

An Urgent Appeal To Caribbean Voters

By David Parks

With the upcoming November's general election, there is an urgent appeal to all Greater Hartford Caribbean voters. In particular, why the appeal to Caribbean voters?

There have been waves of Caribbean immigrants who, have become citizens of the United States, in recent years and are anxious to vote.

In fact, there is a sharp shift in the composition of the large Caribbean population—now bursting the seams of the fifth-generations. They by far have outgrown the early beginnings of the

Caribbean farm workers. Now there are scores of Caribbean voters in the various industries, institutions, professions, and corporations. They vote in every election and are making an impact.

And don't forget the Caribbean voters in Connecticut's major cities, particularly Hartford. These are informed voters who are entering the polls—they represent large blocks of homeowners, entrepreneurs who are empowered to take the time to go to the polls but after elections, these voters soon realize that the political candidates for whom they voted do not have their community's best interests in mind.

But the question remains, how long will some area politicians continue to play the hide-and-seek game with immigrant voters. Consider this, there is a long-standing folklore that underscores that these immigrants are the "sleeping giants," unaware of their political clout, claiming that they are not sophisticated in the political way of life and politics of America, until they awaken!

As election time comes, these politicians approach the Caribbean community with their dancing and playing the fiddles to win their votes. These politicians do not reach out to the Caribbean com-

munity with a plan or proposal, inquiring to better understand their community, issues impacting for example, Caribbean families, the plight of new arrival West Indian students in the school systems.

Do the politicians understand the issues of their constituents and are they making their quality of life happier?

Well, now that a large number of Caribbean voters are citizens, registered to vote and are voting; it's time to hold the politicians accountable—what have they done for your community and what are they prepared to do for your community?

Let's become informed voters and do not continue to be used by those politicians who do not have your community needs at heart.

Before you go to the polls to vote, know what the political candidates are prepared to do for your community. Stop the game some politicians play with an element of surprise—have a boycott with voting bloc of voters ready and committed to vote out politicians who are insensitive to the cultural mix of your community.

Why should you vote for

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Remembering A 'Phenomenal' Woman: Catherine "Cathy" Harrison-Tomlinson



Catherine "Cathy" Harrison-Tomlinson

By Paulette Blythe

A phenomenal woman for all seasons, Catherine Harrison-Tomlinson "Cathy" or "The Cake Lady" as she was affectionately known, was memorialized on Sunday, October 13, 2019 at St Martin's Episcopal Church, 290 Cornwall Street, Hartford, CT. Indeed, her memorial service was a celebration of a life well lived. She was an extraordinary woman, wife, mother, grandmother, aunt, cousin, and a friend who touched many lives.

Cathy Harrison-Tomlinson of Hartford CT, beloved wife of 53 years to Henry Tomlinson was born in Linstead, St Catherine, Jamaica, West Indies on October 10, 1942 and died on Monday, October 7, 2019—three

days before her 77 birthday. She migrated to the United States of America as a teenager, completed her education in New York City, and graduated Cum Laude from the Collegiate Business Institute.

She was a woman of substance who loved her family and took her duties seriously. In 1964, Cathy left the bright lights of New York at age 22 and returned to Jamaica to care for her ailing father.

While in Jamaica, Cathy rekindled her love for her country's culture and became a participant in Jamaican festival and cultural expositions and won first prize for her design of a float depicting the "Linstead market" and traditional costumes.

In 1972, she returned to the United States, settled in Hartford,

Connecticut, and was instrumental in establishing a chapter of the Jamaica Progressive League along with her lifelong friend, Algon Grange. She served as an executive secretary for the Jamaica Progressive League for three years and was elected twice as its president.

A trendsetter, she was the first female to become president of a West Indian organization in the Greater Hartford area; first Jamaican woman who ran for a seat in the Connecticut State Legislature; served on the Hartford West Indian Independence Celebration Committee for many years; served on the Hartford Policy Advisory Council, Parish Council, and PTA at St. Justin's Church and school; and helped to form neighborhood watch groups in the Blue Hills neighborhood.

Cathy was an Episcopalian, a woman of God, to whom no task was too difficult, no request was ever an imposition. This led to many influential and not-so-influential people arriving at her home at Blue Hills Avenue over the years as if on a pilgrimage. These included, a succession of prime ministers of Jamaica who visited her not only to pay their respect, but also to seek her advice on matters relating to cultural, social, economic, and political issues in her homeland.

In 1977, Cathy represented the Jamaica Progressive League at the formation and the launching of the National Association of Jamaican and Supportive Organizations, NAJASO. She was elected executive secretary and served in that post for six years under the leadership of the late Rev.

Collin Bennett.

In 2005, Cathy was elected president of NAJASCO and served for two consecutive terms and until years ago was still active. She was an executive secretary by profession. Although she was retired, she continued to serve on many boards. She was loved and a valued member at the St Martin's Episcopal Church, where she served as senior warden for many years until the time of her death. Her "short-hand" writing skills—a dying art, made her a legend in her profession. This ability served her well as an excellent note taker during many vestry meetings and other congregational meetings.

