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Rally for Regis

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Photo Eddy Martinez

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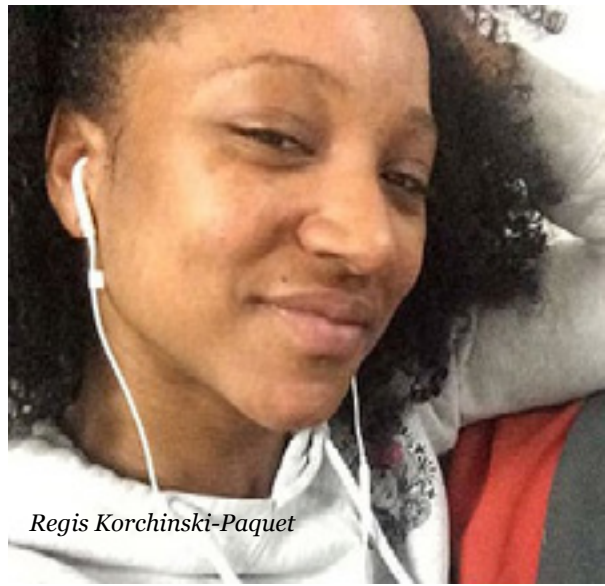
NEWS

After one year, family of Regis Korchinski-Paquet still seeking answers to questions about her death

Hundreds of protestors took part in a rally on Monday for Regis Korchinski-Paquet, a 29-year-old Black and Indigenous woman who fell to her death from her 24th floor apartment balcony last spring while police were in her home.

The protestors had gathered at Queen's Park for a memorial and a news conference before marching in downtown Toronto.

Speakers at the news conference denounced Ontario's Special Investigations Unit for clearing five police officers of wrongdoing in her death. The unit investigates the conduct



Regis Korchinski-Paquet

of police that may have resulted in death, serious injury, assault or the discharge of a firearm.

Jason Bogle, a lawyer for the family of Regis Korchinski-Paquet, said that the

family alleges there was police misconduct.

"We recognize that there is something that went horribly wrong on May 27, 2020. We are looking for answers. We have come forward and we have asked the SIU

to reopen their case. They have said no," he said.

"We are all here now, a year later, looking for answers because we have yet to get those answers," he said.

Bogle said there is an ongoing investigation into the conduct of the police handling of the call by the Office of the Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD).

Regis Korchinski-Paquet who died on the evening of May 27 last was reported to have been suffering from a mental health crisis at the time.. Her mother told reporters that she called police in the



Jason Bogle

hope that officers would diffuse the situation and take her daughter to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).

Korchinski-Paquet died minutes after officers arrived at her apartment that night. Her family has questioned the role police played in her death.

"Regis has not had

any justice," Beverly Bain, a member of No Pride in Policing Coalition, told reporters at the rally.

"It's really critical for people to be gathering today to remember Regis, but also to mark that after one year there has not been any accountability, any responsibility taken by the Toronto Police Service for the death of Regis," she added.

"According to her lawyers, according to the alternative investigations that were done, it's pretty clear that there is suspicion here, that the police did not do their job.

If anything, the police endangered her. There was a lack of care."

Preliminary study a 'first step' to dismantling anti-Black racism – researcher

Seven in ten Black Canadians have experienced racism on a regular or occasional basis, suggests a preliminary study that experts are calling a "first step" toward dismantling systemic discrimination.

Researchers at York University released

early findings on Friday from a national survey examining how Black Canadians experience race and racism across social spheres.

The interim report, produced in partnership with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, draws from the responses of roughly 5,500 participants,

including about 1,800 Black people, between March 21 and May 5.

The ongoing study finds that 70 per cent of Black respondents reported facing racism regularly or from time to time, compared to roughly half of Indigenous people and other racialized people.

More than one in

five Black respondents told researchers that they have been unfairly stopped by the police in the last year.

Lead author Lorne Foster said the research breaks new ground in compiling granular data on Black Canadians, in contrast to existing literature that combines all racialized groups into the catch-all category of "visible minorities."

"We see this data as really the first step in dismantling systemic racism, particularly anti-Black systemic racism," said Foster, the director of York University's Institute for Social Research

"With this type of information, it's difficult now to even deny or ignore the calls from the Black

community to address racism in the major sectors and institutions of our society."

Researchers blended traditional online survey techniques and new digital tools to gather a wide breadth of insights, including participant-submitted policy proposals, said Foster.

He and his team will continue to refine and expand their investigation as data collection continues through June, he noted.

But the initial results paint a clear and detailed picture of the extent to which anti-Black racism pervades Canada's systems of education, health care and criminal justice, he said.



Lorne Foster

Of particular concern is racism in the professional world, which Foster pointed to as a primary driver for socioeconomic disparities along racial lines.

Ninety-six per cent of Black respondents said that racism is a problem in the workplace, including 78 per cent who saw it as a serious issue.

Moreover, 47 per cent of Black Canadians told researchers they have been treated unfairly by an employer in hiring, pay or promotion in the last year.

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UWI Toronto Benefit Awards

Call for support for fundraising initiative to help needy students

By **Lincoln DePradine**

Michael Lee-Chin, the Jamaican-Canadian millionaire, understands what it's like to be a financially challenged university student because he's been in that position. So, he's encouraging support for an ongoing Canadian initiative aimed at raising funds for needy students to attend the University of the West Indies (UWI).

Lee-Chin says after a year of civil engineering studies at McMaster University, he ran out of money and needed help. He wrote the Jamaican prime minister requesting assistance and received a government scholarship, which enabled him to graduate from McMaster in 1974.

"My success is 100 percent attributable to the largesse of the Jamaican people in giving me a scholarship," Lee-Chin said last Saturday, while speaking at the 2021 UWI Toronto Benefit Awards.

The UWI, established in 1948, has a student population of more than 45,000. It has graduated more than 120,000 students – many of them now residing in Canada.

The Toronto Benefit Awards' ceremony, which is also a fundraiser for UWI, was inaugurated in 2010, providing annual scholarships to academically outstanding university students in need of financial assistance.

Lee-Chin, whose



Naomi Campbell



Dr. Graça Machel



Pamela Coke-Hamilton



Dr. Kevin Fenton



Wendy Beckles



Denham Jolly

investments include serving as chairman and CEO of Portland Holdings Inc. – majority shareholders in the National Commercial Bank of Jamaica – implored public support for the UWI Scholarship Fund, saying it will

help deliver "the next generation of leaders from the Caribbean".

The 70-year-old businessman and philanthropist, whose net worth is estimated at US\$1.5 billion by Forbes, was a lead sponsor of Saturday's Toronto Benefit

Awards.

Another lead sponsor of the online event was Scotiabank. The bank's partnership with UWI, over the years, has "collectively raised over \$2.3 million and has awarded over 600 scholarships to young students in dire financial need", said Anya Schnoor, Scotia's executive vice president for the Caribbean, Central America and Uruguay.

"We're here to make a difference and help shape the lives of many of our future leaders across our communities in the Caribbean," she said. "Youth are our future for both social and economic prosperity."

One of this year's scholarship recipients is Mikkel Wilson, a Trinidadian majoring in community health at UWI's faculty of medical sciences at Cave Hill, Barbados.

"I wish Mr Wilson, and all of this year's recipients, the very best in their studies

and in the future," UWI Chancellor Robert Bermudez said in remarks Saturday.

He, and other speakers, reflected on the impact on education of the COVID-19



Michael Lee-Chin

pandemic and appealed for contributions to the UWI Scholarship Fund. "Sincere thanks

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NEWS

Officer who kicked Black teen might have used excessive force – Ontario police oversight agency

A police officer may now have to face a disciplinary hearing seven years after a Black teenager accused him of brutality, Ontario's police oversight agency decided in a case that set off a bruising years-long legal battle.

In a new decision, the Office of the Independent Police Review Director found evidence exists to suggest Toronto Const. Chris Howes used excessive force during the incident in April 2014.

