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Dr. James W.S. Yansen, Jr.

Dr. Yansen Puts America's Fears And Anxieties Into Perspective

By Edgar Johnson

Have you paused to wonder the reasons for the fears and uneasiness in the United States and around the world, since the recent political campaign and the inauguration of Donald Trump, president of the United States?

President Trump's executive orders have resulted in thousands of protesters across the country and overseas. There are the anguish of Mexico and angst with Australia; panic and fear have gripped America's immigrant population. Families and children are wailing, traumatized with uncertainty—losing

family and separating family members. There is full-scale panic over losing the Affordable Care Act, which many rely on for their healthcare.

Thousands of protesters have stirred conversations and are convinced that they are living in a dark and dangerous time.

On the other hand, there is President Trump with his thrust to "Make America Great Again," and believing he is the only one capable to solve the problems in the United States.

Notwithstanding, it appears that mere words are not the answer. The issues impacting the majority of people are boiling over with increases in pre-

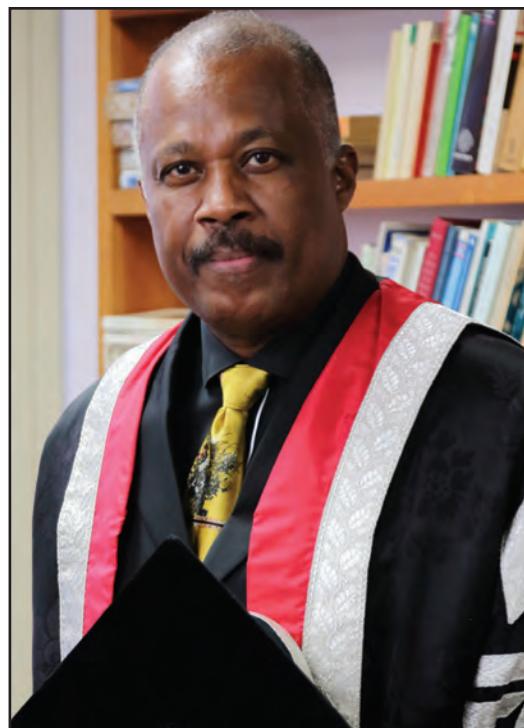
vailing hostility and intolerance. The question remains, how can we find answers in a world of problems impacting so many lives? Has America fallen from its longstanding values? Where is the American motto, "in God we trust?"

Perhaps a good starting point in wrestling for answers could begin with a sense of history, and this is poignant as we celebrate Black History Month, which underscores the totality of our story. And it is a paradigm which cannot overlook history's darkest ages for Blacks, inseparable from the slave religion, are entrenched in racism, tyranny, hope, faith, and self-understanding of destiny—the consciousness that there is someone, somewhere who is in control and will bring about better days soon to come.

With an apparent rehearsal of history, now captivated all the fears and uncertainties in the United States and as we celebrate Black History Month, the thought of our forebears certainly comes in sharp focus—the tyranny of the Jim Crow laws, the many civil rights marches, so many of our ancestors died risking their lives for us to have freedom today.

And with the Civil Rights movement and freedom gained from the struggles, there are still mountains to climb in 2017. Moreover, there is a continuum of learning from history, which empowers as we tell our story at each celebration.

Interestingly Dr. James W.S. Yansen, Jr., joins in the ongoing conversations. Against the backdrop of the turmoil highlighted above, he has contextualized the unrest, the perplexities, challenges and anxieties, and offers answers to



Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, vice chancellor at the University of the West Indies, Jamaica

Justice: A Caribbean Conversation

By Sandra Taitt-Eaddy

Chattel slavery is a thing of the past. It is also true that Abraham Lincoln's 1863, Emancipation Proclamation did not erase slavery's stain. Besides, slavery's ugly legacy did not disappear with the Slavery Abolition Act that came into force in 1838 throughout the British Colonies.

While various entities have made acknowledgments and statements of regret for their predecessors' roles in enslaving, exploiting and discriminating against people of African descent, reality dictates that an apology is just not enough.

Between 1985 and 2009 apologies have come many quarters. Pope John Paul II, head of the Catholic Church, apologized for slavery. Connecticut-based insurance giant Aetna said it had "deep regret" for selling slave insurance policies. The Anglican Church of England apologized for enslaving Blacks and taking profits from slavery. In 2009, the State of Connecticut passed a resolution apologizing for its role in slavery. And that same year, the United States Congress did likewise, adding that its admission of wrong is not to be the basis of future claims for reparations for the econo-

ic, social, psychological, and intergenerational damage slavery inflicted on Black populations.

Professor Sir Hilary Beckles is a Barbadian historian and vice chancellor at the University of the West Indies, Jamaica. He is the chairman of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Reparations Commission and is leading a campaign to obtain reparatory justice for the nations of the English-speaking Caribbean. In his book "Britain's Black Debt," Beckles singles out the British government as the masterminds. "They built the slavery system for taxation, revenue generation, profits, trade, finance, and they legislated it," he said. Beckles strongly advocates that "it is Britain's responsibility to assist its former colonies in repairing the damages slavery has caused." But far from answering the demands for reparations, the government of Great Britain has not even apologized, only that it feels "deep sorrow" for the enslavement of Afro-Caribbean people.

The English-speaking Caribbean islands have been independent for 40-50 years, and our leaders have done a remarkable job. The next phase of nation building, Beckles says, will bring economic hardships. Increasing

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Ian Bobb Encourages Students At CURET



Ian Bobb presenting wisdom words, encouragement and inspiration

By Carol Johnson

Ian Bobb, CURET alum who recently completed the requirements for his high school diploma, returned to giveback and to inspire fellow students. In his presentation to students at the Center for Urban Research, Education and Training (CURET), he said:

I used to be just like you. I used to face many discouragements. I know what it is like to try to make the grade in math and experienced failures over and over. I know, I know what that did to me. I know what it is like to have a family with kids to support. I know what it is like to attend classes daily, do homework, consumed with self-doubt, thinking, 'why bother, what's the point?' I know how it is to be tired after working on the job; get myself to class and struggle, struggle, struggle with math. But I never gave into the temptation to give up,

thinking, wouldn't it be better to just give up. That was a far-off thought. But I perished that thought every time I was tempted to give up.

Now I'm experiencing the good feeling that success brings. I recall how CURET encouraged me. I know how it feels to be successful and I want that for you too. So don't give up, work hard and work together as a team, encourage each other, help each other.

Talk to yourself and talk together, take a cue from the slogan President Obama used. He said, "Yes, you can, yes, we can." One of these days you'll experience the joy I now feel. Believe me, please; I beg you. Stay with the program, keep your goal in front of you, stay focused and let you goal propel you, please!"

Indeed, Bobb was authentic in his presentation. A group of students: Veronica, Fay, and Joan, upon hearing and witnessing Ian's authenticity gave a response: Ian Bobb did a

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Editorial

As Hartford Search Committee Narrows: Stakeholders Strategize Concurrently

As Hartford superintendent search committee narrows, it focuses on three semifinalists: acting Superintendent Leslie Torres-Rodriguez; Tim Sullivan, assistant superintendent for operations at the Capital Region Education Council in Hartford, and Hartford District Chief Operating Officer Jose Colon-Rivas. The three will advance to the next level of interviews.

And while this search process for the next school chief advances, the question remains, what is the role of stakeholders—taxpayers, parents, business and community leaders?

Concurrently, a representative group of stakeholders ought to be included in meeting and shaping a vision for the education of their children, ensuring that the stakeholders' priorities, the community's needs and expectations would be understood by the next school chief. And the stakeholders would be strategic in making their voices heard and focused on their deliberations.

Parents ought not to be taken as "creators in a laboratory" and whereby they are used for experiments with the aim of sharpening certain theories and assumptions to be put into practice without their input. Parents having a say is vital part of the process in making a school system work.

