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Vol. 29 No. 1

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For more than three centuries, the Barbados economy relied heavily on sugar and rum production. After a decline, the island's tourism diversity push is again turning towards its tried and tested products, page 8.



As more and more instances of sexual harassment in Hollywood become public, Jamaican entertainer Grace Jones has joined the list of celebrated women who claim to have been victimized by high-powered men. But she fought back, page 11.

GET OUT!

~ The administration of President Donald Trump has ended Temporary Protected Status for Haitians in the United States, which means nearly 60,000 could be booted from the U.S. by 2019. The Caribbean American community is outraged, pages 2 and 6.

T.P.S. FOR HAITIANS Please!

HONORING EXCELLENCE

~ Jamaican scientist Professor Henry Lowe, at right being presented with his honor by Jamaica's U.S. Ambassador Audrey Marks, was among eight recipients of 2017 Caribbean American Heritage awards last month in Washington, D.C., page 5.



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BOOTED OUT: U.S. ends protection for Haitian earthquake victims

Nearly 60,000 Haitians who came to the United States to escape devastation from an earthquake seven years ago are being ordered back to the French-speaking Caribbean nation.

The administration of President Donald Trump last month gave Haitians living under Temporary Protected Status (TPS) 18 months to leave the U.S.

According to the Department of Homeland Security, the “extraordinary conditions” which caused the U.S. to grant TPS following the 2010 ‘quake “no longer exist,” meaning there is no need for the Haitians living under that status to remain in the U.S.

“Since the 2010 earthquake, the number of displaced people in Haiti has decreased by 97 percent,” Elaine Duke, the department’s acting homeland security secretary declared in a statement issued late last month. “Significant steps have been taken to improve the stability



Haitians want renewal, but U.S. doesn't.

and quality of life for Haitian citizens, and Haiti is able to safely receive traditional levels of returned citizens”

TRANSITION

TPS for Haitians will expire July 22, 2019. The Department Homeland

Security believes the 18 months will allow for “orderly transition” of the Haitians back to their homeland, including the ability to “arrange their departure” and for Haiti’s government to make adequate preparations for their return.

In 1990 TPS was created to prevent the deportation of foreigners who came to the U.S. to escape devastation from natural disasters or wars in their home-

lands. Some 300,000 with TPS are believed to be in the U.S., most from Nicaragua, El Salvador, Haiti and Honduras.

But while U.S. administrations have generally renewed TPS for foreigners, the Trump administration has

stressed the program is meant to be temporary relief for victims and not a path to permanent U.S. residence.

The majority of Haitians believed to be affected by the latest U.S. decision reportedly live in Florida. Political representatives from both major parties in the state – Republicans and Democrats – have expressed disagreement with the Department of Homeland Security’s decision, claiming conditions in Haiti may not have been improved sufficiently to send back those with TPS.

BLOWBACK

Florida Republican Senator Marco Rubio recently called for Haitians’ TPS to be renewed, claiming if they are sent back to the Caribbean they “will face dire conditions, including lack of housing, inadequate health services and low prospects of employment.”

Senator Bob Mendendez, a Democrat from New Jersey, blasted the Trump administra-

tion’s decision to end TPS for Haitians.

“Let there be no mistake, revoking TPS in the name of nativism is a self-serving move to strip legal status from entire communities, force them into the shadows of society, and ultimately subject law abiding immigrants to deportation,” Menendez noted in a statement last month. “The fact is Haiti remains the poorest country in the Americas and one of the poorest countries in the world, and the country is in no position to accept the return of thousands of nationals currently protected under TPS, jeopardizing the vital economic support of \$1.3 billion remittances coming from the U.S., especially after recent destruction caused by hurricanes Irma and Maria.

“This decision will not only have a seriously destabilizing effect and impair Haiti’s fragile recovery efforts, but it further harms our ability to be

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

Florida community leaders decry TPS end as ‘heartbreaking’, ‘shameful’

MIAMI, Florida – Community leaders in South Florida, including many from the Caribbean, have decried a decision by the administration of United States President Donald Trump to return nearly 60,000 Haitians to their earthquake-ravaged homeland, calling it “heartbreaking” and “shameful” while

vowing that their fight has just begun.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Acting Secretary Elaine Duke said on Nov. 20 that she made the decision to terminate the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for undocumented Haitians living in the U.S. effective July 22, 2019.

“We all know that Haiti is not ready to absorb so many of its children,” said Gepsie Metellus, executive director of Sant La, the Haitian Neighborhood Center in Miami.

“This is a sad day, a very shameful day, a depressing day especially on a Thanksgiving eve where a

nation of immigrants would be rebuking immigrants.”

With the outrage spreading to Palm Beach, hundreds of Florida hospitality workers came by the busload from across the state to protest at Trump’s private beach club Mar-a-Lago, where he was spent Thanksgiving holiday. According to news reports, union workers from Unite Here waved flags and marched in the searing sun on a bridge overlooking the resort, chanting “Shut it down.”

MESSAGE

Their message to the president: If you deport us, many of the resorts, theme parks and hotels, like yours, won’t be able to operate, the Miami Herald noted.

“I have six children. My mom and dad were killed in the earthquake. My country is nothing now,” said Marie Partait, who migrated from Haiti 15 years ago.

Alberto Carvalho, superintendent of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, said: “Over my dead body shall anybody remove any child from the sanctity of our classrooms, from the sanctuaries that schools represent in our community,” during a news conference with U.S. Democratic Congresswoman Frederica Wilson and faith-based and community leaders who support extending Temporary Protected Status.

Duke’s decision came two



Wilson

weeks after she also ended the status for 2,500 Nicaraguans. She put on hold a similar decision for 57,000 Hondurans, triggering an automatic six-month extension.

INCENSED

But it was the decision about Haiti that incensed South Florida members of the U.S. Congress on both sides of the aisle, the Herald reported.

“This announcement will just give us more fight power,” said Wilson, who represents one of the largest constituents of Haitian American voters in the U.S., during a press conference in front of the Miami-Dade School Board. “We will continue to advocate.”

Supporters of TPS in the U.S. Congress have introduced at least three bills, including the bipartisan Extending Status Protection for Eligible Refugees with Established Residency Act or ESPERER, which spells hope

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)



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UNDER UTILIZED: P.M. tries to harness Jamaican diaspora's 'voice'

Jamaicans living outside the Caribbean island have not been fully utilized to help build the nation, according to its leader.

"There is a powerful tool we have not utilized as much. That tool is the diaspora," Prime Minister Andrew



Holness

Holness told an audience attending last month's awards gala hosted by the Jamaican-American Bar Association in South Florida.

Jamaica has some 2.9 nationals living on the island, but another 350,000 who identify as Jamaicans are estimated to reside in the southeast United States. The diaspora, according to the prime minister, can be used to greatly assist Jamaica's development.

During his address, Holness touched on several other issues, ranging from Jamaica's financial situation, lobbying for constitutional change which would allow diaspora members to vote and contest political office on the island, and crime and violence.

U.S. seizes \$23M cocaine in Caribbean

ST. PETERSBURG, Florida – The United States Coast Guard recently seized about a ton of cocaine, worth an estimated \$23 million, in the Caribbean Sea.

The contraband was offloaded here on Nov. 20 by the crew of the Coast Guard cutter Pelican. Three suspected smugglers were also arrested.

The Coast Guard reported that while patrolling during "Operation Caribe" on Nov. 11, the crew seized more than 834 kilograms of cocaine from a vessel that was located south of Jaragua in the Dominican Republic.

Working under the direction of U.S. Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S), the Coast Guard said law enforcement members board-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

Up to the time of his Florida visit, over 1,400 had been killed in Jamaica during 2017. That's up from some 1,350 murdered during 2016.

'VOICE'

The image of Jamaica as a violent destination can discourage investment in the country, Holness added, as he

called on Jamaicans overseas to help.

"You are a powerful voice," the prime minister said, although he admitted that Jamaica

has not capitalized on that voice.

Holness, the function's keynote speaker, also weighed in on the issue of climate

change, including the impact of larger nations' practices on countries like Jamaica.

"The issues surrounding climate change are real ... and we small islands, we can't afford to be trampled by big guys who are trying to determine whether or not this thing is real, yes or no," he explained.

"... We are being affected by these astronomical weather events," Holness added as he recalled hurricanes Irma and Maria, which smashed into the Caribbean recently, although Jamaica escaped direct impact.



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NEWS



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Rich nations obliged to help rebuild hurricane-hit Caribbean ~ Antigua's P.M.

UNITED NATIONS – Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne believes wealthy countries have a moral obligation to rebuild his nation, which was battered by a recent hurricane.

Browne also expressed support for proposal by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) for a Caribbean Resilience Fund to finance the construction of climate resilient communities.

"We contend that liability for the destruction of Barbuda and the dislocation of its residents, resides with those whose excessive carbon emissions have unleashed the demons of climate change," Browne told the Caribbean community (CARICOM) United Nations High Level Pledging Conference here last month.