Cathy's multi-talents extended to her culinary skills. She was renowned for her artistic and creative baking and cake decorative ability. She baked many wedding cakes over the years. Every member of the St. Martin's Church, especially the men on Fathers' Day, have been the recipients of Ms. Cathy's famous rum cakes and delicious pastries. She had the remarkable skill for making the ordinary to taste extraordinary.

Speaking about Cathy, the Reverend Canon Austin during his delivery of his sermon said: "On Friday October 7 our worlds were dealt a terrible blow. The news of Cathy's death sent a shock wave in the world of many people. Vibrant Cathy, friendly Cathy, multi-talented Cathy, full-of-love-for-people Cathy, was gone. Reverend Austin reminded his hearers of the popular phrase, "Here today, and gone tomorrow," was now changed to "Here today, gone today."

Tears rushed like a tide

against the eyelids of many in the audience listened to the various renditions of songs, tributes, and citations given in honor of the life of this beautiful and selfless woman. Cathy loved her sons and grandchildren with a love that knew no bounds. She knew and stressed the importance of education and made sure that she cultivated the same values in her grandchildren. They knew when they were with her homework was first.

During his tribute and reflecting on Cathy's life, Rudy Cohen captured the essence of this exceptional woman when he highlighted that the Lord had blessed her with many talents. With her multi-talents she served her family, church, community, and her God with a determined sense of purpose.

Extending into the community, she was one of the founding members of the well-known "Humming Birds" group. For many years she helped to keep Jamaica's cultural, historical, and musical heritage alive with melodious renditions of cumina, mentor, folklore music and adept at multi-tasking. Simultaneously, she was a strong and determined force behind the organization and promulgation of the West Indian Independence celebrations. She enjoyed designing parade floats and costumes.

In his closing remarks Cohen gave a charge to her sons: Write a book entitled, "Service: the Life and Times of Our Mother, Cathy Tomlinson."

Over the years she received many acknowledgments for her dedication in serving her community, here in the United States and abroad.

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Harrison-Tomlinson

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kind of dedication and leadership will be very hard to replace but it can be emulated.

This was evidence in the numerous awards and citations including: a Medal of Honor for Meritorious Service to Overseas Community in 1980 that she received from the Government of Jamaica and the Jamaica National Movement Portia Simpson-Miller Award for Female Leadership in 2010; several Resolutions and Citations that were issued posthumously in honor of her life’s work.

The overcrowded church was a testimony to her spirit of giving selflessly. She was a woman

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candidates who do not include their advertising campaign ads in your frequently read neighborhood newspaper?

Before the general election on November 5, and before you go to the polls to vote, make sure you get hold of all the neighborhood newspapers, those in English and Spanish, observe where the political candidates put their campaign advertisement.

f they isolate your community with their advertising ad campaign, they do not deserve your vote. Remember your vote counts and your one vote is precious; you can make a difference.

By Leon Fraser

I salute all people that identify being of African descent, and have made a decision to remain in these United States, trying to integrate in the mosaic of their community despite unfair treatments continually meted out to them in this “land of the free.”

The decision to remain in this country is a manifestation of other smaller decisions that brought us all to this particular geographic locale.

Generations of Afro-Caribbean roots are transplanted in this country; they too experience the entrenched inequalities and the American racial/ethnic realities that typify the country.

Can it be said that their life form here is nature or nurture? And it also brings into sharp focus an awareness of the “separate and unequal” attitudes toward people of African descent connected more to

for all season.

God used Cathy to touch our lives. Our world was blessed to have her for 77 years. To all who are lucky to have the privilege of knowing her, to have loved her, and to have been covered under the huge tent of Cathy’s friends, lost a very special friend. Cathy passing will leave a void in the lives of all.

She is survived by her husband Henry, sons: Derrill and Andre, grandchildren: Robert, Dylan, Kaylana, Angela, and Shayla, daughter-in-law Melissa; a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Caribbean Voters

Let’s boycott voting for some politicians with a bloc of voters—vote them out of office and let your voice be heard.

At this upcoming election, every organization, family, and friend ought to set up a buddy calling system and remind folks to get out and vote.

Take time off the job and get to the polls. Take a stand, exercise the power of your one vote and send a strong message to those politicians who do not care about your community building.

Why can’t we have Caribbean representations around the table? Why should you vote for candidates who just want you to vote for them but who do not care

about your community, no commitment to ensure that your community’s needs and concerns are also presented at the table.

As voters, we own huge amounts of real estate properties and we pay huge amount of taxes without representation. Why are our concerns not on the agenda?

Residents’ representation of every neighborhood/town ought to be a part of the agenda. How else will politicians unite, for example, a divided Hartford and included Caribbean representation in meaningful roles, not playing after-thought roles?

Let’s not forget the fact that we all originate from immigrants who traveled from far-away

countries in order to make a better life for themselves and families—all have contributed and continue to make America dynamic and enriched for all.

We must make sure that everyone is represented. We must ensure that every constituent is represented at the table and has a voice.

Certainly, we are enriched by the diversity of our cultures, and values.

Get out and vote November 5.

November 5 Election:
You Must Make A Selection

integration rather than segregation.

Indisputable, after 200-plus years of political separation from the UK, people of color make up the base of the social pyramid of the US to the point that they now vie for high and higher offices in the political realm.

