Team selection.



Morrison

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# 'Wagga' Hunt scholarships benefit Jamaican high school students

Almost two dozen students in Jamaica are set to benefit from scholarships donated by the Jamaica David "Wagga" Hunt Scholarship Organization in the United States.

The organization has provided more than J\$8 million in scholarships to 21 students from Calabar High and Kingston College, two prominent high schools in Jamaica.

In her message, delivered at the organization's annual fundraising ball by Nicholette Williams of the Jamaican Embassy, Jamaica's U.S. Ambassador Audrey Marks commended the organization for providing the scholarships during a recent function in

Washington, D.C.

## GROWTH

"I am heartened by the tremendous growth of this endeavor, which is in its sixth year of fund raising event and from which four students will benefit," Marks said.

"Your scholarship has moved from two in previous years to four this year. This continued growth augurs well for the future of the scholarship program which helps to defray costs associated with books, lunch, tuition and other expenses for most of high school life of the student."

"Even though Calabar High and K.C. have a history



Nicholette Williams, third right, poses with, from left, Kingston College Principal David Myrie, awardees Dr. Donald Philbert and Audley Hewett, Albert Corcho and Christopher Hunt

of a long standing friendly rivalry in sports and academics, this initiative should be

viewed as a fitting example of the synergistic effort towards a common purpose, ostensibly strengthening the relationship between the two schools," the ambassador's message added.

Dr. Donald Philbert, of Calabar High, received the same award for his philanthropic efforts.



The scholarship fund was established to preserve the legacy of the late David Hunt, a past student of K.C. and a coach at Calabar High who died in Oct. 2007.

Audley Hewett, past student of K.C., received the 2017 David "Wagga" Hunt Award for giving back to his school, community and country.

## HEALTH WISHES

- Photograph by Derrick Scott

Jamaica's Ambassador to the United States Audrey Marks greets U.S. Republican House Majority Whip Steve Scalise during the Christian Embassy Luncheon held in Washington D.C. late last month. Marks wished Scalise a speedy and full recovery. The congressman, along with three others, were wounded after gunmen opened fire at a Republican congressional baseball practice last June. David Bailey, who is of Jamaican heritage, was one of two police officers credited with helping to save the congressman and others.



## Immigrant issues the focus of Feb. 8 meeting in Miami

A meeting to discuss challenges faced by immigrants, including those from the Caribbean, will be held from **8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Feb. 8** at the YWCA of Greater Miami-Dade, Inc.

Among the scheduled presenters will be Marleine Bastien, founder and executive dDirector of FANM -

Haitian Women of Miami - and Adonia R. Simpson, director of the Family Defense Program at AI Justice.

Participants are expected to discuss the recent changes to temporary protected status (TPS) and possible changes to DACA and its impact on immigrant families. This pro-

gram will also feature be an interactive session designed to engage participants in finding solutions to address the needs of those in the immigrant community.

The YWCA is located at 351 N.W. 5th St., Miami.



## 'March For Cancer' Mar. 3 in Ft. Lauderdale

The fight against the deadly disease will continue in South Florida early next month.

The 2018 "March For Cancer" is scheduled for **Mar. 3** at the DC Alexander Park in Fort Lauderdale.

The event is being staged partnership with Memorial Cancer Institute, Memorial Healthcare Systems and Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital.

It aims to raise awareness, provide assistance and support those in need, including food, counseling, home healthcare, transportation and housekeeping.

Registration is available at [www.MarchForCancer.org](http://www.MarchForCancer.org).

For more information, call **954-989-5600**.



## Attorney David Rowe dies

Jamaican-born, Miami-based attorney David Rowe died last month in South Florida.

Rowe, who was also an adjunct professor at the University of Miami, was 58.

Up to press time it was still unclear what was Rowe's cause of death. However, family sources said he had been ailing and had been staying at hospital periodically.

Rowe graduated from the Norman Manley Law School in Jamaica. He practiced law in Florida for more than three decades and has been credited with establishing the Caribbean Law program at the University of Miami, where he taught since 1989.