"Justice and fairness requires that the burden of building a more climate resilient community, should not fall to the victims of climate change alone"

The prime minister added that he was also concerned

U.S. seizes \$23M cocaine in Caribbean

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

ed the go-fast boat and discovered 30 bales of cocaine and apprehended three suspects.

OPERATION

The Coast Guard said the cocaine and detainees were transferred to RFA Mounts Bay, a Royal Fleet Auxiliary Bay-class auxiliary landing ship dock.

The RFA Mounts Bay crew transferred the detainees and contraband to the crew of the Pelican and offloaded at Coast Guard Sector St. Petersburg.

"This offload represents approximately one ton of illicit drugs that will never hit our streets," said Captain Aldante Vinciguerra, chief of response, Coast Guard's 7th District.

The U.S. Coast Guard said Operation Caribe is Canada's contribution to Operation Martillo, a JIATF-S operation, subordinate to US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), based in Florida.

JIATF-S is a U.S. task force responsible for conducting interagency and international detection and monitoring operations and facilitating the interdiction of illicit trafficking of drugs, weapons, money and people, the Coast Guard said.

- Edited from CMC.



about the recent position of the Development Committee of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) regarding eligibility for aid by so-called middle-income countries.

TOO LATE

"The OECD position insists that aid would only be triggered if countries, impacted by disasters, suffer a long-term economic decline and that no existing aid is diverted," Browne argued. "But, by the time aid is triggered in those circumstances, the economic decline and human suffering, as well as the long-term impact, would have plunged these countries into irreversible ruin.

"The OECD would be helpful if it reconsidered this position and adopt a more proactive and effective one"

Most of the Caribbean countries are categorized as



Browne

middle-to high-income and are largely ineligible for concessional development financing and Official Development Assistance (ODA), due to the use of gross domestic product

(GDP) per capita as a principal criterion.

Browne told the conference that the people of the Caribbean islands impacted by the hurricanes "through no fault of their own, call on this conference to pledge and deliver meaningful support, so that they can rebuild to withstand the dreadful effects of climate change in the future, and make their lives safer"

NO DISCRIMINATION

He said climate change recognizes no borders, does not discriminate between big or small, developed or developing, rich or poor, Hindu, Muslim Christian or Jew.

"All are involved," said Browne. "All are consumed. But, of course, the small, the poor, and the vulnerable are the worst affected. And, affected not through

their own fault, but because of the culpability of others"


Browne said that in the Caribbean, "we now have a new category of citizens, climate refugees," who have been made homeless, jobless and helpless by ferocious Category 5 hurricanes and have been forced to flee their motherlands.

Browne said in the case of Barbuda, his administration does not have the resources to rebuild swiftly and the people of the island have themselves been stripped of the means of restoring their livelihood.

He said while some governments and agencies have provided relief to Barbuda's residents who had to be evacuated to Antigua, the bulk of the cost of maintaining them has been met by his government.

- Edited from CMC.





AN EVENING OF REFLECTION: AIDS THROUGH THE DECADES

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ICS honors Caribbean excellence at heritage awards

Jamaican scientist Professor Henry Lowe and entertainer Shauna “Etana” McKenzie-Morris were among eight recipients of 2017 Caribbean American Heritage awards presented at the 24th annual gala held last month in Washington, D.C.

Lowe was presented with The Institute of Caribbean Studies (ICS) Marcus Garvey Lifetime Achievement Award for 50 years of contributions to science, technology and health sciences “nationally, regionally, and internationally.” Among other distinctions, Lowe has spearheaded ground-breaking discoveries with Jamaican medicinal plants used for the treatment of cancer, diabetes and HIV/AIDS.

Etana received the ICS’s Excellence in the Arts Award for contributions in music and for taking a principled stance against entertainment industry’s emphasis on sexual objectification of women in particular.

This year’s other award recipients were: United States Congressman Eliot Engel, for political leadership and support for the Caribbean; Guyanese Dr. Glendon Archer - Outstanding Entrepreneurship Award; Dr.



Etana, right, accepts her award from Nelson.

Clive Callender - Excellence in Medicine Award; Haitian American Karl A. Racine - Forerunner Award; Trinidad and Tobago-born former Florida lieutenant governor Jennifer Carroll - Trailblazer Award; BET Corporate Social Responsibility Director Nneka Norville - Vanguard Award; T&T’s Bevil Wooding - Excellence in Science and Technology Award; and the late Walker A. Williams -

Legacy Award.

“We lift up those who are exemplars of excellence, whose genuine and hard work make real Americans a success as an immigrant nation,” said Jamaican-born Dr. Claire Nelson, ICS founder and president.

- Edited from JIS.
Photographs by Derrick A. Scott.



IDB \$20M to improve JA’s murder conviction rate

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has approved a \$20 million loan to support the Jamaica government’s efforts to measurably increase the conviction rate for murders and other violent crimes.

According to the IDB, the project aims to help reduce homicides through intensified crime prevention activities, as well as to improve the quality and rate of criminal investigations being managed by the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF).

The IDB said key metrics will be the number of murder investigations and the overall murder conviction rate. The project will also fund the training of JCF personnel in the use of technology to combat crime and to improve criminal case management.

Jamaica’s violent crime rate of 223 per 100,000 inhabitants continues to be among the highest in the Americas. It has negatively affected its economic growth prospects.

Between 2010 and 2016, the Caribbean country averaged over 1,200 murders each year. Out of this total, 43 percent resulted in an arrest and

subsequent criminal charges being filed against a suspect. Just 36 individuals - or three percent - were successfully incarcerated on murder charges each year.

FEMALE MURDERS

The IDB said the project will also seek to address the high percentage of female murder victims of domestic abuse and intimate partner violence. During the last five years, 19 percent of female murders in Jamaica were the result of domestic violence, compared to three percent of male murders.

“Modernizing the intelligence of the Jamaica Constabulary Force through the use of technology and better surveillance techniques are important to enhancing policing and citizen security in Jamaica,” said Therese Turner-Jones, general manager of the IDB’s Caribbean Country Department.

The \$20 million loan is for a 25-year term, including a grace period, at a LIBOR-based interest rate.

- Edited from CMC.



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NEWS



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Caribbean American legislators blast Trump's decision to end TPS

NELSON A. KING

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Black Democratic congressional leaders have joined Caribbean legislators in expressing outrage over the decision by the administration of President Donald Trump to terminate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for nearly 60,000 undocumented Haitian nationals residing in the United States.

U.S. Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke, daughter of Jamaican immigrants and

chair of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Immigration Working Group; Congressman John Conyers of Michigan, House Judiciary Committee Ranking Member; and Congressman Cedric Richmond of Louisiana, CBC chairman, declared in a joint statement last month that they were outraged by the decision that forces the Haitian immigrants to return home starting July 2019.

They noted that the massive earthquake in the French-speaking Caribbean country

killed more than 300,000 people in 2010, disrupted the function of civil society, displaced families from their homes, closed schools and social service agencies, created instability in the government and undermined the economy.



Clarke

“By ending Temporary Protected Status for Haitians, the Trump Administration has put the lives of more than 50,000 people at risk,” the statement by Clarke, Conyers and Richmond noted, calling the decision a “low point for this administration” that “will leave an indelible mark further tarnishing his (Trump’s) legacy”



Williams

grants, who represents the predominantly Caribbean 42nd Assembly District in Brooklyn, New York, told the **Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC)** that she was “equally saddened and angered” by the decision.

“The fight must continue to address these inhumane and unconstitutional decisions,” she added.

New York City Councilman Jumaane Williams, son of Grenadian immigrants who represents the 45th Council District in Brooklyn, said he was “appalled to hear the administration’s decision, but I was not shocked”

“This kind of callous, deliberate disregard for the well-being of hard-working immigrants, this disdain for our fellow human beings, is what we’ve come to expect from Donald Trump,” he told CMC.



WRONG DECISION

Additionally, the black congressional leaders said the “wrongful decision underscores the need for Congress to lead by passing bipartisan comprehensive TPS legislation that would provide meaningful relief to Haiti and all other similarly situated countries”

New York State Assembly member Rodneyse Bichotte, daughter of Haitian immi-

BROKEN PROMISE

The black congressional leaders said those conditions were exacerbated by the cholera epidemic, subsequent hurricanes and food insecurity crisis, “which continues to this day”

The lawmakers said while campaigning in Miami, then-candidate Trump called Haitian Americans “hard-working, creative and industrious, and promised to be their ‘greatest champion.’ Today, Donald Trump broke that promise.

BOOTED OUT: U.S. ends protection for Haitian earthquake victims

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

an effective leader on the global stage by demonizing people from different countries. But faced by a lack of

‘bad hombres’, the Trump administration is shamelessly creating deportable immigrants out of thin air and tearing apart American families -

specifically 27,000 U.S. citizen children who have TPS parents.”



Florida community leaders decry TPS end as ‘heartbreaking’, ‘shameful’

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

Haitians. With Miami Republican Congressman Carlos Curbelo as the chief sponsor, the bill would provide a path to permanent residency and American citizenship for immigrants currently living in the U.S. under TPS, the Herald noted.