It is for this reason the Hartford community came down

strongly, voicing negative feedbacks of Equity 2020. They saw themselves as "creatures in a laboratory" of former School Chief Beth Schiavino-Narvaez with her district's consultant-driven data, insensitive to the real needs and issues impacting parents and their children, under the assumption that they (the educational professionals) know what is best for the community, people affected by the Equity 2020 report.

Furthermore, an interesting point was the fact that Equity 2020 members were shocked when the consultants released and presented their report, some of the members were seeing the report for the very first time, they had no input, and they rejected the report.

The voices are getting louder, and the community is taking notes and demanding transparency. For example, certain Northend schools were put on the cutting block, including the Martin Luther King (MLK) Jr. Elementary School. And of all the schools, the one named after the father of the Civil Rights movement.

The school has significant numbers of new immigrant students' enrollment and the numbers continue to increase. A past vice-principal shared the teachers' frustration. As they worked hard and improved the skills of their students, Central siphoned the students to different schools as students' scores

improved. So the teachers are always playing catch-up. Besides, for example, the MLK students continue to be recruited directly by the area's magnet schools. And in spite of limited resources, including arts in after-school program, teachers worked hard to ensure students' success. But the reality of the "robbing Peter to pay Paul syndrome" continues to have its toll on neighborhood schools.

What is more, the State Department of Education under the guise to meet the requirement of the landmark Sheff v. O'Neil desegregation case ruling went on a mighty recruiting and marketing campaign, building magnificent and beautiful magnet schools, putting in place excellent curricula and resources to attract suburbanite students and students from Hartford Public Schools to create a balance in the student population. At the same time, funding and resources to the neighborhood schools continue to be drastically reduced. Little was done in terms of maintaining the infrastructure of the neighborhood schools to the extent that at MLK School in particular, the building appears old and dilapidated. Now Hartford schools are facing enrollment crisis and school closures.

"Every time you build a magnet school you take children out of the Hartford Public Schools. Every time you engage in Open

Choice you're taking children out of the Hartford Public Schools," said Bruce Douglas, former magnet school creator. "I think we have to be careful that we don't empty out the Hartford Public Schools," he added.

Connecticut Superior Court Judge Thomas Moukawshie's recent ruling spells out the facts that the state is defaulting children not providing adequate educational opportunities to all its students. There is an imbalance in the funding of rich versus poor schools amounting to millions of dollars. Thumbs up to Governor Dannel Malloy for his proposals to pump more money into the public school system, targeting the poor schools.

In particular, the time calls for the neighborhood stakeholders to be focused. Someone in pointing out the need for a class-action lawsuit in that the state has reneged and defaulted students in Hartford neighborhood schools, not providing adequate education, and educational opportunities to all students. And how much more alarming the finding that funding earmarked for the poor school districts now redirected to the rich school districts. Now the plan to deal with the economic plight of the city schools includes school closures. Again, the target is on the impoverished, vulnerable neighborhood children and their helpless parents. Let's not close the schools. Rather, invest

in the best education for all students.

Why it is important to sustain the presence of a neighborhood school in the community? Not treating our neighborhood students as "creatures" jumping from one school to another with feelings of detachment. The presence of the school in our neighborhood is an investment in the brainpower of children and youth.

When students can read, write, understand math; learn the values of a good education, going to college, or exposed to career options in the trades, and other fields. The school is a critical infrastructure in the neighborhood. It enables students to succeed, ensuring the constitutional rights to a quality and equal education for all students.

Having your neighborhood school represents the key fabrics that draw people to a community. And this builds the city's economy, the real estate market, and truncates the school dropouts' journey to the prison pipeline.

The neighborhood stakeholders ought not to sit by and allow dollars and cents to crumble our most powerful infrastructure. Let's invest in our neighborhood schools. Let your voices be heard and recruit other parents to join in outlining and articulating the issues for the next school chief.

Let's utilize all the social

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Viewpoint

By Leon Fraser

Every ethnic group that manages to maintain its cultural links for the past centuries, especially after the age of "discovery," pogroms, crusades, and other various methods of ethnic cleansing, somehow is able to celebrate individuals who worked tirelessly to ensure that their traditions are continued and maintained.

For Caribbean nationals, the transportation from the continent to the Caribbean has been extensively documented, primarily to substantiate pecuniary investments. Consequently, the heads that were counted were not given portfolios of ancestral bios to travel. Rather, it was anticipated that after a period of "seasoning," the cultural umbilical cord would've terminated and with-

ered. But it didn't.

In the context of Blacks, they have endured numerous trials and tribulations in the concerted attempt to create and distort the actual source of their genesis in the form of names they were given, celebrated holidays that are irrelevant, and many other methods of subterfuge that were used to manipulate the images that they, as a people, should incorporate into their psyche. This was done to inculcate certain pavlovian responses in the dominant ethnicity's favor; it has not worked completely or irrevocably.

And then there is the Cuban contextual framework. Many displaced migrants of Cuban beginnings, now residents of South Florida, fall within the stratification

of uncertainties that are promulgated as the view of all the residents of that peculiar, irritating, island-nation, Cuba, situated 90 nautical miles south-east of Key West, Florida.

The government and people of Cuba have been good friends to the government and people of Jamaica. Cuba's contribution to the island of Jamaica as a fledgling independent nation that chose to become non-aligned at the time, much to the chagrin of other more developed countries, Jamaica is now an elder in terms of years, a nation of more than 50 years.

So the people feel the enormous loss of a stalwart, Fidel Castro. Jamaicans of sound mind and common sense will feel the sense of loss of a good friend and ardent supporter of independence to small countries on a global scale. Neo-colonists and their surrogates will celebrate his demise because he was against their hegemony globally. His anti-colonial stance was most notable on the continent of Africa, especially in the southern region, namely Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia, Angola, Mozambique, and Ethiopia.

The hypocrisy of Washington manipulation is there for the world to now see, for a second time, the winner of the popular vote, one person, one vote, was tossed out and an elite group chose the winner. Just imagine this scenario in any other country and what the beltway response would have been. All the amplifiers would be turned up from the UN to the G5, G6, G7, and G8, calling for free and fair elections. And all efforts to have it scrutinized are side tracked and marginalized; this is America.

Many Caribbean residents have interfaced and interacted with Cuban individuals at one point or other in various professions, namely medical, construction, maritime, and education. So the loss of Fidel is more memorialized than applauded. The 1% that benefitted from Batista's cruel and repressive regime, who at the time enjoyed the support of the US government, will applaud Fidel's death; the other 99% will express grief and sorrow.

As a Jamaican with strong Afro-Caribbean links and awareness of the geo-political chess that was played by Castro against the dominant colonial powers, I salute his

work, his commitment to the struggle to resist the indoctrination that befell so many for them to become mindless shells ready to be used. When Langley provided intelligence, Havana provided counter; when Downing Street provided resources, Havana created a drain on that; all in the fight against colonialism.

For Jamaica, an Island-nation, in the shadow of the western giant, USA, to withstand five decades of political, social, economic, cyber bullying, and still able to educate, medically treat, and nutritively provide for its citizens, is a model that should be copied in many aspects for others to use. How did such an achievement occur? People of African decent that have been victimized and oppressed globally know the true value of FIDEL CASTRO.

We have been programmed to pay attention to the faults of our ancestors and ancestral links instead of their achievements. Conversely, we have been encouraged to celebrate both the faults and achievements of the ancestral links of the dominant ethnic group, with the rationale that their faults made them human; for ours it made them derogatory and not worthy of praise.

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Fears And Anxieties

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the seemingly endless problems in our contemporary world. He comes with an interesting background, serving in ministry for over 20 years in the Caribbean, United States, France, England, and South Africa, serving as district pastor in Trinidad, West Indies, and assistant professor at the University of the Southern Caribbean, Trinidad, West Indies; pastoral work in Boston, Massachusetts; and taught biblical Hebrew I and II at Boston University.

