

# Caribbean Today

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Carnival image)

# BARNES' ISLAND DREAM

Could Scottie Barnes Suit Up For Jamaica? ... Page 15

Toronto Raptors' Scottie Barnes, seen here celebrating during a NBA match, could suit up for Jamaica as well.



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# REGIONAL NEWS



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

### HAITI

Haiti has welcomed the United Nations Security Council's decision to transform the Kenyan-led Multinational Security Support (MSS) mission into a new Gang Suppression Force, (GSF).

The resolution, introduced by the United States and Panama, was adopted as Resolution 2793 with 12 votes in favor and abstentions from China, Pakistan, and Russia. The GSF will operate for 12 months with 5,550 authorized personnel, including 5,500 uniformed officers and 50 civilians.

U.S. Ambassador Michael Waltz hailed the measure as a "key first step" in tackling Haiti's spiraling humanitarian and security crisis, while Panama said the vote sent a clear message that "Haiti is not alone."

Haiti's representative, Ericq Pierre, called the decision "a decisive turning point," noting the MSS provided valuable support but was limited in scope. "Today's mandate gives the international community the tools to match the gravity of the situation," he said.

CARICOM states, represented by Barbados and Guyana, endorsed the resolution as critical to restoring public safety and safeguarding human rights, particularly of children. Russia, however, voiced skepticism, warning the initiative could repeat past failures.

### DOMINICA

Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit is urging Caribbean leaders to avoid sowing "seeds of discord" within the region, stressing his long-held position of not publicly sparring with fellow heads of government.

Speaking at a press conference, Skerrit said small states like those in CARICOM cannot afford division. "We are not islands to ourselves... all that we build can be washed away in a natural disaster," he cautioned.

His remarks came after Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister Kamla Persad Bissessar told the UN General Assembly that the notion of the Caribbean as a "zone of peace" was a false ideal. Skerrit said while member states have divergent views on issues like U.S. military operations near Venezuela, such differences should not be exaggerated into disunity.

### BAHAMAS

A 16-year-old boy has been charged in connection with a mass shooting that left two men dead and five others injured in New Providence last month. The teenager appeared before Chief Magistrate Roberto Reckley on September 29th facing two counts of murder and five counts of attempted murder stemming from the August 9 attack. Police said victims were gathered outside a home when



A burnt-out car serves as a barricade on a street in Port-au-Prince. With over 150 gangs operating in and around the country, all roads access in and out of Haiti's capital are now under some gang control. (© UNOCHA/Giles Clarke image)

two gunmen exited a vehicle and opened fire.

The shooting claimed the lives of Eden Louis and Markentash Saintil, while Hayden Breus, Trish Louis, Widny Saintil, Karib Rodgers, and Gregory Jean-Charles were wounded. The accused was not required to enter pleas and has been remanded into custody. He is scheduled to return to court on December 10, when a voluntary bill of indictment is expected to be presented. Authorities continue their investigations into the case.

### SURINAME

Suriname's new president, in her maiden address to the United Nations during the 80th United Nations General Assembly, (UNGA), called for a new, just world order, urging

that aggression and military force be replaced with dialogue and peaceful resolutions.

President Jennifer Geerlings-Simons reaffirmed Suriname's commitment to multilateralism, calling it "one of humanity's most important achievements which needs our protection in this time of change." Her remarks coincided with Suriname's 50th anniversary of independence and UN membership. Geerlings-Simons praised the UN for its role in ending colonialism, advancing human rights, and offering hope and a future to vulnerable communities worldwide.

### JAMAICA

Jamaica has warned that Haiti's crisis has exposed the global reach of transnational criminal networks, urging world leaders to launch a coordinated "war on gangs."

Addressing the 80th United Nations General Assembly, Prime Minister Andrew Holness said criminal syndicates trafficking guns and drugs now command resources rivaling nation-states.

Holness, who chairs the 15-nation CARICOM bloc, added that Jamaica has reduced its homicide rate by more than 50 per cent in recent years, but warned that no single nation can stem the tide of global organized crime.

### ST. KITTS & NEVIS

Prime Minister Dr. Terrance M. Drew of St. Kitts and Nevis has urged sweeping reform of the international financial system, warning that it was "built in a different century for a different world."

Addressing the 80th Session of the UN General Assembly, Dr. Drew said reforms must reflect modern realities of climate risk, inequality, and the disproportionate burdens on small island states. He reaffirmed his country's support for the Bridgetown Initiative, describing it as a roadmap to

"alter debt dynamics, reposition credit flows toward green investments, and protect the vulnerable."

"Reform is justice; reform is prudence; reform is protection and equity," Drew declared, calling on global partners to turn "initiative into instrument" and move from rhetoric to action.

The prime minister also highlighted the moral urgency of reparatory justice, exoneration of Marcus Garvey, and solidarity with Haiti and Cuba.

### TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Prime Minister Kamla Persad Bissessar has reiterated Trinidad and Tobago's support for the U.S. military presence in the southern Caribbean, describing it as "very effective" in disrupting drug cartel activity.

Addressing the 80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Persad Bissessar warned that the Caribbean's "zone of peace" is no longer a reality, citing rising gang violence, narcotics trafficking, and illegal migration. "Peace is not daily life but an elusive promise," she said, pointing to her country's 623 murders last year, 40 percent linked to gangs.

She praised U.S. efforts to combat organized crime, insisting that "unless forceful actions are taken, these evil drug cartels will continue their societal destruction." She also endorsed U.S. and Panama's proposal for a 5,500-member gang suppression force in Haiti, commending Kenya's leadership of the Multinational Security Support mission.

### GRENADA

The Investment Migration Agency, (IMA) says U.S. nationals accounted for the largest share of approvals under Grenada's Citizenship by Investment, (CBI) program during the second quarter of 2025. Data show Americans represented 12 percent of the 402 people granted citizenship, followed by applicants from China and Nigeria at 10 percent each. By contrast, only one percent of the 632 approvals in the first quarter were from the U.S., marking a sharp shift from the traditional dominance of Nigerian and Chinese nationals.

Other new citizens hailed from countries including Pakistan, the UK, Philippines, Uganda, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Haiti. Altogether, 893 new citizens were approved in the first half of 2025, generating EC\$103.2 million (US\$38.1 million) for Grenada, according to the Ministry of Finance.

- Rewritten from CMC & Reuters



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# Three High-Profile Caribbean Nationals ICED

By CT TODAY Staff Writer

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, (ICE) has detained three high-profile Caribbean nationals as the Trump administration intensifies its immigration crackdown, drawing wide attention across education, business, and political circles in the region and diaspora. It is unclear how many other Caribbean immigrants in total are in ICE custody nationwide and around the world. The three making global headlines currently are:

**Dr. Ian Roberts** – *Des Moines Superintendent*



Guyanese-born educator Dr. Ian Roberts, superintendent of Des Moines Public Schools and a former Olympian, was taken into ICE custody on September 26th during a “targeted

enforcement operation.” Roberts is being held at the Woodbury County Jail after federal authorities said he had been issued a “final order of removal” in May 2024.

Iowa’s Board of Educational Examiners revoked his license, citing his lack of legal presence in the United States. Des Moines school officials placed him on unpaid leave and raised further concerns after a gun was reportedly found in a district vehicle he drove. Questions have also emerged about the accuracy of his academic records.

The Des Moines Education Association, representing teachers and staff, has urged transparency, calling for documentation and due process. “We just want to make sure that Dr. Roberts has the opportunity to appeal,” union president Anne Cross said.

Roberts had passed multiple background checks when hired, including federal employment verification. Officials acknowledged he listed himself as a U.S. citizen on forms. “In hindsight, there is nothing we would have done differently,” School Board Chair Jackie Norris told reporters. Dr. Roberts, who came to the US on a student

visa, resigned on September 30th. “Out of concern for his 30,000 students, Dr. Roberts does not want to distract the Board, educators, and staff from focusing on educating DMPS’s students,” the resignation letter said.

**Dimitri Vorbe** – *Haitian Businessman*



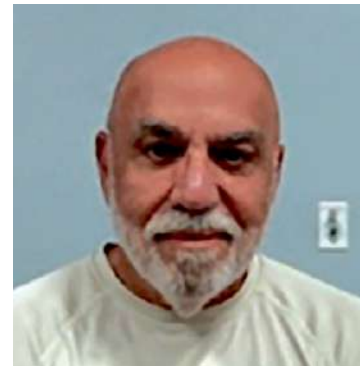
On September 23rd, ICE arrested Haitian businessman Dimitri Vorbe in Florida following an investigation involving the Department of State and Homeland Security Investigations. Days later, the U.S. State Department declared his continued presence “a potential adverse foreign policy consequence” under Section 237 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Vorbe, who is being held at Miami’s Krome North Processing Center, is part of

a powerful family that once supplied electricity to Haiti’s national grid and has been involved in vehicle production for Haitian police. U.S. officials accuse him of supporting gang activity in Haiti — a charge his brother Joel vehemently denied, telling Reuters: “Dimitri has never supported or financed gang activity and has always advocated for a safe and stable country.”

The Trump administration described his arrest as evidence of a “new era of accountability” in Haiti.

**Pierre Réginald Boulos** – *Former Presidential Hopeful*



Another Haitian powerbroker, Dr. Pierre Réginald Boulos, was arrested on July 17 at his Palm Beach County home. The physician and businessman, whose family runs supermarkets and car dealerships, is accused

of engaging in violence and gang support that Washington says has destabilized Haiti.

Boulos, 69, rejects the allegations. His attorneys argue he remains a U.S. citizen, challenging the State Department’s handling of his renunciation documents. U.S. District Judge Beth Bloom has ordered Homeland Security to explain why he is being detained, calling for a review of his petition claiming, “unlawful detention.”

Appearing in court via video from Krome, where his cell block was under quarantine, Boulos paced in an orange jumpsuit while his lawyers argued that the government’s case is “inherently flawed.”

### Broader Context

The detention of Roberts, Vorbe and Boulos highlights the Trump administration’s aggressive posture on immigration and transnational crime, with implications for Caribbean communities in the U.S. and abroad.

All three men remain in ICE custody as legal battles unfold pending their likely deportation.



# DID YOU KNOW?

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**ALINA GARCIA**  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

# Jamaica's Diaspora Weighs In On Election Results - Calls For Stronger Engagement From Holness Government

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

With the Jamaica Labour Party, (JLP), clinching a third consecutive five-year term on September 3rd - albeit with a significantly reduced majority - members of the Jamaican Diaspora are voicing fresh expectations.

The JLP, led by Prime Minister Andrew Holness, won 35 parliamentary seats to the People's National Party's, (PNP), 28, a sharp drop from their 49-13 landslide victory in 2020. In his inaugural speech, Holness pledged to focus on infrastructure development, crime reduction, and advancing legislation to make Jamaica a republic.

For Jamaicans overseas, the next five years represent a chance for closer partnership with Kingston. "The government should tap into the expertise in the

Diaspora to assist in improving several areas where needed. We have several individuals leading major organizations and government agencies in the US, UK and Canada," said Eddy Edwards, Miramar City commissioner and promoter of the Grace Jamaica Jerk Festival. "Those individuals can assist in improving areas such as crime, social services and infrastructure."

Edwards welcomed the tighter race, saying it could lead to better governance. "This election was closely contested, in part because the PNP was more organized than the previous election," he said. "They gained a number of seats but fell short partly because a vast number of the electorate are uncommitted. This result provides for a stronger opposition to hold the government accountable."

For South Florida nurse



Jamaica's PM Andrew Holness and his wife ahead of the swearing in ceremony on Sept. 16, 2025. (JIS/Donique Weston image)

and philanthropist Carol Hylton, crime remains the biggest obstacle preventing many in the Diaspora from resettling or investing in Jamaica.

"I think the government should focus strongly on reducing crime and create

opportunities and incentives to encourage members in the Diaspora to invest in Jamaica," said Hylton, who runs Smiley's Voice Foundation.

But she does not support the PNP's campaign pledge to seat a Diaspora representative

in parliament. "Members of parliament should be citizens of Jamaica whose primary residence is in Jamaica," she argued.

Broadcaster Winston Barnes agreed, raising concerns about accountability if overseas voters influence policies that affect residents. "What happens when overseas voters elect politicians who create hardships for people on the ground while overseas voters don't have to pay that price?" he asked. "Major constitutional change is also called for as well to make the demands workable."

For Jamaicans abroad, the election's outcome is less about party politics and more about whether the next administration will forge real, sustained partnerships with its global citizens - not just court them during campaign season.



# Indicted Before Swearing-In: Azruddin Mohamed's Legal Trouble Casts Shadow Over Guyana's Opposition Leadership

Guyana's fast-changing political landscape took another stunning turn Monday as Azruddin Mohamed, the businessman whose family empire dominates the nation's gold trade and who is set to become the country's opposition leader, was indicted by a U.S. federal grand jury in Florida today.