PATH

Wilson, who is a co-sponsor of Curbelo’s bill and another TPS-related bill by New York Democratic Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, said she plans to file her own legislation soon. Her bill will be exclusively focused on the estimated 59,000

Haitians with TPS who meet certain requirements to adjust their status to legal permanent resident within three years of the bill’s passage. Wilson’s proposal will allow Haitians to legally live and work in the U.S. while their immigration application is being processed.

“It’s the only solution we can come up with to make sure that these people are not deported back to Haiti,” she said.

Carvalho, who organized last month’s press conference in Miami with Father Reginald Jean-Mary of Notre Dame d’Haiti Catholic Church in Little Haiti, said the Trump administration’s deci-

sion will divide mothers from sons, fathers from daughters.

“I cannot be a superintendent of schools. I cannot be a father, I cannot be an immigrant, citizen of this nation if I did not stand with the 12,000 K-12 children impacted by TPS and the 5,700 adult learners currently enrolled in our school system equally impacted by TPS,” Carvalho said.

“This is a matter of decency. This is a matter of common sense. This is matter of respect. This is a matter of compassion for those in greatest need.”

- Edited from CMC.



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MURDER AT CARNIVAL: N.Y. indicts fifth gunman for killing Jamaican

NEW YORK – Acting Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez says a fifth man has been charged with the murder of Jamaican lawyer Carey Gabay, a former legal aide to New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, during the Caribbean J'ouvert celebration on Labor Day 2015 in Crown Heights, Brooklyn.

"Like the other defendants, who allegedly engaged in mutual combat during the early morning shootout, the latest defendant, previously charged with weapons possession, is being held equally responsible and was also indicted for murder," Gonzalez, who traces his roots to Puerto Rico, said on Nov. 15.

"We have made a promise to the family of Carey Gabay to hold accountable everyone who took part in the shootout that took his life," he added.

"With this indictment, we have taken another step in keeping this promise, and we will not rest until every person who brazenly fired a gun during that devastating incident – creating a killing field amid a crowded celebration – is brought to justice"

"We have made a promise to the family of Carey Gabay to hold accountable everyone who took part in the shootout that took his life. With this indictment, we have taken another step in keeping this promise, and we will not rest until every person who brazenly fired a gun during that devastating incident – creating a killing field amid a crowded celebration – is brought to justice"

- Eric Gonzalez

DEFENDANTS

Gonzalez identified the defendant as Stanley Elianor, 26, of Brownsville, Brooklyn.

Elianor was arraigned on Nov. 15 before Brooklyn Supreme Court Justice Vincent Del Giudice, charged with second-degree murder, four counts of second-degree criminal possession of a weapon and first-degree reckless endangerment. He was ordered held without bail.

Gonzalez said Elianor faces a maximum sentence of 40 years to life in prison if convicted of the top count with which he is charged.

The defendant was previously arraigned in Oct. 2015 with criminal possession of a weapon for allegedly having a loaded machine gun at the scene.

Gonzalez said further investigation revealed that he allegedly also fired a small caliber gun, inciting additional violence, as warring gang members engaged in a gun battle.

In June 2016, Micah



Gabay

Alleyne, 26, of Jamaica, Queens; Tyshawn Crawford, 22, of East New York, Brooklyn; and Keith Luncheon, 25, of Crown Heights, Brooklyn were indicted for murder and related charges for their alleged role in the shooting.

A fourth defendant, Kenny Bazile, 32, was indicted on similar charges in Sept.

2016, Gonzalez said.

INCIDENT.

He said that, according to the investigation, the incident took place during the early morning hours of Sept. 7, 2015 in front of 1680 Bedford Ave., which is part

of the Ebbets Field Houses in Crown Heights.

At the time of the shooting, Gonzalez said the patio and street in front of the building were filled with hundreds of people, many of whom were celebrating j'ouvert, a traditional pre-dawn festival that precedes the annual West Indian American Day Parade.

Gonzalez said the building's large patio was known to be controlled by the Folk Nation street gang, "which has been engaged in a years-long war with the 8-Trey faction of the Crips gang, among others."

"Due to heightened tensions and despite the annual celebration, there were numerous armed gang members in the area that morning with the intention of shooting at rivals on sight, the investigation found," the acting district attorney said.

At about 3:40 a.m., Gonzalez said a group of 8-Trey members walked up from Montgomery Street, apparently heading toward the j'ouvert procession on Empire Boulevard, about two blocks to the south.

"Their presence in 'enemy territory' sparked a gun battle between Folk Nation members and their affiliates, who were shooting from the street and the patio, and the 8-Trey members who fired from the street before fleeing north," Gonzalez said. "An estimated two to three dozen shots were fired in two consecutive volleys from at least eight firearms, according to the investigation"

DEPRAVED

At the same time, Gonzalez said Gabay, 43, a first deputy counsel for the Empire State Development

Corporation and a former assistant counsel to Cuomo, was walking north on Bedford Avenue with his brother and a couple of friends after attending the j'ouvert procession.

"They happened upon the front of the patio just as the gun fight broke out," Gonzalez said. "The group ran to a parking lot located between the patio and the street and ducked near parked cars. A bullet struck Mr. Gabay in the head, and he was taken to Kings County Hospital Center, where he died a week later on September 15, 2015"

Gonzalez said Elianor was

indicted for depraved indifference murder under the theory of mutual combat, as were the four other co-defendants, "meaning that the alleged gunmen all entered into a de-facto agreement to engage in a gun battle."

"Under this theory, all are equally responsible for the murder, regardless of who fired the bullet that struck Mr. Gabay, and a claim of self-defense does not apply," Gonzalez said.

- Edited from CMC.



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FEATURE



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MIXED DRINK: Barbados turns to rum, sugar to boost tourism

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados – For more than three centuries, the Barbados economy relied heavily on sugar and rum production.

However, by the 1990s, and with the decline of sugar exports, the tourism sector emerged as the island's main income earner.

The Central Bank of Barbados (CBB) in August reported that sugar production for the first six months of this year was a mere 10,000 tonnes. Rum exports, however earned BDS\$76.9 million (one Barbados dollar = US\$0.50 cents) in 2016.

Now, as tourism officials seek to diversify the tourism product and improve the island's competitiveness on the global stage, they have turned their attention to heritage tourism with a focus on the sugar and rum industries.

Latest figures released by the CBB note that the tourism sector played a significant role in the island's economic growth of 1.4 percent during the first nine months of this year. But it said tourism output, which fueled the stronger growth performance over the first half of the year, fell during the third quarter due to a reduction in the average length-of-stay of visitors and hurricane-related disruptions to tourist arrivals in September.

"The improved tourism performance for the first nine months of the year enabled the external current account to stabilize," it said, adding that the activity in the tourism sector expanded by 4.1 percent during the first three quarters of the year, compared to 2.8 percent growth for the corresponding period in 2016.

GROWTH

While September arrivals fell by 3.3 percent, data for the January to September period of 2017 showed a

cumulative growth in long-stay visitors of 6.2 percent, relative to the same period in 2016. Arrivals from the United States and Canada remained robust, expanding by 14.4 percent and 10.7 percent, respectively, but the performance of the United Kingdom market was on par with 2016.

Cruise passenger arrivals for the first nine months of the year rose by 17.6 percent. However,

the performance of the industry was tempered by a 21.3 percent decline in arrivals during the third quarter, due to a falloff in cruise calls as cruise lines adjusted their September itineraries following the impact of unfavorable weather conditions.

The Barbados Tourism Product Authority (BTPA) said it will host the 2018 Sugar and Rum season from Jan. 15 to April 15, to highlight various aspects of production in both industries and at the launch of the event last month, BTPA Chief Executive Officer Dr. Kerry Hall recalled the time "when sugar was king and rum was queen."

"By the end of the 1600s Barbados was said to be the richest of all the European colonies in the Caribbean region, and the brightest jewel in the British crown," Dr. Hall explained. "This was wealth was made possible through the sugar industry which was built on the backs of the enslaved workers," Hall said, adding that it is important that the story of sugar and rum is told to both locals and visitors alike.

"We insist that we must tell the story of Barbados to the world. It is a fascinating,



Harvesting cane in Barbados.

rich and compelling story that we believe the world will be interested in hearing. And a large part of this story is the rich history of sugar and rum.

"As you know, for over 300 years in Barbados, sugar was king and rum was queen. And Barbados was known to be one of the richest countries, richest colonies in the Caribbean region, and the brightest jewel in the British crown, due to the great wealth that was accumulated by the sugar and rum industry. And of course this wealth was made possible through the hard work, the blood sweat and tears and on the backs of the enslaved people, and we owe it to them to tell the story. And we will tell the story," Hall stated.

ROOTS

Local historian Professor Karl Watson recalled how sugar and rum production began in Barbados.

"The sugar economy, as we know it in the Caribbean, started on this island," Watson said. "And like a shifting frontier, it went further and further north: Jamaica, St. Domingue ... so this island, and this is something that I am proud of, what my ances-

tors did, they created a world-wide industry."

He also acknowledged the dark side of sugar and rum production, most notably the use of African slave labour for the cultivation of sugar cane when the early settlers realized that laborers from England and Ireland could not survive the tropical climate.