Rowe was noted for his commentary following the arrest and extradition of noted Jamaican criminal Christopher "Dudus" Coke in 2010.

Rowe's father was Ira Rowe who was once president of the Court of Appeal in Jamaica and Belize. At the time of his death he was married to immigration attorney Rosemarie Robinson-Rowe.



Rowe



## CAHA nominations open

This month is the deadline to submit nominations for Caribbean American Heritage Awards (CAHA).

The awards recognize Florida residents with Caribbean heritage who have done extraordinary community work in areas including health care, arts and culture,

entrepreneurship, academia, charity and media.

The awards will be presented at a June 9 CAHA banquet in Sunrise-Sawgrass.

Nomination forms are available at [uniquecreations01@bellsouth.net](mailto:uniquecreations01@bellsouth.net) or by calling **954-292-6848**.



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Peter A. Webley, Publisher

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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

## Miami-Dade celebrates with 'African Americans in Times of War' theme

MIAMI, Florida – South Florida residents will have numerous opportunities to celebrate Black History Month throughout February. The Miami-Dade County Black Affairs Advisory Board (BAAB), along with various community-based organizations, have scheduled multiple events that pay homage to the African American diaspora, as well as this year's national theme: "African Americans in Times of War".

The BAAB is also highlighting its "I Support B.O.B." (Black Owned Businesses) campaign by designating "Flash Mob for B.O.B." events.

The following is a list of some countywide events and activities commemorating Black History Month:

**Feb. 9, 5 p.m. to 7: 30 p.m.** – "S.O.O.T." movie: Spoken word documentary featuring Liberty City residents and advocates at Sandrell Rivers Theater, 6101 N.W. 7th Ave., Miami. For more information, call **305-636-2331**.

**Feb. 10, 8 a.m.** - Annual Trayvon Martin Peace March, featuring host Faizon Love at Miami Carol City Park, 3201 N.W. 185th St., Miami



A documentary on late entertainer Sammy Davis Jr. is part of this month's attractions.

Gardens. For more information, call **786-504-4235** or visit [info@trayvonmartinfoundation.org](mailto:info@trayvonmartinfoundation.org).

**Feb. 11, 5 p.m.** - Free gospel concert with Melvin Williams of the Williams Brothers, featuring the Miami Mass Choir at Adrienne Arsht Center-Knight Concert Hall, 1300 Biscayne Blvd., Miami. Reservations required. For more information, call **305-949-6722** or visit [www.arsht-center.org](http://www.arsht-center.org).

**Feb. 14, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** - Valentine's Pop Up Shop "#Black Love", featuring Valentine's themed gifts at Stephen P. Clark Government Center Lobby, 111 N.W. 1st



The Jones Family Singers are scheduled to perform.

St., Miami. For more information, call **305-375-4606**.

**Feb. 15, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** - Community health fair at 6051 N.W. 6th Ct., Miami. For more information, call **786-216-9230**.

**Feb. 16, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** - "Getting to Zero" health fair at Stephen P. Clark Government Center, featuring information on HIV diagnosis and prevention, food trucks and health information.

**Feb. 16, 6 p.m.** - Black Lounge Film Series presents "Sammy Davis Jr.: I've Gotta

Be Me" a documentary at Overtown Performing Arts Center, 1074 N.W. 3rd Ave., Miami. For more information, call **786-897-8854**.

**Feb. 17 noon to 4 p.m.** - "Black Heritage Festival 2018", featuring African fashions, dancers, food trucks, entertainment and vendors at Betty T. Ferguson Recreational Complex, 3000 N.W. 199th St., Miami Gardens. For more information, call **305-474-3011** or visit [www.miamidade.gov/advocacy](http://www.miamidade.gov/advocacy).

**7 p.m. to 9 p.m.** - Perez

Art Museum fifth annual reception and fundraiser, to benefit the PAMM Fund for African American Art, at 1103 Biscayne Blvd., Miami. For more information, call **305-375-1707** or visit [www.pamm.org](http://www.pamm.org).