Many who identify as African Americans embrace the flag, sing the Star-Spangled Banner, yet they can’t find a reason to vote. Yes, it might be a thinking that their one vote doesn’t add up to the one-man one-vote that this country upholds dearly. We must remember, however, this is a republic, as clearly stated in the pledge.

People, the reality is that you must make a selection in an election despite any appearance of impropriety. The ballot box is the weapon of choice. It is affordable and available to almost everyone.

I’d like to propose that whenever an individual opens a social media account he or she should also register to vote. And a

next logical step is to become informed about the viewpoints of candidates vying for an office.

Voters should make every effort to find out about the selected candidates and their black agenda: What are their opinions and voting records on issues that affect you as a resident of the city and state? What are the candidates’ alliances? What is their personal investment portfolios status?

All that and more are significant when candidates running for office approach you with a sticker and a smile to capture your vote during an election season, and come into play when you are alone with your thoughts at the ballot box.

An analysis of voting data shows that even with their biases no electoral office in this country can be won without the input of the Afro-American electorate, the educated sectors of society, the progressive African American votes, and black women voters.

The mainstream masters

have projected a multitude of negatives about black women, and of course the social nurturing that has seeped into the behavior of the black man. This now creates a different facet with which the black woman now has to defend.

This puts the trust factor just above foundation in the necessary alliance needed to forge a path forward, and there are many “good intentions” that will nurture a distracted mirage so as to avoid a conjoined unity.

So my city dwellers, do you know your city Council member? Are you a member of the human race, or a human member in a rat race? Can you, or will you vote on an ordinance or an action to allow felons to vote?

What does your Council member have to say about that? Have you heard your senator speak about gun control or immigration? Have they said anything about the school in your area that is closing?

If the progressive thinkers are not yet beating the bushes so as to energize the dormant and recalcitrant members of their ethnic minority, then whenever the vote for funding comes around our folks will be there to see the funding go elsewhere.

Without our participation in the political processes and our one individual vote, the greatness of a mighty racial/ethnic group can slowly fade away or burnished, and there could be no going back. You must cast your vote in elections!

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Here Come The Indians

By Jim Daniels

Approximately 31 million Indians live outside of India and about 50,000 of them – the recently migrated and citizens of long standing, gathered in Houston on September 22 to listen to Indian Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi. No foreign political leader had ever been so welcomed in the United States. President Trump joined him in Houston.

These many overseas supporters are sure to bolster Modi’s support at home and irritate his detractors. For those seeking political office in the US, however, the message is that this support may be accessible if they are well disposed to India’s concerns.

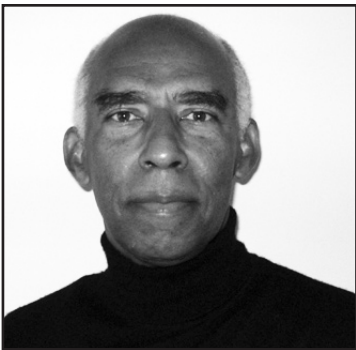
As a group, Indians are well educated and have a higher percentage with at least a four-year degree compared to whites; higher on average household income compared to whites, and even more post-graduate degrees compared to whites. They are assertive and increasingly comfortable in their own skin.

According to the Migration Policy Institute (MPI), immigrants from India first arrived in the United States in small numbers during the early 19th century, primarily as low-skilled farm laborers. They also around that time began arriving throughout the Caribbean.

In recent decades the population has grown substantially, with 3.18 million Indian immigrants and US-born citizens resident in the United States as of 2015. This makes the Indian foreign born the third-largest immigrant group accounting for over 7 percent of the 43.3 million foreign-born population, according to the (MPI).

Migration from India swelled between 1965 and 1990 as a series of legislative changes removed national-origin quotas, introduced temporary skilled worker programs, and created employment-based permanent visas. In 2016, Indians were the top recipients of high-skilled H-1B temporary visas and were the second-largest group of international students in the United States according to MPI. From 1980 to 2010, the population grew more than elevenfold, roughly doubling every decade.

In 2013, India and China



Jim Daniels

supplanted Mexico as the top sources of newly arriving immigrants in the United States.

Our current climate of political upheaval has brought the Indian American population significant recognition. Most of us know that Bobby Gindal was the first Indian America elected to the US Congress and later governor of Louisiana. We know that Nicky Haley was the first Indian American elected governor of South Carolina and appointed US Ambassador to the United nations.

Many may know that the former chairman and chief executive officer of PepsiCo, Indra Nooyi, is Indian; the president and chief executive officer of Microsoft, Satya Nadella, is Indian. Preet Bharara, the former US attorney for the Southern District of New York, who is Indian, and was fired after refusing to resign as requested by President Donald Trump.

There is former acting US Solicitor General Neal Katyal who in December 2017, *American Lawyer* magazine named him the litigator of the year; he was chosen from all the lawyers in the United States.

Now there are four U.S. Congresspersons of Indian descent making waves in the nation’s struggle over impeaching the President plus Senator Kamala Harris whose mother was Indian. It is expected that the presence of Indian Americans in the political life of the country will only grow as more of them from New England to California become more engaged in seeking elected office.