"They couldn't stand the hard work, they couldn't stand the bad food, they couldn't stand the ill-treatment. And then the price of indentured servants went up in England, and so they said where is a marketplace for human labour. And so they shifted their attention to West Africa. And that's when thousands and thousands of Africans were brought to this island to labour in the sugar cane fields."

Tourism Minister Richard Sealy, said the importance of sharing the island's heritage with visitors could not be overstated.

"It is a fact that our visitors want to be immersed in our cultural experiences, and if you're going to come to Barbados, and you want to be a part of our cultural experience, how better to do it in deed than to experience the

story of sugar?" Sealy said, praising the private sector here for its continued investment in the rum industry.

"Of course the St. Nicholas Abbey experiment is one that comes to mind right away, and I think the Warren family should be saluted for what they've done there, and I think apart from taking one of the few Jacobean mansions in the western Hemisphere and making it something truly attractive, they've actually created a brand of rum around that whole plantation," Sealy added.

Barbados counts St. Nicholas Abbey among its three main distilleries. And with the decline of the sugar industry, only one factory remains operational - Portvale Sugar Factory - west of here.

The 2018 sugar and rum season will include rum distillery tours and historic lectures.

- Edited from CMC.



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Vol. 29, Number 1 • DEC. 2017

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CARIB Comments

• "The 24-hour cable news shows in the United States have in a number of ways led to a lessening of standards that would not have been allowed in previous times. There has been a considerable blurring of reporting and commentary. It is telling when certain standards have been breached, that some in the press do not even realize that a standard has been breached."



Journalists are not supposed to be champions of any political party, business, group or interest in a country - Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis of The Bahamas blames news shows in the U.S. for lowering journalism standards.

• "The detrimental impacts of the recent hurricanes have complicated our ability to recover from the 2010 earthquake ... resulting in major disruptions of living conditions in the short term" - Haiti's United States Ambassador Paul Altidor makes his case to the U.S., which is ending Temporary Protected Status for Haitians.



• "Faced with so much adversity, our people have exhibited tenacity, bravery and dedication in helping their brothers and sisters rebuild their lives while committing to welcoming visitors back to their shores" - Karolin Troubetzkoy, president of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association, commends Puerto Rico and other Caribbean destinations affected by recent hurricanes.

• "Studies have proven that adults who smoke weed lose weight, they can keep in better shape, they have a smaller waist size; they are better (with) insulin levels! I won't say



names but they will be ... slim, trim and fit" - Opposition Leader John Briceño offers his views on the benefits of marijuana to the Belize Parliament.

• "It is tragic that the said 'ten man in one', Dr. Denzil Douglas, who led the fight against others, could now have entangled himself in issues of eligibility to serve in the People's Parliament" - St. Kitts and Nevis Prime Minister Timothy Harris takes a shot at the country's Opposition leader during their ongoing feud over Douglas's citizenship.

- Compiled from multiple sources.



Building the Caribbean better after hurricanes

IRWIN LAROQUE
ACHIM STEINER

Imagine re-locating the entire population of your country in the face of a colossal hurricane and two months later still not being able to get back home.

Now imagine spending several nights in a shelter and taking a stroll the next morning only to find what you used to call community, city or country reduced to an apocalyptic scene.

This is no fiction. Irma and Maria, two back-to-back Category 5 hurricanes, the most powerful ever recorded in the Atlantic, swept across the Caribbean in September, cutting a swathe of destruction, taking lives, devastating infrastructure and severely damaging the economies of small climate-vulnerable countries.

Entire islands were decimated, like Barbuda, the smaller of the two-island state of Antigua and Barbuda, and Dominica, both members of the Caribbean community (CARICOM).

Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands were also devastated, while The Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands were severely affected. Haiti and St. Kitts and Nevis also suffered damage. All of the islands are members or associate members of CARICOM.

The island of St. Martin, divided between Sint Maarten, a constituent country of the Kingdom of Netherlands and St. Martin, a dependency of France, as well as Cuba and the Dominican Republic were impacted, in addition to Puerto Rico and Florida in the United States.

The principal economic sectors of tourism and agriculture have been significantly affected, the resulting loss of jobs compounding the anguish of the loss of homes. In-depth damage assessments in Barbuda and Dominica are still ongoing, but initial estimates indicate recovery costs could be more than \$3 billion.

GAME CHANGER.

These hurricanes were a game changer. Not even in the Caribbean, which is the most natural disaster-prone region in the world, had anything like this been experienced before. The occurrence of successive Category 5 hurricanes signals a dangerous change in the intensity and frequency of climate-related storms and heralds the advent of a new normal.

The number of severe hurricanes is projected to

increase by 40 percent, if global temperatures rise by 2°C, and up to 80 percent should they rise by 4°, according to a World Bank report entitled "Turn down the Heat". With the resulting sea-level rise, this will have devastating effects on all small island developing states (SIDS), but particularly those in the Caribbean, the study confirms.

Since the hurricanes hit, the governments of Antigua and Barbuda and Dominica, along with the Barbados-based Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), have been working on the ground with U.N. teams, co-led by the UN Development Program (UNDP) and the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) with an urgent task.

Also on the frontline have been other CARICOM member states and specialized institutions, France and its departments in the Caribbean, Venezuela, United Kingdom, the U.S. and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Women and men are working around the clock to build back better. They need more resilient communities that are ready to cope with the next hurricane season only months ahead.

SUPPORT.

But rebuilding from the increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters will be impossible without international support, particularly considering the overwhelming climate-vulnerability and crippling debt burdens of these vulnerable SIDS.

The needs are urgent. But there are three crucial opportunities at hand. First, the Conference of The Parties (COP23) in Bonn, Germany, 6-17 November, was a vital moment for the world to come together and act on climate change.

Then, on Nov. 21 at the U.N. headquarters in New York a U.N.-CARICOM pledging conference provided the opportunity for the world to support affected Caribbean countries as they build back better, especially considering that they have been bearing the brunt of climate change without having contributed to the problem.

Finally, now, more than ever, it is fundamental that the international community re-thinks traditional criteria for concessional development

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

BLACK AND WHITE: The hypocrisy of Donald Trump

MIAMI, Florida - The Oxford dictionary defines "terror" as "extreme fear, dread, horror, fear and trembling, fright, alarm, panic."

All of the above undoubtedly described the range of the emotions felt by the victims of yet another gun massacre in the United States – the Texas shooting of Nov. 5, 2017 – as well as the relatives, friends and most Americans who have to now pick up the pieces of their lives and hearts.

More than a month after the Las Vegas slaughter of 58, another white American gun owner has slaughtered 26 innocent men, women and children in Sutherland Springs, Texas. This brings to more than 300 victims of mass shootings in the U.S. so far this year.

In both recent mass murders, the 45th U.S. President Donald Trump, did not jump on Twitter to decry the terror or the instrument in the hands of wrong people that caused the carnage. He did not call for gun law changes or denounce Republicans for not passing any in the recent weeks since the Vegas killing spree. He did not denounce the Christian killers or call for a systematic change to ending guns getting into the wrong hands.

There were no hissy fits; no blame game; no hate-filled diatribe or jumping to conclusions before investigators had even pieced together the facts of the case. No name calling of the madman who committed the senseless act.

TWEET

Instead, he tweeted: "May God be w/ the people of Sutherland Springs, Texas. The FBI & law enforcement are on the scene. I am monitoring the situation from Japan." And then later: "... Americans do what we do best: we pull together. We join hands. We lock arms and through the tears and the sadness, we stand strong..."

That's it!

By contrast, when a man we later learned was an Uzbekistan immigrant drove a truck up a New York City bike path and killed eight, @realDonaldTrump's Twitter fingers could not stop working. Immediately after the Halloween attack on Oct. 31 2017s, he took to Twitte: "In

NYC, looks like another attack by a very sick and deranged person. Law enforcement is following this closely. NOT IN THE U.S.A.!"

That was followed quickly, before any announcement on whether it was a terror attack or not by, with: "We must not allow ISIS to return, or enter, our country after defeating them in the Middle East and elsewhere. Enough!"

Hours later he tweeted: "I have just ordered Homeland Security to step up our already Extreme Vetting Program. Being politically correct is fine, but not for this!"

And at 4:24 a.m. on Nov.

1 came this 'beauty': "The terrorist came into our country through what is called the "Diversity Visa Lottery Program," a Chuck Schumer beauty. I want merit based."

BLAME GAME

The tweets kept on coming. Later that day Trump expanded his right wing immediate immigration reform calls, tweeting: "CHAIN MIGRATION must end now! Some people come in, and they bring their whole family with them, who can be truly evil. NOT ACCEPTABLE!", followed by: "The United States will be immediately implementing much

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)



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VIEWPOINT



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BREAKING BARRIERS: It's hard for women, but still they rise

Wonderful things have been said about women, ladies, the female of the species. Many are lauded for their beauty, charm, sexuality, sophistication and allure.

What is not often mentioned, though, is the struggle and hardship many females have to endure. People either don't want to hear it or are oblivious.