**Feb. 18, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.** - "Music in the Park in Honor of Black History Month" at Arcola Lakes Park, 1301 N.W. 83rd St., Miami. For more information, call 305-694-2779 or visit [www.miamidade.gov/advocacy](http://www.miamidade.gov/advocacy).

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 22)

## NSU offers free films, concerts, lectures

Nova Southeastern University (NSU) will celebrate Black History Month with a variety of free events, including films, discussions, music, art, poetry and spoken word.

The events begin **Feb. 3** and will be held on NSU's main campus.

Among the highlights is a panel discussion from **4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Feb. 6** in the Maltz Building, Room 2045. The theme is "We Are Not All the Same: Differences in the Provision of Psychotherapy within Black Culture". It aims to explore working effectively as a psychotherapist within the black community.

Those interested in African diaspora influences in

art and culture may view the exhibit that runs from **Feb. 8–Mar. 12** in the Alvin Sherman Library, Adolfo & Marisela Cotilla Gallery. The grand opening of the "African Presence 2018 Annual Art Exhibition" will be held on **Feb. 8**.

Reservations are required to attend the reception. For reservations and more information about NSU's programs, visit [nova.edu/blackhistory](http://nova.edu/blackhistory).

"Let's Speak Truth" Poetry and Spoken Word Night will be held **6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Mar. 2** at the Cotilla Library, 2nd floor of the Alvin Sherman Library.



## National college fair

Representatives from nearly 200 colleges and universities are scheduled to participate in the 2018 Miami National College Fair in South Florida.

The fair, scheduled for noon to **4 p.m. Feb. 25**, is being presented to allow the college representatives to meet with students and parents on subjects such as financial aid, planning, admission

and testing requirements.

The fair, which has free admission, will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Miami Airport & Convention Center, 777 N.W. 72nd Ave. There is a cash fee for parking.

For more information, call **305-995-1739** or visit [www.nacacnet.org](http://www.nacacnet.org).



## Tours, exhibitions to highlight BHM celebrations

Multiple tours and exhibits will be staged in February to mark Black History Month in Miami-Dade County, Florida.

The following are some of the scheduled highlights:

**Through Feb. 28**

\* The Black Police Precinct and Courthouse Museum will be open **10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**, Tuesdays through Saturdays. The museum is located at 480 N.W. 11th St., Miami. For more information, call **305-329-2513** or visit [www.historicalblackprecinct.org](http://www.historicalblackprecinct.org).

CHAT Miami Tours - Cultural Heritage Alliance for Tourism specialized tours highlighting Miami's heritage and urban communities. For more information, call 786-507-8500 or toll free **866-859-3930** or visit [www.chatmiami.tours](http://www.chatmiami.tours).

"The City of North Miami presents a tribute to Black History", featuring various events honoring. For more information, call **305-895-9840** or visit [www.NorthMiamiFl.gov/celebrate](http://www.NorthMiamiFl.gov/celebrate).

**Feb. 4-10 and 1-28** - Florida Memorial University's Homecoming: "FMU Loves You-Love Us Back" and Black History Month Observance. Includes various events presented by South Florida's only Historically Black College/University at



Legendary Gladys Knight will be on stage.

15800 N.W. 42nd Ave., Miami Gardens. For more information, call **305-626-3658** or visit [www.fmuni.edu](http://www.fmuni.edu).

**Feb. 5-9** - Black Tech Week, featuring the latest in tech news, interactive workshops centered on technology, innovation and creativity. Visit [www.blacktechweek.com](http://www.blacktechweek.com) for more information.

**Feb. 10-25** - Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts' Black History Month Programming Performances, featuring Gladys Knight, Motown Originals Review, George Benson and the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater. For more

information, call **305-949-6722** or visit [www.arshtcenter.org](http://www.arshtcenter.org).