But their presence and influence in areas outside of politics and the law came slowly but is now strong as comedians and TV and screen actors in Hollywood and

beyond. They include Aziz Ansari, Mindy Kaling, Kal Penn, Danny Pudi, Maulik Pancholy, and Priyanka Chopra are some of many who come to mind.

Today there are over 45,000 physicians of Indian descent who are represented by the American Association of Physicians of Indian

Descent (AAPI) but 112,000 Asian physicians. There are 54,000 African American physicians. The purpose of the association is to provide a forum and to facilitate and enable its members to excel in patient care, teaching, and research and to pursue their aspirations in professional and community affairs.

Indian Americans established a powerful presence in Silicon Valley that has helped to shape US business and economy. That energy and resourcefulness will be leveraged as they participate more broadly in our national affairs. Some among us are actually alarmed at this prospect.

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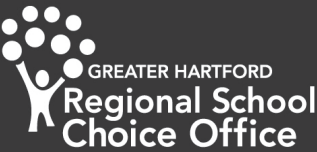


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Nursing Home Workers Join Ranks At SEIU 1199

Three West Hartford Nursing Homes Vote “Yes”

By Pedro Zayas

Caregivers at Hebrew Senior Care in West Hartford voted unanimously 26-0 in favor of joining the New England Health Care Employees Union, District 1199, SEIU.

The workers at Hebrew Senior Care recently concluded their voting process.

“I’ve worked at the Hebrew Senior Care for 31 years. I would like to see everyone treated with respect,” said certified nursing assistant Merzell Dunn. “We need better wages and a better work environment so that we can take care of the residents the best we can. We need a voice on the job and job security.”

District 1199 represents roughly 6,000 nursing home workers and over 30% of nursing homes in Connecticut are in the union. But the advocacy of union caregivers for quality care, respect on the job, livable wages and benefits has a positive impact on 100% of the industry’s workforce.

“I am voting for 1199 because they believe in helping us achieve our goals: to have better



“Together We Rise”: Caregivers at Hebrew Senior Care in West Hartford celebrate their 26-0 victory to join SEIU 1199.

insurance, to fight for a pension, to help us further our education, and to help our patients along the way,” said certified nursing assistant Andria Lyn.

The multiracial and multi-ethnic workforce overcame a vicious and outrageous antiunion campaign by the administration that attempted to divide workers using ethnicity.

“We are voting for a shift in power. We need more benefits, more respect, and a pension. We need a driving force to sustain our needs, including better pay,” said certified nursing assistant Tamara Benton.

Recent worker victories were also attained at Genesis HealthCare’s Reservoir in West Hartford with a pro union vote of

12-1 by licensed practical nurses, 31-0 by certified nursing assistants, and 10-2 by housekeeping and dietary staff.

The third West Hartford nursing home to join the union ranks recently is Hebrew Center, which is owned by National Health Care Associates Centers, with a vote of 110-31.

SEIU 1199 Union members have a long history of success

fighting for health care workers’ rights and quality services for people in need. We advocate for living wages for all workers — black, brown, and white—and adequate resources to do our jobs well. The Union represents 26,000 health care workers in Connecticut; many of the workers recently organized in West Hartford are West Indians.

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Herbalist Introduces Natural Organic Farm In Jamaica



Roxanne Little, Natural Organic Farmer

By Stan Walker

St. Ann, known to many as “the Garden Parish of Jamaica,” is the third largest parish on the island.

There are many claims to its name. A known tourist destination with popular beaches and attractions, it is also the birthplace of political activist and Jamaica’s first national hero Marcus Mosiah

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Jesus’ Model Of Thanksgiving



By Edgar Johnson

Within a few weeks, we celebrate Thanksgiving Holiday. The Pilgrims first celebrated the holiday after the first harvest in 1621, expressing thanks to God for the harvest and the many other blessings.

President George Washington proclaimed the first national Thanksgiving and Congress ratified Thanksgiving Day, the fourth Thursday of November, becoming the biggest annual holiday and family festival in the United States.

As a religious people, settlers had models of Thanksgiving reflecting on Scriptures—thanks for physical food, thanks for answered prayers—when they took away the stone from the tomb where Lazarus was laid, . . . “Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you that you heard me” (John 11:41)

Among the physical blessings call for thanksgiving are: peace, deliverance from danger, acceptance of the word preached, growth in grace. Paul in 2 Thess. 1:3: “We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, as is fitting, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing.”

As to its characteristics, thanksgiving will always be a dominant feature of Christians’ praise: “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Christians should render thanksgiving continually—Col.

4:2: “Continue steadfastly in prayer being watchful in it with thanksgiving. In Phil. 4:6, Paul declares: “have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

The remedy for complaining people, achy with somebody or something troublesome, someone rubbing others the wrong way, the remedy Paul says in Phil. 4:6, “Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God. Thanksgiving and the showing of gratitude are the basic and lasting elements of the Christian life. It has healing power.

Today’s world is in great need of Thanksgiving Christians. Christians who have a personal relationship with giving thanks, and a touch of Jesus’ power. Luke 17: 11-19 describes how Jesus met a group of ten lepers who sought healing from him.

Instead of healing them on the spot, Jesus simply commanded them to go and show themselves to the priests, something that needed to be done by lepers who had been cleansed.