"I find there are reasonable grounds disclosed during the original investigation to



Selwyn Pieters

believe misconduct may have been committed," Stephen Leach, the independent police review director, said.

The case arose when 19 officers, acting on a tip about a firearm,

smashed in the front door of the Stanley family home. Howes rushed upstairs to where brothers Yasin and Faye Stanley were.

Legal documents show Howes kicked a

prone Yasin Stanley — there's a dispute over whether he was handcuffed — in the head at least once. Ultimately, police found no weapons and charged no one.

In March 2015, then-review director Gerry McNeilly found evidence of "serious misconduct" against Howes. McNeilly referred the matter to Toronto's police chief for a disciplinary hearing.

However, a senior police officer complained investigators had made a significant mistake regarding a statement from Howes, who had said he was reacting to a threat Yasin Stanley posed. McNeilly had mistakenly said Howes saw no threat.

Without telling the family, McNeilly reopened the investigation, then dismissed the allegations against the officer, prompting a court fight.

In its look at the case, Divisional Court rapped the watchdog for the secretive, back-channel chats with police. It ordered a fresh investigation, prompting the director to appeal.

The Court of Appeal then ruled McNeilly never had the power



to review his initial misconduct finding. However, the appellate court also said new rules now granted the director that authority. The Supreme Court of Canada refused to intervene.

In his ruling this week, the current director said it was in the public interest to take another look. After doing so, Leach said, there were still grounds to uphold the initial finding of wrongdoing.

"Despite the error in the original report, there are reasonable grounds to believe misconduct occurred," Leach said.

It's now up to Toronto's chief of police to decide whether the alleged misconduct was serious, in which case a tribunal hearing would be automatic. If the chief does not deem it serious, the two sides would have the chance to try to resolve the matter.

Selwyn Pieters, the family's lawyer, said on

Thursday Howes should face a hearing:

"Despite the fact that seven years has elapsed, justice requires that a full public hearing takes place in this matter and be adjudicated on its merits, and a decision be rendered with respect to whether or not Officer Howe violated the code of conduct."

Howes' lawyer Lawrence Gridin called the latest director finding a "fresh absurdity." His client, he said, had done nothing wrong and was considering his legal options.

"They've decided to ignore all the evidence from the second investigation, pretend it didn't happen, and on that basis reinstate their first flawed determination that there is possible misconduct," Gridin said. "The OIPRD has lost all credibility in this case."

The case also sparked controversy in Hong Kong in 2019 after McNeilly was appointed to advise the territory's Independent Police Complaints Council. McNeilly later admitted he had not told the council about the controversy over his handling of the Stanley complaint.

"We need to talk about it."

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NEWS 

Trudeau reaffirms commitment to fight racism on anniversary of George Floyd's murder

OTTAWA - Prime Minister Justin Trudeau reaffirmed his commitment to address anti-Black racism and injustice on Tuesday, as advocates around the world marked the one-year anniversary of the death of George Floyd.

Floyd a Black man, was killed in Minneapolis one year ago after then-officer Derek Chauvin knelt on his neck for 9 1/2 minutes. Chauvin was later convicted of murder, while three other fired officers are awaiting their trials.

The incident set off a firestorm of protests around the world as demonstrators called for leaders to tackle



Justin Trudeau

systemic racism within law enforcement bodies, including in Canada.

"Mr. Floyd's

death was a tragedy," Trudeau said, speaking to reporters during a press conference.

"And it was a reminder that there are still too many people living with anti-Black racism and injustice, including here in Canada."

He said the government has taken action after Canadians "marched to demand change" last summer, including establishing the Black Entrepreneurship Program and proposing to remove "ineffective" mandatory minimums from the Criminal Code.

"Our government

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Balarama Holness enters Montreal mayoral race

MONTREAL - Balarama Holness who is reported to be "a distant cousin" of Jamaica's Prime Minister Andrew Holness, has announced his candidacy in Montreal's mayoral race set for November this year.

Holness, the 37-year-old political activist and community organizer who once played professional football for the Allouettes, made the announcement outside City Hall last week, saying that his new political party, Movement Montreal, wanted to bring new

blood and new ideas to the table.

"What we really want to do is address the issues of environment, address the issues of culture, address the issues of transportation," said Holness, who has become a leading voice against systemic racism.

His grassroots Mouvement Montréal organized a 22,000-name petition that in 2019 sparked hearings by Montreal's public consultation agency on racism and systemic discrimination.

He ran unsuccessfully to become borough



Balarama Holness

mayor of Montreal North for Projet Montréal in the 2017 municipal election

He will be running against Montreal Mayor Valérie Plante and Denis Coderre, who served as mayor from 2013 to 2017.



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Fitting the description

Do all Black men in Canada, regardless of age, really look alike?

No, certainly not.

But in this day and age it is still seems hard to convince some police officers in the great Dominion of Canada that all Black men do not look alike.

Just last week we reported about an incident in which Justice Selwyn Romilly, a retired British Columbia Supreme Court judge was detained and handcuffed by police officers

as he was taking a walk in Vancouver.

The retired judge who is Black, is 81 years old and the policemen were looking for a “suspect,” also Black, but about half the age of Justice Romilly.

“Fitting the description”? The retired judge told the policemen who he was and the handcuffs were removed and he was allowed to continue on his way.

We are told that Vancouver police board will be reviewing this incident but we hope that the “review”

will not be the end of the matter.

At first, the news of the “look alike” retired judge was greeted with guffaws by many in Toronto’s Caribbean community. But the laughter soon turned to anger as people in the community realized that what happened to the judge was happening to many in our own community. Too many have been “fitting the description.”

Many Black men in Toronto still recall that as boys they were lectured by

their mothers “to come home straight from school” to avoid being picked up by the police as “a suspect fitting the description.”

Like “driving while Black,” the term “fitting the description” is well known in our Caribbean community.

It is unfortunate that Justice Romilly was publicly embarrassed by the police officers but the incident has brought to national attention a serious problem about which people from our community keep complaining.

Vancouver Mayor Kennedy Stewart and the city police have apologized for the “look alike” incident.

And in a statement, Mayor Stewart has noted that “all our institutions are based on colonialism and are systematically racist,” including the city and the police department.

Yes, they are systematically racist and we need appropriate action to ensure that innocent Black citizens in our country are not tainted as suspects “fitting the description.”

Ontario needs a Provincial Arts Strategy

By Jill Andrew

As a child, piano, drama, local singing competitions and dance literally helped save my spirit. Many children experience bullying at school and sadly I was no exception. However, the arts provided me with not only a safer space to negotiate healthier friendships but with a different mindset – one that afforded me the opportunity to think creatively, hone problem solving skills and to learn how to embrace the benefit of constructive criticism. It reinforced the power of play, my

voice, my respect for the hard work and commitment required to take risks in art-making, and it taught me how to work through diverse group dynamics.

Our arts and culture sector is critical to the social, cultural, economic and mental health of our communities. According to Ontario Arts Council (2020), arts and culture in Ontario directly contributed \$26.8 billion annually to the provincial economy, representing 3.4 per cent of Ontario’s GDP. There were more than 277,430 culture jobs in Ontario or 3.7 per cent of total Ontario employment. I am eager to know what the stats will look like next year or the year after since leaders in the arts have told me the industry could take upwards of three to four years to recover from the pandemic impact.

The arts must be considered an integral part of public health and during this pandemic, like never before, artists and cultural workers especially community-based spaces and creatives representing equity-seeking groups have struggled to survive. It is time for Doug Ford’s government and particularly the Ontario Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, Lisa MacLeod, to show up for them in substantive ways, especially the small and medium arts organizations, cultural institutions and individual artists many of who have lived with precarious employment, grossly underpaid and under-resourced well before the pandemic.