People were outraged in the United States a few months ago when a famous pop star stated she was the hardest working 23-year-old in the world. That's how oblivious she was of the hardship of women and what they were going through.

The plight of females, who have suffered for centuries, is perhaps not known by many

or they perhaps accept it as the lot of women. Some refer to the Bible verse where it says that women are hewers of wood and carriers of water and still expect that women should do that and nothing else.

Even in politics some countries still do not elevate females. Even though there have been many female leaders, some nations are still not ready for that step. It was interesting to hear that many in the U.S. did not vote for Hillary Clinton simply



TONY ROBINSON



because she was a woman.

GAINS.

True, great strides have been made, but it was only a few years ago that women were allowed to vote and even now, in some countries, women are not allowed to drive cars, drink alcohol, smoke or walk alone in public. Plus they have to cover their faces and bodies with flowing robes too.

Females have struggled to

break through the "glass ceiling" - to get equal pay as men for doing the same job. Still, many are harassed at the workplace, even as some succumb to the advances of men to advance up the corporate ladder.

Maternal mortality rate is the leading cause of death for older teens - that is young women dying in childbirth. Suicide is the leading cause of death for girls ages 10 to 19 globally. More women attempt

suicide than men, although more men are successful at it.

It's difficult for young females to get a proper start in life, as many are held back by unplanned pregnancy. It's difficult - if not impossible - to catch up educationally. Some 19 million girls 15 to 19 give birth each year, which is equal to 10 percent of all births globally. Also, over 120 million girls around the world have experienced sexual violence in any given year.

Meanwhile, abuse of women has serious ramifications, among them health risks. Girls 15 to 19 account for 65 percent of new teen infections of HIV/AIDS worldwide.

Females do get a raw deal. Still, so many are strong and are making great strides. Girls are doing better academically than boys. Over 75 percent of tertiary students are females.

Females have it hard yes, but many are fighting the good fight - and not giving up.

seido1@hotmail.com.



Building the Caribbean better after hurricanes

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

financing based primarily on GDP per capita. These affected nations are being denied full access to such financing based on being ranked as middle income countries.

The criteria must take into account the economic and environmental vulnerability of SIDS. Now is the time to act. If Caribbean countries are to achieve the sustainable development goals by 2030, they need urgent accessing to financing - including for climate change adaptation.

In view of such urgent needs, UNDP's Caribbean Human Development Report, "Multidimensional Progress: human resilience beyond income", launched a year ago,

called for improved standards that take into account multiple indicators, or well-being measurements beyond income alone. If the world has vowed to eradicate poverty by 2030, it is crucial to invest in boosting communities', countries' and entire regions' resilience in the social, economic and environmental fronts.

Building back better is an essential part of this effort. We must all act now, before it's too late.

- **Irwin LaRocque** is secretary general of the Caribbean community (CARICOM).

Achim Steiner is United Nations Development Program administrator.



BLACK AND WHITE: The hypocrisy of Donald Trump

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

tougher Extreme Vetting Procedures. The safety of our citizens comes first!"

By Nov. 2, even after the accused terror suspect was indicted in N.Y. federal court, El "Blowhard" Trumpeto was not done. No. He had turned judge, jury and executioner tweeting: "...There is also something appropriate about keeping him in the home of the horrible crime he commit-

ted. Should move fast. DEATH PENALTY!"

No such pronouncements came down on lax gun laws or on the weapon of choice for these home grown madmen intent on reigning down terror and killing as many as possible without cause - the AR-15.

Not a peep from The Donald or the Right Wing, or the NRA and its well paid lobbyists. Instead, all talked on that shattered Sunday about prayers and standing

strong as the hypocrisy reigned on and the money changers lived on in the "temple" of America and Jesus wept!

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



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Jamaican entertainer Grace Jones recalls sexual harassment at first acting job

Jamaican-born entertainer Grace Jones said she was sexually harassed when she got her first big acting job.

In a recent interview with CNN's Christiane Amanpour, the singer recalled an unnamed producer for a Ossie Davis-directed film inviting her to his house under the premise of discussing her possible role in a film.

"He (the producer) poured some champagne, he was in his bathrobe and of course, took me to a room .. it was his bedroom," the 69-year-old Jones told Amanpour.

"So with the champagne, even then at that young age .. I threw it in his face and walked out the door."

Jones's recollection of the event followed a slew of allegations of sexual harassment claims pouring out of the entertainment industry, especially since a barrage of allegations against Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein, who



Jones on stage.

- Photograph by Getty Images

has denied any claim of non-consensual sex, but apologized for his behavior, which spanned decades.

'POWER THING'

Jones, who recorded hits such as "Slave to the Rhythm" and starred in a James Bond movie, told Amanpour that for alleged perpetrators of sexual assault "it's a power

thing." However, she added, it caused problems for up-and-coming people in the industry, especially women.

"It's really difficult call because when you're in that position, you're so vulnerable, you're so nervous," said Jones.

"You want this break so badly because you've been banging away at the pavement, probably longer than others and you finally think 'I've made it to the big time, this is my way, the door is open' and now you have a monster to confront."

- Edited from CNN.



Dancehall deejay Ninjaman found guilty of murder

Deejay Ninjaman, a longtime stalwart of Jamaica's dancehall music, was last month convicted of murder.

Ninjaman, real name Desmond Ballentyne, was found guilty in the Supreme Court for the Mar. 2009 shooting death of Richard "Trooper" Johnson in the parish of St. Andrew.

His son Janeil and Dennis Clayton were also convicted of the crime.

Evidence indicated that the crime resulted from a domestic dispute on Mar. 16,

2009. Ballentyne, his son and Clayton reportedly came back the next day. Johnson was chased and shot.

A jury of seven found Ballentyne guilty of murder and shooting with intent. Their sentencing is scheduled for Dec. 15.

Ninjaman, known by multiple nicknames such as Don Gorgon, recorded several dancehall classics, including "Murder Dem" and "Permit To Bury".



Ikaya headlines COJO gala

NEW YORK, N.Y. - Jamaican reggae, dancehall, R&B singer/songwriter Ikaya will headline this year's fundraising scholarship gala and awards of the New York-based non-profit Children of Jamaica Outreach (COJO) Inc.

The event will take place Dec. 2 at the Hilton New York, JFK Airport.

COJO aids underserved

children in Jamaica.

Ikaya entered the music scene in 2001 when she performed on Capleton's hit track "Fire". She has done "Hard Way", "Good up", "These Tears" and "Amber Alert", a collaboration with Merciless. Ikaya won the Stone Love Award for "Female Artiste of the Year" in 2010.



OUR QUEEN



Miss Jamaica Davina Bennett, right, finished second runner-up in the 2017 Miss Universe pageant held Nov. 26 in Las Vegas. The crown was won by Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters of South Africa, left. Runner-up was Miss Colombia Laura Gonzalez. They emerged top three from a field of 92 contestants.

Bennett, a 21-year-old marketing student at the University of the West Indies, is also a model and has reportedly created a foundation for the deaf.

Trinidad and Tobago's Wendy Fitzwilliam, who won the 1998 Miss Universe title, was one of the judges in 2017.

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ROAD BLOCK: U.S. tightens travel, commercial restrictions on Cuba

HAVANA, Cuba – Effective last month, the United States has tightened travel to Cuba in an effort to reverse policies implemented by the former administration.

The new rules came nearly five months after President Donald Trump announced that he would reverse policies made by former President Barack Obama to loosen the trade embargo against the Spanish-speaking Caribbean nation.

The changes restrict Americans' ability to travel to

Cuba and prevent business deals with certain entities controlled by the Cuban government and military. But the Trump government said the core of Obama's policies will remain intact.

Under new U.S. Treasury Department rules, individual "people-to-people" trips, which have enabled American travelers to visit Cuba for educational purposes on their own as opposed to with a tour group, have been eliminated. Educational group trips must be arranged through a

licensed organization that is "subject to U.S. jurisdiction" and travelers must be accompanied by a person who represents the organization and is also subject to U.S. jurisdiction.

SKIRTING

Tourism to the island is still strictly prohibited, but Trump administration officials have said that people have been skirting the ban by abusing the people-to-people category and designing their own



trips, instead of going with a tour group.

The changes come at a time of heightened tensions between Washington and

Havana over what the U.S. government has described as "sonic attacks" against its diplomats in Cuba. The Cuban government has said it did not carry out the attacks against American representatives, but the Trump administration said Havana is ultimately responsible for ensuring diplomats' safety.

- Edited from CMC.



Puerto Rico will be ready for Caribbean marketplace

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) has expressed confidence in the readiness of Puerto Rico to host Caribbean Travel Marketplace early next year, despite damage caused by hurricanes recently.

The region's largest tourism marketing event will be held here between Jan. 30 and Feb. 1 as officials work to prepare hotels and meeting facilities impacted by the hurricanes.

"In rolling out a re-energized Caribbean Travel Marketplace, we look forward to showing the world how the courage, determination and hard work of the Puerto Rican people and tourism industry has prevailed in view of the challenges they are currently facing," Frank Comito, CHTA's director general and chief executive officer, said recently.