As they went in obedience to his word, they found that they had been cured. This story may well articulate memories of the cure of Naaman (2 Kings 4-5: 10-14), but it takes a fresh step forward with the account of how one of the lepers gave praise to God for his cure and

returned to thank Jesus.

Jesus’ comment is twofold: a remark on the fact that only one man—and a Samaritan at that—returned to give thanks to God, and a declaration of salvation to the man on account of his faith.

Thus the story is not simply a testimony to the ability of Jesus to cure lepers but is also concerned with the attitude of the person cured. Jesus’ mercy is offered to all people, but they must acknowledge what God has done through him: to faith must be added thanksgiving.

Luke is not content to tell us that this incident took place in a village somewhere on the journey to Jerusalem. He specifies that it happened as our Lord was traveling along the border between Samaria and Galilee.

Mention of the border area between the two, gives the story its first hint of separation, distance, and alienation. Besides the crucial part played by the geographical and spatial details in the development of the story, mention is made that ten men with leprosy met Jesus (17:17). The ten lepers “stood at a distance” and had to shout to make their voices carry across the intervening space.

We know that Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, and yet among the ten lepers, one was a Samaritan. Here is an example of one great law of life.

A common misfortune had broken down the racial and the national barriers. In the common

tragedy of their leprosy they had forgotten that they were Jews and Samaritans and remembered only that they were men in need. Verse 13: they lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.”

We must note that Jesus did not go to them, touch and heal them as he had done with other lepers (John 5:12-13). He kept his distance and simply told them to go and show themselves to the priests. Only as they went were they cleansed. But by now, of course, the distance between them and Christ was increasing. Suddenly one of the lepers realized that he was cleansed.

He was of course grateful to God; but it is the way in which he expressed his gratitude to God that is crucial to the lesson, which this story has to teach.

What Christ expected him and all the others to do was to return, that is to return to Christ, in order to give glory to God (17:18). Nor was it that Christ merely wanted them to thank him personally as well as thanking God, through the returning leper did that. The phrase in 17: 18 “returned to give glory” implies that in order to give true glory to God in this affair, they had to return to Christ.

One leper did return, and it is delighted to see how as he did so all distance and alienation of every kind between himself and Christ, between himself and God, was removed. The need for social separation was gone. He no longer

had to stand at a distance: He came and fell at the Lord’s feet. He was a Samaritan, Jesus was a Jew; the national and religious barrier meant nothing now.

True, leprosy had long since brought him together with nine Jewish lepers in a common separation from both Jews and Samaritans, but cleansing had brought him to recognize the divine power of Jesus the Jew and to accept its implications. There is no story in all the gospels, which is as pointed in showing humankind’s ingratitude.

The lepers had come to Jesus with a desperate longing; He had cured them, but nine never returned to give thanks. So often, once a person has gotten what he or she wants, such one never returns and gives thanks.

In their leprosy they had at least come near Christ after He gave them physical healing, they walked out of his life. So often we are ungrateful to our fellow human being—to our parents, friends, teachers, and others. So often we are ungrateful to God.

In times of bitter need, we pray with desperate intensity; the time passes and we forget God. He gave us His only Son, so often we never give to Him even a word of thanks. The best thanks we can give, is to try to deserve this goodness and His mercy a little better.

Make this Thanksgiving a special historic one and return to Him. Happy Thanksgiving!

Medical Marijuana Presentation, Schomburg Center For Research In Black Culture



Hon. Audley Shaw presenting on Medical Marijuana at Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

By Mark D. Milward

The Hon. Audley Shaw, minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries (MICAF) was the keynote speaker at the world-renown Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and delivered a powerful and informative presentation entitled “*The Search for Green Gold . . . Marijuana*.”

The annual forum sponsored by the Caribbean International Network (CIN) was held October 16, 2019, in Harlem, New York.

Minister Shaw addressed a full house of interested attendees that included investors, Hemp and Marijuana producers, and those who were curious and seeking information on the subject matter, and how to enter into the to burgeoning Cannabis Industry market.

In his opening statement the Minister stated, “Our real focus as a country is to develop true medical products which can bring health and wellness to Jamaica and the world.” He elaborated on how Jamaica is uniquely positioned to be the global leader in the medical cannabis industry and cited the establishment of the Cannabis Licensing Authority (CLA) established in June 2016 whose

mandate is to develop cannabis regulatory policies and drive towards impactful economic development benefits for Jamaica.

Currently, 47 licenses have been issued and approximately 250 are in the application process.

A press release from CIN prior to the lecture stated, “Though ganja may be an appealing revenue source, Jamaica may find as American states, such commerce raises thorny societal issues such as who benefits from the revenue and how to address those who were incarcerated for selling a product that becomes regulated by the government.”

Those concerns were central questions that came directly from the attendees, and the minister was comprehensive and succinct in providing credible responses that detailed specific activity to address these issues.

The Minister cited current measures to review cases of those who were incarcerated for selling marijuana prior to legalization, and talked at length about efforts being undertaken to include small farmers in the growing Cannabis industry.