The indictment, filed in the Southern District of Florida and unsealed on October 6th, charges Azruddin Mohamed and his father, Nazar "Shell" Mohamed, with multiple counts of wire fraud, mail fraud, money-laundering conspiracy, and asset-forfeiture violations. It marks the latest escalation in a widening transnational probe into the operations of Mohamed's

Enterprise, long one of Guyana's largest gold exporters.

Azruddin's indictment lands at a moment of political triumph: his We Invest in Nationhood (WIN) party finished second in Guyana's September 1 general election, earning him the constitutionally recognized post of Opposition Leader. His pending swearing-in now thrusts Guyana into an unprecedented situation - one in which a man facing serious U.S. criminal charges could soon occupy one of the highest offices in the country's democratic system.

### A Collision of Law and Leadership

The federal charges allege that the Mohameds engaged in

complex schemes to defraud both U.S. and Guyanese authorities through falsified export documentation and under-reported taxes. Prosecutors cite violations of U.S. laws governing fraud and money-laundering conspiracies.

According to the 11-count indictment, Mohamed's Enterprise allegedly reused sealed shipping boxes and invoices to create the false impression that duties and royalties on exported gold had been paid when, in fact, they had not. The complaint also references the company's alleged role in undervaluing luxury vehicle imports, including a 2020 Lamborghini Roadster SVJ declared at US \$75,300 instead of its estimated US \$695,000, depriving the Guyana Revenue Authority, (GRA) of roughly G \$383 million in taxes.

If convicted, the defendants face lengthy prison sentences, multimillion-dollar fines, and forfeiture of assets - including a US \$5.3 million gold shipment seized in Miami in 2024.

### Political Shockwaves

The news has sent tremors through Georgetown's political establishment. Supporters of the WIN party frame the indictment as a foreign intervention timed to derail a populist movement, while critics argue it underscores long-standing concerns about corruption and the blending of business and politics in Guyana's resource-rich economy.

With Guyana being now one of the world's fastest-growing oil producers, the optics are fraught. The United States remains a key



Azruddin Mohamed, the US sanctioned and now indicted businessman and founder of the WIN party, r., with his father Nazar "Shell" Mohamed, who was also indicted on Oct. 6th in the Southern District of Florida.

partner in security and energy investment - yet its justice system is now directly targeting the man expected to lead Guyana's parliamentary opposition. Diplomats and analysts warn this could complicate bilateral relations, limit Mohamed's travel, and cast a shadow over the country's efforts to project transparency to investors.

### Legal Battles at Home

Azruddin Mohamed's legal troubles are not confined to the United States. In Georgetown, he and family members face Customs Act charges tied to undervalued imports of several luxury cars. The GRA estimates total unpaid duties at more than G \$1.2 billion. Although the family won a temporary injunction preventing seizure of the vehicles earlier this year, the judicial review hearing continues before

Justice Gino Persaud, with a ruling expected October 31st.

### The Road Ahead

Despite the indictment, Mohamed's swearing-in is expected to proceed as the Guyanese constitution presumes innocence until conviction. Still, the juxtaposition is stark: a newly elected opposition leader confronting both a domestic tax probe and a sweeping U.S. criminal case.

For many Guyanese, the episode encapsulates the nation's broader crossroads - a young petro-state flush with promise yet haunted by questions of governance, transparency, and accountability.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## IN MEMORIAM



*Mavis Pearl Webley*  
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Our secret tears still flow  
The joys and happiness we shared  
Are treasured in our hearts forever  
What it meant to lose you  
No one will ever now*

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Children: Mike & Peter, Sister: Overil  
Nieces, Nephews, Grandchildren, other relatives & friends!

# NYC Council Introduces Aland Etienne Safety and Security Act To Honor Murdered Haitian-Born Security Guard

The New York City Council has introduced sweeping new legislation aimed at raising safety standards and pay for the city's 82,000 private security officers – in honor of Haitian-born security officer Aland Etienne, who was killed while protecting office workers during the July Midtown mass shooting at 345 Park Avenue.

City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams joined hundreds of security officers, union leaders from 32BJ SEIU, elected officials, and Etienne's family on the steps of City Hall recently to unveil the Aland Etienne Safety and Security Act.

The legislation, which was announced ahead of the Council's Stated Meeting, will create citywide standards for training, wages, and benefits for the security workforce, which currently faces a 77 percent turnover rate.

### What The Act Does

Under the bill, security employers would be required to provide an additional 16 hours of emergency preparedness and active shooter response training



NYC Council Introduces Aland Etienne Safety and Security Act To Honor Fallen Haitian-Born Guard. (Contributed image)

within an officer's first 120 days of hire, followed by annual 8-hour refresher courses.

The Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP) will also be tasked with setting fair wage, benefits, and paid time-off standards, phased in over four years to give employers and building owners time to adjust.

A 2025 UC Berkeley Labor Center report underscored the urgency for reform, revealing that New York City security guards

earn a median annual income of \$40,311 — less than 40% of the city's area median income. Nearly 38% have no access to employer-provided health insurance.

### Remembering Aland Etienne

Etienne, a member of 32BJ SEIU, was killed on July 12, 2025, after confronting the shooter at 345 Park Avenue. His younger brother, Smith Etienne, told supporters: "If he were with us today, he'd be fighting for this

legislation. Let's honor his legacy by uplifting and protecting his colleagues across the city. Protect the protectors. Aland is a New York hero."

Colleagues also spoke about the risks they face every day. "As security officers, we're really on the forefront. Whatever happens, we're there," said Brian Telfair, who worked alongside Etienne.

### Broader Impact

Union leaders hailed the bill as a first-of-its-kind measure that would make New York safer while helping retain experienced officers. "Security officers are on the frontlines of every imaginable emergency," said 32BJ SEIU President Manny Pastreich. "That was made tragically clear when our union brother Aland Etienne was gunned down while trying to save the lives of others during a mass shooting. Unfortunately, the security officers who we trust to watch over our loved ones are often overlooked. But New York City is a city that stands with first responders. Let's make that clear by showing our support for this essential workforce and passing the Aland Etienne Safety and

Security Act to ensure all officers get the training they need to respond to crises, and the wages, benefits and time off to stay in the force. Investing in our brave security officers will make us all more safe."

Smith Etienne, Aland Etienne's younger brother, said: "My brother was someone who protected and uplifted others. He protected the public on the job. And as a father, partner, brother, son and mentor he did whatever he could to uplift not just his family and friends, but strangers and colleagues alike. If he were with us today, he'd be fighting for this legislation. Let's honor his legacy by uplifting and protecting his colleagues across the city. Protect the protectors. Aland is a New York hero."

The measure will now move through the legislative process, with advocates pressing for swift passage to honor Etienne's sacrifice and improve public safety for millions of New Yorkers.

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**NEWS**



# Meet Dr. Sabine Charles: The Haitian American Financial Expert Transforming Leadership Development

BY DAVID L. SNELLING

Regarded as among the upper-echelon financial experts in the nation and beyond, Haitian American Dr. Sabine Charles is on a journey to help individuals and companies reach their full potential.

Whether it's traveling to U.S. cities and countries like Colombia, Dr. Charles is invited to share her Leadership MEQ accelerator program, which focuses on emotional intelligence and leadership development for professionals including auditing and corporate environments.

Born to Haitian immigrants, Charles, the CEO of Charles Financial Strategie, said leadership development hinges on emotional intelligence, resiliency and credibility.

"You have to approach the role with the right leadership mindset," she said. "Leadership can be used in any profession."

And that's her message she's sending to the corporate world and individuals embarking on a path to financial stability. Her program dives deeper into three pillars that help drive up success: Mindset, Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Qualities, (MEQ)

Dr. Charles said developing a framework and mindset and understanding other people's feelings are the first steps in

achieving success.

"What is success?" she asked. "How do people become successful? It's mindset and how you lead yourself. Those three pillars create components for leadership. If you don't understand them, everything can fall apart."

She said the program places high importance on the acquisition of unique views in order to successfully manage the challenges of global marketplaces, diverse workforces, and ever-changing client expectations. As a result, managers are held to a higher standard of planning, making flexibility a vital characteristic for leaders.

"When faced with unforeseen events, supervisors can provide their subordinates with trustworthy and intelligent advice," she said.

During her workshops and retreats, Dr. Charles helps people pursue entrepreneurship. "Leadership and framework helps professionals thrive in their careers," she said.

Dr. Charles said when she performs audits to determine any discrepancies or embezzlements, corporate leaders are on the defense. "Why is this person so hostile and not in the right mindset? They are supposed to build resilience and solve



Haitian American Dr. Sabine Charles is on a journey to help individuals and companies reach their full potential including through her latest book, "Leadership MEQ." (Contributed Image)

problems instead of creating them."

Dr. Charles said she became an auditor in 1995 and was part of a team of auditors for City Bank in Brazil and Panama. She has held leadership positions at American Express, Deloitte, World Vision International, and Touro University.

Her diverse background and extensive experience across various industries have equipped her with a comprehensive understanding of organizational dynamics. Dr. Charles later

landed a job as chief executive auditor in the U.S. and held the position for 14 years.

But it wasn't easy getting the job. Dr. Charles said she failed the exam to be an executive CPA twice due to stress but tutoring helped her overcome her anxiety, and she ended up earning 12 other certifications.

She went back to school to earn her doctorate degree in Business and Administration and came up with her Leadership MEQ accelerator program while doing her term paper.

"That's where I came up with the leadership and framework through the courses," she said.

With a background in research, auditing, teaching and consulting, Dr. Charles said she's living out her dream and inspiring others to reach their full potential.

She has authored several books, including her latest work, "Leadership MEQ." Despite being a full-time working mother, she pursued a master's in accounting and a Doctorate, exemplifying her commitment to lifelong learning.

Dr. Charles is frequently invited as a guest expert on renowned podcasts, where she shares groundbreaking insights and strategies for personal growth and organizational success.

Through her writings, public speaking engagements, and collaborations, she has become a highly sought-after mentor and advisor in professional circles. Born in New York, Dr. Charles currently lives there. She often visits her 80-year-old mother who lives in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

Dr. Charles said her mother is amazed at her career, and that she plans to take care of her next speaking engagement outside the U.S.



## Miami Book Fair Returns: The Big Read Celebrates Stories That Speak From the Heart

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

Miami Book Fair, the much-anticipated literary festival of the season, is back again this year. The street fair, scheduled for November 16-23, 2025, is the culmination of events that have been taking place all year long. Book lovers have had plenty of opportunities to hone their writing skills through online and in-person workshops, seminars, thought-provoking panel discussions, and readings.

Now at the closing weekend, bibliophiles can interact with international booksellers and

learn more from the hundreds of award-winning authors, poets, and artists. With intimate conversations highlighting the work of leading authors, readings by fiction and nonfiction writers, literature for young people and Caribbean authors focusing on regional stories, attendees are spoiled for choice.

### The Big Read

This year, The Big Read program of events, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts, celebrates the joy of reading and sharing a good book, with its title selection:

Sandra Cisneros' 'The House on Mango Street,' a novel that explores the many meanings of home and how it shapes who we become. Part of the Big Read are writing workshops for emerging, seasoned and young writers in search of inspiration to write that good book.

Cuban American writer and anthropologist, Ruth Behar, will lead one such workshop on October 12th, titled "Telling Stories with Heart," in which she will help participants weave ancestral stories into their tales of past, present, and future homes

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)



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NOW ENROLLING!

# The Links, Incorporated Has A Street Renamed In Its Honor In Miami

BY DAVID L. SNELLING

Miami-Dade County and the City of Miami Gardens have honored The Links, Incorporated - a leading national service organization - by naming a street in its honor.

On September 13th, local dignitaries, including U.S. Rep. Fredrica Wilson; Miami-Dade County Commissioner Oliver Gilbert; and Miami Gardens Mayor Rodney Harris and City Commissioners, Reggie Leon and Linda Julian, celebrated the achievements of the Links, Incorporated, highlighting the organization's rich history and impact on local communities.

Now, 12th Avenue stretching between Northwest 184th Drive and 189th Terrace, will be named The Links, Incorporated Way. It is now the first street in the nation named for an organization.

Founded in 1946 by Sarah Strickland Scott and Margaret Roselle Hawkins, the Links, Incorporated has documented over one million hours of community service in the past decade alone.

"Today in Miami Gardens we celebrated more than a new street sign. We honored The Links Incorporated, an organization built on friendship and service that has touched lives across this country," said Commissioner Gilbert, whose district covers the street named after the organization. "Their work lifts up our youth, strengthens our schools, promotes the arts, and protects our health."

Gilbert also said the organization is an integral part of the community and of "our nation's story."

"This street will remind us every day of their legacy and the power of women linking arms to change the world," he added.

In June 2025, the city



Local lawmakers and Links, Incorporated leaders celebrated the renaming of 12th Avenue stretching between Northwest 184th Drive and 189th Terrace in Miami Gardens, The Links, Incorporated Way. (Contributed image)

of Miami Gardens passed a Commissioner Reggie Leon-led resolution to rename the street in the organization's honor. Commissioner Leon said the tribute not only honors the Links, Incorporated but also inspires future generations, particularly young people, to recognize the potential for leadership within themselves.