During COVID-19 although the

arts has been one of the hardest hit sectors and remains the sector that will be last to return to ‘normal’, it has remained the social medicine keeping us and particularly our mental health nourished during these challenging times with artists and cultural workers virtually sharing their craft with society often at no cost. Before COVID-19 the median income of Ontario artists was \$23,500, which is below the median income for Canadian artists (\$24,600), and far below the median income of all Ontario workers (\$43,600).

According to statistics from CARFAC Ontario, 50 per cent of Ontario artists are self-employed, which is significantly higher than the self-employment proportion of all Ontario workers (12 per cent). Black, Indigenous, racialized and women artists have lower median incomes than their non-racialized, non-Indigenous and male counterparts. Too many of our community artists end up having to leave their craft due to systemic disparities or are disproportionately represented in the gig-economy where misclassification of workers among other discriminatory acts often results in employees being yet again underpaid, under-protected in terms of workplace safety and left without benefits or any sense of security.

These conditions must change. Ontario needs a Provincial Arts Strategy and it must be a central feature of the province’s COVID-19 response and recovery. The arts have propelled vital conversations

on community safety, anti-Black racism, women’s rights, youth engagement, housing inequities, the environment, 2SLGBTQIA+ lives, and on mental health, to name a few. These conversations are public health conversations. They foster deeper community awareness of our diverse neighbourhoods which in terms builds stronger relationships among us. That is how we cultivate a sense of belonging in our communities. This is how we continue to learn to build trust in one another and to problem solve as a collective. It is through the arts that our histories, our narratives have carried forward through generations. It is how we can be sustainable and built a critical mass of leaders and community supports. It is how generations to come learn who they are, where they come from and where they still need to go. That is public health.

More designated funding for individual artists from government and granting institutions is crucial and the culture sector must include fashion and comedy - two central art forms currently ignored (which means no access to governmental funding) by the provincial and federal governments. Culture must be integrated into government policy as every ministry and community benefits from the jobs, revenue, tourism and heritage the arts brings to the table. Artists must be able to make a living wage and during the pandemic, we have heard calls for an artist basic income guarantee. Many of the larger cultural institutions use equi-

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It is time for Israel and the US to stop the genocide



By **Carlton Joseph**

Thousands of people celebrated the recent ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas, ending Israel's eleven-day bombardment of Gaza. Two hundred and forty-three Palestinians, including 66 children, were killed in the airstrikes and bombings and rockets fired from Gaza killed 12 people in Israel. Hopefully, this ceasefire brokered by Egypt and Qatar, allows the US to stay in the background since she is incapable of being an honest broker.

Since 1948 there has been the constant cycle of removal of Palestinians from their homes and lands followed by "war" intense massacre of Palestinians, followed by cease fires, then peace talks; then a period of calm; then the cycle repeats itself. Then we get the usual response from the US that Israel has a right to defend itself, followed by the US veto of any UN attempts at a cease fire, until some non-disclosed goal is achieved by Israel before a cease fire is adopted.

Historically this is the white supremacist, settler colonialism ideology that created America, Canada, Australia, South Africa and other countries where indige-

nous peoples were massacred, forced into slave labor, or slave labor was imported and white people were incentivized to come to the new lands and make it their homeland. This is precisely what is happening in Gaza today and it is supported by the US.

Some might take issue with my statement that the US is supporting genocide, apartheid and settler colonialism in Gaza. Since Joe Biden is now president, let's start with his 1986 address to Congress when he stated that Israel is the best three-billion-dollar investment the United States makes, and that if there were not an Israel, the US would have to invent a one to protect US interests in the region. From his current actions in the UN, he obviously maintains this position.

In 2006, Palestinian's election turnout was 77 per cent. Hamas won the 76 seats and the ruling Fatah party got 43 seats. Instead of supporting democracy and the people of Palestine, President George W Bush said the election was a "wake-up call" for the Palestine's leadership, but he hoped Mahmoud Abbas would stay in power. How can the leader of the world's democracies show such contempt for democracy? If election results don't matter, why should countries have elections?

Israel insisted it will not deal with an authority, including Hamas, Mahmoud Abbas, head of the Fatah party stated that he was committed to a peaceful settlement, Hamas leader

reiterated that his main objective is to end the occupation and have an independent Palestinian state. Finally, the UN, US, Russia and the EU withheld all financial assistance to Palestine after Hamas rejected conditions of non-violence and recognition of Israel. The unwritten rule is to accede to the demands of the major powers, regardless of the outcome of democratic elections.

A brief overview is necessary at this point.. The creation of a secular homeland for Jews was perceived as a solution to widespread anti-Semitism within Europe. As a result, in 1917 the Basel program was adopted. This established a publicly and legally assured home for the Jewish people in Palestine.

In 1935 the Nuremberg Laws enforced the persecution of Jews, racism, Nazi eugenics, and antisemitism which were the main ideological feature of the regime. Hitler eventually decided that all Jews were to be exterminated and an estimated six million, including one million children were murdered in gas chambers at Auschwitz.

After Hitler's defeat, in 1947 the UN United General Assembly Resolution 181 called for the partition of the British-ruled Palestine Mandate into a Jewish state and an Arab state. Why does Israel have a state today, and Palestine does not? Why is the two-state solution still being debated? What is the purpose of the UN if their resolutions are not enforcea-

ble?

A few years ago, in my quest to understand this unresolved issue, I travelled to Auschwitz, Israel, and Palestine. At Auschwitz, I visited the gas chambers, saw the glass case with human hair, the shoe polish, because the Jews not know they were going to be gassed. It was horrible and Hitler was a monster, but does this make Palestinians death by bombs acceptable? If Hitler is a monster, then Benjamin Netanyahu is also a monster, Israel is doing to the Palestinians what Hitler did to the Jews.

In Israel, I visited the wailing wall, where the Jews pray on one side and the Palestinians on the other. It is the most sacred place for Jews who believe it to be the only surviving structure of the Herodian temple; the other side is sacred to Muslims who believe that their prophet Muhammed tied the Buraq during the Night of Ascension.

At the end of one tour the Israeli guide reached the end of the Israel area and informed me that I should not go into the other area because the Palestinian markets were dangerous and he will not be responsible if anything happened to me. I decided to ignore his advice and went into the market. I met friendly people, and spent hours talking about cricket and soccer. The shops had the same products as Israel but at half the price. It was one of the most memorable days of my stay in Israel.

It was Friday

evening and I got the surprise of my life, the Jewish sabbath had begun and the Palestinian food markets, and bakeries were full of Jewish shoppers. I checked in with my Jewish guide who informed me that the Jewish people did not do anything during the sabbath and that they totally relied on the Palestinians during this time. Many questions came to mind- Why and how can people hate those they depend on for any period of time? Why would you trust "terrorist" to supply you with food?

I became convinced that it is not the Jewish people who hate Palestinians, it's the Jewish political leadership with their own agenda of genocide that keep the carnage ongoing. Racism and anti-Palestinian seems to be the ideology of Netanyahu. In his frantic effort to stay in power and avoid prosecution for corruption, he has cultivated an authoritarian type of racist nationalism. It's unbelievable that a people who suffered extermination under Hitler, who wants the world to remember the holocaust, is now doing what Hitler did to them.

A global pandemic is raging and only three percent of Palestinians have received the vaccine. Recent bombings have left thousands homeless, Gaza's infrastructure, from sewage systems to clean drinking water supplies, electricity and hospitals have been destroyed. Under these conditions the virus will complete the genocide.

President Biden's

reaction to this massacre was that the United States fully supports Israel's right to defend itself against indiscriminate rocket attacks from Hamas and that Palestinians and Israelis equally deserve to live safely, and securely and to enjoy equal measures of freedom, prosperity and democracy. He went on to say that Netanyahu had shared his appreciation for the Iron Drone System that was developed by the US and Israel.

Israel remains the one sovereign authority in the land of Israel and Palestine, and rather than preparing for peace and justice, it has been entrenching its unequal and undemocratic control. Israel is the largest recipient of U.S. military aid, receiving some \$3.8 billion a year, and I am concerned that Gaza is being used as a testing site for US military weapons. It is time for Israel and the US to stop the genocide.