Yansen earned his Ph.D degree, majoring in biblical studies (Hebrew Bible), Boston University School of Theology. His dissertation entitled: "Daughter Zion's Trauma: Reading the Book of Lamentations with Insights from Trauma Studies." Also, he earned a Master's Degree in Sacred Theology (MST), Boston University; Master of Divinity, Andrews University Theological Seminary; and Bachelor of Arts, Andrews University, Michigan. Currently, Yansen is the senior

pastor at Faith Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Hartford, CT.

Yansen brings to the ongoing conversations strong academics in Biblical—Theological and Pastoral Ministry backgrounds. He uses his skills in these disciplines, extrapolating insights from the Book of Lamentations, shedding light and giving meaning to some of the most gruesome history and experiences the Israelites encountered.

Amid the pressing and baffling issues facing the people, there were those who were resilience, recognizing God's hand in history, holding on in confident expectation of hope, forgiveness, relief from sufferings as they strengthened their resolve through prayer.

According to Yansen, his studies and ministries have helped him to develop a love for the Hebrew Bible and got him involved in the Black History movement. Yansen said that he has "always been intrigued by lectures on the Book of Job, the history of the Israelite religion, and how the Israelites lived amidst the world of experiences that crushed around them."

"What everyday religion for the Israelites was all about? What religion was for them in their homes, among family members and in their community?" Yansen asked.

For Yansen, there are important parallel lessons to be learned from the experiences of the Israelites. For example, in youth ministries, one can develop ministries aimed at helping the youth to understand their humanity and purpose; helping them in their struggles and pain to find the courage to go forward, keeping a focus and enduring to the end.

An understanding of Old Testament characters struggling and wrestling with their world, you read some of their violent passages; you see pain and the suffering of innocent people, their ups and downs. When these experiences are applied to individuals and the ministry of the church today, they challenge us and there are lessons to learn.

Yansen shared his own experience at Boston University after he completed the coursework for his doctoral program. His major professor passed away. This is one experience all doctoral students wish they

would never experience.

"My journey to complete my doctorate was confronted with trauma, after trauma with the passing of my major professor," Yansen said.

"I was driven back to the Book of Lamentations. God's presentation in suffering and Lamentations gave me a voice," he added.

There are five Lamentations of the Book that described the utter misery the children of Israel experienced with the destruction of Jerusalem and Judah. The people experienced acts of oppression, starvation, and low moral, deep spiritual sufferings and distress. Yet in spite of their woes and seemingly abandonment, there was a thread of confident expectation and hope in their deep sorrow that the Lord will forgive and relieve the sufferings as they put forth their resolve in prayer.

So for Yansen, the Book of Lamentation gives us a voice and challenges us to translate our sufferings into pure religion. "One is driven to God to express his emotion and is given space to voice his pain and not given an easy answer," he said. "One senses the reality of God, holding onto God and continuing to pray, holding onto God. This relationship shapes one's faith," he said.

Who says it would be an easy way? In the struggle there is a cross to bear. "Looking at the cross, we see ultimate suffering and we see a God who transcends suffering, and we see a God whom we can trust. So when we find ourselves oppressed, God comes to our side and identifies with us. There is no victory without struggles, roadblocks and pain."

The Book of Lamentations is certainly relevant to our time. There are lessons of history for all ages. And like the Israelites who faced some of their darkest and dangerous times, full-scaled panic concerning the future but ultimately there were those who recognized God's hand in history and answered God's call, accepting his hope and a better future.

The Book of Lamentations has lessons for everyone today. It challenges us on the importance for our voices to be heard, including the voices of the many protesters telling their stories. Join them in their strug-

gle and plight, don't stop crying, and join in their pain.

Yansen made a poignant point in reference to Black History Month. "As we celebrate Black History Month, we never put a full stop to the story. It is an open story, opened and left open to God's intervention, His building and restoring.

Black History is an ongoing story, and open book for the oppressed, to bear witness to the uttermost truth. We cannot quit but create more space in a nonjudgmental way. "So as I bear witness to my story, I am able to turn my pain into oppor-

tunity and to open space for others," he said.

The feeling of pain and anguish that many are experiencing can be captured in the Negro Spiritual and the ray of hope and ultimate freedom:

Soon-a-will be done a-with the troubles of the world
Troubles of the world, troubles of the world
Soon-a will be done a-with the troubles of the world
Goin' home to live with God
No more weeping and a-wailing
No more weeping and a-wailing
No more weeping and a-wailing
I'm goin' to live with God.

Dr. Yansen shares in Christian service with his wife, Nadiège, and children Jedd and Joachim.

Hartford

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media outlets—radio, TV, person-to-person contacts on the importance of making one's voice be heard, the power of education, and ensuring that all students succeed with a quality education.

Also, this empowerment is preparation for the future. As regards those who are not yet naturalized citizens of the United States, let's get them ready; show them the ropes to become active informed citizens with voices.

Let's save the neighborhood schools. They are the custodians of the core values for our children's future and success. It's time to organize the entire community and be proactive. Let's ensure our neighborhood schools become centers of excellence in education and the education hall of fame for the future of our kids.

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Justice

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diagnosis of hypertension and diabetes, high levels of illiteracy as seen now in some countries, unstable family structures as manifested by large numbers of single-parent homes will all strain national budgets.

These problems are the ugly side of slavery's legacy that will hurt the region's capacity for nation building well into the future, says Beckles, and these are some of the areas that reparations can fund.

Georgetown University recently apologized and at the same time, unveiled a plan to provide reparations to African American descendants of the people they enslaved.

In an address to African Americans, University President John J. DeGioia told the audience, "the most appropriate ways for us to redress the participation of our predecessors in the institution of slavery is to address the manifestations of the legacy of slavery in our time."

Professor Beckles warns that "if Caribbean people relinquish their responsibility to demand reparatory justice for slavery, it will have dire implications not only for them but it will also have relevance for their children and the future of the region."

Obtaining reparations requires the peoples of the Caribbean and their supporters to stand united and vigorous in their demands for justice, because as Professor Beckles points out, "weak people don't get reparations." He cautions those who are against the idea, that reparation is not a handout. "We are asking for a moral conversation, a legal con-

versation about justice." Reparations will go to those nations that have an informed citizenry and those that have the belief that they deserve justice and that their children and grandchildren's futures depend on it.

Professor Beckles points to historical precedents for reparations. Nineteenth-century West Indian planters used the event of emancipation to obtain £20 million in reparations from Great Britain in return for the loss of their enslaved. France demanded and extorted millions of dollars in reparations from the treasuries of Haiti, its former slave colony, in exchange for Haitian independence. Europeans elites in both cases regarded themselves worthy of reparations.

The legal end of slavery in America and the British Colonies was welcomed by the enslaved. Since then, apologies have come from many quarters. In September 2016, a United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent said that the U.S. owes reparations to African Americans.

But from the perspective of Professor Sir Hilary Beckles and those he represents in the Caribbean region, mere words cannot adequately address the lingering negative consequences that slavery has inflicted on English-speaking Caribbean societies, only reparatory justice can.

Professor Beckles, vice chancellor at the University of the West Indies (UWI), will be the guest speaker at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) Amistad Lecture on Tuesday, February 28. The theme of the lecture is "The Reparatory Justice Movement, 21st Century Enlightenment and the Legacy of the Amistad."

Caribbean Countries And Black History Month Celebration

By Stan Walker

Every year when Black History Month comes around, we hear a lot of arguments among some Caribbean people contemplating its necessity and omissions. Why just a one-month celebration, some query.

Others question whether they should celebrate it. Such questions are raised, given the historical context and multi-faceted components of the Caribbean experiences—slavery, years of colonialism by rulers such as the Spaniards, British, French, Dutch, Portuguese, among other colonists.