"The gathering is the importance of recognizing and celebrating the contributions of women of color in building community infrastructure and fostering excellence," he said.

Commissioner Julian echoed similar sentiments. "History was made, as the legacy of service, sisterhood and impact that has uplifted generations was honored," she said. "We honor the past, embrace the present, and inspire the future together."

Congressmember Wilson, a member herself, said she's amazed at the work The Links, Incorporated has accomplished in the South Florida community for nearly 80 years.

"The Links, Incorporated has uplifted our communities," she said. "That legacy was honored with the naming of a street as 'The Links, Incorporated Way. As

a proud member, I was honored to witness this historic moment in Miami Gardens."

Ethel Isaacs Williams,

## Island SPACE Caribbean Museum To Honor Inaugural Icons

Island SPACE Caribbean Museum will mark its fifth anniversary in grand style with the launch of its ICON Awards, honoring four leaders whose lives and legacies reflect the brilliance of the Caribbean Diaspora.

The awards will be presented during the museum's milestone fundraising gala, under the theme: "Milestones: FIYAH! Fashion. Folklore. Future," on Sunday, October 26, 2025, at the Fort Lauderdale Marriott Harbor Beach Resort & Spa.

Since opening its doors in 2020, Island SPACE has grown into South Florida's cultural epicenter, doubling visitors, launching signature festivals and amplifying the stories of Caribbean people.

"We recognize that history is being made right now," said co-founder and executive director Calibe Thompson, "and we want

National President of the Links, Incorporated said dedication, education and ingenuity describes the street renaming as a testament to the organization's mission and its lasting impact. "Leave the door cracked for those coming behind us," she said.

Williams said the Links, Incorporated offers a heartfelt thanks for the honor.

"Thank you City of Miami Gardens and everyone for this incredible honor," she said.

The Links, Incorporated, which has 299 chapters and more than 170,000 members in the U.S. and beyond, has some national prominent members. They include former U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris and Civil Rights Activist and founder of the Children's Defense Funds

Marian Wright Edelman. Betty Shabazz, the wife of Malcolm X, was a member until her death in 1997.

Chapters typically hold multiple social events for a city's black elites, such as debutante cotillions, fashion shows, gala fund-raisers, ball, luncheons and former parties. The national core focuses include education, health, youth services, art, domestic legislation, and international welfare.

The Links, Incorporated chapters have provided support to Africare, the Haitian Refugee Center, the NAACP, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and the United Negro College Fund.



to ensure that we're honoring the Caribbean history-makers in our midst while we can."

### 2025 ICON Award Honorees

This year's honorees represent the linguistic and cultural diversity of the Caribbean and its impact on civic life in South Florida. They are:

- **Commissioner Hazelle Rogers (Jamaica)** – Broward County Commissioner, former Lauderdale Lakes Mayor and Florida State Representative, celebrated for decades of public service and advocacy for Caribbean culture.
- **Braulio Rosa (Puerto Rico)** – Executive Director of the Broward County Bar Association, recognized for advancing mentorship, inclusivity, and civic engagement in the legal community.
- **Gepsie Metellus (Haiti)** –

Co-founder and Executive Director of Sant La Haitian Neighborhood Center, honored for her decades of leadership in social services, education, and empowerment for Haitian Americans.

### • Lesly Simon (Venezuela)

– Community leader and philanthropist, lauded for expanding access to resources and strengthening Miami's Caribbean networks.

Guests at the October gala will enjoy a night of cultural spectacle, including music, dance, spoken word, drumming, and high fashion, as well as the presentation of the ICON Awards. Tickets, sponsorship opportunities, and event details are available at [islandspacefl.org/fiyah](https://islandspacefl.org/fiyah).



## Miami Book Fair Returns: The Big Read Celebrates Stories That Speak From the Heart

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6) but doing so from a place of emotion.

The acclaimed author has won awards for her work including 'Lucky Broken Girl,' a young adult novel based on her own life experiences that would change and ground her forever. 'Tía Fortuna's New Home,' celebrates culture, heritage and belonging, while 'An Island Called Home,' delves into roots and identity.

We caught up with Behar for a chat about transforming heartfelt experiences into words.

"To tell stories with heart, you need to let the characters in your stories have a wide range of emotions, from happiness to sadness, from despair to hope, from loss to the acceptance of a new life," Behar told Caribbean Today. "When I was writing 'Lucky Broken Girl,' I thought about this a lot: how being a girl in a body cast was a miserable experience, yet it opened her heart



Haitian American Dr. Sabine Charles is on a journey to help individuals and companies reach their full potential including through her latest book, "Leadership MEQ." (Contributed Image)

to the suffering of others, and in this way was a metamorphosis. Stories with heart are stories that show transformation. They are stories that make us feel more empathy toward others and in this way make us better humans."

The author entwines her personal stories into her work. Yet, these memoirs become much

more than her life story. As a writer she creates something new by adding fictional elements to give her stories more vivid color. For example, she explained:

"When I wrote 'Tía Fortuna's New Home,' it occurred to me as Tía was saying goodbye to her home by the beach and packing up her things that she might point to her head, filled with memories, and call it a suitcase," she disclosed. "Likewise, I imagined she might hug a tree, and sure enough she does! These are fictional touches that add a touch of magic and wonder to a story."

### Toolbox

In the upcoming workshop, Behar will pass on her toolbox of creative writing, but she will also be sharing her experiences, something she believes is essential in writing one's own story. She explained that "in writing for young people, I feel that the intergenerational bond is important."

"I want to share with kids a range of histories and stories that I hope will be meaningful to them and remembered," she added.

Whether participants are interested in writing for young people or want to focus on the adult market or delve into the fictional or non-fiction genre, it all comes down to writing creatively and taking on the hard work and joys of the craft, said Behar.

"It is both challenging and joyful to be a writer. It is challenging because writing takes time and effort and dedication, even though it can look easy once a book is done and published," the author added. "And it is joyful because as a writer you feel happy when a reader is moved by your story and feels it deeply... I hope participants will be inspired to tell their own stories. Children may want to create illustrated stories based on their own lives. Adults may want to start writing a story in their childhood voice or in the voice of an ancestor they want to

know better."

As a Cuban American with Jewish heritage, Behar has so much more stories to share.

"I am excited to have two picture books coming out in 2026 that draw on my Jewish and Cuban heritage," she disclosed. "One book is called 'A Snowy Hanukkah for Luz,' and it's about being grateful for the everyday miracles of the eight days of Hanukkah. The other book is called 'Picadillo for Paulina,' and it is co-authored with my son, Gabriel Frye-Behar. This will be our second co-authored book, and it's about a girl who decides to be a vegetarian in a Cuban family that loves traditional beef picadillo."

For more information about the Miami Book Fair and the various seminars and workshops taking place under The Big Read, visit <https://www.miamibookfair.com/>.



## FEATURE



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# From Deportee To Parliament: Isat Buchanan's Stunning Win In Portland Eastern

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

On the evening of September 3, 2025, as it became clear the Jamaica Labour Party, (JLP), would retain power in Jamaica's general elections, Isat Buchanan was one of the bright spots on a night of gloom for the opposition People's National Party, (PNP).

A dark horse, he defeated the incumbent Ann-Marie Vaz for the Portland Eastern seat. He earned a seat in Jamaica's parliament by polling 8,316 votes to his opponents' 8,181, one of few upsets in an election where the JLP won 35 constituencies to 28.

It capped a remarkable year for Buchanan, a 46-year-old lawyer who successfully secured Vybz Kartel's release from prison in July 2024. He was officially named the PNP candidate for constituency four months after he and the controversial deejay

walked out of the General Penitentiary in Kingston.

Buchanan was admitted to the Jamaican Bar in 2017, 10 years after being deported from the United States where he served eight years in prison on drug-related charges. The JLP attempted to use his criminal record against him, but Buchanan said his tale of redemption is worthy to be heard.

"There's a lot of negativity in the social media space, and I simply do not consume negativity," he told Caribbean Today recently. "What I do is focus on issues and I'm very much un-bothered about the conversations whether it be personal attacks or rehashing of the criminal conviction and deportee ideas. I use my past as a steppingstone, and I am the poster child for rehabilitation."

Portland Eastern, a rural



Isat Buchanan, once a deportee and now an attorney, delivered a major win for the PNP by capturing the Portland Eastern seat.

area, is traditionally a PNP stronghold, but Vaz wrested it for the JLP in the 2020 general election. A popular Member of Parliament, she was widely expected to retain the seat.

Buchanan, the son of reggae star Big Youth, has big plans for

the constituency where many people depend on farming for their livelihood.

"My goal as an MP is to first and foremost improve the lives of the people of Portmore Eastern, to transform the space in such a way that economic

viability and the flow of money is a reality," he said. "A focus on health, education, agriculture and tourism to resuscitate the economy is my primary goal."

Born in Kingston, Buchanan was raised in middle-class surroundings. He has had his share of legal problems, starting in 1997 when he was arrested at Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston, en route to the United States.

Buchanan allegedly had drugs in his possession but argued that he agreed to carry the packages with the contraband for a friend who said it contained cash. He was convicted and paid a fine.

Two years later, he was given a 10-year prison sentence for having drugs in his possession on a domestic flight to Florida. While in prison, Buchanan counseled several inmates which spiked his interest in law, a career he pursued after returning to Jamaica.

Now he will hopefully help make laws that will impact his constituents, the nation and the youth.



## Haitian Born FSMSDC President And CEO Stepping Down After A Quarter Century

BY DAVID L. SNELLING

In a leadership role that spanned a whopping quarter of a century or 25 years, Florida State Minority Supplier Development Council President and CEO, Haitian immigrant Beatrice Louissaint, is stepping down, marking the end of an illustrious tenure that saw the organization net \$50 billion in sales and partnerships.

Louissaint last day on the job is set to be December 12, 2025. Her successor will be named in November.

"It has been an extraordinary privilege to guide FSMSDC through decades of meaningful growth and impact," Louissaint said in a statement. "While the moment has come to welcome new leadership and fresh perspectives, I'm confident that the strong foundation we've built together ensures the organization's continued success and stability. Our mission will - and must - continue."

The FSMSDC debuted in 1975, and under the leadership of, has grown to be the leading connector of corporate and government members with Minority Business Enterprise, (MBE), to foster equity in a business.

The enterprise has certified thousands of MBEs connecting them to corporations focused on Diversity and Inclusion, which have resulted in over \$50 billion in sales and successful partnerships.

Together, these companies support more than 80,000 jobs, helping drive intergenerational wealth creation in communities across Florida and beyond.

The FSMSDC membership includes 60 percent of the



Florida State Minority Supplier Development Council President and CEO, Haitian immigrant Beatrice Louissaint, is stepping down this December. (Contributed image)

Fortune 500 and 3,500 corporate members nationwide and the SFMSDC has linked minority firms to \$5 billion in corporate procurement sales and its annual Business Expo is the largest minority trade event in the Southeast.

Louissaint immigrated to Miami from Haiti when she was 5 years-old, and only spoke little English when she arrived on U.S. soil.

She attributes her success to her upbringing and a strong family heritage.

In 1970, her father founded Miami's first Haitian church, which put a young Louissaint at the crosscurrent of the Haitian Diaspora's development political, economic and cultural.

In 1984, she was the youngest person hired by Dade County Public School's Project HOPE, and was a founding

member of its Drug Prevention Program staff for youth. As a staff member of the Haitian American Association, she helped Haitian immigrants transition from farm work to trades in an increasingly diverse economy.

In addition, she founded the Haitian American Women's Coalition and spearheaded the region's first Haitian Conference in English focusing on issues of acculturation.

In 1990, she launched the first organized effort to build a Haitian community center. In 1992, she founded and produced Miami's first Haitian TV show in English on WLRN.

Later in her career, Louissaint was the first Executive Director of the Black Business Association, where she increased the organization's revenue from \$30,000 to

\$300,000, and launched several initiatives, such as the International Trade Assistance. The program took Black businesses on trade missions to Brazil, Mexico, Haiti and Ghana and resulted in \$1.7 million in new sales in its first year.

In 2000, Louissaint took on the leadership role at Southern Florida Minority Supplier Development Council.

Louissaint earned a bachelor's degree from Barry University and is currently completing an MBA at the Wayne Huizenga School of Business at Nova Southeastern University. She has received numerous recognitions for her work including South Florida Business Journal 2003 "Businesswoman of the Year Award" finalist South and serves on numerous community boards.

FSMSDC's Board of Directors has launched a national search for Louissaint's successor. The Board has also initiated a strategic pivot and long-term sustainability planning effort to chart the organization's course for the future.

Those efforts reinforce FSMSDC's commitment to innovation, equity, and scalable impact. "Leadership transitions are a natural part of an organization's evolution," said Louissaint. "I am incredibly proud of all we have accomplished together and confident FSMSDC is poised for even greater impact in the years ahead."

The FSMSDC will honor Louissaint for her achievements during the organization's annual gala.



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# Why Are African Nations Agreeing To Take In US Deportees?