I believe that the international community has to stand up against Israel for the carnage that is taking place in Gaza. Netanyahu's efforts to marginalize and demonize Palestinian citizens of Israel, pursue settlement policies designed to foreclose the possibility of a two-state solution and pass laws that entrench systemic inequality between Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel, must be challenged.

(Trinidad-born Carlton Joseph who lives in Washington DC, is a close observer of political developments in the United States.)

TRAVEL

CHTA says virtual marketplace a 'resounding success'

MIAMI -The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) is describing as a "resounding success" its first ever first virtual edition of the Caribbean Travel Marketplace.

"This virtual format allowed us to introduce the Caribbean to new buyers and travel advisors from over 20 markets that haven't been able to attend in



the past," said Vanessa Ledesma, the CHTA Director General.

The CHTA, which hosts the marketplace, said more than 6,000 meetings were held over three days, giving buyers from 20 countries the chance to connect with suppliers representing more than 150 Caribbean hotels and tourism-related businesses.

"We're looking forward to continuing the momentum as we move the region's hospitality sector forward together," Ledesma added.

The CHTA said that the event, held May 11-14 was especially meaningful for Caribbean hospitality professionals who have been diligently working on enhancing their products from a health safety perspective.

"The past 15 months have been the ultimate test of our resiliency and our ability to bounce back," CHTA President Pablo Torres said, adding "and bounce back is exactly what we are doing."

Torres said that traveller interest in the Caribbean is surging.

"We are back and ready to open for business better than ever," he said, later noting that the region has about 30,000 new hotel rooms in the planning and



Vanessa Ledesma

construction stage and is seeing a 10-per cent increase in its inventory.

"While the pandemic disrupted Caribbean tourism and the impact will be felt for years to come, "we believe the disruption will prove to be an interruption," Torres said, adding that the Caribbean has been a world leader in managing COVID-19. "We need to be inspired by our own resiliency."

The CHTA said that the market place conference platform and resources will be available online until June 30.



tdsb | Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement

Celebrating Black Excellence: TDSB Launches Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement

Tuesday, June 1
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

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- Dr. George Dei, Professor of Social Justice Education and Director of the Centre for Integrative Anti-Racism Studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), The University of Toronto.
- Dr. Carl E. James is a Professor and the Jean Augustine Chair in Education, Community & Diaspora in the Faculty of Education at York University.
- Dr. Nicole West-Burns, CEO of NWB Consulting, professional development consultant with a focus on educational equity issues and dismantling anti-Black racism in education.
- Dr. Njoki Wane, an accomplished educator, researcher, educational leader and professor at the University of Toronto. She is currently serving as Chair in the Department of Social Justice Education at OISE, University of Toronto.

Moderated by Itah Sadu, storyteller, children's author and managing director of A Different Booklist Cultural Centre: The People's Residence.

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ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

HERO now streaming on Cineplex and Prime Video

HERO, the feature film inspired by the extraordinary life of Trinidad and Tobago citizen, diplomat and judge Ulric Cross, is now available exclusively in Canada on Premium VOD in the Cineplex Store and on Prime Video in the United States and the United Kingdom., says a news release from Caribbean Tales Media Group.

The award-winning film is also available in the United States on Showtime's specialty channel Sho Next and



its streaming platform Showtime On Demand.

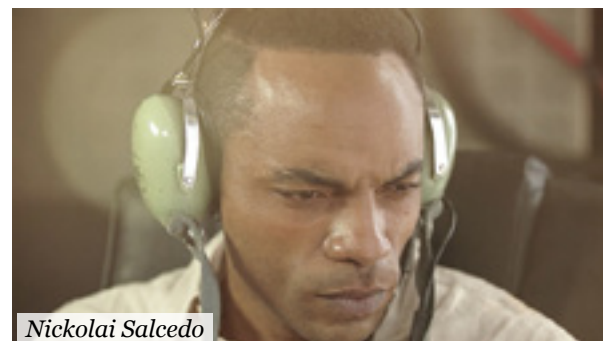
HERO opened to rave reviews at the TIFF

Bell Lightbox in Canada in 2018 and played in cinemas across the United Kingdom on a

40 City tour covering England, Scotland and Wales prior to the pandemic.

Following this tour, HERO went on to win multiple awards and was the Opening Night feature film for the Pan African Film Festival in Los Angeles last year.

"It's exciting to know that Ulric's remarkable life will be shared on a global scale," said film director Frances -Anne Solomon, CaribbeanTales



Nickolai Salcedo

Media Group is a multi-faceted group of media companies that produces, markets and sells

culturally diverse film and television content from the Caribbean and its wide Diaspora.

Ammoye releases video for "Give It All"

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Ammoye

Jamaica-born, Canada-based singer, Ammoye (Shernette Amoy Evans) has released the video for her Juno-nominated song, "Give it All."

It's among five songs, nominated for the 2021 Juno Award for Reggae Recording of the Year.

"When I heard that the song was nominated for a Juno award, it came as a wonderful surprise. I was elated and filled

with excitement," said Ammoye.

"This is now my fifth Juno nomination but this one came at a time when so much is shifting and changing in our world — with lockdowns, quarantine and not being able to perform live music. So this was a beautiful gift from the universe. A wonderful surprise.

"Getting good news, at this time, is so welcomed, reassuring and motivating; it just

lets me know there's light at the end of the tunnel and I'm choosing to take it as a sign that, in spite of everything going on right now, everything is going to be all right."

Produced by Adrian Hanson, for Donsome Records, the song, which, according to Ammoye, "is all about freedom", was released last June.

The video was directed by Ghanaian filmmaker Jim Resley.

Ògo Tàwa plans to create gardens of statues of Black Canadians across the GTA

By **Lincoln DePradine**

Khalidah Bello, a creative entrepreneur, wants to see more images in public spaces that honour the contributions to the country of Black Canadians.

Bello, founder and CEO of the non-profit Ògo Tàwa Inc., noted that while a few African-Canadians have had places such as schools and roads named after them, statues of whites overwhelmingly dominate outdoor public spaces.

“This disparity is really troubling,” Bello said last week as she addressed an online festival and conference.

The event, organized by Cultural Pluralism in the Arts Movement Ontario (CPAMO), examined anti-Black racism in the arts.

The vision of the project being embarked upon by Ògo Tàwa is to “make sure that Black Canadians feel recognized, cherished and honoured as valuable members of our society and who have really been critical to Canada’s success as a nation and have made an impactful influence on the country”, said Bello, who also is a cultural producer.

Under the planned project, Ògo Tàwa intends to create “gardens of 20 to 25 statues across the Greater Toronto Area”, Bello said.

“What we’re seeking to do is to create life-size and visible, tangible portraits that are designed by Black artist entrepreneurs. They would celebrate

the contributions that Black Canadians have made to events in all of Canadian society.”

Members of CPAMO, which is headed by Charles C. Smith as executive director, say the movement’s aim is to seek “to open opportunities for Indigenous and racialized professionals and organizations to build capacity through access and working relationships with cultural institutions across Ontario”.

The CPAMO festival and conference was addressed by various Black cultural arts professionals and stakeholders, as well as City of Toronto representatives such as Cheryl Blackman and Timaj Garad.

Garad, outreach and access program manager at the Toronto Arts Council (TAC), explained that her role at the council is to “lead the development of a new Black arts funding program and to also manage this program once it’s up and running”.

“The Black arts funding program has been proposed to address the current disparity in access to arts funding for the Black community in Toronto,” said Garad. “TAC recognizes the need for commitment to greater outreach and to greater engagement of the Black arts community.”

Garad said there are existing support programs available to artists, but admitted that “a lot of people just don’t know about them”.

She said what now

being proposed to be implemented would involve “targeted and structured funding”, with “sustainable support” for Black artists.