The colonists exploited the Caribbean region, and there are enduring impacts on the diverse people and the cultural mix of the Caribbean.

The complexities inherent in the Caribbean milieu include out-migration from the Caribbean, blacks in the Diaspora who are now residing in the United States. All of these intricacies, plus more, warrant acknowledgment in helping to inform discussions in the account of Black History.

The writer of an article that appeared sometime ago in one of the leading publications in Jamaica, stated it bears repeating that Black History Month is an American necessity, as the minority African-Americans in the U.S. is honored in this way.

"Black History Month is good for African-Americans," the writer wrote. "It has its place in America and other predominantly white cultures. But there is so much more to Jamaican black his-

tory than slavery."

In the book *Jamaica Under the Spaniards* written by Cundall, Frank and Joseph Pieterz, the authors stated that in June 1513, King Ferdinand of Spain, the then ruler of the island, gave permission to Juan de Esquivel, then governor of Jamaica, to import three African slaves who had, however, being Christians could not be captured and brought directly from Africa. They were in fact brought from the Iberian Peninsula, after having been taken there from West Africa by the Spanish and the Portuguese several years before.

In the context of Jamaica for example, under the British, who had captured the island from the Spaniards, when sugar became king, the mass importation of slave labor from Africa took place, and it is from here that so many people begin their account of Jamaican black history.

Our history is good for us, another writer stated, and we should know the history of Ghana, all of West Africa, Britain, Spain, India, Lebanon, China, of all the "out of many one people." We should also know the history of Ethiopia, as it is home of the Rasta messiah Haile Selassie, as much as the Christian messiah Jesus, who is portrayed as a Middle Eastern brown-skinned man from Nazareth.

"It is not too late, I think, for us to mark the quincentennial of the arrival of Africans to Jamaica. Our culture is indeed unique. Derived from many sources, Jamaican culture is not simply the arithmetical sum of its many parts.

We have become Jamaican, quite a separate brand from our European, African, Asian (or Amerindian) forebears," he said.

Marcus Garvey, II, son of the island's first national, said that Black History Month celebration, is similar to the way some Christians treat Sunday service—they engage in all kinds of awful things from Monday to Saturday, but pretend to be saints on Sunday.

Black History Month, the latter Garvey said, should be mostly about re-examination of old chapters of our experiences and examination of new ones, but many of us end up dancing, singing, and engaging in things that are of little importance, he said.

"If things were being done well, many of us would have known that certain terms including 'negro' and 'colored' or 'people of color' should only be used in a historical context.

The terms 'Black,' Negro, and African were invented by settlers . . . We belong to a myriad of ethnic groups, including Youruba, Mandingo, Igbo, and Ashanti. We need to research our roots as much as possible. I hope we will see it fit to address the state of the Black family, which is in a tangled mess, including the common practice of fathering children without regard for their well-being," Garvey said.

(Carol Johnson is a contributor to this story.)

Some Contributions Of West Indians To Black History

By Barney Bishop

When Carter G. Woodson established Negro History Week in 1926, it was to ensure American history included

the accomplishments of black Americans beyond the discriminatory ideas that were popular at the time. Woodson and others who participated in this celebration knew

that praising these accomplishments would not only help to overcome negative stereotypes but also inspire black Americans.

Since then, we've learned

about the achievements of Jackie Robinson, Hattie McDaniel, Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X and numerous others who have significantly contributed to American history. Their stories have traveled the world and inspired people of color throughout the Diaspora. But there are so many more untold stories and what some may not realize the contributions of Jamaica's sons and daughters to black American history. The following are some brief highlights.

Marcus Garvey: Widely considered one of the leaders of the Pan-Africanism movement, Marcus Garvey was born in St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica. The self-educated political leader, publisher, entrepreneur, and civil rights activist founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League. His teachings, which today is referred to as Garveyism, aimed to uplift people of African descent and called for economic, social, and political empowerment.

Colin Powell: Son of Jamaica via his parents, Colin Powell is a retired four-star general and served as the 65th United States Secretary of State from 2001-2005 serving under President George W. Bush. To date, he is also the only African American to serve on the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Angella Reid: In October of 2011, Angella Reid was named the chief usher of the White House. Born in the St. Thomas parish of Jamaica,

Angella became the first woman and the ninth person to hold the position. With 25 years of hotel management experience, Angella began her career at The Half Moon Club in Jamaica and was the general manager at The Ritz-Carlton, Pentagon City, Arlington, Virginia prior to this appointment.

Lester Holt: Son of Jamaica via his grandparents, Lester Holt became the lead anchor of NBC Nightly News, the most-watched evening newscast in America, in 2015. With this appointment, he became the first African American to be the lead on a broadcast network's weekday nightly newscast. In the summer of 2012, Lester took a trip to the island of Jamaica where he traced his ancestral roots to the island and reconnected with family that live in Jamaica today.

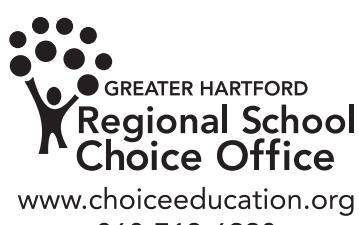
Maurice Ashley: Born in Kingston, Jamaica in 1966, Maurice Ashley is the first African American to be crowned International Grandmaster in Chess. After moving to the U.S. at age 12, he began playing chess at the age of 14. In 1986, he earned the title of national master.

Roy Emile Alfredo Innis: Born in Saint Croix, U.S. Virgin Island was an activist and politician. At the age of 13, he moved with his mother to New York City. When he was 16 years old, he joined the U.S. Army and at the age of 18, he received an honorable discharge. Some of his accomplishments included: serving as a research chemist at Vick Chemical Company and Montefiore Hospital where he was the sole researcher for a cardiovascular research project. He was national

Continued on Page 5



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Every Day, Immigrants Contribute To America

By Cathy Roberts

The touchstone words of most immigrants in the United States are, "We came from somewhere to accomplish something. As immigrants we came to America and accomplished something."

And on occasions, whether small or large, when a group of immigrants come together, they have never come short of telling their immigrant experience. Many share how they came with "nothing" but with a willing heart to work hard and achieve their dreams, even with great risk, leaving their families behind.

How many understand the pain and hardship immigrants experienced coming to America and living in America. And how difficult it was to get a visa!

Interestingly, the immigrant experience runs across all groups. Every person in the United States, except the indigenous American Indians and slaves who were brought to America by force, all shared a common immigrant connection—great grandparents and grandparents—all came to America to have a second chance and all have contributed to America.

So the United States is a country of immigrants. The country was built on the blood, sweat, tears, and money of its immigrants. They built the railways and highways, everything you can ever

imagine, and immigrants have laid their hands and dropped their tears and sweat.

What if all the immigrants, including those who have become naturalized U.S citizens, legal Green Card residents, and even the undocumented—some who have inadvertently overstayed their time in the United States—the millions of specialists; educators; engineers; scientists; scholars, those who plant and reap our foods, packed them for shipping to diverse places, those who take care of the elderly Americans in nursing homes and in homecare, the hospitals, and others who enrich the fabric of the many landscapes of the American economy.

All leave their little rocks, handprints and footprints on this wonderful country with opportunities. They have made significant contributions to America. Immigrants ought not to be treated as "people who don't belong." They have all continued to make America great.

Let's not go after the vulnerable immigrants; some because of ignorance, upon arriving in the United States, failed to extend their time and missed the expiration date. How many poor and ignorant people have come to the United States and the contributions are phenomenal, saving and caring for so many people.

What ought to be the guideline for all immigrants in the

USA. Make sure your status is upgraded and legal. And those who are permanent Green Card holders check the date on your Green Card, make sure you take the next step and eventually become a citizen of the United States.

Make sure all your family members are citizens and exercise the power of their votes. So make haste and exercise the power of your vote. You give up nothing and have nothing to lose. So take the step and become a citizen. You have already paid your due.