**Feb. 23-25** - The annual Melton Mustafa Jazz Festival Weekend, honoring the legacy of the great artist at the Black Archives Historic Lyric Theater, 819 N.W. 2nd Ave., Miami. For more information, call **305-623-3063** or visit [www.melton-mustafajazzfestival.com](http://www.melton-mustafajazzfestival.com).

For additional information regarding this month's events, call **305-375-4606** or visit [www.miamidade.gov/advocacy/black-affairs-home.asp](http://www.miamidade.gov/advocacy/black-affairs-home.asp).



# BLACK HISTORY MONTH



www.caribbeantoday.com

~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

## Haitians march to protest Trump's racist comments

NEW YORK – Hundreds of Haitians marched from the Brooklyn Bridge to Trump Tower in midtown Manhattan last month, protesting reported disparaging remarks made by United States President Donald Trump about the French-speaking Caribbean country.

The marchers waved Haitian flags and danced to the beat of drums and horns on Jan. 19.

"We have a president in power who knows no history and seems to have no education, who just disrespects any and everybody in the world," said Marie Timothee, 28, a social worker born in Haiti and raised in Brooklyn.

The protesters took to the streets eight days after Trump was reported, in a White House meeting with lawmakers, to have described Haiti and African nations as "shithole countries."

### WRONG

The president reportedly used the derogatory term to describe the countries with black populations while wondering aloud why the U.S. wasn't accepting more people from

places like Norway, a predominantly white country.

"I am here with my fellow Haitians, and also our fellow Africans, to tell Trump he's wrong the way he thinks about us," said Sully Guillaume-Sam, 49, a priest at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Bushwick, Brooklyn.

"We bring a lot to this country, and he needs to be fair to us," Guillaume-Sam said. "He needs to be a leader with heart, not the kind of racist leader he has been showing us he is."

Meanwhile, Haiti has been slapped with the ending of Washington's guest worker program for Haitian nationals. Effective last month, Haitian farmers and other laborers seeking to come to the U.S. as temporary, seasonal workers under the federal H-2A and H-2B guest worker program will no longer be eligible.

The temporary workers' visa has for decades allowed hundreds of U.S. farmers, hoteliers and other business owners to hire thousands of foreign seasonal workers.

- Edited from CMC.



## Belafonte TACOLCY Center to feature its founder

This month, the historic Belafonte TACOLCY Center in South Florida will feature noted achievements in black history in the United States.

Among those highlighted will be Frances Henderson,

**Amid racial and economic tensions, she was given seed money to create an outlet where young men could work to help their community transform poverty and violence into positive change**

the center's founder.

Henderson was recognized as a woman with great vision and energy. A former disc jockey in the 1950s and 1960s in New York City, she moved to Miami in the early 1960s from Brooklyn.

During the height of the civil rights movement, Henderson worked with at-risk African American male youth in Liberty City.

### OUTLET

Amid racial and economic tensions, she was given seed



Henderson

money to create an outlet where these young men could work to help their community transform poverty and violence into positive change. Out of this movement, came

the Belafonte TACOLCY Center.

In celebration of Black History Month, the TACOLCY Center will share facts and stories about Liberty City's illustrious past.

Visitors will be able to read about the extraordinary accomplishments of notable residents, get "Pork & Beans" trivia, review the race riots of the 1970s and 1980s and find out how Henderson's TACOLCY Center - a Liberty City cornerstone - has fit into the community for more than 50 years.



## HANDS ON EDUCATION



Volunteer Trudy Brown gets her hands dirty assisting with landscaping during last month's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. "day ON, not day off" project organized by HandsOn Broward at McNicol Middle School in Hollywood, Florida. The project served to launch a pilot program to deliver education to middle school students through experimental learning in an outdoor setting.

## Miami-Dade celebrates with 'African Americans in Times of War' theme

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

**Feb. 22 10 a.m. to noon** - Miami-Dade County Small Business Development Division Vendor Outreach Event at Florida Memorial University, Smith Conference Center, 15800 N.W. 42nd Ave., Miami Gardens. For more information, call **305-375-3155**.