In his first term, Donald Trump allegedly referred to African nations as “s-hole countries.” In this term, he has slashed aid to the continent at breakneck speed. Yet now, in a disturbing echo of history when some African leaders were complicit in selling their own into bondage, governments are striking secretive deals to accept U.S. deportees - for cash.



**FELICIA J. PERSAUD**

The price tag is eye-popping. Rwanda was reportedly paid \$100,000 in April to take a single deportee and has since agreed to accept up to 250 more. Eswatini, formerly Swaziland, was offered more than \$10 million to detain over 150 people. Other agreements with Uganda and South Sudan remain cloaked in secrecy.

In addition to cash, these deals may come with promises of favorable trade terms, foreign aid, or even the easing of sanctions. In short, human lives are being turned into bargaining chips in global politics - much like during the Middle Passage.

## Rwanda, Again, In The Spotlight

Rwanda has already received seven deportees from the U.S., officials confirmed. Some have requested to return home, while others hope to stay and rebuild their lives in Rwanda.

This comes just three years after Rwanda’s failed migrant deal with the United Kingdom. That 2022 plan, which sought to

resettle asylum seekers in Kigali, was struck down by Britain’s Supreme Court as unlawful - but not before the U.K. had already spent nearly \$1 billion, including \$300 million handed to Rwanda that was never recovered.

Now the U.S. is following a similar playbook.

## The Risks For Deportees

The human costs are already mounting. In South Sudan, eight deportees from countries including Cuba and Vietnam were transferred after weeks of being held in a shipping container at a U.S. base in Djibouti. South Sudan, a nation racked by conflict, has not disclosed where those men are being kept.

In Eswatini, deportees are being held in solitary confinement in a maximum-security prison for up to a year, often without legal representation. Human rights lawyers have already taken the government to court over their treatment.

These deportations are not simply about removing people from U.S. soil. They are about offshoring America’s immigration problem to fragile states with little capacity - or will - to safeguard detainees’ rights.

## Uganda’s Conditional Deal

Uganda has agreed to accept deportees on the condition that they are not minors or convicted criminals. Still, local rights advocates have condemned the arrangement.

“We are sacrificing human beings for political expediency, in this case because Uganda wants to be in the good books

of the United States,” Ugandan lawyer Nicholas Opio said.

## The Bigger Question

Here lies the crux: deportees are not being returned to their home countries. Instead, they are being shipped thousands of miles away to unfamiliar nations, where they face indefinite detention and uncertain futures.

Trump frames this as getting tough on the “worst of the worst.” But make no mistake - these deals are not about justice or public safety. They are about

US tax payer dollars, leverage and transactional diplomacy.

The grim truth is that vulnerable Black and brown people - some legal residents, many of whom have already served their time and rebuilt their lives - are once again being reduced to pawns in a political trade. For African states to be complicit in this in 2025 is not only atrocious and unconscionable, it is a shameful replay of history - a modern-day trafficking of human lives that echoes the betrayal of centuries

past when some Africans sold others into slavery. Yes, Donald Trump is egregious - but Africans choosing to enable him is unconscionable.

*Felicia J. Persaud is the founder and publisher of NewsAmericasNow.com, the only daily newswire and digital platform dedicated exclusively to Caribbean Diaspora and Black immigrant news across the Americas.*



# Medical Cannabis in the Workplace

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# Narcissism On Steroids

Narcissus, from Greek mythology, was so vain and overly obsessed with his looks, that he gazed intently at his reflection in a stream, lost in self-admiration, slipped, fell in and drowned. But what about those mortal people who exhibit the same traits of narcissism?

A narcissist by definition is a person who has excessive love or admiration for themselves. Narcissists also think that the world revolves around them. The Mayo Clinic says that “narcissistic personality disorder is a mental health condition in which people have an unreasonably high sense of their own importance.”



**TONY ROBINSON**

“They need and seek too much attention and want people to admire them all the time. People with this disorder may lack the ability to understand or care about

the feelings of others. But behind this mask of extreme confidence, they are not sure of their self-worth and are always upset by the slightest criticism.”

In many cases where the narcissist is highly critical of everyone and everything around them, they fly into a psychotic rage if someone dares to criticize them. They take it to another level. Narcissism on steroids is what I call it.

The narcissist is often unhappy and disappointed when they’re not given the admiration that they believe they deserve. Naturally this affects their relationships, which they may find troubled and unfulfilled. After a while, people may not enjoy being around them.

As a result, the narcissist is almost impossible to please, as they focus their criticism on almost every aspect of their surroundings, including their partner. Here are some of the symptoms. They have an unreasonably high sense of self-importance and require constant admiration. They make

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

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# More Voters, Fewer Votes: The Hidden Story Of Guyana's 2025 Election

COMMENTARY BY  
RON CHEONG

**News Americas, NEW YORK, NY, Fri. Sept. 26, 2025:** Guyana's 2025 general election delivered results no one could have imagined a decade ago. The governing Peoples Progressive Party/Civic, PPP/C, expanded its majority to 36 seats, the A Partnership For National Unity, APNU, collapsed to just 12, and We Invest In Nationhood, WIN, a first-time party founded mere months before the elections, claimed 16 seats in a debut that signalled stunning voter realignment and changes in decades old voting patterns.

And under this all lies a telling number: turnout fell by 11.8% even as the electorate grew by 14.6%.

This paradox of more eligible voters but fewer actual votes, speaks to leadership quality, not paying attention, not doing homework, taking the base for granted, neglecting the needs of constituents, shifting loyalties, apathy and opportunism.

A look into this number reveals the very different attention given to the its underlying drivers by the two major parties going into the election, with one party giving high priority to it and the other seemingly unfocused – resulting in very different outcomes:

## The Numbers Tell the Story

Of Guyana's 2,792 polling divisions, 2,112 recorded lower turnouts compared to 2020. In more than half of those, the decline was in the range of 10 - 25 percent - a staggering drop that signals not just inconvenience or indifference,

but outright disengagement.

The effects were uneven. In the 680 divisions where turnout increased, the PPP/C captured 77% of them. WIN picked up 13% and the APNU, just 10%.

These figures confirm that the governing party not only preserved its core but also succeeded in mobilizing new support, especially in places like North Georgetown, once firmly in APNU's column.

By contrast, in Region 10 - APNU's former bastion - the collapse was total. APNU failed to win a single polling division, while WIN took 35 and PPP/C 7. For a party that had long assumed its base was unshakable, the message from voters was unmistakable: loyalty has its limits.

## APNU's Freefall

The steepest losses came where APNU once stood tallest. Years of drift under David Granger left cracks that widened under Aubrey Norton's uninspired leadership. Promising MPs defected. Grassroots activism withered. Strategic direction was absent.

The data shows that APNU's undoing was not simply defections to PPP/C or WIN. It was abstention. In many of its strongholds, more than one in four voters who had once turned out simply stayed home. The party did not just lose - it was abandoned. Had the party under Norton been paying attention or doing its strategic analysis, they would have seen from the 2020 election that the disengagement had begun - many Georgetown North districts 2020 vote totals were lower than in 2015.

## PPP/C's Resilience

The PPP/C's steadiness has attracted less attention than APNU's implosion or WIN's breakthrough, but it may be the most important lesson of all. By holding its base and mobilizing turnout where it mattered, the governing party expanded its majority even in an environment of broad disillusionment. That does not mean PPP/C is immune. A shrinking pool of engaged voters is a threat to every party. But in 2025, it was the only one that avoided the worst of the disengagement - and the numbers prove it.

## WIN's Opportunistic Surge

WIN's debut captured headlines, though it was less about strategy than opportunity. Led by wealthy businessman Azzruddin Mohammed, the party offered no governing experience. Its appeal rested on timing, resources and a social media-driven campaign that attracted younger voters and disaffected working-class citizens.

While WIN's rise was real, it was fragile - built more on personality and circumstance than substance or policy. Whether it can convert this momentum into lasting political legitimacy remains uncertain.

Still its surge has striking significance. Both WIN and the ruling PPP/C are led by Indian Guyanese men, while APNU has long been rooted in Guyana's Afro-Guyanese base and an older generation. The 2025 results suggest that, while racial identity still matters, socio-economic discontent and generational change may be redrawing the political map.

## Lessons From 2025

The election underscores several key lessons:

- 1. Disengagement is decisive:** Parties can collapse not only when voters switch sides, but when they stop showing up at all.
- 2. Leadership matters:** APNU's failures were compounded by Norton's inability to inspire or unify, accelerating the party's decline.
- 3. Mobilization pays:** PPP/C's ability to bring out its voters, even in difficult conditions, proved decisive.
- 4. Demographics are shifting:** Young and mixed-race voters are the fastest-growing segment of the electorate, and their choices - or abstention - are increasingly shaping outcomes.

## Voter Disengagement

The drama of 2025 tempts us to focus on party fortunes: APNU's collapse, WIN's surge, PPP/C's quiet strengthening. But a critical part of the story is the voters who stayed home. A party and a democracy cannot thrive if each election brings more eligible citizens but fewer actual participants.

For Guyana's democracy, questions ahead include whether WIN can sustain and whether APNU can rebuild. The latter depends on whether APNU has learned its lesson. The first step of a disenchanting base is to abstain, moving is not easy for many people who had a lifetime association with the party, but we have seen it happen with more than half of its base. The party has some serious work at hand.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Ron Cheong, born in Guyana, is a community activist and dedicated volunteer with an extensive international background in banking. Now residing in Toronto, Canada, he is a fellow of the Institute of Canadian Bankers and holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Toronto.**

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## Narcissism On Steroids

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

their achievements and talents seem bigger than they really are, blowing everything that they do out of proportion.

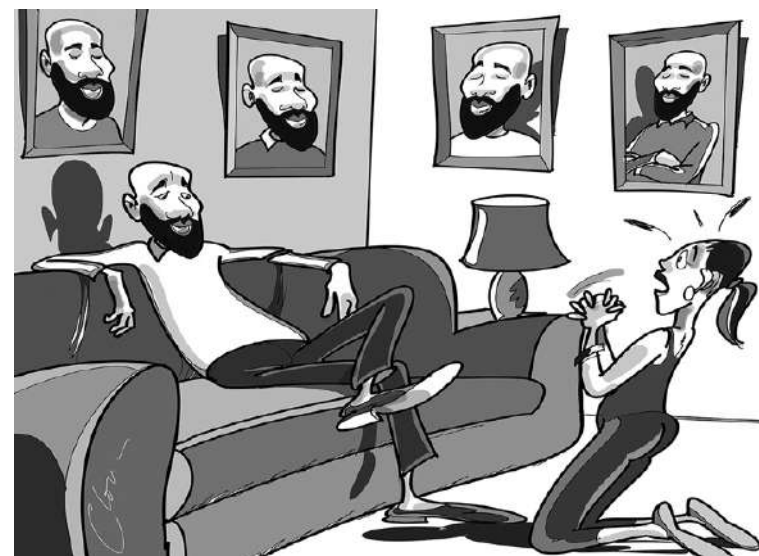
They believe that they are superior to others, are extremely critical and look down on people who they feel are not important. They expect special favors from people, are envious of others and believe that others envy them. They come across as conceited and insist on having the best of everything, even though they resent it when anyone else has anything that compares to what they have.

Nothing is good enough and they always want something or somewhere nicer. They react with rage and contempt and try to belittle other people to make themselves appear superior. They often feel depressed and lonely because they fall short of perfection.

Let's not forget not being able to please the narcissist when it comes to romance, for if it's a woman, no man can ever please her, as he will always come up short. Naturally she will blame him and not see that it is her own narcissistic tendencies that prevent her from enjoying the moment.

If it's a man, he will hop from one woman to the next, always seeking fulfillment that eludes him, for he's so in love with himself that he's unable to garner satisfaction from anyone else.

Oh, my goodness, who would



have thought that when that guy Narcissus fell into that stream and drowned as he gazed at his reflection, that he would have left such a legacy of mental disorder and crosses named after him?

I'm quite sure that some of you reading this can relate to these findings, and you may even recognize some people or person who fits this description. Of course, the narcissist will dismiss it as utter rubbish that does not apply to them at all.

"A narcissist never cares about how you feel, never appreciates you, never makes you feel good about yourself, they will ruin special occasions like birthdays."

All along I thought that narcissists were only obsessed with their looks and self-admiration,

but after delving into extensive research, I can see that it's been taken to a different level - narcissism on steroids

A woman who is involved with a narcissist will experience hell, and so will a man who's involved with one. But they dare not broach the subject, for remember what the experts say, the narcissist does not take criticism well.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Tony Robinson is an independent contributor to Caribbean Today and the views expressed here are his own. He can be reached at seidoIyard@gmail.com for feedback.**



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## Bunji Garlin, Fay-Ann Lyons To Headline Miami Carnival's 41st Edition

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

It's October and soca is in the South Florida air. Miami Carnival, a showpiece of the West Indian community, takes place from October 4-12th, with a series of events throughout the region.