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Contributions

Continued from Page 4

chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and he advocated for community-controlled education and black empowerment. He was opposed to busing black children out of their neighborhood as a method of achieving integration in schools. He stated that desegregation cannot be defined as the notion that black children cannot learn outside the presence of white children. Innis founded several black business groups and served as co-editor of the *Manhattan Tribune*.

James Weldon Johnson: Son of a Bahamian mother, Johnson was an author, educator, lawyer, diplomat, songwriter, and a civil rights activist. He became well known during the Harlem Renaissance for his poems and novels. He was actively involved in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); and he composed the lyrics of "Lift Every Voice and Sing." This song became popular and is known as the "Negro National Anthem."

Kwame Ture/Stokely Carmichael: Born Stokely Carmichael in Trinidad and later changed his name to Kwame Ture, became a prominent figure in the Civil Rights Movement and in the global Pan-African movement. At the age of 11, he emigrated to the U.S. He became an activist while attending Howard University. Some of his involvements included: being active in the Black Power movement; served as a leader for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), was an Honorary Prime Minister of the Black Panther Party (BPP), and was a leader of the All-African People's Revolutionary Party (AAPRP).

Richard Benjamin Moore: Hailed from Barbados, he

experienced tragedy at a young age. His mother died when he was three years old and when he was nine years old, his father died. His stepmother aided him in his migration to the U.S to further his education raised him. Immediately upon arrival, he encountered discrimination after seeking employment and educational opportunities. Hence, he turned to odd jobs working as an elevator operator and working at a silk manufacturing firm (in Barbados, he was trained in clerical work). Due to the struggles Moore experienced, he became a civil rights activist. He joined the African Blood Brotherhood (ABB), which defended blacks from race riots and lynching; and he was a prominent socialist. In addition to crusading for equal rights in the U.S, he played a prime role in Caribbean advocacy groups.

Dr. Ivan Van Sertima: Born in Guyana, he was a literary critic, a linguist, and an anthropologist. He was honored as an historian of world repute by joining UNESCO's International Commission for Rewriting the Scientific and Cultural History of Mankind. He was asked by Congress to appear before a Congressional Committee to challenge the Columbus myth. Sertima was a professor of African Studies at Rutgers University and was also a visiting professor at Princeton University. He lectured at more than 100 universities in the United States and he also lectured in Canada, the Caribbean, South America and Europe. In 1991, before the Smithsonian, he defended his controversial thesis on the African presence in pre-Columbian America. The Smithsonian published his address in *Race, Discourse and the Origin of the Americas: A New World View of 1492*.

(Joette Johnson contributed to this story)

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Students at CURET listening intently to Ian Bobb's inspiring words

Encouragement At CURET

Continued from Page 1
good job in encouraging us. He told us to be persistent. Sometimes we feel so discouraged, but Ian touched

our feelings when he said, "I am an example of one who was discouraged. But kept on persisting," he said: 'Push yourself. Don't give up because of discouragement; don't allow yourself to fall out; you will regret it.' That caught our attention, the group in unison said.

Sometimes we feel so discouraged, but he told us to push ourselves. He said he was like us. He admonished us with a word of caution, saying, 'we'll regret it' if we give up without investing all of our mental energies. Don't say, "I can't be bothered. Rather, persevere," Ian said.

Speaking on behalf of her colleagues, Joan said: "When I heard Ian Bobb admitting to us that he could not do math, that made me feel that he really identifies with us. He said, "I used to be like you with that negative attitude toward math." "That really lifted our spirits. That was a big motivation for us," Joan said.

"The importance of checking in with classmates and working together offered a very special form of encouragement," Veronica said. "We call each other and when discouragement starts to set in, we call each other. That gives us strength," Fay said. We endorse everything Ian shared with us, she said.

For Nadine who was moved by Ian's message: "He was very informative. I've experienced a lot of the things he said. There were days when I doubted myself. I hate math and I'm fighting that doubt. I had such a real identity with Ian. He was vocalizing what I'm experiencing within myself. Because of my

dislike for math, I started doubting myself in every way. But when Ian said, 'Take it one day at a time, it will get a lot easier,' he inspired me.

And the thing that makes Ian so identifiable is that he is a parent just like most of us with family responsibilities and children. He spoke to what we are going through. And when he said, 'If I can do it, you too can do it too,' that was such an important statement. And when he spoke about how his life has changed, that really motivated me.

Also, he mentioned a very important thing—team-work—that's how it is with members of my class at CURET. We work as a team. And to hear Ian's suggestion on how we can survive when we work as a team, he was right on. 'When we try to work with each other as a team, that should be fine,' Ian said.

Another student, Gwendolyn said: "Ian's talk was an eye opener. So many times I find myself thinking, 'I don't think I can go back to school and achieve anything.' When Ian said, 'Put your mind to it; you can achieve your goal.' That caught my attention, Gwendolyn said. Ian really encouraged me and lifted my spirits. We'll continue to encourage each other and achieve, even when we fall down, we'll brush off ourselves and start again," Gwendolyn added.

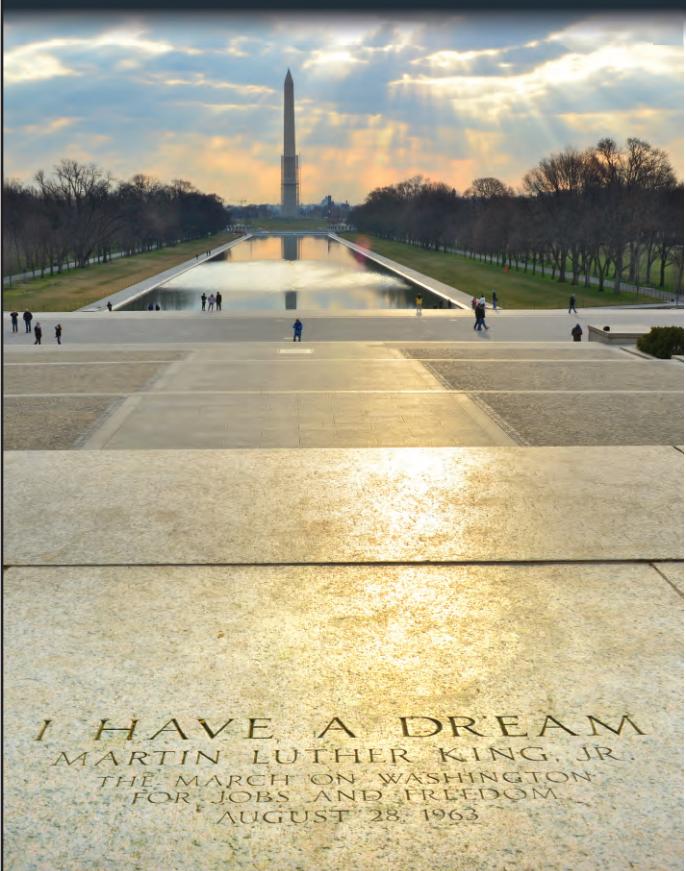
Claudette, another student said: "For me it was enlightening and helps to soothe some of the anxieties I had. I was so nervous about the whole thing of going back to school. But since I'm here, I'm re-assured and I admire Ian's spirit and how he came across with his slogan: 'If one can make it here, we all can, and that we should keep on working together.'

Angela said: "Before I came to CURET, I went to Capital Community College (CCC) to apply to the CNA Certification program, but when I took the test, I scored two points lower than the requirement. CCC advised me to go to CURET and sharpen my math skills and return in three months.

When I came to CURET and found out what is offered, I thought it best to stay at CURET, learn more and I'll do better on the tests. Because of the encouragement I received at CURET, I am taking my time. I was crawling at first, but now I'm walking. I hope to run some day. But I must admit that at times I really feel like giving up. Math is my problem; it's difficult for me. But I receive such encouragement at CURET.