Comito said the Puerto Rican people's resilience in rebuilding communities and getting their tourism and hospitality sector up and running

is inspiring.

'SUPPORT'

"It is important for the entire Caribbean region, our industry's travel partners and those who book travel to the Caribbean to show their support," Comito added. "Already, most of the region's tourism industry is open for business."

Marketplace is produced by CHTA, in collaboration with the Puerto Rico Convention Center District Authority, the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, and the Puerto Rico Hotel and Tourism Association.

CHTA President Karolin Troubetzkoy said Caribbean hoteliers, destination representatives and industry stakeholders who do business with the region will have opportunity to learn about diverse offerings, new products, improvements and upgrades, and niche opportunities.

- Edited from CMC.



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PITCHING IN



British Airways has pitched in to help the Caribbean rebound from the devastation of recent hurricanes. The airline made a £25,000 contribution to the Caribbean Tourism Recovery Fund of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA). Karolin Troubetzkoy, right, CHTA president, received the contribution from Marc James, center, the airline's key partnership manager for the United Kingdom and Ireland, at last month's World Travel Market in London, England. At left is a member of the British Airways cabin crew.

Green banana salad brings Caribbean flavor to season

The festive feasting seasons are approaching and chefs and cooks in the diaspora are looking for ways to bring various Caribbean flavors to the table.

We're recommending a nutritious green banana salad, can be used as a side dish or the main starch in any entree. Here's the recipe:

Ingredients

- 1 dozen green bananas
- 2 large sweet (red and green) peppers
- 1 medium sized onion
- 1/2 cup chopped stuffed green olives
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup coconut oil
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 4 chopped hard boiled eggs
- Dash of salt

Method

Peel green bananas and

put them into pot of boiling water. Add salt to taste. Cook bananas until fork tender.

Chop and sauté the onion and peppers into quarter cup coconut oil. Add chopped stuffed green olives. Remove from flame and place chopped sautéed ingredients into a large bowl.

Cut the green bananas into quarter-inch thickness. Add bananas into the bowl. Add vinegar, quarter cup coconut oil and black pepper.

Combine all ingredients well.

Serve with steak, roasted turkey, stewed chicken, stewed turkey, curried goat etc.

Serves 6.

- M. LaFortune



Whole meal or side broth, fish tea hits the spot

MINNA LAFORTUNE

One of the most unique teas in the world is found in Jamaica's cuisine.

This tea is not made from any kind of vegetation or spice, but from freshly caught sprat fish. It is called fish tea.

It is usually made and given to the convalescing to help open the appetite, and as a first meal to help build physical strength and stamina. It is also given to babies as an introductory meal to the family foods and spices.

Below is the recipe for fish tea.

Ingredients

- 2 lbs. small sprat fish (fish head can be substituted)
- 3 quarts water
- 3 sprigs thyme
- 4 stalks scallion
- 2 medium potatoes (cubed)

Method

In a heavy pot, sauté the onions, scallion and garlic.

Add coconut milk. Add cooked pumpkin. Stir well. Bring ingredients to a boil

- 2 carrots (cubed)
- 3 medium choyote (Jamaican product cubed)
- 1 green scotch bonnet pepper
- Salt to taste
- 8 pimento seeds

Method

Scale and wash fish. Put half of the scallion, thyme, pepper, pimento and salt in water to boil. Add potatoes, carrots and choyote.

Cook until vegetables are tender. Remove vegetables from the pot.

Add fish and cook until fish flesh comes off the bone.

Pour fish contents through a strainer and remove all bones. Place the potatoes, carrots and choyote back into to the strained liquid.

Add the rest of thyme,



Fish tea

scallion, pepper, and pimento and black pepper.

Simmer for five more minutes.

Remove from heat and serve hot.

Edited from News Americas. Minna LaFortune is a trained Caribbean caterer.



Spice up the holidays with coconut pumpkin rice

The holidays are near and, as the temperature falls, we try to find seasonal and comfort foods.

One of my favorites is coconut pumpkin rice. Here is the recipe:

Ingredients

- 1 lb. white rice

- 3/4 lb. dry pumpkin (cooked and crushed)
- 3 cups fresh coconut milk
- 1 onion finely chopped
- 2 stalks scallion finely chopped
- 4 cloves of garlic finely chopped
- 1/4 cup coconut oil

- Salt and black pepper to taste

and oil for 10 minutes. Add the rice. Combine all ingredients in a pot.

The water must be just about an inch above the rice. Cover and cook rice mixture over low heat and allow it to steam.

Monitor the cooking of

the mixture often. Steam until all the rice is tender.

Serve with cooked stew fish, stew chicken or stew turkey or beef.

- M. LaFortune



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RE-CONNECTION: 'Jamaica Roots' seeks to woo diaspora

A competition aimed at strengthening Jamaican Americans' connection to their homeland has been launched.

Jamaica's U.S. Ambassador Audrey Marks announced "Jamaica Roots", which began last month and is scheduled to run through Feb. 4, 2018. It will feature monthly draws on Facebook Live.

According to Marks, the competition is about reconnecting to Jamaican heritage and culture and is aimed at Jamaicans who were born in Jamaica, but moved to the U.S. without returning.

"Jamaica Roots", she added, will offer a chance to reconnect Jamaican Americans and their children, grandchildren, and great great grandchildren, allowing them to learn more about the Caribbean nation country



Marks announces competition

their family originated from.

PRIZE

Under the pilot program, winners will receive one week free accommodation at a hotel or live with a family member in Jamaica, travel the island on guided tours, visit and

learn about their family history, and experience life in the community of their roots. Marks also explained that the aim of the program is to bring Jamaica's diaspora back to Jamaica as a second home to invest time, talents and resources to boost the country's development.

To be eligible, each applicant must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Be at least 21 years old at the time of travel
- Have Jamaican roots (able to prove themselves a citizen, or the child, grandchild, great grandchild, great, great grandchild of a citizen)
- Have a valid passport and
- Have lived outside Jamaica for 10 years or more.

Entries can be submitted at: <http://s.hey.com/c9ca7e>. Rules and requirements can also be found on Facebook @AmbassadorMarks.

- Edited from JIS.



Jamaica Progressive League to honor Michael Manley

Jamaica's late Prime Minister Michael Manley will be remembered this month on the 93rd anniversary of his birth.

Manley, will be remembered on Dec. 10 at a function presented by the Jamaica Progressive League (JPL) in The Bronx, New York.

The JPL's event, which has scheduled presentations from scholars, will be held begin 2 p.m. at 2230 Light St.

Manley, who died in 1997, was Jamaica's prime minister



Manley

from 1972 to 1980 and 1989 to 1992.



Congressman urges support for U.S.-Caribbean pact

United States Congressman Eliot Engel wants the Caribbean and U.S. Congress to work together to ensure a law to aid the region is fully implemented and has the resources to allow it to succeed.

Engel, one of the authors of the U.S./Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act, during an address to the recent Family Unification Resettlement Initiative (FURI) award ceremony in New York, said there needs to be a concerted effort to ensure that the Act succeeds as "President (Donald) Trump and Secretary (of State Rex) Tillerson have proposed a draconian and short-sighted 33 percent cut to our international affairs budget.

"Let me break that down

for the Caribbean, just to show how bad this could be: In the Trump budget, overall assistance for the Caribbean would decline by 28 percent; assistance to Jamaica would be cut by 90 percent; aid to Haiti, the poorest country in the hemisphere, would be reduced by 17 percent; assistance to the

Dominican Republic would drop by half; aid to Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean would be cut by 41 percent and Caribbean Basin Security Initiative funding would drop by 37 percent to \$36.2 million," Engel said.



Engel

PLEASED

The congressman, who received the FURI Pinnacle Award, said the Appropriations Committee rejected the 37 percent cut to the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative or CBSI, and he was "pleased that CBSI will be funded in 2018 at the same

"This is an important first step, but we will need to see many more improvements to the president's 2018 international affairs budget in order to truly enhance our engagement with the Caribbean. And as we do this, we also need to re-double efforts to ensure that this funding reaches vulnerable populations, including deportees"

- Engel

level it was funded at in 2017: \$57.7 million.

"This is an important first step, but we will need to see many more improvements to the president's 2018 international affairs budget in order to truly enhance our engagement with the Caribbean," he added.

"And as we do this, we also need to re-double efforts to ensure that this funding reaches vulnerable populations, including deportees."

Engel urged members of the Caribbean American diaspora to lobby his colleagues in the U.S. House and U.S. Senate and make the case for funding for the Caribbean.