Small farmers are unable to afford the 1 million dollar investment startup costs and many small farmers are growing cannabis without a license. Minister Shaw referred to the Alternative Development Programme, which offers illegal growers of marijuana the opportunity to formalize their operations and become an integral part of a legal cannabis entity while at the same

time establishing a steady supply chain for the medical marijuana and pharma market.

Minister Shaw discussed MICAF’s partnership agreement with Harvard University’s Harvard International Phytomedicine and Medical Cannabis Institute to address matters of medical cannabis dosages and other key issues.

The Cannabis market in the United States is expected to reach \$24 billion dollars in a few years and \$80 billion dollars by 2030. To date, the US cannabis market has created more than 250,000 jobs.

Minister Shaw also spoke on the issues surrounding correspondent banking as it pertains to US banking and which impedes research and economic progress within the region. A forum was held November 21-22, 2019 on Capitol Hill, Washington, DC.

It addressed the correspondent banking issues. US Congressional representatives were invited to attend. The forum is part of the 21st Annual INVEST CARIBBEAN Conference, sponsored by the Institute of Caribbean Studies (ICS), www.icsdc.org.

“The Jamaica Diaspora Show” will broadcast Minister Shaw’s full presentation on Hartford Public Access Television, followed by posting on YOUTUBE for national and international viewership.

Watch for the broadcast announcement date by visiting <https://www.facebook.com/www.HPATV.org>.

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Organic Farming, Jamaica

Continued from Page 4

Garvey, Reggae icon Bob Narley, and Grammy recording Reggae artist Shabba Ranks.

Within this parish lies a historic community called Nine Miles, the birth and resting place of Marley. Many tourists come here to see his mausoleum where he is entombed. And now, there is an added attraction, Natural Mystic Organic Farm, which is situated just down the road.

Natural Mystic Organic Farm is a 25-acre property owned and operated by Master Herbalist and Healer Roxanne Little, CEO of Grassroots Holistic Care, LLC in Hartford, Connecticut. A mother of four children, Little, acquired the land 12 years ago and decided to transform it into a farm and healing center.

Today, Little is making the transition to an alternative way to farm without soil with Tower Gardening that was first introduced to her four years ago.

Tower Garden is a vertical hydroponic growing system. Weighing at 150 lbs. when filled, it is a patented plant production system that is ideal for urban

farms and commercial growing operations.

With Tower Gardening, you eliminate all the pests, disease, weeds and other complications that come with traditional farming. Furthermore, it delivers the water and nutrients with minimal effort, enabling you to grow healthier and stronger plants without soil.

The beauty of Tower Garden is that it requires roughly only 10% of the land and water traditional growing methods use, and it is perfect for sunny areas. It's better for the environment, too.

The benefits of Tower Garden are that it is perfect for commercial farmers high up in the Dry Harbor Mountains, where there is a scarcity of water.

There is already a noticeable down slope in farming in St. Ann as farmland is being used for housing and other development.

Little's goal is to bring back the "Pride" to the Garden Parish. Not only will farmers be able to produce at a faster rate, but most importantly, they will be producing organically grown plants and making St. Ann "the food basket of Jamaica" again.

Access Health CT Reports On Findings In Preparation For 2020 Open Enrollment

* Consumer Impact Study finds close to 50 percent of customers will experience a decrease in premiums

* Uninsured Research Study analyzes demographics of uninsured people in Connecticut, (State uninsured rate of 5.3 percent is significantly less than the national uninsured rate of 8.5 percent)

* Small Business plan developed by new Access Health CT Director of Small Business, John Carbone

Findings from the reports are helping AHCT to prepare for the 2020 Open Enrollment period that begins November 1, 2019 and ends December 15, 2019 and beyond.

About the Consumer Impact Study: To better understand the impact of plan changes on customers, including rate changes approved by the Connecticut Insurance Department, Access Health CT commissioned a Customer Impact Study.

It found close to 50 per-

cent of customers will experience a decrease in premiums if they select a similar health insurance plan on the exchange during the 2020 Open Enrollment period.

"We look at the data every year," said Chief Executive Officer of Access Health CT, James Michel, "and we work to provide the best tools to help our customers pick a health insurance plan that provides the best value for them and their families. It's important that customers shop and compare before enrolling because needs can change. Customers should evaluate their options and choose the plan that works best for them."

About the Uninsured Research: Understanding the uninsured population in Connecticut is essential to Access Health CT's mission to increase the number of insured residents. The research was conducted using data from the United States Census American Community Survey, where it was determined that Connecticut's uninsured rate is 5.3 percent, significantly less than the national uninsured rate of 8.5 percent.

Access Health CT hopes to gain a better understanding of the people who are uninsured in Connecticut, and the drivers and barriers that lead them to go without health insurance.

The research found a wide set of extenuating circumstances and varied backgrounds across the uninsured population. Based on the findings, the Access Health CT team identified achievable strategies as well as short- and long-term tactics that AHCT can use to innovate and further assist in lowering the uninsured rate in Connecticut.

"Several short-term tactics are already in place," said Michel, "to increase awareness, build trust and increase enrollment. We are working to make personal, community-based connections including a pilot program that extends canvassing efforts beyond the Hartford region and into Fairfield County—bringing Access

Health CT resources directly to communities that need us the most."