Continued on Page 8

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Encouragement

Continued from Page 6

I was encouraged with the strategies I learned and I'm following the strategies. That's what I'm doing and I can do math better now. Also, I'm learning to work together as a team with my classmate, Hyacinth. We call each other and we work together. I'm

so thankful I came here. I remember when I used to count the words when I tried to read. I couldn't read fluently. But now I don't count words. I've grown a lot in my reading. So I'm very thankful for CURET.

Claudette shared another point of view: "I came to this country in 2015. I was searching to further my education, but did not know where to

go or how to start. When I heard about CURET and made an inquiry in 2016, I received encouragement and an eye-opener. I was thinking to myself; 'it's only a pity I did not get this information about CURET long ago.' CURET has helped me greatly."

If I put in the effort I think I can make it. I really appreciate the program. I am much more enlightened. I feel so confident more than ever upon hearing Ian's presentation. I am more relaxed. Before, the tunnel seemed so dark. Now I see there is light at the end of the tunnel, and I am striving towards the light. I really appreciate it. This is wonderful."

Janice, too, as a relatively new arrival to the United States, shared her reflection. "Before I

came to America, my children used to encourage me to further my education.

But in Jamaica it wasn't possible for me as a parent with lots of responsibilities. When I came to the USA, my children said don't rush and don't put stress on your self. But I often had the lingering thinking that I want to be in a classroom setting.

A friend gave me the CURET address and phone number. When I came to CURET the first time, I saw a great opportunity. And as I reflected on that which I did not achieve and always wanted to achieve earlier in my life, now I see the opportunity. And at first I was thinking that I could not accomplish furthering my education. But when I came to CURET

and experienced the teamwork, I was encouraged. There is always someone at CURET to whom I can go to get help and information. Besides, CURET is not far from my home. So I am making the effort because I really want to achieve via this educational opportunity. Thanks for making it possible for me to see an opportunity to achieve the education I desire. And thanks to Ian for sharing his story. I'm motivated."

At the end of Ian's rousing presentation, the group in solidarity pledged with an enthusiastic response, saying, "Yes, we can," as they raised their hands up high, demonstrating solidarity.

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vice-president of the Commonwealth Sports Ministers advisory body on sport and its development.

Born in Barbados, Hilary has lectured in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas and has published more than 10 academic books. He is chairman of the Caribbean Community (CARI-COM) Commission on Reparation and Social Justice.

He has received numerous awards including Honorary Doctor of Letters from Brock University, the University of Glasgow, University of Hull, the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana, the University of the Virgin Islands in recognition of his major contribution to academic research into transatlantic slavery, popular culture, and sport. He is an editor of UNESCO's General History of Africa, and has conceptualized the "Global Africa" theme for this series.

Hilary is a distinguished university administrator, economic historian and specialist in higher education and development thinking and practice, and an internationally reputed historian.

Before assuming the vice chancellor post at UWI, he was principal and pro-vice chancellor of the Cave Hill campus of the university, a post he held for 13 years.

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Life Scout Board of Review with (from left) Donovan Longmore, Committee member Travis Hancock, Yolanda Bonnick, and, CURET T1443 Scout Gashaird R.

In Scouting: Smiles And Support Lead To A Brighter Future

By Jerry Hancock

To gain an insight into the Scouting Program, the photo that accompanies this article shows a panel of interested adults seated in front of a scout engaged in an earnest conversation.

What is revealed about the values contained within the Scouting Program?

Scout Gashaird R., age 17, a member of CURET Troop 1443, Hartford, CT is highlighted for having successfully completed a Board of Review for the rank of Life Scout.

This momentous occasion is reason enough for both the scout and the adult reviewers to wear such beaming smiles on their faces.

Life Scout is the middle rank between Star and Eagle Scout. By the time a scout achieves the Life rank, he has spent a considerable amount of time in the Scouting Program. Through his years of participation, scouting's values have become more recognizable to him.

A Board of Review is conducted upon completing all the requirements for a given rank. A scouting resource, <http://www.boyscouttrail.com> aptly describes the process this way, "The Board of Review is a time to determine the Scout's attitudes, accomplishments, and acceptance of Scouting Ideals."

NESA, the National Eagle Scout Association, on its website <http://www.nesa.org>, lists these ideals as follows: First, there are the three "Aims of Scouting." "They are character development, citizenship training, and personal fitness."

Furthermore, "The methods by which the aims are achieved are listed below in random order to emphasize the equal importance of each." These are: "Ideals, Patrols, Outdoor Program, Advancement, Association with Adults, Personal Growth, Leadership Development and Uniform."

Life Scout Gashaird R.

conducted himself admirably during the 45-minute review session. The review format quickly evolved into an engaging, informational, give and take conversation between Gashaird and the adult panel members as he replied, with genuine, thoughtful responses to their inquiries about the impact scouting has had upon him.

The discussion touched upon many of the three aims and the eight methods of scouting. Key topics focused on Gashaird's participation in the outdoor program and his camping experiences at the BSA (Boy Scouts of America), National High Adventure/Summit Bechtel Reserve, in West Virginia this past summer and his likes, dislikes, challenges and accomplishments in achieving his remaining Eagle required merit badges, Personal Fitness and Personal Management.

Participation in these kinds of activities is essential to realizing your full potential as a scout.

Gashaird has one more objective in mind, that of becoming an Eagle Scout. It is clear from his Life Board of Review that he is ready, to continue his scouting journey and to plot a course that will successfully, lead him on the 'Trail to Eagle.'

As on all trails, he will need to set his sights and plan his way to his destination, and as it is with all Eagle candidates, it is certain that Gashaird will experience some trials and tribulations along the way, as he endeavors to complete the requirements for the rank of Eagle Scout.

One such requirement is to plan, develop, lead and carryout an Eagle Service Project. It is also certain that Gashaird will rely on his personal growth, and his leadership skills that he has refined throughout his time spent in scouting to reach scouting's highest honor.

While the adult panel members on the Life Board of Review, came away from the review, confident that Gashaird is benefitting greatly from the Scouting Program, it can be said, that Gashaird also came away knowing that CURET Troop 1443's adults will be there to continue to support him as well. That is the

adult role in scouting, to be supportive of all scouts, and in this instance, all the scouts in CURET Troop 1443.

We can't wait to smile, with Gashaird and shake his hand once again, upon his becoming the troop's next Eagle Scout.

Encourage a boy in your family or from families you know, to join Scouting in Hartford. Why not offer them the same opportunities that are described above?

CURET Troop 1443 meets most Saturdays from 3-5pm at the Main Hartford Public Library and most Tuesdays from 6-7:45 pm at CURET 1443 Albany Avenue, Hartford. Call in advance to confirm meeting times: CURET Troop 1443 Scoutmaster Dean Rhoden 8 6 0 - 4 6 2 - 5 6 5 6 dl.rhodengaa@yahoo.com.

Scoutmaster Rhoden can also provide more information on

how you, as an adult or youth, can join, support or contribute financially to your local Hartford Scout Troop. (Make checks payable to Troop 1443 and mail to: Troop 1443 C/O CURET 1443 Albany Ave Hartford CT 06132.).

Jerry Hancock is an assistant scoutmaster in CURET Troop 1443.

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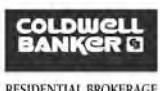
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Thomas Aldridge, Ph.D.

One of the most profound declarations that one can make is emphatically stating, "This is my life." So if this is your life, then you should take ownership and responsibility for everything that goes on in your life.

If your declaration is true, then why would you allow someone to dictate your actions or influence what course you follow?

You should be the master of your own destiny, starting especially at the beginning of this New Year.

It is said that time and tide wait for no one, and with this thought in mind, you should begin to chart your own course today. But what is destiny?

As we understand it, destiny is deemed as the final outcome which each of us intends to achieve.