John G. Beckford, the event's chief marketing officer, told Caribbean Today that top soca artists from the Caribbean are scheduled to perform. Their presence, he noted, sums up the eight-day spectacle.

"Miami Carnival is a perennial event that means everything to the West Indian community in terms of Caribbean cultural unity and bonding," said Beckford.

Headliners this year will be Bunji Garlin, who recently lost his mother, and his wife Fay-Ann Lyons from Trinidad and Tobago. They will be supported by Blaka Dan from Grenada,



Bunji Garlin and his wife Fay-Ann Lyons from Trinidad and Tobago will headline the Miami Carnival. (Bunji Garlin/X image)

Trinidadian American Anika Berry, Imran Nerdy and Arthur Allain from St. Lucia; and Julien

Believe from The Bahamas. The 41st staging of the annual event starts with its

Junior Carnival at Central Broward Park in Lauderdale and ends with the live show and Road March at the Miami-Dade Fairgrounds.

"In store for Miami Carnival this year are over 18 Mas bands on the road for Carnival Sunday on October 12; and over nine Junior bands on Saturday, October 4th," Beckford disclosed. "The format for Pan is a Pan Jamboree instead of Pan Competition on Friday, October 10th. And J'ouvert promises to be the best ever. Then on Saturday, October 11th, from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., it's all about paint, powder, mud,

water and plenty vibes!"

Like Caribana in Toronto, Canada and West Indian Day Parade in Brooklyn, New York, Miami Carnival is a colorful showcase of Caribbean culture and unity in the United States. It not only attracts a diverse audience but is a financial blockbuster for Miami.

"The economic impact cannot be overlooked, with 31 percent of the patrons and revelers hailing from outside Florida, generating over \$144 million in spending," Beckford exclaimed. "That means tourism and that begets jobs, jobs, jobs!"



## Aaron Silk Issues Call To Action With His New Single



Singer Aaron Silk gives a heartfelt lament echoing the grief, resilience, and hope of mothers who have lost their children to the harsh realities of life - especially in inner-city communities of Jamaica. (Contributed image)

For the period 2020-2024, roughly 168 Jamaican children were murdered while from 2019-2023, 619 women were killed. Statistics from 2023 show that over 80 percent of Jamaica's murder victims were men.

For singer, Aaron Silk, enough is enough and his new song and video, 'Painful Birth,' signals his call to action for all Jamaicans to take a stand against violence.

"Painful Birth for me is more than just an ordinary song - it's a tribute, a protest, and a prayer. It struck a chord deep inside me and I knew I had to liberate it to serve its purpose," said Silk.

The just released single was written by Michael Orrett and produced by Tru-Frequency Music based in Canada. A very poignant song, it gives a heartfelt lament echoing the grief, resilience, and hope of mothers who have lost their children to the harsh realities of life - especially in inner-city communities. Through vivid imagery, spiritual references, and emotional rawness, the lyrics convey a deep sense of sorrow, questioning, and ultimately, strength.

"I wrote the song, but Aaron owned it. He made it his

and delivered an exceptional rendition with his captivating voice," said Orrett explaining that for him, it was a modern-day ballad of resistance and remembrance, giving voice to the voiceless and offering solace to grieving hearts.

The song has been released on all major platforms such as Apple Music, Deezer, Tidal, Pandora, Boomplay, Amazon music, the iTunes Store, Spotify etc. (Mike to add where else it is available). The accompanying music video, which was set in Jamaica, features noted Jamaican Actress Audrey Reid as the grieving mother and several other local talents. It was shot by Fareye Productions and is slated for release on X.

"This one hit deep. We want to call on everyone, man, woman, boy, politicians, churches, all of us to come forward and take action to stop violence," said Silk. "In the video, the mother transformed her pain into purpose and made sure that her son's death was not in vain. We want to ensure that other mothers don't have to go through her experience, and our sons and daughters don't die before fulfilling their dreams and mission."



## South Florida People Of Color Celebrates 10 Years Of Impact At The Lyric Theater



The South Florida People of Color recently turned 10 and marked its birthday at the Lyric Theater in Overtown. (Contributed Image)

BY ALYSSA SPENCE

The Lyric Theater in historic Overtown recently served as the backdrop for the South Florida People of Color, (SFPoC)'s 10th anniversary celebration, with a vibrant and deeply moving celebration.

Under the theme, "We All Matter," the evening honored a decade of transformative work in equity, inclusion and cultural education, led by visionary Roni Bennett, the organization's founder.

The reception was more than a milestone, reflecting SFPoC's mission to build bridges across communities through storytelling, history and honest dialogue. Attendees were buzzing with praise and gratitude from the reception.

The event honored three distinguished leaders whose work exemplifies the values of justice, creativity, and community transformation. Dr. Mike Allen, President of Barry University, was "recognized for his visionary leadership in higher

education and his dedication to equity and social mobility." Chana Budgazzad Sheldon, Executive Director of MOCA North Miami, was "honored for transforming MOCA into a dynamic hub for arts and community engagement" while State Senator Shevrin "Shev" Jones accepted the Political Leadership Award and reminded everyone in his message: "Power lives in what we do together."

The evening began with a symbolic icebreaker titled: "We All Matter: Community Weave," where guests passed strands of yarn to one another, representing values of belonging, healing, justice, solidarity and mutual aid. The result was a living tapestry of connection and shared purpose.

Renee O'Connor, an event attendee, described the moment with heartfelt clarity. "Holding a single strand of yarn and knowing it was part of something bigger... justice sounded different for each voice, but together, we wove a tapestry of hope, dreams, and connection.

Justice is never a solo act but a weaving together of many voices," she said.

Founded by Bennett, a proud Jamaican-American, SFPoC has become a beacon for inclusive education and cultural dialogue in South Florida. Bennett's Caribbean heritage has deeply influenced the organization's approach to community building, especially in an area known for its Caribbean influence.

Over the past decade, SFPoC has launched signature programs that have sparked meaningful conversations and created brave spaces for dialogue. The Awkward Dinner™ series, which became award-winning at the Philanthropy Miami Shark Tank competition, invites participants to engage in honest discussions around race, identity and belonging. The Unity 360 Institute offers equity training for organizations, rooted in storytelling and restorative practices while The Redline Bus Tours educate participants on the history of housing discrimination in Miami, while cultural dialogues celebrate Black History Month, Haitian Heritage Month, Juneteenth and more, including the acclaimed "Alkebulan" series on African identity.

Even during the pandemic, SFPoC's virtual programming reached audiences nationwide, from Los Angeles to New York, proving that its message resonates far beyond South Florida.

For more on SFPoC visit <https://southfloridapoc.org>



## New Non-Stop Caribbean Flights To Know

Caribbean tourism is getting a major boost this winter with a wave of new non-stop Caribbean flights connecting U.S. travellers to some of the region's most sought-after destinations. From Bimini to Grand Cayman to Grenada, new and returning nonstop service is poised to make island-hopping easier, expand visitor access, and strengthen regional economies.

### Bimini's First-Ever Non-Stop Service From Miami

The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism, Investments & Aviation has announced the first-ever nonstop American Airlines flight from Miami International Airport, (MIA) to South Bimini Airport, beginning February 14, 2026. The new service will operate three times weekly - Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays - using an Embraer 175 aircraft.

Deputy Prime Minister I. Chester Cooper hailed the route as "a game-changer for Bimini," emphasizing that it marks a new phase of economic growth and tourism expansion for the island known as the "Gateway to The Bahamas." The launch coincides with an \$80 million public-private partnership to upgrade South Bimini International Airport

with a new terminal, modernized airfield, and enhanced passenger amenities under the country's Family Islands Renaissance Project.

### JetBlue Brings Back Ft. Lauderdale - Grand Cayman Service

The Cayman Islands Department of Tourism announced that JetBlue will resume year-round service from Ft. Lauderdale, (FLL) to Owen Roberts International Airport, on Grand Cayman this winter, operating on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. The route represents the fifth new airlift addition to the Cayman Islands for the 2025 winter season.

"This is a solid vote of confidence in our destination," said Gary Ruddy, Deputy Premier and Minister for Tourism and Trade Development. The Cayman Islands is known for its world-class Seven Mile Beach, diving, and culinary scene, and officials say the new route will help sustain record-breaking visitor numbers into 2026.

### Delta Expands Atlanta Service To Grenada And St. Vincent

Delta Air Lines is making



Floridians can now fly non-stop from MIA to Bimini, Bahamas on American Airlines.

two hard-to-reach Caribbean gems more accessible with new nonstop flights from Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport to Grenada, (GND) and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, (SVG), starting December 20, 2025.

Grenada, known as the "Spice Isle," is famous for its nutmeg plantations, rainforest hikes, and spectacular beaches like Grand Anse. St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a sailor's paradise, with dozens of cays and anchorages. Tourism boards in both destinations say the added connectivity will attract more U.S. visitors, especially for high-value sailing and eco-tourism markets.

Delta will also offer new seasonal Saturday service to Grand Cayman from Detroit

and Nassau from Minneapolis, providing Midwestern travellers with a warm-weather escape during the winter months.

### Southwest Adds St. Maarten To Its Caribbean Map

Southwest Airlines announced its first new international destination since 2021: St. Maarten. Starting April 7, 2026, daily nonstop service will operate from Orlando International Airport, (MCO) to Princess Juliana International Airport, (SXM), famous for its dramatic low-altitude landings over Maho Beach.

Weekend service from Baltimore/Washington International Airport will follow, opening new gateways for East Coast travellers. The Dutch French islands are known for its

beaches, nightlife, and shopping and is expected to see a surge of visitors thanks to the new route.

### Frontier Launches Atlanta - Nassau Service

Frontier Airlines is debuting weekly nonstop service from Atlanta to Nassau starting December 13, with one-way fares beginning at \$79. The new service puts Paradise Island, Atlantis, and Nassau's cultural and culinary attractions within easy reach for budget-conscious travellers.

### Contour Airlines Connects Puerto Rico And St. Maarten

Rounding out the wave of announcements, Contour Airlines will launch a new nonstop route from San Juan, Puerto Rico (SJU) to St. Maarten (SXM) beginning November 14, 2025. The service, using 30-seat regional jets, is designed to make multi-island vacations and business trips between two of the Caribbean's busiest hubs easier than ever.

Travelers looking to take advantage of these new flights are encouraged to book early, as peak season demand in the Caribbean remains strong and fares are expected to rise closer to departure dates.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## CAL To Suspend Fort Lauderdale - Jamaica Flights

Caribbean Airlines will suspend its Fort Lauderdale-Montego Bay and Fort Lauderdale-Kingston routes effective November 2, 2025, in a move the carrier calls part of its "network optimization program," the Jamaica Gleaner reported.

The Trinidad-based airline relaunched its Fort Lauderdale service in December 2024 after

a five-year hiatus, expanding Montego Bay flights to daily service by March and reinstating Kingston-Fort Lauderdale earlier this year. Despite the effort, performance lagged, with load factors on the Kingston route dropping to just 32% in May - well below sustainable levels.

Caribbean Airlines said the suspension will allow it to redeploy aircraft and crew to

stronger markets. Analysts note heavy competition from JetBlue, Spirit and American Airlines, as well as rising operating costs, made it difficult for the airline to hold its share of South Florida traffic. Customers booked after November 1st will receive refunds or travel credits.



## Jamaica Spotlighted In CBS Eco-Series 'The Visioneers'

Jamaica once again shone on U.S. network television when CBS aired the Season 2 premiere of The Visioneers with Zay Harding on Saturday, October 4th, as part of its "CBS WKND" educational programming block.

The eco-adventure series, produced by Hearst Media Production Group in partnership with the VoLo Foundation, is hosted by international explorer and veteran presenter Zay Harding. Each 30-minute episode highlights global environmental solutions being driven by scientists, engineers, and community leaders.

For the October 4th premiere, Harding and his crew traveled to Kingston over the summer to document the ambitious Kingston Harbour Cleanup Project, a partnership between The Ocean Cleanup, a Netherlands-based nonprofit, and Clean Harbours

Jamaica Limited. The initiative is tackling plastic pollution in the island's iconic Kingston Harbour - the seventh largest natural harbor in the world - by installing floating barriers, known as "interceptors," at the mouths of drainage gullies where waste meets the sea.

In the episode, Harding interviewed Erik Holbom of The Ocean Cleanup and Jamaican Michael McCarthy of Clean Harbours Jamaica Limited, who discussed their shared mission to reduce harmful waste and restore the harbor.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for our viewers to see how Jamaica, often regarded as one of the world's most beautiful destinations, is also a nation committed to preserving and enhancing its natural allure," Harding said. "In fact, we were so inspired by our Jamaican

experience that the island will be featured again in another later episode of Season 2."

Harding, who grew up in Hawaii and has spent over 25 years exploring all seven continents, co-created the series with philanthropist David Vogel, founder of the VoLo Foundation. Their vision was to spotlight environmental pioneers working on practical, scalable solutions to climate challenges.

The first season of The Visioneers with Zay Harding aired earlier this year from April to September, featuring stories from across the globe. Season 2 will expand further, revisiting Jamaica and covering destinations including Portugal, Germany, Switzerland, Kenya, the U.K., and a dozen U.S. states.