About the Small Business Research Study: Access Health CT is committed to increasing the number of insured Small Businesses in Connecticut. A research study was conducted to inform the business plan and better understand Small Business stakeholders—including small business owners, employees and key decision makers that influence them such as brokers, carriers and health-care providers.

The report found opportunities to strengthen relationships with all stakeholders by clearly defining Small Business opportunities and how AHCT can play a larger role, while staying true to its mission of increasing the rate of insured people.

About Access Health CT Access Health CT (AHCT), Connecticut's official health insurance marketplace established in 2011, supports health reform efforts at the state and national level. AHCT provides Connecticut residents with resources for better health, and an enhanced and more coordinated healthcare experience, which results in healthier people, healthier communities and a healthier Connecticut.

AHCT's mission is to increase the number of insured residents in Connecticut, promote health, lower costs, and eliminate health disparities. Connecticut residents and small business owners can compare and enroll in health-care coverage and apply for tax credits for individuals through AHCT. AHCT (or the Marketplace) also partners with the Dept. of Social Services for eligibility and enrollment with state Medicaid Insurance and Children's Health Insurance Programs.

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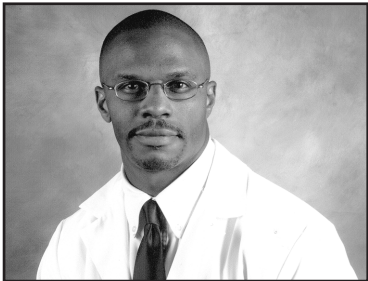
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Patois (Patwah), Jamaica's Second Language

Readers of my column may recall previously that I wrote about Patois as Jamaica's 'second language.' Since then I have received several comments regarding this topic.

I have re-submitted this article as a means of refuting some of the comments I have received concerning the subject.

Many may not know that Patios originated in West Africa. As Jamaicans celebrate independence, let us remember that our first and most important language is English. Patois is merely a broken form of French, mixed with other languages and dialects, and should be treated as such.

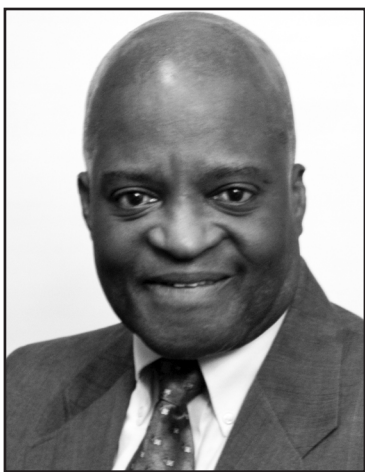
I know that many do not share that opinion and will hasten to abandon company with me for saying so. That is evidenced by the fact that many at The University of West Indies, Mona Campus in Kingston are of the opinion that Patois should be given more prominence and in fact be Jamaican's language of choice.

Upon reflection, Jamaicans should remember that Jamaica was ruled by England and as such Jamaicans speak the English Language. Jamaicans should also remember that many who came to Jamaica as slaves were from West Africa and as such Patois came to prominence in the island. Ironically, Patois is a French word.

Those who wish Patios to have more prominence in Jamaica should remember that it is "broken French." During slavery Jamaican's use of patios came to prominence as a means of slaves communicating among themselves.

Most of the communication in the Western World is done in the English Language (opinion, not fact). Here in the United States English Language is the main language. If Jamaicans wish to speak Patois among themselves, so be it. To place prominence on Patois is okay if Jamaicans wish to communicate only among themselves.

Many who speak Patios have much difficulty in recognizing



Christopher A. Service Sr.

it in written form. Some Jamaicans even say, "**mek wi chat wi Patois cause dem no know wah wi a chat bout.**" That is in reference to those who speak among their peers in their native tongue depending on which part of the world they are from.

Many who do not speak the English Language as their main language make an effort to learn that language to effectively communicate with those with whom they come into daily contact.

The fact is this: Jamaica's main language is English. Those who are pushing for Patois to be Jamaica's main language are depriving their fellow Jamaicans of the opportunity of broadening their vocabulary.

To speak only Patios limits individuals as they communicate beyond their environs. There is nothing wrong with speaking Patios. What is foolhardy is to deemphasize the proper use of the English Language.

Many at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, got there because they were able to master the English Language. How selfish of them to be proposing that Patios, shift its place as "the local language of the people."

Upon a recent visit to Kingston, Jamaica, I was unpleasantly surprised to see written on several "Bus Sheds" not "Keep Jamaica Beautiful" but 'Nuh Dutty Up Jamaica.' Let's keep Patois as our second language.

That is as I see it.

Your Word Should Be Your Bond

My readers I am sorry for my prolong absence from this medium, but here I am again. I will try to do a monthly submission, but I hope you can forgive me if I miss a few.

My topic this month of has always been near and dear to my heart. If like me you grew up in an era when one's word and a handshake were all it took to seal a contract. However, today sadly it is not so anymore.

There was a time when keeping one's word held very special significance. We took great pride in being good citizens of good character. Personal integrity was both expected and valued. That was a time when everyone knew each other's family, and you would not dare do anything that would cast a shadow on your family's good name. It was a time when integrity was instilled in children at a very early age and was viewed as instrumental in achieving success.