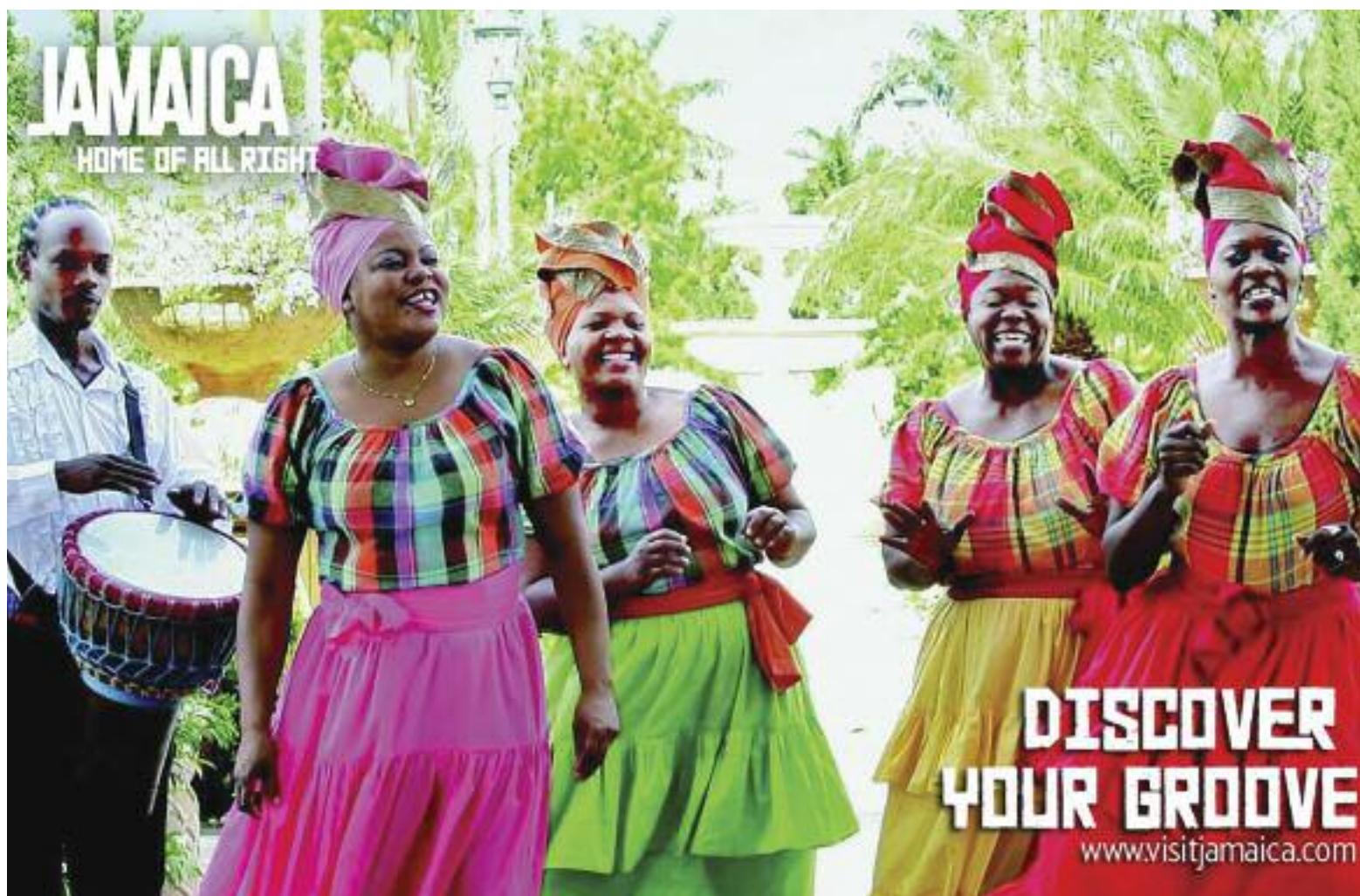
"Now is the time for action, and none of us can be complacent," he declared.

Engel said an estimated 3.5 million people from the Caribbean live in the U.S., which accounts for nine percent of the total foreign-born population in the country.

"And six million people self-identify as members of the Caribbean diaspora in the United States. They represent an extraordinarily rich and vibrant part of the fabric of America that can do so much to make our country stronger and strengthen our ties to countries across the Caribbean," Engel said.

FURI assists deported migrants upon their return to Jamaica.

- Edited from JIS.



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CHANGING STRIDES: Bolt preps for new career in professional soccer

MELBOURNE, Australia – Legendary retired Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt says he is seriously weighing up a career in soccer and is currently getting in shape to undertake a possible trial at Germany giants Borussia Dortmund.

The multiple-time World and Olympic champion, the most successful sprinter ever in the history of track, has always flirted with the idea of a soccer career, but has firmed up plans following his retirement last August at the World Championships in London.

“It’s something that I want to do,” the 31-year-old told the **Herald Sun** as he took charge of a training session with members of the Australia cricket side preparing for the Ashes series against England. “I’m trying to get fit now.”

“My doctor finally passed me after my hamstring problems at the World Championships, so now I can start training. I’ve started training while I’m here and trying to get into shape before I get home and next year I’ll get a trial and we’ll take it from there.”



Bolt, left, and Australian cricketers.

DOMINANT

Bolt dominated sprinting ever since dramatically bursting onto the international scene at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, going on to become the first sprinter to win the 100 and 200 meters titles at three consecutive Olympiads.

He is an 11-time World

champion and remains the world’s fastest-ever man with his astonishing 100 meters record of 9.58 seconds and 200 meters mark of 19.19 seconds, still intact.

Bolt’s last appearance at the London 2017 World Championships was riddled with injury, however, as he could only manage third in the

100 meters before pulling up in the sprint relay. The outing raised some doubt over his ability to continue as a top tier athlete, but Bolt said he would give his new interests plenty thought before making a final decision.

“We’ll decide if it makes sense,” he said. “When I put my mind to something, I’m

going to do it.

“I’m going to train hard, put myself through some drills. Coach of the team in Jamaica – I’ll do some work with him also to figure out the finer details.”

AUSSIE TIP

Bolt took the Aussie cricketers through their paces as he helped sharpen up the speed element of their running, ahead of the opening Test on Thursday in Brisbane.

“It’s all about explosiveness and that’s one thing I’ve noticed with cricket – they don’t really have a lot of explosiveness when they’re running,” Bolt explained.

Batsman Peter Handscomb said they would be taking Bolt’s tips on board to help with their game.

“We’ll give it a crack,” he said. “He was trying to get us nice and low in the turn and in and out. The first couple of steps are key and if we can get them right, we’ll be fast.”

- Edited from CMC.



Guyana national swimmer faces drug charges in U.S.

NEW YORK – A Guyanese national swimmer was charged in the United States with being in possession of a quantity of cocaine that was found in his suitcase when he allegedly arrived here last month from his home country.

Earlando McRae was remanded to the New York Detention center after making his first court appearance in connection with the drugs that U.S. authorities said were found in a suitcase with false sides when he arrived at the JFK International Airport on Nov. 4.

Federal Court documents show that the 28-year-old presented the suitcase to Border

Patrol agents and, during a search of the suitcase, packets of the white powdery substance were discovered. McRae was immediately arrested and taken into custody.

Media reports in Guyana described McRae as someone who is well known in the local swimming arena and has represented Guyana at a number of regional and international meets.

McRae returned to the pool recently after taking a break from competitive swimming.

- Edited from CMC.



T&T soccer star retires after snub by U.S. club

ATLANTA, United States – Trinidad and Tobago soccer star Kenwyne Jones abruptly ended his 15-year professional career last month after Major League Soccer (MLS) franchise Atlanta United opted not to renew his contract for the upcoming season.

The 33-year-old, a former T&T captain, was one of seven players not retained by Atlanta following a season where he scored two goals in 17 league appearances. He announced his decision via the online social networking service Twitter.

“(Soccer) has been great to me, I thank everyone who has helped me on the way, I appreciate you, but this is my last year in the sport... #onelove.”

Jones was later quoted as saying: “My decision to retire from playing has not been an easy one for me but having thought about it at length, and having discussed it with those closest to me, I believe that now is the right time to move on to the next chapter in my life and career.”

“I feel incredibly honored and proud to have enjoyed the career I’ve had and I’ve loved every moment of it, being part of history and playing before fans of my country and the different teams I represented.

“It has been a huge distinction to captain my national team both at the senior and youth level and these were some of the best years of my life.”

MOVEMENT

Following successful spells with Trinidadian Pro League clubs Joe Public and W Connection, the 6’ 2” striker came to prominence as a 19-year-old during a three-year spell at Southampton in England, scoring 19 goals in 71 appearances. Jones then joined Sunderland in 2007 in a deal valued at six million pounds sterling and again impressed in his three years on Tyneside.



Jones

He moved to Stoke City in 2010 for a club record eight million pounds sterling. This was followed by a two-year spell at Cardiff City and short loan stints at Bournemouth and Al Jazira in United Emirates, before linking up with Atlanta last year.

Jones won 89 caps for T&T, scoring 23 goals. He was a member of the historic Soca Warriors squad which qualified for the 2006 World Cup in Germany.

He played in three CONCACAF Gold Cup campaigns - 2005, 2013 and 2015 - and was part of T&T’s recently failed 2018 World Cup qualifying campaign.

- Edited from CMC.



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TASTE TEST: Florida issues holiday healthy eating challenge

"This year, the only thing that should be stuffed for the holidays is the turkey."

That's the motto of the 11th Annual "Eat Smart, Move More, Maintain Don't Gain Holiday Challenge", a seven-week, e-mail-based event that helps people avoid the bulge of holiday overindulging.