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## Golden Krust Wraps Up 2025 Jamaican Patty Tour With Flavorful Miami Celebration

Golden Krust Caribbean Restaurant, the nation's premier Jamaican fast-casual chain, capped off its 2025 National Jamaican Patty Day Tour with a high-energy celebration in Miami's Wynwood district last month.

The finale, dubbed "Flavor Miami," was held on Saturday, September 20 at Electric 23 Wynwood and marked the 10th anniversary of National Jamaican Patty Day, a holiday Golden Krust founded in 2015 to spotlight Jamaican culture, cuisine and history.

Hosted by Miami radio personality Papa Keith, the evening featured a vibrant mix of food, music, and Caribbean pride. Guests sampled Golden Krust's signature Jamaican patties alongside exclusive menu offerings and sipped cocktails from partners Bacardi, Patrón, and Vita Coco.

The stage came alive with performances from DJ Delano & Jazzy T, Dutty Dex, DJ Marvelous, and a live set by reggae and dancehall hitmaker Wayne Wonder. Notable attendees included Waggy Tee Movements, Don Yute, Tifa and Elijah Marley.



Singer Wayne Wonder was among the performers at the Golden Krust National Jamaican Patty Day Tour in Miami. (Contributed image/Golden Krust)

Golden Krust launched the National Jamaican Patty Day Tour to connect with fans in major U.S. cities. This year's multi-city series included stops in Atlanta and New York before culminating in Miami.

"Flavor Miami was a fitting finale to a summer of celebrating Jamaican heritage across the country," said a Golden Krust spokesperson. "From music to food, we were proud to create a space where the community could come together, celebrate our culture, and share in the

joy of Jamaica's most beloved snack."

Founded in 1989, Golden Krust has grown from a single Bronx restaurant to over 100 locations across North America, producing more than 50 million patties annually. The brand continues to honor its heritage while introducing Caribbean flavors to new audiences.

For updates on upcoming events and the Patty Tour, follow @goldenkrust on social media.



## Lenny Kravitz To Headline Bahamas Culinary & Arts Festival

The Bahamas is about to become the Caribbean's culinary and cultural capital this October as The Bahamas Culinary & Arts Festival returns for five days of food, art, music — and one unforgettable headline performance by US-born, Bahamian roots star, Lenny Kravitz.

From October 22–26, 2025, the iconic Baha Mar resort will transform into a playground for food lovers, art collectors, and music enthusiasts with world-class events designed to celebrate Bahamian and Caribbean creativity.

The festival kicks off Wednesday night with celebrity chef Daniel Boulud's annual Truffle Dinner at Café Boulud, followed by the highly anticipated opening of FUZE Art Fair. FUZE will showcase more than 70 artists and 40 galleries from 14 countries, offering everything from contemporary paintings to immersive installations. Guests can take part in hands-on workshops such as straw craft, acrylic pouring, and more, making the art experience truly interactive.

The weekend's crown jewel arrives on Friday night when Grammy-winning rocker Lenny Kravitz headlines the "Taste of Baha Mar" Welcome Party. Known for his deep Bahamian roots and home base on Eleuthera, Kravitz

says performing in The Bahamas is always special.

"The Bahamas has always been my home, as well as heartfelt inspiration for my music," Kravitz shared in a statement. "I'm humbled to join fellow Caribbean artists, creatives, and innovators for The Bahamas Culinary & Arts Festival, and I look forward to sharing this experience with a community that means so much to me."

The festival's culinary programming will feature tastings and pop-ups from internationally renowned chefs, mixologists, and sommeliers, while the art fair will continue to celebrate Bahamian heritage with panel discussions, live demonstrations, and collector meet-ups.

With a perfect mix of high-end cuisine, culture, and entertainment, the Bahamas Culinary & Arts Festival has quickly become a marquee event on the Caribbean's cultural calendar, drawing visitors from across the globe.

Tickets and weekend passes are available now, with limited capacity for the Lenny Kravitz performance. Learn more at festival.bahamar.com.

- NewsAmericaNow.com



## A Dominica Rum Brand Is Rewriting The Caribbean Spirits Industry

In just under a year, Bleu Magic — a premium rum brand born in Dominica — has shaken up the Caribbean spirits industry with a strategic blend of cultural pride, youth-driven marketing, and regional expansion.

Launched during Dominica's World Creole Music Festival in October 2024, Bleu Magic has surged ahead of legacy brands through a savvy grassroots playbook and a powerful message: Caribbean rum doesn't need foreign ownership to achieve global success.

Ivor Nassief, owner of the historic Belfast Estate where Bleu Magic is crafted, adds, "The patience and detail their team has taken to craft the entire experience—from product to packaging—is inspiring. We look forward to seeing how far Riki and his team can take it. They have our full support." A Cultural Product With A Rebel Spirit

Produced at the historic Belfast Estate, a rum-making site dating back to the 1800s, Bleu Magic draws deep inspiration from Dominica's history of resistance — most notably the legacy of Maroon Chief Jacko. The brand's packaging and messaging are unapologetically Caribbean, rooted in rebellion, resilience, and regional pride.

"Our story is rebellion in a bottle," says Elroy Harrow, product manager of Bleu Magic. "We're building a brand for the new generation—one that is Caribbean, is premium, and is unapologetically ours."

### Organic Growth, Real Impact

Despite a saturated market, Bleu Magic has become one of the fastest-growing premium rum brands in the Caribbean, amassing



Ivor Nassief, owner of the historic Belfast Estate where Bleu Magic is crafted, adds, "The patience and detail their team has taken to craft the entire experience - from product to packaging - is inspiring. We look forward to seeing how far Riki and his team can take it. They have our full support." (Contributed image)

nearly 20,000 Instagram followers and expanding its footprint across Jamaica, St. Lucia, and other key islands. From Carnival Week activations in Kingston to Gros Islet Friday Night events in St. Lucia, the brand's pop-up

presence is being felt far beyond its Dominica roots.

A major catalyst in its visibility has been its partnership with Ridge, a two-time Caribbean Music Award winner and global Bouyon ambassador, who became a brand ambassador in late 2024.

### Owned And Operated By Caribbean Talent

What sets Bleu Magic apart isn't just branding. Unlike many regional rums owned by multinationals, Bleu Magic is operated by a young Caribbean team committed to rewriting the region's role in global spirits production. "This is not just rum. It's a movement," says Dajan Bleau, Marketing Manager of Bleu Magic. "We're exporting not just a premium product, but a piece of Caribbean heritage with ambitions of turning the colonial triangle on its head, from the Caribbean to Africa to Europe." With growing demand from

hotels, supermarkets, and bars in Dominica — and plans for expanded regional distribution—Bleu Magic is positioning itself not just as a product, but as a movement.

### What This Means For Caribbean Business

Bleu Magic's rise offers a clear model for other regional entrepreneurs: lead with culture, invest in branding, and build from within. In a time when many Caribbean-made products are acquired by foreign conglomerates, Bleu Magic represents a rare homegrown success story. It's a reminder that Caribbean creativity, when backed by strategy and ownership, can punch far above its weight on the global stage.

- NewsAmericaNow.com



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Peter A. Webley  
Publisher

## Caribbean Restaurants Score Big

In a landmark moment for Caribbean cuisine, Stush in the Bush (Jamaica) and Buzo Osteria Italiana (Barbados) were the only Caribbean restaurants named in the inaugural North America's 50 Best Restaurants 2025 list.

Stush in the Bush, ranked No. 49, is a plant-forward fine-dining destination in Free Hill, St. Ann, Jamaica. Under the guidance of Lisa and Christopher Binns, it blends



This amazing dish from Stush in the Bush is on the menu at the Jamaican restaurant.

sustainable farming, Ital (vegan) principles, and Caribbean flavor. Dishes like plantain gnocchi with callaloo pesto, jackfruit tacos, and roasted pumpkin hummus reflect the restaurant's mission to reimagine traditional Jamaican food through a regenerative lens.

Buzo Osteria Italiana, ranked No. 41, brings Caribbean vibrancy to Italian heritage in Bridgetown, Barbados. Under Chef Nakita Goddard, the menu fuses Italian technique with local ingredients. Signature offerings include wood-fired pizzas, fresh pasta, and creative seafood dishes like Gamberoni alla Diavola

The restaurant is also celebrated as "The Best Restaurant in the Caribbean 2025."

Their inclusion on the list marks a major win not only for the restaurants but for Caribbean gastronomy as a whole. As noted by Bon Appétit,



Buzo Osteria Italiana ranked at 41 and was named 'The Best Restaurant in the Caribbean 2025.'

the list celebrates diversity in North American cuisine, with the Caribbean's two entries reinforcing the region's culinary resonance.

For Jamaica and Barbados, this recognition validates their evolving food scenes - where heritage, sustainability, and innovation converge on the plate.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## Food For The Poor Breaks Ground On First Sustainable Community Development Project In Jamaica



Food For The Poor (FFTP), in partnership with Entrepreneurs Across Borders (EAB) and the UpMobility Foundation, broke ground in December 2024 for the Zion Entrepreneurial Village, a sustainable community development project in Martha Brae, Jamaica. Participants in the ceremonial dig included (left to right) Kivette Silvera, then-Executive Director of FFTP-Jamaica; Bishop John Persaud, Apostolic Administrator of the Montego Bay Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church; Martin Babinec, a Silicon Valley entrepreneur and founder of both EAB and the UpMobility Foundation; Ed Raine, President/CEO of FFTP; Sister John Kim, of the Kkottongnae Brothers and Sisters of Jesus, of South Korea; and Tamika Plummer, President of the Zion Community Action Group Benevolent Society. (Photo/Food For The Poor)

Food For The Poor, (FFTP), has broken ground on its first-ever sustainable community development project in Jamaica, marking a new chapter for the international relief organization.

The Zion Entrepreneurial Village, located in the Martha Brae community of Trelawny, will provide housing, education, training, and entrepreneurship opportunities aimed at helping residents achieve long-term self-sufficiency. The initiative is being developed in partnership with Entrepreneurs Across Borders (EAB), the UpMobility Foundation, and the Diocese of Montego Bay, which donated the land.

"This project represents a bold step forward," said FFTP

President/CEO Ed Raine. "Everyone knows us for building houses and schools, but this is about building communities - and Jamaica will be our flagship."

Sustainable community projects typically take about five years to complete and combine housing with economic, social, and spiritual development. The Zion project is designed to empower families through business training, mentoring, and access to markets, supported by EAB and UpMobility.

Martin Babinec, founder of EAB and UpMobility, said the site's proximity to the Falmouth Cruise Port offers a unique opportunity for partnership and visibility. "This is a special

beginning," he said. "Our goal is to create economic self-sufficiency and a model that can be replicated across the island."

Bishop John Persaud of the Diocese of Montego Bay blessed the site, calling the project a reflection of the church's mission to help families move from poverty to prosperity.

FFTP has built more than 36,700 homes in Jamaica over the past 40 years. The Zion Entrepreneurial Village signals a shift toward holistic community transformation, combining housing with education, skills training, and micro-enterprise.

For more information, visit [foodforthe poor.org](http://foodforthe poor.org).



## Golden Krust Brings Back Fan-Favorite Jerk Chicken Pasta For A Limited Time

Golden Krust, the premier Jamaican fast-casual restaurant group with more than 100 locations across North America, is spicing up the season with the return of its much-loved Jerk Chicken Pasta.

Available beginning October 6, the limited-time dish combines penne pasta with Golden Krust's signature jerk chicken, peppers, and onions, delivering the perfect blend of Caribbean heat and homestyle comfort. Customers can enjoy it at all Golden Krust restaurants across North America, through major delivery platforms, and on the Golden Krust Rewards App.

The menu addition builds on Golden Krust's legacy of bringing authentic Jamaican flavors to mainstream audiences. Founded in 1989 in the Bronx, New York - where its first restaurant still operates - the



Jerk Chicken Pasta is back on the menu at Golden Krust for a limited time. (Contributed image)

family-run brand has expanded into a household name. Today, Golden Krust operates more than 100 restaurants, offers grocery products in 22,000 stores, and is especially known for producing over 50 million Jamaican patties annually.

Beyond patties, Golden Krust's menu includes beloved staples like Jerk Chicken, Oxtail, and its signature baked goods, from Easter Bun to Spice Bun. With the return of the Jerk Chicken Pasta, the company continues to showcase the versatility of Caribbean cuisine while keeping loyal fans hungry for more.



## South Florida Turns Up The Heat As Grace Jamaican Jerk Festival Returns

South Florida's favorite Caribbean celebration returns bigger than ever next month. The 23rd Annual Grace Jamaican Jerk Festival, (GJJF), will take over Miramar Regional Park on Sunday, November 9th, from 1 to 10 p.m., promising a full day of sizzling food, soulful music and vibrant island culture.

Presented by Publix and VP Records, the Grace Jamaican Jerk Festival is the largest Caribbean food festival in the U.S., blending authentic jerk cuisine with the energy of a Caribbean street party and the warmth of a family Sunday dinner.