It would “simplify the process and remove barriers, so that people are not feeling like they have to jump through a bunch of hoops” to get funding, Garad said.

Blackman, acting general manager for economic development and culture, said she and her staff are “working very deeply on not only an awakening of our programming, but also on an awakening of how we approach all of the work that we do in the division”.

Blackman also holds the position as director of museums and heritage services. On this aspect of her work, at the Toronto History Museum, “we have been going through transformative change” that began before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Blackman said.

“We started looking at who we are. The fact that we are very unknown; that we have 10 historic sites that should be assets for all Torontonians; and that we should be leaning into this idea that we want to be able tell stories that reflect the past, the present and the future,” she said.

“We want to move from this notion that future should be dystopian. We want to make sure that we can fight against those kinds



Khalidah Bello

of challenges and that we are actually lifting up and elevating the

voices that have not been heard.”

Bello said the first public statue Ògo Tàwa is commissioning is of Joshua Glover, with the work to be done by Quentin VerCetty, an award-winning visual storyteller and art educator.

The project would receive “creative direction from West African master sculptors”, Bello said.

“We’ve been here in Canada since about 1589 and there is an underrepresentation of

the significance of Black people’s contributions to Canadian society – past and present – in the permanent life-size public monuments in the GTA,” she said. “These are things that we may not always think of but they’re quite important.”

Glover escaped slavery in the United States and arrived in Canada in 1854. He lived and worked in Etobicoke.

He died in 1888 at age 74 and is buried at St James Cemetery in Toronto.

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IN CASE YOU MISSED THESE NEWS STORIES

The following news stories appeared in last week's issue. See full story at TheCaribbeanCamera.com

Toronto Caribbean Carnival 2021 officially cancelled

The City of Toronto announced on Friday [May 14] that it is extending the cancellation of "in-person" major participatory events until September to continue to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Included in its list of cancelled outdoor events are the grand parade of the Toronto Caribbean Carnival, the Caribbean Junior Carnival, the King and Queen competition and Pan Alive.

The Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) has also been cancelled.

The decision to cancel these summer events, made in consultation with Toronto's Medical Officer of Health, the City's Emergency Operations Centre, Toronto Police Service and the organizers, follows the previous cancellation of all such events up to July 1 and supports the directive that "physical distancing is critical to stopping the spread of COVID-19," says a news release from the City.

Commenting on the cancellation, Toronto Mayor John Tory said "the City and the vast majority of Toronto residents are doing everything we can right now to stop the spread of COVID-19 and get vaccinated.

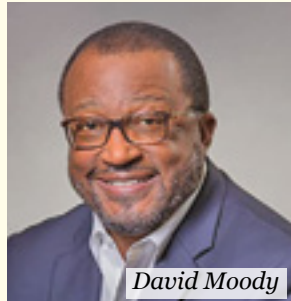
"Following the public health measures and getting vaccinated as soon as you're eligible will help us bring this pandemic to an end so that we can safely gather together once again.

"We will continue to support the City's major events through these tough times and will do everything we can to make sure they come back stronger in 2022."

'When we have true inclusion, everybody wins,' says David Moody at BDA Gala

By Lincoln DePradine

Twice in the last two weeks, trade unionist Chris Campbell had to



David Moody

take time off to receive awards in recognition of his contribution to the community and also to the construction sector.

The second of the two awards was presented to him last Thursday at the inaugural Building Diversity Awards' (BDA) Gala of the Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN).

The event was to honour "exemplary contractors, unions and client/owners, as well as industry champions, who are leading in diversity, equity and inclusion".

Keynote speaker, David Moody referring to the issue of inclusion, said "when we have true inclusion, everybody wins. Companies grow and so many great things happen".

Moody is President and CEO of C. D. Moody Construction Company, Inc., one of the largest African-American-owned construction companies in the United States

"Keep working on your diversity and your inclusion," Moody urged. "It is so important because everybody wins when we share. The pie is big enough for everybody. We can share and win."

In presenting the awards at the gala, John Cartwright – a TCBN founding co-chair – noted the work of Chris Campbell, who recently was recognized by the Black Action Defense Committee with a 2021 Dudley Laws Memorial Award.

Campbell is business representative of Local 27 of the Carpenters' Union, equity and diversity representative of the Carpenters' District Council of Ontario and a TCBN co-chair.

Campbell is "truly deserving" of the Community Benefits Champion BDA, Cartwright said. "Year over year, his work has engaged his colleagues and inspired his union to do more and to do things differently; to ensure that Black, Indigenous and other racialized youth and adults, including women and newcomers, know about, are prepared for, and can access employment and apprenticeships."

Other awards were presented to one individual, Kimoy Francique, a licensed electrician, and a mentor to many young people., and three corporations -Metrolinx, Crosslinx Transit Solutions and LiUNA Local 506.

Retired judge wrongfully detained and handcuffed

VANCOUVER – The mayor of Vancouver says he is "appalled" that police officers wrongfully detained and handcuffed a retired British Columbia Supreme Court justice out for a walk last Friday morning. [May 14].

Kennedy Stewart says in a statement he reached out to apologize to Justice Selwyn Romilly, the first Black person appointed to the court.

Vancouver Police Sgt. Steve Addison says in a statement officers were dispatched around 9:15 a.m. following reports of a man kicking, punching and spitting at people along the seawall near English Bay.

He says officers patrolling the area noticed a man resembling the description of the suspect and "briefly detained him to investigate," handcuffing him given the violent nature of the reported incidents.

Addison says the man was compliant and identified himself as a retired judge, and the handcuffs were "quickly removed."

"The man was allowed to proceed when it became obvious that he was not the suspect and

had done nothing wrong," he says.

Addison says the suspect was described as a "dark-skinned man" around 40 to 50 years old – decades younger than Romilly.

Stewart says he has contacted the police department's chief and board members, and the board will review the incident.

"All of our institutions are based on colonialism and as such, are systemically racist," including the city and police department, he says.

Romilly who was born in Trinidad and Tobago, was appointed as a judge in 1974, and in 1995 was elevated to the B.C. Supreme Court.

University of Windsor professor describes SAWP as 'racial apartheid'

By Lincoln DePradine

A program which offers short-term employment in Canada for workers from the Caribbean and other places, is a "nasty system", according to Jessica Ponting of Justice for Migrant Workers (J4MW).

Ponting made the comments while participating in an online discussion titled, "Understanding The Farmworker Program".

The webinar, in which calls were made for changes in the Farmworker Program, was organized by the Department of Behavioural Sciences of the University of the West Indies (UWI), in collaboration with J4MW – a Toronto-based migrant workers' advocacy group.

For more than 50 years, foreign nationals – including many from Mexico, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and Antigua and other member countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States – have been employed in Canada annually.

The Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) allows employers to hire temporary foreign workers, such as those from the Caribbean when local farm hands are not available.

But Ponting and other panelists, were scathing in their criticism of SAWP which operates according to bilateral agreements between Canada and the participating countries.

"The system is supposed to protect the workers but it doesn't," said Ponting, who is a community legal worker with the legal clinic known as IAVGO – the Industrial Accident Victims' Group of Ontario.

It's a "pretty nasty system" that's "designed to have a compliant workforce", Ponting added.

Fellow panelists Adrian Smith, Vasanthi Venkatesh and Evelyn Encalada Grez – all J4MU members – as well as webinar chairperson Dr Talia Esnard of UWI and moderators Moilene Samuels and Chris Ramsaroop of Toronto – outlined problems confronting the migrant workers.

The problems, they said, include exposure to diseases such as COVID-19; injury on the job; eating "unhealthy food"; and "inadequate" living conditions.

"There are serious problems with the program", including "system inequalities" that are "deeply imbedded" in the SAWP, said Esnard. "They still remain a disposable group of workers."