**1 p.m. to 7 p.m.** - Black Affairs Advisory Board's Annual Law Enforcement and Emergency Services Career Fair at Florida Memorial University-Smith Conference Center. For more information, call **305-375-4606** or visit [www.miamidade.gov/advocacy/baab](http://www.miamidade.gov/advocacy/baab).

**Feb. 23, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.** - Black History Month Closeout Celebration, featuring food trucks, marching bands and the Miami-Dade County Technobus at N.W. 2nd Avenue and

N.W. 3rd Street to N.W. 6th Street. For more information, call **305-375-4606**.

**Feb. 24, 2 p.m.** - Macy's and Miami-Dade Black Affairs Advisory Board Black History Month Celebration at Macy's Aventura Store-2nd Floor Fashion Store, 19535 Biscayne Blvd. For more information, call **305-375-4606**.

**Feb. 25, 5 p.m.** - South Dade Gospel Fest, featuring "The Jones Family Singers" and the South Florida Ministers of Music at South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center, 10950 S.W. 211th St., Cutler Bay. For more information, call **786-573-5300**.

For more information regarding this month's events, call **305-375-4606** or visit [www.miamidade.gov/advocacy/black-affairs-home.asp](http://www.miamidade.gov/advocacy/black-affairs-home.asp).



# Spring Health

The April issue of Caribbean Today will feature a comprehensive examination of how the healthcare industry serves the Caribbean community.

With a proven track record now in our 28th year of service to readers in the United States and the Caribbean Basin, Caribbean Today reaches an audience of over 112,000 highly qualified readers. They have median household income of \$63,000 and enjoy a higher disposable income. 19% have a college degree, 39% have some college. In today's economy,

our readers are highly esteemed. 59.6% own their own homes. 76% are between 25-54 years of age (readership study conducted by Circulation Verification Council).

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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

## Are blacks at White House in over their heads?

WILLIAM REED

What's your view of Donald Trump's system of politics and government? On the other hand, what does Trump know, or care, about American blacks' needs and/or political priorities?

What's the level of communications between Trump and blacks?

In 2016, candidate Trump declared that if he became president, "at the end of four years, I guarantee you that I will get over 95 percent of the African American vote." He was elected with just eight percent of the black vote. Trump recently tweeted that his "approval ratings with blacks has doubled." Actually, President Trump has a four percent approval rating among black voters and, according to **Gallup**, has tumbled from 15 percent approval among black voters a year ago to six percent.

How has the United States economy performed in 12 months of the Trump era? Actually, Trump has reason to boast regarding the economy and rising stock market valuations - S&P 500 index is up around 22 percent that equates to an increase of around \$4 trillion.

Trump also justly claims to have boosted U.S. employment through his exhortations for manufacturers to repatriate off-shored jobs to American soil. Since he won the vote, the U.S. economy has added an average of 167,000 new jobs each month and the unemployment rate has dipped to just 4.1 percent.

### WHO SAYS?

So, who's talking favorably to blacks about Trump? Trump



Scott, right, has supported Trump.

has a perfectly respectable job-creation record, but who's telling blacks that?

Cleveland pastor Reverend Darrell Scott was at Trump's White House meeting to sign legislation re-designating the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site to the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Park.

Scott is the "head man" in the circle of blacks supporting Trump and his agenda as chief executive officer of the National Diversity Coalition for Trump. He is a co-founder, along with Trump's campaign spokesperson Michael Dean Cohen, and board member of the National Diversity Coalition for Trump. The coalition was formed to provide specific minority groups' support for candidate Donald Trump. Bruce LeVell, also a co-founder, was a contender for appointment to head the Small Business Administration.

The guy that created the group is a Jewish lawyer, Cohen. Cohen was in Trump's business operations as an executive vice president, co-president of Trump Entertainment and member of the board of the Eric Trump Foundation. Cohen set the bar for tolerating Trump's idiosync-

rasies in his defenses of Trump against charges of anti-Semitism.