Festivalgoers will enjoy an exciting mix of culinary showcases, live entertainment, and cultural experiences, featuring:

- Live performances spanning gospel, reggae, and dancehall - with superstar headliners to be announced soon.
- Celebrity chef demonstrations on the Publix Culinary Stage.
- Cultural presentations highlighting the best of the Caribbean experience.
- An Authentic Marketplace filled with island-inspired art, crafts, and merchandise.
- And of course - all the vibes, flavor, and rhythm that make the festival a South Florida tradition.

"Each year, the Grace Jamaican Jerk Festival grows in excitement and energy, and this year we're raising the bar even

higher," said Eddy Edwards, CEO of Jamaican Jerk Festival USA, Inc. "Our focus remains on delivering the authentic flavors of Jamaican jerk cuisine while enhancing the overall patron experience - from food to entertainment to family fun. We want every guest to walk away feeling that this year's festival was truly something special."

For more than two decades, the GJJF has united the community in a joyful celebration of Caribbean flavor, culture, and connection. Thousands attend each year to savor jerk chicken, pork, seafood, and innovative fusions from top Caribbean chefs and vendors - all while enjoying music, laughter, and togetherness.

Festivalgoers seeking an elevated experience can indulge in the VIP Experience, an all-inclusive feast featuring premium cocktails, authentic Jamaican dishes, comfortable seating, and a prime view of the main stage - offering the best seat in the house for the day's electrifying performances.

The 2025 Grace Jamaican Jerk Festival promises to be more than just an event - it's an immersive celebration of Caribbean pride, culinary artistry and community spirit.

For tickets, vendor information, and VIP reservations, visit [www.jerkfestival.com](http://www.jerkfestival.com).



# Could Scottie Barnes Suit Up For Jamaica? ... NBA Star Opens Door To Representing Island Roots

BY CT TODAY  
STAFF WRITER

When Toronto Raptors forward Scottie Barnes sat down at the team's annual media day last week, much of the chatter revolved around his upcoming NBA season. But for Caribbean fans, one comment stood out: Barnes confirmed that he is seriously considering representing Jamaica on the international stage.

"That's definitely something I've been thinking about doing," Barnes said when asked about donning Jamaica's black, green, and gold.

Born in West Palm Beach, Florida, the 24-year-old Barnes is eligible through his father, Scott Barnes Sr., who hails from Jamaica. Although he has previously worn the red, white, and blue of the United States at youth levels - capturing gold medals at the 2017 FIBA Under-16 Americas Championship, the 2018 FIBA Under-17 World Cup, and the 2019 FIBA Under-19 World Cup - Barnes has yet to compete for the senior U.S. team, leaving the door open for Jamaica.

## A Rising NBA Star With Caribbean Roots

Since entering the league in 2021, Barnes has quickly



Toronto Raptors forward Scottie Barnes is reportedly in talks to join Jamaica's national team for the FIBA 2027 Americas Pre-Qualifiers. (NBA image/Toronto Raptors)

established himself as one of basketball's brightest young stars. The Florida State product won the NBA Rookie of the Year Award in 2022, made his first All-Star appearance in 2024, and has averaged an impressive 17.2 points, 7.5 rebounds, and 5 assists per game over four seasons. His versatility and energy have made him a cornerstone of the Raptors' rebuilding efforts.

For Jamaica, which has a modest basketball footprint compared to track and field, soccer, or cricket, the prospect

of adding a player of Barnes' caliber would be transformative. It could energize the program, attract sponsors, and inspire a new generation of players across the island and diaspora.

## Diaspora Pride And Precedents

If Barnes makes the switch, he would join a growing list of Caribbean-connected athletes who have chosen to represent their roots internationally and who shine on basketball's biggest stage. Chavano "Buddy" Hield of the Bahamas has built a reputation as one of

the league's top three-point shooters, proudly representing his island in international play. Veteran forward Al Horford of the Dominican Republic, a five-time NBA All-Star, remains a cornerstone of the Boston Celtics and a trailblazer for Dominican basketball. Rising superstar Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, with Antiguan roots, has emerged as one of the NBA's elite guards and a franchise face for the Oklahoma City Thunder. Together, they embody the region's growing influence in global basketball. These choices resonate deeply with diaspora communities, where questions of identity, belonging, and pride extend far beyond sports. Barnes' potential alignment with Jamaica would offer a powerful symbol of Caribbean excellence on the world stage.

## A Boost For Jamaica Basketball

Jamaica has had moments of promise in international basketball, producing NBA players like Patrick Ewing, Samardo Samuels, Jerome Jordan, Nick Richards and Roy Hibbert, the latter of whom briefly represented Jamaica before switching to Team USA. But consistent success has been elusive, largely due to resource limitations and limited exposure. Barnes' presence could change

that narrative. His star power would not only boost Jamaica's competitiveness in FIBA events but also draw global attention to the island's basketball program. With the 2027 FIBA World Cup and 2028 Los Angeles Olympics looming, timing could be ideal for Jamaica to stake its claim with diaspora talent.

## More Than Just A Game

For now, Barnes remains focused on his NBA season, where he hopes to help the Raptors bounce back from a challenging 2024-25 campaign. But his words have already sparked excitement among Jamaican fans at home and abroad.

Whether or not he ultimately suits up for Jamaica in the FIBA 2027 Americas Pre-Qualifiers or beyond, the very possibility underscores the enduring ties between Caribbean heritage and global sports. As Barnes himself suggested, representing Jamaica isn't just about basketball - it's about honoring his father's roots and embracing a broader identity.

And if he does pull on that Jamaica jersey, one thing is certain: the Caribbean will be watching, cheering, and celebrating a new chapter in the region's sporting story.



# Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce Falls Victim To Fake News

Jamaican sprint legend Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, who recently announced her retirement from global competitions, has become the subject of fake online posts generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI), that claimed she signed a lucrative deal with Netflix.

The 38-year-old icon, who secured silver with Jamaica's sprint relay team at the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo, told fans that the meet marked her final global outing. Shortly after, posts began circulating online alleging Fraser-Pryce had signed a US\$13.5 million agreement with Netflix for a seven-episode tribute series.

The false claims suggested the project would go beyond a traditional sports documentary, and instead serving as a celebratory portrait of her career. The story, widely shared both locally and internationally, has since been debunked by fact-checkers as misinformation.

Fraser-Pryce is not the first celebrity to be targeted by such fabricated AI-driven content. Similar viral posts claimed NBA star Ja Morant had secured a US\$13.5 million Netflix deal, American broadcaster Stephen Colbert had signed with the



Jamaican sprinter, Olympian Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, retired from athletics after winning silver in the World Championships last month. (ANDREJ ISAKOVIC | Credit: AFP via Getty Images)

platform after his late-night show ended, and billionaire Elon Musk had partnered with Netflix to fund youth innovation. All of these reports have also been exposed as false.

Netflix, one of the world's largest entertainment services with more than 300 million subscribers across 190 countries, has not announced any such project.

Fraser-Pryce does, however, appear in the authentic Netflix docudrama *Sprint*, which aired in 2024 and spanned two seasons, featuring several Jamaican athletes.

- Rewritten from the Jamaica Gleaner



# Cricket West Indies Pays Tribute To Late All-Rounder Bernard Julien

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has paid tribute to former West Indies all-rounder Bernard Julien, who passed away on Sunday in Valsayn, Trinidad, at age 75.

CWI President Dr. Kishore Shallow, in a heartfelt statement, remembered Julien as "one of the quiet legends" of the game whose brilliance shone both on and off the field.

Julien, a member of the 1975 World Cup-winning West Indies team, played a pivotal role in the regional side's historic victory - taking 4 for 20 against Sri Lanka, 4 for 27 against New Zealand, and 2 for 38 in the final at Lord's, where he also contributed a crucial unbeaten 26 runs.

"In all, Bernard played 24 Tests, scoring 866 runs and taking 50 wickets. His smooth left-arm swing and calm temperament earned him deep respect," Shallow said, describing him as a cricketer who brought "intelligence and integrity" to every performance.

Reflecting on Julien's decision to tour apartheid South Africa in the early 1980s, Shallow acknowledged the "difficult realities" of that era, noting that his life story reflected the moral and political complexities faced



by West Indian players of his generation.

"As we honor Bernard Julien, we also recognize the importance of reflection and inclusion," Shallow said. "It is time to view that chapter not through exclusion but through understanding."

He added that the day will be significant "when CARICOM undertakes a regional act of acknowledgement and pardon - a quiet but profound tribute to the full journey of West Indies cricket."

"His passing reminds us that a life devoted to purpose never truly leaves us," Shallow concluded. "Cricket West Indies stands with his family and all who loved him. Bernard Julien's legacy will forever endure."



## SPORT NEWS



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# Soccer Legend And Bob Marley Confidant - Allan "Skill" Cole - To Receive Official Funeral

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

Just before taking the stage on September 23, 1980, for what would be his final show, Bob Marley called on Allan "Skill" Cole, his manager and close friend.

"He asked mi to stay close to him in case him fall," Cole recalled in a 2010 interview with The Gleaner newspaper in Jamaica.

Three days earlier, Marley collapsed while jogging with Cole in Central Park, New York. He was diagnosed with terminal cancer and the show at the Stanley Theatre in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania three days later would be the reggae king's last.

Cole, his friend since the mid-1960s, died on September 9th at the University Hospital of the West Indies in Kingston at age 74. The cause of death was multiple organ failure.

Considered by many to be Jamaica's finest soccer player, Cole played semi-professionally in the United States for the Atlanta Chiefs

and professionally in Brazil for Nautico as an attacking midfielder. He was the youngest player ever to represent the national senior team, having made his debut as a 15-year-old.

His deft touches and impeccable ball control earned him a lasting nickname and cult status in Jamaica. In September 2010, then FIFA president Sepp Blatter presented him with a special award for his contribution to Jamaican soccer.

It was a bittersweet occasion.

"I really appreciate the award, but I think the contribution I could make at a national level is being ignored," Cole told The Gleaner. "Apparently, there are people here who don't want to see people like me in a certain capacity."



The late Allan "Skill" Cole will be funeralized on October 11th at the National Arena in Kingston, Jamaica. (Jamaica Gleaner image)

Cole had several brushes with authority which may have hurt his career as a player and any chance of him getting a coaching job with the Reggae Boyz.

There were rumors of him setting races at Caymanas

Park in Jamaica, which resulted in a lengthy ban from that thoroughbred track. In 2007, Cole and three men were arrested for attempting to smuggle marijuana out of Jamaica.

He was sentenced to 18 months in prison but that was quashed three years later without him serving time.

Cole's close friendship

with Marley also played a part in his stop-start soccer career. He toured with the singer as road manager for much of the 1970s and lived for three years in Ethiopia where he coached the national team.

Michael "Mikey Dan" Whyte, a member of the Twelve Tribes of Israel which Cole and Marley joined in the early 1970s. He toured the world with both men as Marley's chef. Whyte said Cole had a positive impact on Marley, who died in May 1981 at age 36.

"Bob was shy at first, an' Allan help build him confidence because he was more popular early in life through football (soccer)," Whyte disclosed.

Cole had written a manuscript for a book about his friendship with Marley. At the time of his death he had not found a publisher.

Allan "Skill" Cole will be given an official funeral by Jamaica's government on October 11th. The service will take place at the National Arena in Kingston, where Marley's funeral took place 44 years ago.



## ADVERTORIAL

## New Doctors Join Longstanding Palmetto Bay Chiropractic Practice

Coral Reef Chiropractic welcomes Dr. Benjamin Pepin and Dr. Kelsey Pepin to the team

PALMETTO BAY, FL — Coral Reef Chiropractic, a trusted name in holistic and chiropractic care for over 30 years, is proud to welcome two new doctors to its growing team: Dr. Benjamin Pepin and Dr. Kelsey Pepin.

Dr. Benjamin Pepin has recently joined his father, Dr. Mark Pepin, at Coral Reef Chiropractic, where he brings a fresh, integrative approach to chiropractic medicine. Specializing in extremity care and rehabilitation, Dr. Benjamin focuses on helping patients heal from sports injuries, daily aches and pains, and musculoskeletal dysfunction by combining chiropractic adjustments with movement coaching and nutritional support.

"I'm a new chiropractor thrilled to be back in Miami and in my father's practice," says Dr. Benjamin. "I believe in a holistic approach to health—addressing not just pain, but the root causes behind it. From adjustments and movement coaching to nutritional advice, I love empowering people with the tools they need to feel their best. I'm excited to bring fresh energy to the practice and serve this amazing community."

A graduate of Florida International University, Dr. Benjamin earned his Doctorate of Chiropractic at Life University in Marietta, GA. He is passionate about treating patients of all ages and educating them on injury prevention and recovery.



Joining him in both life and practice is his wife, Dr. Kelsey Pepin, who also received her Doctorate of Chiropractic from Life University, along with a degree in Exercise Science. Dr. Kelsey specializes in functional medicine and applied kinesiology, treating complex conditions such as thyroid dysfunction, hormone imbalances, gut motility issues, autoimmune diseases, adrenal fatigue, and allergic reactions.