In the last few months, as many as seven SAWP workers have died in Canada, said Ramsaroop, a J4MW member and University of Toronto student. "

Ramsaroop said thousands of SAWP participants also have tested positive for COVID-19 and "many outbreaks" among the

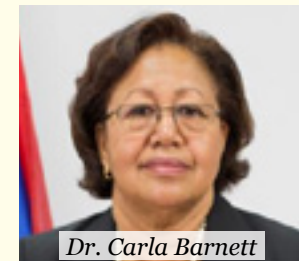
group "are not being reported".

Ponting, for her part, described agriculture work as a "very dangerous" industrial sector. "Agriculture is one of the most dangerous jobs in Canada, in terms of fatality," she said.

Smith, a J4MW member and a professor at Osgoode Hall Law School, said "racism is an indispensable feature" of the temporary farm labour program, which facilitates "the ability of the employers to continue to accumulate capital; to continue to run their businesses and industries, without due consideration of these workers, their families and their communities".

Venkatesh, an assistant professor in the faculty of law at the University of Windsor, referred to the SAWP as "racial apartheid".

Dr. Carla Barnett is CARICOM's new Secretary-General



Dr. Carla Barnett

Belize-born Dr. Carla Barnett, the first-ever woman to have served as deputy secretary-general from 1997 to 2002, has been elected as the new Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretary-General replacing the Dominican-born diplomat, Irwin LaRocque, who has been in the post since August 2011.

Barnett was elected during the virtual 21st Special Meeting of the CARICOM leaders, chaired by Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley, the chairman of the 15-member grouping.

The other candidate who was being considered for the post is the current CARICOM Deputy Secretary-General, Dr. Manorma Soeknandan.

Toronto School Board launches Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) will launch its Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement on Tuesday.

Guyana-born Karen Murray, the principal of the Centre told The Caribbean Camera that it will provide "multiple support for Black students, their families and the community based on our nine-point mandate."

She said it will:

- Provide support to Black students in TDSB schools to combat racism, navigate complaint processes, identify barriers to success and access appropriate resources (such as

scholarships, networking, mentoring);

- Use evidence to highlight promising practices and engage in meaningful research on topics relevant to Black students that are then integrated across schools and at the system level within the TDSB;

- Create professional learning in anti-Black racism and collaborate with other staff in facilitating learning in decolonization, Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression & human rights recognizing the similarities and intersections of various forms of oppression;

- Identify, develop and facilitate culturally responsive and relevant



Karen Murray

healing practices for groups of students;

- Inform changes to policies and procedures so that all students may benefit from the

learning and innovative practices developed by the Centre;

- Establish effective mechanisms for monitoring improvement

in the achievement of Black students;

- Provide annual accountability reports and recommendations to the Board of Trustees and staff;

- Support meaningful engagement and advocacy of caregivers for their children in TDSB schools and programs and improve communication to them about Black student success, system navigation and complaint processes; and

- Engage in strategic community partnerships related to education within the annually identified approved budget for this purpose.

Murray said the Centre will have about

20 staff positions, including a social worker, child and youth counsellor and five graduation coaches all focused on supports for Black students, improving students' experiences and identifying the ways in which anti-Black racism is operating in TDSB and offering possible solutions to eradicate it

The Centre will be the first of its kind in public education in Canada, according to a TDSB news release.

At the official launching, several prominent educators will take part in panel discussion about the the Centre's mandate.



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NEWS

Black entrepreneurs say access to capital among challenges to success, survey finds

OTTAWA — A new survey of Black entrepreneurs in Canada says widespread barriers stand in the way of Black Canadians who are looking to start and grow businesses.

The survey of 342 Black entrepreneurs found three-quarters say their race makes it harder to succeed in business, with

systemic racism, access to capital and the lack of a business network all cited as barriers to growth.

It found the top challenges are access to funding and financing, and only 19 per cent of those surveyed say they trust banks to do what is right for them and their community.

The survey,



Colin Deacon

commissioned by the African Canadian Senate Group and Senator Colin Deacon, also found almost half of Black entrepreneurs are unable to pay themselves from their business.

Meanwhile, it found that networks and support are critical to empowering Black

entrepreneurs and yet a majority say they do not know how to access supports or advice when challenges arise in their business.

Still, the survey says 87 per cent of Black entrepreneurs report that they are either very or somewhat optimistic about the future of their business.

Call for support for fundraising initiative to help needy students

from PAGE 3

to the supporters of the 2021 Toronto gala for the University of the West Indies. Your ongoing support for the UWI is deeply appreciated," said Bermudez, adding that students "are the ultimate beneficiaries of all that we do".

The outbreak of COVID-19, he said, "highlighted many inequities across, and within, societies. The education sector globally has been especially impacted and I am proud of the manner in which the leadership of the UWI, ably supported by our academic and administrative teams, transitioned to remote online teaching

to ensure that our students were not disenfranchised".

The event's theme was, "Meeting the Moment". The theme, said UWI Vice Chancellor Sir Hilary Beckles, "is really in fact a call to action"; something, he said, UWI has done in dealing with the pandemic.

"We did not retreat. In fact, we rose up to assist our governments in savings lives," Sir Hilary said.

He, too, noted that the principal purpose of the gala was raising funds to provide students with access "to quality higher education".

It's important the gala is held,

despite the inability of participants to meet in person, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said.

"I know virtual events aren't the same as being together in person. But, it's important that we still celebrate our accomplishments during this challenging time," the prime minister said in a video message.

"I know the past year has been difficult; but, for young people around the world, this pandemic has been particularly challenging. They've missed out on opportunities and milestones; and, for those who are already struggling, the pandemic has

made finding work, paying bills and getting an education even more difficult. This is the unfortunate reality for more than 3,000 students at the University of the West Indies. By being here tonight, you're helping to create change."

The co-patrons of the event were philanthropist, innovator and entrepreneur Dr Wesley J. Hall; and the family of the late philanthropist and businessman G. Raymond Chang.

Apart from raising funds, the annual gala honours leaders and organizations of Canadian and Caribbean heritage, or those "whose body of work have had an impact on the Caribbean".

The UWI

"continues to be a bright torchbearer", said award recipient Dr. Graça Machel.

Mozambique-born Machel, widow of late South African President Nelson Mandela, and international model Naomi Campbell, both received UWI Luminary Awards.

Others honoured included businessman and philanthropist Denham Jolly, who received the G. Raymond Chang Award; and the Toronto-based Centre for Addiction and Mental Health was presented with the Chancellor's Award. Vice-Chancellor Awards were given to business executive Wendy Beckles, CEO at Shepherd Village Inc.; lawyer and trade expert Pamela

Coke-Hamilton, who has been serving as executive director of the International Trade Centre; and to professor Kevin Fenton, a respected medical doctor considered one of the most influential Black people in Britain.

The gala, which included a performance by Grammy award-winning recording artiste Shaggy – a 2015 Luminary Award recipient – was hosted by CBC News anchor Dwight Drummond.

"Your support tonight can help countless students achieve their dreams, when it would have otherwise been impossible," Drummond said, reinforcing the importance of the fundraising aspect of the event.

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Judge sets aside H&C refusal in the case of a 93-year-old UK citizen



SUKHRAM
Ramkissoon

Under Canadian immigration laws, a foreign national who is in Canada may make an application for permanent residence requesting an exemption “**from any applicable criteria or obligation**” of the Act because of any hardship that person may or will face if removed from Canada. The immigration minister may then grant permanent residence “**if the Minister is of the opinion that it is justified by humanitarian and compassionate consideration relating to the foreign national.**”

Let’s look at the case of Mr. B, a 93-year-old, a citizen of the United Kingdom

who came to Canada in 2017. According to a recent decision of Federal Court, Mr. B applied for humanitarian and compassionate (H&C) relief soon after he arrived in Canada. He wanted to reside permanently in Canada. His daughter, son and other close relatives are Canadian citizens and well established.

In his application, Mr. B stated that he came to live with his daughter and her family, following the death of his wife. He is in good health, has three children, two in Canada and one in the UK. He has four siblings. Three of them live in Canada and relatives of his late wife also live in Canada.