The Florida Department of Health in Broward County is encouraging everyone to sign up. It's free.

According to a release from the department, surveys show that many people gain one to five pounds over the holidays and may never lose it. The point of the "Holiday Challenge" is not to lose weight by maintaining your weight amid all the tempta-



tions, feasts, family parties, soirees and endless bowls of sweets sure to be encountered this time of year.

The department is urging people to think of the challenge as a friend encouraging you to be strong. Until Dec. 31, your "friend" will e-mail you daily tips, a weekly newsletter, a weekly chal-

lenge, recipes, social media posts and logs for you to track your food, weight and activities. The aim is to show that with balance and moderation, you can enjoy the holiday festivities and remain healthy.

Choose fresh fruit instead of candy. Limit fat, salt and sweet foods. Find fun ways to stay active, such as dancing to

holiday music or going for a brisk walk after holiday meals. Make it a goal to be active for at least 30 minutes a day.

TIPS

The challenge offers tips:

- Survive a holiday party
- Manage holiday stress
- Be a healthy host
- Fit physical activity into your day
- Prepare quick and healthy meals
- Serve healthy holiday recipes.

Last year, the department said 15,650 people participat-

ed, including 2,145 in Florida, through Healthiest Weight Florida. Of those who reported after last year's challenge, 67.6 percent maintained their weight, 16.9 percent lost three to five pounds and 7.4 percent lost over five pounds.

About three-quarters were confident they could keep off the weight and 95.7 percent said they would keep using the tips they learned.

For more information, visit www.healthiestweightflorida.com/activities/holiday.html or <https://esmmweighless.com/holiday-challenge-live>.

- The Florida Department of Health in Broward County.



A doctor's tips to stay healthy during holiday travel

More than 100 million Americans will travel this holiday season, according to AAA estimates.

Holiday travel can seem daunting, between flight delays and bumper-to-bumper traffic. What's more, it has potential health impacts, including leg swelling and increased risk for cold and flu.

"Air travel, long drives, less sleep and added stress can weaken your immune system at a time when you're around more people and susceptible to illness," says natural health physician and author Dr. Fred Pescatore.

Dr. Pescatore is sharing a few tips to help boost health for this season's holiday travel.

Feed your immune system

- Cold and flu season ramps up just in time for the holidays, which means you may be more at risk of catching a bug.

"Take precautions before boarding your flight - wash your hands frequently, bring hand sanitizer with you and snack on antioxidant-packed vegetables like broccoli, carrots and sweet potatoes to keep your immune system strong," says Dr. Pescatore.

Fend off fatigue

- The American Sleep Association estimates that nearly 93 percent of travelers experience jet lag and it can be severe enough to interfere with holiday and vacation plans.

"Sleep disturbances make you feel tired, nauseous and irritable - not a good combination with holiday activities," says Dr. Pescatore.

A peer-reviewed study



- Photograph © Rawpixel.com/stock.Adobe.com

Take time to properly plan trips.

shows that daily supplementation with the super-antioxidant Pycnogenol (Pic-noj-en-all) reduces jet lag symptoms by nearly 50 percent.

"Pycnogenol, a natural botanical extract from the bark of the French maritime pine tree, is a traveler's best friend. You can spend less time feeling fatigued and more quality time with your loved ones this holiday season," says Dr. Pescatore.

Boost circulation - Long periods of immobility in a cramped space like a car or plane contribute to swelling and fluid accumulation throughout the legs. Known as edema, it can be uncomfortable and may feel worse after travel.

Dr. Pescatore recommends taking short breaks to move around on road trips and to stand up and stretch during long flights to keep

blood circulating and reduce swelling.

"Pycnogenol is also shown to promote circulation, and studies show its benefits for reducing swelling and discomfort during long-distance travel. Again, it's a good supplement for travel," he says.

Pycnogenol is one of the most researched ingredients on the market with decades of studies showing its benefits for a variety of health applications. It's available in more than 700 dietary supplements, multivitamins and health products worldwide. For more information, visit pycngenol.com.

"Drink plenty of water, use a supplement for a beneficial boost and remember to enjoy the holidays. Yes, even the travel can be fun," says Dr. Pescatore.

- Edited from StatePoint.



5 hacks for living with diabetes

According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), approximately 30.3 million Americans are living with diabetes, which affects people of all ages.

Diabetes requires time and energy to manage, but there are many simple things people can do to help make living with the disease easier.

Here are five life hacks for those living with diabetes:

• **Get moving** - Experts say exercise helps maintain stable blood glucose levels. But not everyone loves the gym. Whether it's learning ballroom dancing or joining a basketball league, enjoyable hobbies can boost motivation to exercise.

A fitness tracker that counts steps is a good way to discover how much movement you're getting and allows you to make changes if necessary.

• **Travel smart** - Don't let the logistics of travel put a damper on your next trip or vacation. It just requires a bit of additional preparation.

The ADA recommends having a medical exam prior to a trip and bringing at least twice as much medication and supplies as you think you need. If you are flying, be sure to keep your medical supplies in your carry-on baggage.

• **Rethink your diabetes management** - Consider new medical advancements that can help make diabetes a smaller part of your life.

For example, the Omnipod Insulin Management System, a wearable insulin pump, eliminates the need for injections. Its small, lightweight design gives people living with diabetes more freedom and flexibility and, unlike traditional pumps, has no tubes to disconnect.

Offering up to 72 hours of nonstop insulin, the pod is water-resistant and is the only



Go tubeless to simplify your life.

tubeless insulin pump available in the U.S.

"Diabetes limits you as a person," said Ross Baker, an Omnipod user. "I thought using an insulin pump would control my life more - needles, cords, machines. Then I started using the Omnipod System, which takes away the typical limitations of a tubed pump, liberating me to control my diabetes without setbacks."

To learn more, visit myomnipod.com.

• **Make friends** - Diabetes communities exist online and locally, and include specialized support groups for everyone from children to college students to adults. Finding the right group can help make living with diabetes something you don't have to face alone.

• **Use Apps** - Free apps available on iPhone and Android phones can make tracking important metrics easier and more streamlined, and can help patients more easily share their data with their healthcare providers. Find and monitor carbs, track glucose levels, fitness, vital stats and more.

- Edited from StatePoint.



SPRING EDUCATION



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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

Tips to repay student loans quickly, affordably as possible

College students who borrow to pay for school typically don't have to start repaying their student loans until six months after leaving school.

But when it does come time to start making loan payments, some may find themselves stressing out about the additional monthly expense.

"Properly preparing for this transition can help students successfully manage their payments now and in the future," says Martha Holler, senior vice president of Sallie Mae.

To help, Holler is offering the following insights:

• **Know who and how much you owe** - Keep track of lender and servicer contact information and other important details on a spreadsheet. Include the type of student loan, name of the servicer, the servicer's phone number, interest rate and type and the ending date of your separation or grace period.

• **Tap technology** - Set up automatic payments so you'll never have to worry about missing a payment. You'll

avoid late fees and you might qualify for a discount on your interest rate.

For example, Sallie Mae customers may be eligible to receive a 0.25 percent interest rate reduction when they pay on time via auto-debit. In addition, with the mobile app for Android and Apple, customers can make and manage payments anytime.

• **Save money** - Make more than the minimum payment each month to pay off your loan faster and pay less interest overall.



Be ready when it's time to pay.

- Photograph © bnenin/stock.Adobe.com

• **Think long term** - Paying on time consistently can help you establish and build a favorable credit history. This can make a big difference when you apply for a car loan, credit card, lease, mortgage, or even a job.

• **Be responsible** - Open any mail you receive from your servicer or lender and read it carefully.

Update your contact information when it changes, such as when you leave school and ".edu" is no longer part of your e-mail address. If you run into trouble, contact your lender or servicer, your co-signer if you have one and look for solutions.

For more tips and tools, visit salliemae.com and check out Sallie Mae's "Manage Your Student Loans".

- Edited from StatePoint.



Help kids get the most out of music education

Here are five ways to help make music education a success:

• **Be encouraging** - Learning music is hard work, but it shouldn't feel that way. Keep it positive and be encouraging. Fostering a love of music is only possible if a child enjoys practicing and playing. If your child is taking lessons, be sure that is or her teacher practices a similar philosophy.

• **Get practical** - Incorporate practical engagement and games to make it fun. For example, learn new musical words with body actions like clapping and stomping, so students can better understand the rhythm and music through movement.

• **Be contemporary** - Many kids will prefer playing what they already know and love. If your child is learning to play piano or keyboard, consider a new digital instrument that makes learning the latest tunes easy, such as Casio's LK-265 keyboard.



- Photograph © Bright097/Shutterstock.com

• **Pace yourself** - Every child has his or her own musical aptitude and passion for learning. To ensure that your kids are neither overwhelmed nor bored, discover the pace that works best for each individual and don't pressure anyone into rushing or slowing down.

• **Set goals** - Whether it's working to perfect a particular song, or it's practicing for a talent show, setting achievable goals can be a great motivation for budding musicians.

- Edited from StatePoint.



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