### SUPPORT

Scott met Trump in 2011 after being invited to a meeting at Trump Tower, when Trump was considering the run. After Trump announced his candidacy, Scott was one of the first African American pastors to support him and was instrumental in getting other African American pastors to attend meetings.

Minister Alveda Celeste King, a member of the King family, is on the coalition's board. Trump's diversity group contains American Muslims for Trump, African American Pastors for Trump and Korean Americans for Trump.

The infamous Omarosa was once a member of the group and will go down in history as being ineffective enough in her outreach to blacks to drive their support to zero. With Omarosa gone from microphones, we ask LeVell: What have you got to lose ceasing defense of bigoted Trump acts?

During the campaign, Bruce etched out a profile and position proclaiming that "Donald Trump is not a racist." As the coalition's executive director, LeVell has elected to spend his time declaring Trump is not racist, instead of showing him strategies that can help blacks and convert their business and political thinking.

*William Reed is a freelance writer. The opinions expressed above do not necessarily reflect those of Caribbean Today.*



## 'Black Heritage Festival' set for Miami Gardens Feb. 17

MIAMI GARDENS, Florida – The contributions of African Americans will be celebrated at the 2018 Black Heritage Festival on Feb. 17 in this South Florida city.

The free festival, being staged in honor of Black History Month and hosted by Miami-Dade County Commissioner Barbara Jordan, held from noon to 4 p.m. at the Betty T. Ferguson Recreational Complex – Amphitheater, 3000 N.W. 199th St.

It will feature music, culture, crafts and family friendly activities.

"As we observe Black History Month, we will honor the contributions that African Americans have made to this country," Commissioner Jordan stated in a recent press release promoting the event.

"It's so important to teach younger generations about the forefathers who paved the way for them, so this year, our theme will be 'Celebrating a Rich History'."

### ENTERTAINMENT

There will be mobile units on site providing information

and services such as the Miami-Dade Office of the State Attorney and the Miami-Dade Public Library System. The festival will also feature African fashions, dancers, face painting, rock climbing, vendors and food trucks.

"Knowing and celebrating who we are, what we have accomplished, and the way stations of our historic journey, informs what we can do when we purpose ourselves towards progress and a common path," Mayor Oliver Gilbert stated in the release.

Jesus People Ministries International Gospel Choir, Rebecca "Butterfly" Vaughns, the Junkanoos, Simone's Just Dance Studios and the Viking Freedom Writers are among the scheduled performers.

Sponsors for the festival are EAC Consulting, Inc., Airside International Business Park, AT&T, Marlins Foundation, Carrie Concessions, Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau, Urban Health & Wellness Group, IGWT Construction Inc., and Slip-N-Slide Records.



## Young Black Professionals meet

Young Black Professionals will hold its next meeting from **6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Feb. 16** in Miami, Florida.

The meeting will be held at Barrio Mojito Bar & Lounge, 299 N.W. 23rd St.

**Supporting the homeless** Black Professionals Network is supporting Make the Homeless Smile (MTHS) this month.

MTHS's Smile Day Anniversary will be observed between **10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Feb. 18** at 610 N.E. 1st

Ave.

BPN will assist by volunteering and encouraging its network to be present or donate the following:

Men and women's clothes, shoes and toiletries; and water and juice.

Also for people can volunteer as barbers and beauticians. Group will meet on 6th Street and N.E. 1st Avenue then split into two groups, which will go to downtown and Overtown.



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1897

Alfred L. Cralle  
invents the ice  
cream scoop.

2018

Maya D. Jones scoops  
her own ice cream for  
the very first time.



This Black History Month, take time to celebrate the achievements of African Americans, from the lesser-known inventions that helped weave the fabric of our day-to-day lives, to the more widely-known achievements that revolutionized our culture. All of these accomplishments come together to pave the way to a bright—and sweet—future.

Join Publix in the celebration of Black History Month. Explore African American contributions to food history at [publix.com/BlackHistoryMonth](https://publix.com/BlackHistoryMonth).

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