Mr. B submitted several documents in support of a complete and compelling H&C application. Since his entry to Canada in 2017, he maintained his visitor’s status. At the time of the decision of his application, he held “implied” status, which means he was waiting on a decision of

his visitor’s extension application.

The deciding officer, who is a delegate of the Minister, found that Mr. B demonstrated family ties and that his pension income and proceeds from the sale of his home in the U.K. determined him to be financially stable. However, the officer concluded that because Mr. B acknowledged that his daughter would be an eligible sponsor, a successful sponsorship could be expected and therefore he could be sponsored as a member of the family class.

The officer also concluded that Mr. B could apply for a super visa which would allow him a two-year, uninterrupted stay while a sponsorship application was pursued. However, on the question of hardship, the officer dismissed Mr. B’s claim that a separation from his children would constitute a hardship since he had been able to maintain a close relationship with them for decades while he lived

in the U.K. As well, Mr. B did not provide sufficient evidence to show that he would need to live in a nursing home on his return to the U.K.

Based on the refusal of his application, Mr. B sought judicial review of the officer’s decision. At the Court hearing, he argued that the officer did not engage in a meaningful way with the evidence of his advanced age and need for support.

In allowing judicial review, the judge stated, that “*the Officer, in his view, erred in her assessment of the hardship Mr. B. would face because she unreasonably presumed that he had a network of family and friends in the U.K. On the issue of family, the evidence was that his son was not close to him and suggested that he live in a nursing home, and that Mr. B’s sister was also elderly. Further, there was no basis for a presumption that, after two years in Canada, he had maintained a*

network of friends. Lastly, given his age, it was unreasonable to assume that he would still have friends from his working life.”

The H&C application will now be returned to a local IRCC office to be reconsidered by a different officer.

In the many years of my experience, I have often seen applications like this which have been refused. Clients then had to seek judicial review which can be an expensive process. However, in order to challenge a negative H&C decision, a person must seek leave and judicial review from the Federal Court. By taking this route, a person cannot simply disagree with the negative decision but must argue there was a significant error or multiple errors made by the deciding officer. In this case, the learned judge found the officer was not sensitive in examining the personal circumstances of Mr. B and the hardships he would face if he returned to the U.K.

Clearly, the officer did not examine the objective of family re-unification, for an elderly person, who desires to be with his loved ones in Canada who will look after his needs.

It saddens me that the officer did not consider the established evidence which would have moved a reasonable person, in a civilised community to relieve the hardship of another. The officer should have stepped in the shoes of Mr. B which is a consideration that has been established in another Federal Court case, to better understand Mr. B’s situation.

All officers who are dealing with H&C applications should use their discretion in a way that truly reflects compassion.

SUKHRAM RAMKISSOON is a member of ICCRC and specialises in Immigration Matters at No. 3089 Bathurst Street, Suite 219 A. Toronto, Ontario M6A 2A4 Phone 416 789 5756.

Ontario needs a Provincial Arts Strategy

from PAGE 6

ty and diversity in their funding applications to secure dollars but their programming does not reflect their promises.

Our representation isn’t a funding prop. Race-based data on representation within senior leadership in arts and culture institutions and in grant recipients is needed. Artists require accessible spaces and greater access to ASL interpretation and we cannot ignore the opportunity to ex-

pand public art across the province and the benefits this can bring to further engage our children, youth and our elders. No more provincial cuts to arts and arts education. It has been proven time and time again that arts save lives, it builds community and it is by far one of the most accessible tools community can tap into to demand social justice while creating the sustainable futures we deserve to see.

There is a strong demand for more intentional opportunities for networking, professional development and mentorship within the arts and especially

for Black, Indigenous, racialized and artists with disabilities who are routinely underrepresented in so-called ‘mainstream’ arts spaces and this should not

come at the expense of artists already economically disadvantaged.

Dr. Jill Andrew is the Ontario NDP MPP for Toronto-St.Paul’s.

She is also the Official Opposition’s Women’s Issues, Heritage and Culture critic and is also a founding member of the Ontario NDP Black Caucus.

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FOCUS ON HEALTH

Staying fit may decrease risk of death from COVID-19, study finds

A new study from researchers at the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health suggests that improving your cardiorespiratory fitness level may help protect you from COVID-19.

The findings, published last week in the journal PLOS One, indicate that fit people have a reduced risk of dying from the disease.

"One of the really cool findings of this study is that anyone with an above low level of physical activity is better protected," says Rebecca Christensen, a Ph.D. student and lead



author of the study. "Running once in a blue moon won't protect you but if you are running regularly, you're doing fine."

The researchers examined a cohort of 2,690 adults from the UK Biobank Study and focused solely on the risk associated with death and the likelihood of catching the virus. They found no significant association between level of fitness and risk of infection. The study did not examine disease severity which would include hospitalization.

The data range was limited to ages 49 to 80, but the sample was large enough to look at COVID-specific death.

The team observed physical activity by percentile within ten-year age bands given the UK Biobank's limited variables. The lowest 20th percentile was categorized as low fitness; the 40th to 80th percentile was moderate; and above the 80th percentile was above average.

Researchers observed that even low-to-moderate exercise

seems to make a difference.

"Someone who just goes from doing no fitness to doing some fitness, could see appreciable benefits. And that's why we pulled data based on age and activity-level thresholds," Christensen says. "We want to see if you could just do something, will it have an impact? The answer is yes—as long as you're doing something consistently."

Physical activity declines with age but "if you're fitter for people within your age group, are you going to have a benefit? The answer is still yes," Christensen says.

A routine must include a cardio intense workout, one where you break a sweat or are breathing heavily says Christensen, but you don't need to be a marathon runner. The greatest benefit is in moving from inactivity to some consistent amount of physical activity.

There are known cases of athletes catching COVID-19.

Christensen says that the nature of their work increases the likelihood of catching COVID-19 as most are exercising in an environment with others in close settings. The severity of symptoms could be linked to the physical stress of the athlete's intense workouts, she adds.

"People who exercise a lot can actually have a decrease in their immune system by over exercising," she notes.

The World Health Organization recently doubled its recommended physical activity guideline. "We've got up to 300 minutes (about five hours) instead of 150 minutes (about two and a half hours) per week. So, we're starting to see the importance of physical activity."

Christensen advises, "the sooner you start, the better and then you'll build up. You can make quite large gains when you go from doing nothing to doing anything."



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Retired accountant Parker Ignatius Woods dies in Toronto at 77



Parker Ignatius Woods

Tobago-born retired accountant Parker Ignatius Woods died at his home in Toronto on May 20 last after a long battle with myeloma. He was 77.

Woods worked for more than 20 years with Canada Revenue Agency, retiring in 2013 as an auditor and was also actively involved for more than 25 years with Caribana, the Toronto Caribbean Carnival, his daughter, Nicole told The Caribbean Camera.

He served on the board of the Caribbean

Cultural Committee which ran Caribana and was for many years the treasurer of the organization. He was also a member of the Tobago Association, the Caribbean Scholarship Association and Mas' Players International.

Family members recall that he was a keen soccer and cricket fan and a frequent visitor to the Woodbine race track in Toronto.

Woods who grew up in Bon Accord, Tobago, worked as a police officer in Tobago before mi-

grating to Canada in the 1970s.

He leaves his wife, Shirley Hamlet, his daughters, Nicole and Julie, his stepchildren, Jillian, Debra, Lenore and Curtis, his brothers, Topin and Kenneth, and his sisters Shirley, Iola and Janet and several grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

A virtual "celebration of life" for the late Parker Ignatius Woods will be held at the Woodbridge Chapel of the Ward Funeral Home in Vaughan tomorrow.



Committee established to aid Barbados' transition to republican system

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados — The Mia Mottley-led administration has announced the formation of a Republican Status Transition Advisory Committee (RSTAC) to help plan and manage the transition of the island from a monarchical to a republican system.