You have heard it often said that someone is destined to be great because of the path he or she chooses to follow, or based on the other positive choices he or she has made.

So it is my belief that it is choice, not chance, that determines our destiny. It is that choice and self-determination that Jack Welch, the CEO of General Electric, summed up in his book entitled, *Control Your Own Destiny or Someone Else Will*.

Also be aware that failure to choose a path is also a choice by default that can take you to any destination, as so ably emphasized by Lewis Carroll "If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there."

As humans we are created with the ability to choose our destiny, and ultimately control it. The fundamental principle here is that we are the only ones who really know what to do with our lives.

So what we do today will bring us closer to taking command of our lives and destiny. We cannot think of someone as successful until we have seen that person's end, because therein lies the destiny he or she tried to attain.

What are your goals for 2017 and beyond? If you aim at creating and controlling your destiny, you must first know yourself and what drives you to your intended goals.

You should also be aware that life's situations are always changing, and that what worked for you in 2016 might not be feasible at the present moment.

Each change should be seen as learning; the kind of learning that develops and enriches your experience.

This is your life and your story. Each day you add a couple of lines or a page to the story, which will ultimately be played out as your destiny. At the end of the year you should be able to see

some positive changes in your lives.

Can you blame someone else for your failures? Yes, I believe someone can be blamed for your failure because there will be situations that you are not privileged to be at the helm and therefore not able to control the outcome.

However, failures should not be seen as the end of the road but an opportunity to take control and steer your ship in a different direction that will yield you the desired outcome.

The following quote from Jimmy Dean sums it up perfectly: "I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination."

- Be well aware though that if you blame others for your failures then you must also praise those who contribute to your successes. So your destiny is yours to decide, but how can you achieve this?

- First, you must have an idea of where you want to go, and believe with all your heart that you can get there.

- Make the necessary changes that will align your choices to your goal.

- Cultivate and maintain a positive mental attitude.

- Never be doubtful about your aspirations. Believe that you are always going to be victorious.

Dream and think big, expand your mind.

- Always sow the seed for the outcome you desire; in other words, if you plant corn do not expect a crop of beans.

- Be prepared for obstacles, setbacks and frustrating times; these will just help to cement your character along the way.

- Challenge your weaknesses. You may be surprised at what you can accomplish.

- Be patient. Remember not everyone travels at the same speed. Take one day at a time.

In times of desperation invoke the Serenity Prayer, especially the part that says "the courage to change the things I can."

- Display only behaviors that will reflect your inner strength and wisdom, and others will be drawn to you in a positive way.

- Learn to be decisive; once you make a decision try your hardest to stick to it.

- Finally, be prepared for everything. This is life.

We never know where we will end up in life, but most of us have an idea where we want to go and just need some help in getting there. Hence, we play a game of trial and error, hoping to somehow fortuitously arrive at the intended destination.

If this is truly your life, you cannot afford to play a game of chance. Seize the day and take matters in your hands.

Remember, life is full of challenges, and I believe that 2017 will be much more challenging than 2016. Please pursue the activities that make life interesting and worthwhile.

So this is your life; create a positive and controllable destiny. Remember also, it is always too early to quit.

(For feedback or comments, please contact me at thomasaldrige@yahoo.com.)



New President Doreen Forrest is sworn in by Veronica Airey-Wilson



Christopher Card

'Our Members And Our Community Matter'

By Stan Walker

This year's newly elected officers of the West Indian Social Club (WISC) were told that the work and mission of the organization are now more relevant than ever and that they should not presume that the current model of political leadership that we see in America today is appropriate for how they should lead the organization.

Making the remarks was Christopher D. Card, dean of Students at Trinity College, who delivered the keynote address at the club's 67th installation of officers, which was held at the club on Sunday, January 22.

Reaching out to the new board, he said that we have seen a political campaign where it appears that truth and honesty don't matter and facts have simply become simple opinions; popular opinions and majority rule in decision making is old fashioned and irrelevant; misinformation and the deliberate mishandling of information is a strategy for success; diversity is argued to be an impediment to growth and progress; leadership can ignore opposing opinions; our voices are muted; and only some people and only some communities matter.

"If, in fact, you are to fulfill the mission and live out the vision that the club articulates, your leadership style must be bold, intentional, deliberate and transformational. In fact, if you believe that our people and our community matter, then your decisions and actions need to reflect that," he asserted.

"There is a troubling notion that to make America great again, our histories, cultures, dreams, and ideas have to be diminished for the greater good to be achieved. A problem with these

notions is that they displace or render irrelevant the contributions of the West Indian and other communities in making America what it is today," Card said.

"America's historical greatness cannot be separated from the impact of the West Indian community and the influences we have brought to bear on modern society. And most importantly, we cannot be complicit in any argument that suggests that our contributions and we do not matter.

I submit to you wholeheartedly, that now more than ever, we matter and we have to be bold and unapologetic about our place, our role and our contribution in this nation's growth," he stated. "America is a great nation, not in spite of our people and community, but because of our people and community," he said.

"The issues and circumstances that caused a group of farm workers to establish this organization 67 years ago may be a very different set of issues than the set that is relevant now. And to speak to a modern West Indian Social Club, you must speak to modern issues.

"There are a few challenges to strong and effective leadership: the challenge of knowing who you are serving and the mission that is in front of you, knowing your community and its issues, knowing when change is needed, devising effective ways to learn what is important for the community that you lead, understanding that the West Indian community is diverse and changing, be present in the work of the organization and in living out the mission of our people and our community.

This board cannot lead an organization where members are not present. We have no community when we are not present. And we have no future if our presence isn't felt.

"All of us gathered here have a responsibility to our people and to our communities. Let us commit them to our continued support of the club, its leadership and its work. Remember, now more than ever that we have a lot of work to do."

The new president, Doreen C. Forrest in her acceptance address paid tribute to the founding fathers of the organization and some women who she said are the giants whose shoulders we stand on today. She saluted them for their foresight and imagination. "We must not forget the unselfish sacrifices of those pioneers who paved the way for us as West Indians in the city of Hartford for their hard work and dedication to this organization. To forget them is to forget history," she said.

Forrest then called on the membership to get involved to help the organization to grow from strength to strength so that we can leave a legacy to our children, their children and the generations to come.

"This is the year when we will engage in succession planning. We must train our young leaders to lead. They must be trained to preserve the legacy of 67 years, which embodies our rich culture.

"Hard times are coming due to the change in the political climate. As immigrants, I implore you to be engaged in your community and be vigilant to ensure that our rights are not trampled upon by political ideologies. Stay strong. We must be guardians of our legacy," she said.

"There is a bright future ahead. If we unite and hold fast to the principles of always placing the organization above self, we will succeed," she said.

The new Jamaican Consul General, Trudy Deans, who was present, congratulated the members of the organization for their accomplishments and wished them success in their future endeavors.

Marijuana Use Not Legalized In Jamaica

By Stan Walker

During the recent U.S. election, one of the things residents in some of the states were asked to vote on was for the legalization of the popular herb marijuana for either medicinal or recreational use. Based on the results, a number of states have now gotten the permission to make this happen.

According to World Drug Report, Marijuana, or cannabis, is the most widely cultivated, produced, trafficked and consumed drug worldwide, but its legality has long been a topic of debate worldwide.

In the U.S., Maine recently confirmed legalized recreational use of marijuana, joining

seven other states and the District of Columbia. Medical marijuana is now legal in more than half of U.S. states.

The present moves to legalize the drug, mirrors a global trend. In 2016, Canadian officials said they aim to introduce legislation in 2017 to legalize and regulate marijuana. Uruguay is another country to legalize cannabis.

Ireland, Australia, Jamaica, and Germany approved measures in 2016 for its medicinal use, while Australia also granted permission for businesses to apply for licenses to manufacture or cultivate marijuana products for medicinal purposes and to conduct related research. Decisions are still pending in South Africa.