"With a deep passion for integrative and holistic care, I love working closely with patients—especially those navigating chronic conditions—to uncover the root causes of their health concerns," says Dr. Kelsey. "My goal is to help people feel truly seen, heard, and supported on their journey toward lasting wellness."

Together, Dr. Benjamin and Dr. Kelsey take a whole-body approach to healing. They integrate a wide range of techniques tailored to each individual patient—focusing on addressing neurological interference in the spine, supporting the body through nutrition, and restoring function through musculoskeletal rehabilitation. Their shared mission is to create a space where every patient feels listened to, cared for, and empowered to take charge of their health.

Located at 9044 SW 152nd Street in Palmetto Bay, Coral Reef Chiropractic continues to serve as a cornerstone of natural, integrative, and holistic health in the South Florida community.

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## ICC Suspends USA Cricket Membership Over Governance Failures

The International Cricket Council, (ICC), has suspended USA Cricket's (USAC), membership with immediate effect, citing repeated breaches of its obligations under the ICC Constitution.

In a statement on Tuesday, the sport's global governing body pointed to USAC's failure to implement a functional governance structure, lack of progress toward recognition by the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee, (USOPC), and actions that caused reputational harm to the sport both domestically and internationally.

As part of the suspension, the ICC will temporarily oversee the management and administration of USAC teams to ensure continued support for players and high-performance programs.

"The decision, taken by the ICC Board during its meeting earlier, was based on USA Cricket's repeated and continued breaches of its obligations as an ICC Member under the ICC's Constitution," the ICC said.

"These include, but are not limited to, the failure to implement a functional

governance structure, lack of progress toward achieving National Governing Body status with the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee, (USOPC), and significant actions that have caused reputational damage to cricket in the United States and around the world."

Calling the move "unfortunate but necessary," the ICC stressed that its top priority is protecting the long-term interests of the game and ensuring athletes are not negatively impacted.

Despite the suspension, the United States will still be permitted to compete in the T20 World Cup set for February in India and Sri Lanka and continue preparations for cricket's return at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games.

The action comes just over two months after the ICC's annual general meeting in July, when USAC was given three months to hold "free and fair elections" and implement "comprehensive" governance reforms.

(Rewritten from CMC)





# FSU Experts Highlight New Frontiers In Breast Cancer Research For Awareness Month

As Breast Cancer Awareness Month begins in October, Florida State University researchers are spotlighting the disease from both the lab bench and the patient journey - underscoring how science and lifestyle together can shape survival and quality of life.

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer among U.S. women, with one in eight expected to face a diagnosis in her lifetime, according to the CDC. While early detection saves lives, FSU faculty members are pushing for even deeper change.

Qing-Xiang “Amy” Sang, Distinguished Research Professor in Chemistry and Biochemistry, is uncovering how proteins act as “fingerprints” that reveal cancer’s growth, aggressiveness, and drug resistance. Her discoveries are advancing targeted therapies and immunotherapies that offer more personalized, less toxic treatments. “Proteins act as messengers in the body...by



Get a mammogram this October – Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

tracking protein activity, doctors can detect cancer earlier and deliver the right treatment to the right patient at the right time,” Sang explained.

Meanwhile, Bonnie Spring, Krafft Professor of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine, focuses on survivorship. Her research shows that lifestyle - exercise,

diet, stress management—can reduce recurrence risk and boost recovery. “It wasn’t until 2006 that the U.S. National Academies advised quality cancer care must also promote the patient’s long-term health and quality of life,” Spring noted.

Both experts stress that prevention and survivorship go hand in hand: making healthy choices, staying active, and ensuring equitable access to advanced care can save thousands of lives.

## FREE MAMMOGRAMS

Meanwhile, CBS News Miami is partnering with community organizations to make breast cancer screenings more accessible this month in South Florida. The mammovan will be traveling across Miami-Dade and Broward counties in the coming months, providing no-cost screenings.

Organizers say participants must sign up in advance online to secure their spot. Anyone interested in receiving a free mammogram must register ahead of time through the official sign-up page. No walk-ups will be accepted.

## Upcoming Mammogram Events In South Florida Komen-Sponsored Mammovan

- **October 22, 2025** — E. Pat Larkins Community Center, 520 NW 3rd St., Pompano Beach, FL 33060
- **December 11, 2025** — Miami Dade Corrections & Rehabilitation, 3505 NW 107 Ave., Doral, FL 33178

## Additional South Florida Mammogram Events

- **October 8, 2025** — American Health Marketplace, 3215

NW 10th Terrace #211, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309

- **October 9, 2025** — CompletePet, 4120 W 91st Pl. Suite 500, Hialeah, FL 33018
- **October 10, 2025** — Conviva East Westchester “MammoLink at Conviva: Screenings on Wheels”, 7500 SW 8th Street, Miami, FL 33144
- **October 11, 2025** — God is Bigger Than Cancer, 12555 Miramar Pkwy, Miramar, FL 33027
- **October 14, 2025** — Sanitas: Homestead, 600 NE 22nd Terrace, Homestead, FL 33033
- **October 16, 2025** — Sanitas: Kendall, 7135 SW 117th Ave., Kendall, FL 33183
- **October 18, 2025** — Peterson’s Harley-Davidson of Miami, 19400 NW 2nd Ave., Miami, FL 33169
- **October 21, 2025** — BCOM Health Goes Pink, 168 N Powerline Rd., Pompano Beach, FL 33069
- **October 27, 2025** — Sanitas: Plantation, 180 SW 84th Ave., Plantation, FL 33324
- **October 31, 2025** — God is Bigger Than Cancer, 12555 Miramar Pkwy, Miramar, FL 33027



## Cholera Cases Surge In Haiti

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, (OCHA) has warned of a sharp rise in cholera cases across Haiti, with Pétion-Ville now a main hotspot.

Between September 21 and 25, health officials recorded 40 suspected cases and three deaths in Pétion-Ville, a major economic hub with many schools. In total, 66 suspected cases were reported recently in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area – a steep increase from previous weeks.

“This surge is particularly concerning, with the new school year set to begin in just two days,” said Farhan Haq, deputy spokesperson for UN Secretary-General António Guterres. He

noted that young adults, due to their mobility, make up most of the new cases, raising fears of wider spread to Delmas, Tabarre, and Carrefour.

So far in 2025, over 3,100 suspected cholera cases have been reported nationwide. Local health teams are investigating cases, distributing water purification tablets, and conducting awareness campaigns in neighborhoods such as Brisetoux and Bobin.

“OCHA, together with authorities and our partners, is working to ensure rigorous case monitoring and rapid mobilization of health workers to reduce the risk of further spread,” Haq added.



## Southern Jamaica Steps Up Prostate Cancer Screening For Men

The Southern Regional Health Authority, (SRHA), has ramped up its prostate cancer screening and education drive, offering hundreds of free tests across St. Elizabeth, Clarendon, and Manchester in recognition of Prostate Cancer Awareness Month.

Teams have been bringing screening services directly to men in workplaces, churches, and hospitals, aiming to break down barriers to testing and encourage early detection.

“All men 40 years and over should screen for prostate cancer,” said Dr. Carol Hamilton, Acting Non-Communicable Diseases and Family Health

Coordinator at the SRHA. “Early detection has better outcomes - less psychological impact, less financial burden on families - and saves lives.”

Prostate cancer remains one of the leading causes of cancer-related deaths among Jamaican men. SRHA is utilizing both the Digital Rectal Examination, (DRE), and the Prostate-Specific Antigen, (PSA), blood test as part of its screening efforts. Confirmatory biopsies are recommended when results suggest abnormalities.

Dr. Hamilton stressed that the campaign is also focused on dispelling myths and fears

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 19)

## Leading



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# HEALTH NEWS



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## Parents Urged To Watch For Warning Signs As Jamaica Records Rise In Suicides

The National Parenting Support Commission, (NPSC), is urging parents to pay closer attention to shifts in their children's behavior as Jamaica records troubling signs of rising suicides in the second half of 2025.

Her appeal follows the tragic death of Tyra Spaulding, 26, a former Miss Universe Jamaica contestant, who died by suspected suicide on September 23rd after publicly documenting her mental health struggles.

"If your child begins to act differently, do not dismiss it as typical teenage behavior. Investigate in a loving and non-threatening way. Children need to feel safe enough to speak," NPSC CEO Kaysia Kerr told the Jamaica Information Service.

Kerr stressed that both subtle and extreme behavioral changes can indicate emotional distress. She cited red flags such as sudden bedwetting, changes in appetite or sleep, restlessness, lethargy, withdrawal from social interaction, and heightened agitation. "Every child copes differently. Do not assume that



Tyra Spaulding, 26, a former Miss Universe Jamaica contestant, died by suspected suicide on September 23rd after publicly documenting her mental health struggles.

what is happening at school is just a phase. If you are unsure or confused by what you are seeing, seek help immediately," she said.

The Jamaica Constabulary Force, (JCF), said 44 suicides were recorded between January and September 2025, compared to 53 during the same period last year. While this reflects a 16.9 percent decline overall,

police warned of a dangerous reversal: July saw an eight-case spike, followed by 20 and 25 percent increases in August and September compared to 2024.

The JCF highlighted that men continue to make up the majority of cases, but suicides among women, though fewer, are edging upward. "This signals the need for urgent gender-sensitive interventions,"

the JCF said, calling for community resilience programs, counselling access, and tailored responses.

Kerr encouraged parents to utilize resources like the NPSC helpline and the Office of the Children's Advocate, (OCA), 24-hour hotline. "These lines are lifelines... If something feels wrong, trust your instincts. Do not delay. Early intervention can save lives," she urged.

Spaulding, who represented Jamaica in the 2023 Miss Universe pageant, was found dead at her Kingston apartment, according to the Jamaica Constabulary Force's Corporate Communications Unit. Relatives reportedly discovered her in her bedroom.

Her death came weeks after she shared candid videos on

YouTube about her struggles with mental health. In one post, Spaulding admitted she had previously attempted suicide and described how leaving her job had worsened her depression. "I was at the point where I made a plan to kill myself," she disclosed in her August 31st video.

The Miss Universe Jamaica Organization confirmed her death in a tribute on Instagram, calling her "a radiant soul" whose "light, grace, beauty and kind spirit touched every life she encountered."

- *Rewritten from JIS and People Magazine.*



## Weak Primary Health Care Puts Latin America, Caribbean At Risk - New Report

A new report warns that Latin America and the Caribbean, (LAC) could face up to 165,000 preventable deaths and US\$37 billion in economic losses if Primary Health Care, (PHC) systems are not made more resilient against pandemics and disasters.

The World Bank-PAHO Lancet Regional Health Americas Commission launched its report No Time to Wait: Resilience as the Cornerstone of Primary Health Care in Latin America and the Caribbean during PAHO's 62nd Directing Council.

It found that a 25-50% disruption in PHC over one to five years could result in 11,300 maternal deaths, 10,000 child deaths, 149,000 deaths from noncommunicable diseases, and up to 14 million unintended pregnancies.

"There is no trade-off between building strong primary health care and building resilience—they go hand in hand," said PAHO director Dr. Jarbas Barbosa, stressing that the poorest are hardest hit when systems fail.

The Commission issued a

five-point action plan, urging governments to:

- Expand equitable PHC models with culturally sensitive teams;
- Embed public health functions like surveillance and vaccination;
- Involve communities in decision-making;
- Work across sectors such as housing, education, and climate resilience;
- And secure sustainable financing with rapid funding mechanisms for crises.

COVID-19 exposed the region's weaknesses, with LAC accounting for 30% of global deaths despite just 8.5% of the world's population. Many countries saw essential services collapse by up to 50%.

"Governments must urgently put primary health care at the center of their agendas," said Jaime Saavedra, World Bank's Director of Human Development for LAC. "Protecting lives and economies cannot be optional."

- *Rewritten from CMC News*



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# Southern Jamaica Steps Up Prostate Cancer Screening For Men

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17) about prostate exams. “We are increasing health education in clinics, workplaces, and community events, explaining the signs, symptoms, and tests

Health Centre and Black River Hospital in St. Elizabeth.

Hamilton emphasized that prostate screening is available year-round. Men can visit health centres or hospitals with a



A driver with the Southern Regional Health Authority, Mr. Garth Bromfield, gets his Prostate Specific Antigen test done by SRHA Medical Technician, Ms. Michel Bright. (Contributed image)

available,” she said.

So far, the SRHA has partnered with Southern Parks and Market, the Chapelton Community Hospital, and faith-based and corporate partners such as Cumberland Seventh-day Adventist Church and New Yarmouth Distillery to reach men who might not otherwise seek care. Upcoming screening events are scheduled for Santa Cruz

doctor’s requisition and receive subsidized testing through the National Health Fund.

“Men should take advantage of every opportunity to know their numbers,” Hamilton said. “Prostate cancer caught early is highly treatable - and we want to keep our men alive and well.”



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