In making the announcement late Saturday, the Cabinet said that acting Cabinet Secretary Hughland Allman will be responsible for servicing the committee.

Barbados has

had two previous constitutional review commissions in 1977 and 1994, headed by Sir Mencea Cox and Sir Henry Forde, respectively.

Sir Henry Forde's commission recommended the manner in which Barbados should settle all of the arrangements for the president.

Guided by this, the new RSTAC will be required to discuss rights, responsibilities and aspirations and to specifically include the youth and the Diaspora.

In a statement, the Cabinet said that over the next few weeks,

the public will be given an opportunity to send their ideas to the committee and to attend its public meetings.

According to the statement, the terms of reference for the RSTAC will review the previous work done on the subject, including the Report of the Constitution Review Commission, 1998, and the draft Constitution Bill, 2004.

It will recommend the constitutional requirements necessary to effect the change and to recommend the type of presidency, the powers and tenure

of the president, and to determine the ceremonial and legal implications of the presidential status; indicate the impact the presidential status will have on the public service and produce a report which is expected to have short, medium and long term, perspectives and which identifies the policies which underpin its work.

In addition, the report will also emphasise the primacy of identity consciousness of Barbadians, identifying the salient national characteristics



Mia Mottley

and encouraging their positive and constructive display and so seek to enhance national consciousness or the 'Soul of the Nation'.

The Cabinet said that the committee will also address the matter of individual freedoms reinforce the values of religious, spiritual and racial tolerance and

related values such as respect and dignity; reflect the rights, obligations, ambitions and expectations of the people of Barbados; examine the benefit and possibilities of Barbados' becoming a multi-lingual country since some of its neighbours speak languages other than English.

Trudeau reaffirms commitment to fight racism on anniversary of George Floyd's murder

from PAGE 5

is working with Black communities across the country to make sure nobody is left behind," he said.

"We will continue to take real action to fight systemic racism and create more

opportunities for Black Canadians, and for everyone."

NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh also weighed in on the anniversary of Floyd's murder on Tuesday.

"At the time, what we witnessed

collectively was one of the most brutal, widely-shared capturing of a Black man being killed by police," Singh said.

"We weren't insulated in Canada -- we saw that police were responsible for the deaths of Canadians, in

Canada, as well."

Singh added that while Trudeau knelt with the protesters, he does not think the prime minister has taken enough action in the year since.

"The material conditions for

Indigenous, or Black, or racialized people has not changed. Their experiences when it comes to the police has not changed," Singh said.

"A year later, after that horrible incident spurred so much

positive action and activism, demanding for justice, demanding that this end, Justin Trudeau failed to do that. And I want to note that, that that is wrong," Singh said.

"There needs to be action."

SPORTS

Canadian international Jonathan David helps Lille secure the French Ligue 1 title

ANGERS, France — Canadian international Jonathan David scored one goal and helped set up the other Sunday as Lille sealed the French league title with a 2-1 victory over Angers.

The win on the last day of the season left Lille (24-3-11, 83 points) ahead of defending champion Paris Saint-Germain (26-8-4, 82 points) and AS Monaco (24-8-6, 78 points).

PSG won 2-0 at



Jonathan David

Brest while Monaco drew 0-0 at Lens.

David opened the Lille scoring in the

10th minute at Stade Raymond Kopa, put in alone by Renato Sanches before slipping

a low shot under Angers goalkeeper Paul Bernardoni. It was David's 13th goal of the season, adding to his Canadian record total for season scoring in one of Europe's top five leagues.

The 21-year-old from Ottawa set the stage for the second goal when he won a penalty in the 45th minute after going down in contact with Bernardoni. Turkish forward Burak Yilmaz

slotted the penalty home in first-half stoppage time.

Angers scored a consolation goal in second-half stoppage time.

The Lille players rushed onto the field at the final whistle to celebrate in the empty stadium.

It marked the fourth French title for Lille and first since 2011. PSG had won seven of the last eight French titles.

David, who came to Lille last August from Belgium's Gent, had a slow start to his first season in France, failing to score in his first 10 league outings. But he then came on strong, forming a dangerous partnership with Yilmaz.

On the international front, David has scored 11 goals in 12 appearances for Canada. He is the first Canadian male to win the French title.

Aaron Brown and Andre De Grasse reach podium as Diamond League season opens

Canadian sprinter Aaron Brown won silver in the 200-metre final in Diamond League action, while fellow Canuck Andre De Grasse took bronze at the meet in Gateshead,

England, on Sunday. Brown, from Toronto, finished with a time of 20.79 seconds, while De Grasse, a native of Markham, Ont., finished in 20.85 seconds.

U.S. sprinter Kenneth Bednarek won gold (20.33), pulling away late from the rest of the competition.

In other action, Canada's Matt Hughes finished 11th

in the 3000-metre steeplechase earlier in the day. American Hillary Bor won the race with a time of eight minutes and 30.2 seconds, followed by Kenya's Leonard



Aaron Brown

Andre De Grasse

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Djilali Bedrani finishing in third (8:32.04).

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Pandemic creating logistical nightmares for Cricket West Indies

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados — Cricket West Indies says the COVID-19 pandemic has created a chaotic situation with airlift, which has forced the regional board to resort to cumbersome routes to get players from their respective territories.

Cricket operations manager, Roland Holder, said that with some borders in the Caribbean still closed and limited flights available, the task of transporting players and officials had become even more difficult and in some cases, more expensive.

“From where we sit, we’ve had to fly persons through the US to get them into various [Caribbean] countries, whether it’s Antigua, whether it’s St Lucia,” Holder said.

“We’ve had to fly people through the US. There are almost no flights coming out of Trinidad so you can’t put somebody on an airplane on a daily basis and say ‘hey, you need to get to point A or B.’ So yes, there are challenges.

“It’s more expensive, it’s more time consuming. Your journey in some instances will take even longer.”

Border closures have become more widespread, not only in the Caribbean but globally, as respective governments have used the measure as part of their overall COVID-19 regulations to combat the spread of the virus.

As a result, CWI has faced a logistical nightmare, and have resorted mainly to the



West Indies Players

use of charters to move players to tournaments and series.

The major fallout last year at the height of the pandemic was the scrapping of the entire international home schedule, resulting in massive financial losses for CWI.

However, the regional governing body managed to stage the Super50 last February and also host Sri Lanka for a full series, with both events hosted in Antigua.

West Indies are now poised to welcome South Africa, Australia and Pakistan over the next three months and Holder said it was critical CWI executed the upcoming tours successfully amid the ongoing pandemic challenges.

“Last year we had no international cricket in the Caribbean so we have one (Sri Lanka) under our belt now,” the former West Indies batsman and Barbados captain told Starcom Radio’s Mason and Guest.

“We’re hoping to get these three tours

underway which of course would generate some income for us and unfortunately, you may just have to spend some of that income on charter flights and COVID testing etc but it’s the organisation we are. We are a cricket organisation so we need to be putting on cricket.”

South Africa arrive on June 1 for two Tests in St Lucia from June 10-24, before heading to Grenada for five Twenty20 Internationals from June 26 to July 3.

Australia then follow for a five-match T20I series in St Lucia from July 9-16 before heading to Barbados for three One-Day Internationals from July 20-24.

And Pakistan round off the home schedule when they take on the hosts in another five-match T20I series from July 27 to August 3 in Barbados and Guyana, before playing two Tests in Jamaica from August 12-24.

Holder said even the international teams coming into the

Caribbean had faced difficult logistical challenges.

“South Africa can only get as far as St



Roland Holder


Martin so we have to move them from St Martin into St Lucia,” he explained.

“Australia don’t wish to go through the various airports and run the risk of being infected, so they are

chartering a flight from Down Under.

“Pakistan are coming from the UK so they’re somewhat easier. There’s a flight from Manchester that will get them to their first port of entry.”

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