An act to legalize the use of

marijuana for medicinal purposes was recently passed by German parliamentarians. They voted unanimously in favor of the new bill, first approved by the country's cabinet in May 2016. Parties on both the left and right welcomed the law. Personal possession of the drug, however, still remains illegal, though small quantities in possession are not usually prosecuted.

Germany now joins a list of countries experimenting with new laws, both medicinal and recreational, regarding control of the drug. They join more than 20 countries exploring the possible benefits of legalization. But as with the drug itself, the laws vary, as does the

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Managers Can Be Leaders Too



Christopher A. Service, Sr.

Among certain individuals, there is the thinking that managers and leaders are one and the same. In fact, there is a distinct difference between

both concepts. As I see it, managers should be leaders as well.

The concept of management dictates that individuals perform a set of functions that should result in the effective and efficient running of a business or organization.

To be efficient means using resources wisely and in cost-effective ways. As the concept relates to organizations or social groups, management means selecting individuals who understand the reason for the formation of an organization or social group and who will or should work for the betterment of that social group or organization.

Organizations generally

have three levels of management: top managers, middle managers, and first line managers. In a social organization one individual performs all those functions depending on what he or she faces. In the social organization, therefore, the manager is usually expected to implement what its Board of Directors decide should take place.

A leader, in relation to an organization or social group, is able to assess what the aims and objectives of his/her organization are and select individuals who are seen as best able to carry out those aims and objectives.

Unfortunately, sometimes there are individuals who are

selected to lead a group or organization and such individuals are not necessarily in tune with the aims and objectives of the organization. What results from the misguided leadership usually is chaos, disenchantment among members, and sometimes resentment on the part of membership.

When individuals put themselves in positions that would make them eligible to lead there should be a system in place that tests whether the individuals are the true fit for the position. Favoritism and popularity should not be the criteria for selection. The fact that an individual speaks eloquently and may have several degrees should not be

the sole reason for his/her selection.

In an organization that has individuals with various skills it is important to use methods that will determine the individual or individuals who are good fits.

Should managers be leaders too? As I see it they should. Managers bring their skills as far as getting things done. Leaders assess what is best for the organization, business, or social group and share those skills for the betterment of whichever entity. Besides, not everyone means well or fits within the organization they serve.

By their deeds you can know them. That is as I see it.

Caribbean Tidbits

J'can scientists creating affordable hepatitis C drug from ganja

Research scientists, led by Dr Henry Lowe, say they have discovered properties in Cannabidiol (CBD), one of the major bioactive compounds in the cannabis (ganja) plant, that has the potential to provide affordable treatment as nutraceuticals and pharmaceuticals for hepatitis C. Information on the new discovery can be found in the latest issue (January - March 2017) of *Pharmacognosy Research*, a publication of Pharmacognosy Network Worldwide, making it subject to peer review. Lowe, who is known worldwide for his anti-cancer and ganja research, as well as the production of a range of nutraceuticals using Jamaican plants, told the *Jamaica Observer* that the discovery is a major development.

Bob Marley should be a national hero, says American author

American author David Cupples believes Bob Marley should be made a National Hero of Jamaica. During his address to the Bob Marley Lecture Series held at the Undercroft at University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona, Cupples described Marley as a revolutionary and visionary whose message was more powerful than folk legend, Bob Dylan. "To everyone all over the world today Bob is a great hero; Bob Dylan deserves the Nobel Prize, but our Bob deserves it more in my opinion," said Cupples. "In my opinion, Bob should be made a Jamaica national hero without question. So too Michael Manley."

Small earthquake felt in Jamaica's Blue Mountains

A 3.0 magnitude earthquake occurred in the Blue Mountains on Sunday, February 12. The Earthquake Unit at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona campus, says the tremor occurred at approximately 5:33 yesterday afternoon. It had a focal depth of 16.1 kilometers. The epicenter was located 12 kilometers north of Hagley Gap, St Andrew. The earthquake was also felt in the community of Chancery Hall. There have been no reports of injuries or damage to property.

T&T total population reaches 1.4 million

The total population of Trinidad and Tobago reached 1,353,895 people in 2016. Based on the numbers of males and females in the country, the Central Statistical Office (CSO) says the country's population can now be stated as approximately 1.4 million people. The population data was obtained by the CSO's Population, Social and Vital Statistics Division. The total consists of 679,288 males and 674,607 females and represents the CSO's 2016 mid-year estimates. The CSO said in a statement: "Based on these official statistics the population of Trinidad and Tobago can now be stated as approximately 1.4 million persons.

Plane crash-lands in Guyana, businessman hurt

An Air Services Limited (ASL) Cessna 206 aircraft crashed on landing at the Kurupung airstrip, Cuyuni/Mazaruni, in Guyana on Saturday, February 12. The incident reportedly occurred around 15:00 hours. The Guyana Chronicle understands that the aircraft was shuttling between the Kurupung Top and Kurupung Bottom airstrip at the time. The crash happened at Kurupung Bottom. The pilot Chris King, a local businessman, sustained a broken hip and other injuries after the aircraft bearing registration 8R-CNK flipped on landing. Two persons were on board the six-seater aircraft, in addition to the pilot and reports are that the injuries they sustained were not life-threatening.

Former BLP member to run for new party

Former Barbados Labor Party member Lynette Eastmond has announced herself as a candidate in the new United Progressive Party (UPP). Last month, Eastmond dismissed rumors that she had joined new party Barbados Integrity Movement and said she was still a member of the BLP.

Leading a news conference at Courtyard by Marriott hotel, Eastmond, who is the UPP's chairperson, urged Barbadians from all walks of life to join the party to effect change in Barbados. Flanked by vice chairperson Craig Harewood, who said he was interested in the St George South seat and member Paul Forte, Eastmond said candidates would be announced on an individual basis.

Marijuana

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potency of control and the world is waiting to learn what will work best.

Although it is understood that some people are under the impression that marijuana (ganja) use is now legalized in Jamaica, the truth is that the island falls into this category.

Early in 2015, Jamaica passed a landmark marijuana law known as the Dangerous Drugs (Amendment) Act 2015. The legislation now decriminalizes possession of two ounces or less of marijuana, making it a JM\$500 (about \$4 U.S.) ticketable offense which is payable within a 30-day period.

With the landmark law now in place, many hoped that this could be a new dawn for Jamaica. Some believe that Jamaica could be on the brink of an economic and social change because of the legislation. Others, however, said that it

could be a false dawn, citing what President Barack Obama said during a visit to the island, where he discussed the push for the legalization in both the U.S. and in Jamaica.

"I have to tell you that it's not a silver lining because first of all, if you are legalizing marijuana, how do you deal with other drugs and how do you draw the line?" he reportedly said.

The then minister of Industry, Anthony Hylton, responded to an article "On the edge of ganja's millions" that appeared in the *Jamaica Observer* in 2016,

which he said had many inaccuracies. And he had to set the record straight on a matter of great importance to the country.

"There were those who were disappointed that ganja was not fully legalized," he said. "That was not the intention of the Cabinet, because Jamaica's obligation under international law does not currently allow for the full legalization of the trade and export of cannabis."

Hylton also spoke about

the government's efforts to protect the reputation of Jamaican marijuana "One very valuable asset is that the Jamaican brand has an image and a reputation that other producers would dearly love to have.

Over time, they will develop their own brands, but Jamaica is already well positioned. The most crucial task facing the government, then, is to ensure that nothing is done to threaten the Jamaican brand and the future of the industry in Jamaica.

"In order to protect the industry in Jamaica, the ministry asked the Jamaica Intellectual Property Office (JIPO) to increase their efforts to expand the framework for protecting Jamaica ganja either as a geographical indicator, or through copyright, or patent, or a combination of the above.

JIPO has worked assiduously at the regional level, and with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), to try to achieve these goals, which are vital to the industry," he stated.

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