Yes, that is what my parents stressed to my sister and me, and I have passed it onto my children. The truth is, even if our world may have changed, the importance of integrity has not.

We have to remember that every time we give our word, we are putting our honor on the line. We are implying that others can place their trust in us because we value integrity and would never let them down. Hence, if we do not live up to our word, we may end up tarnishing our credibility. We will also damage our relationships, and defame our reputations. However above all, we will be letting ourselves down. Therefore our conscience should be our guide every minute of the day.

It is a sad state of



Thomas Aldridge

affairs when we operate with a lack of complete integrity. Can what we say be taken at face value? Will our intentions be assumed to be honorable? Most importantly, can we take great pride in the standards that we have set for ourselves and sleep well at night knowing that our conscience is clear? I can only answer for myself, but you will have to be your judge. Often times when we think we are fooling the world, we are sadly deluded as we realize that we are only fooling ourselves. Honor matters! Your word is your bond, after all.

Nowadays I notice that people are pretty casual when it comes to commitments and to keeping their word. I find it disappointing that persons do not possess the same level of personal responsibility there used to be when making a commitment was the order of the day. Even more disturbing for me, is the seemingly total lack of appreciation for the negative effects of this behavior on others. I am a pretty literal person, and when someone promises to call me back, join me somewhere, or do something for me, I trust that person will follow through. I quite literally, take people's word as binding. However, I

am getting the feeling that I am in the minority. I still do believe what Theodore Roosevelt said, "*I care not what others think of what I do, but I care very much about what I think of what I do! That is character!*"

In today's society, falling short on commitments has become way too common and too easy to do. It seems like following through on a promise is treated as if it was optional, rather than character building.

But this attitude is cavalier and dangerous if not corrected. The fallout can be devastating to our personal and professional lives, as the consequences strike right at the foundation of all relationships. It affects our ability to establish trust.

I still believe in people and do believe we have not completely lost our way. So how do we avoid this situation with others in our everyday lives? We have to begin by only committing to those things that we absolutely know we can accomplish. We should not "promise" unless we know for sure we can deliver. And if something unforeseen happens, it is our duty to contact the person and explain why we cannot deliver. This should save your reputation.

So let us endeavor to keep our word. As the Bible says in Matthew 5:37, "*Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh evil.*" My interpretation is that we should prudent in our utterances because whatever we say affects someone else. Furthermore, I agree with William Lamb in saying, "*Your word is your bond. Make sure your words match your actions. Keep your word and fulfill your promises. Your character is more important than your reputation.*"

[Dr. Thomas Aldridge can be reached at Thomasaldrige@yahoo.com].

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Access Health CT Revamps In-Person Help To Reach Communities In Need Of Health Insurance

ACCESS Health CT: Choosing a health insurance plan that works for you can be complicated, but Connecticut residents can get free help from Access Health CT (AHCT) to better understand their plan options.

Access Health CT offers individuals, families, and small businesses the opportunity to shop, compare and enroll in quality health insurance plans from brand-name insurance companies.

Access Health CT is the only place where Connecticut residents can qualify for financial help to lower their health insurance costs.

People can sign up for health insurance plans during the annual Open Enrollment period, which starts on November 1, 2019. However, people may have questions throughout the year or experience life-changing events and may need health insurance.

To help individuals understand their options year-round, Access Health CT is evolving its Navigator Program.

Navigators are community organizations that partner with AHCT to help people with questions or the enrollment process. Any Connecticut resident can go to a Navigator Partner to receive free, in-person help with choosing and enrolling in a health insurance plan throughout the year.

“We know that health insurance is complex and can be hard to understand,” said Access Health CT Chief Executive Officer, James Michel. “That’s why we are here to offer free help.

The Navigator Program is designed to deepen our community relationships with the goal to engage, educate and enroll individuals in *all* communities throughout our state—including underserved and harder-to-reach populations. And we’re focused on making our in-person help strategy bigger and better for the upcoming Open Enrollment season, too.”

Accordingly, the Navigator Program will include a strong focus on engaging African-American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian communities.

In-person assistance options, like the Navigator Program, are ways to get free, community-based help. Trained AHCT staff, Certified Application Counselors, and Brokers are available to help people understand their options and sign up for health insurance coverage. The following are Navigator Program Partners:

Connecticut Renewal Team, Inc.
www.crtct.org, located at **330 Market Street, Hartford,**
(860) 761-7908.

Community Renewal Team, Inc. (CRT) is the oldest and largest community action agency in Connecticut. As a social services provider, CRT regularly conducts outreach to Hartford and Middlesex County areas relating to healthcare and insurance options.

In addition to the Navigator Program, CRT’s 330 Market Street office in Hartford provides services for behavioral health, a pharmacy, computer and Internet access, resources for people looking for jobs, energy assistance services, and tax filing support.

New Opportunities, Inc.,
www.newoppinc.org, location: **232 North Elm Street, Waterbury,**
(203) 575-9799.

New Opportunities, Inc., is the community action agency that serves Danbury, Meriden, Torrington and 24 surrounding towns in the Litchfield County area.

They offer a variety of social service programs designed to eliminate poverty and assist people in the community with offices in Danbury, Meriden and Torrington.

The agency’s mission is to improve the quality of life for economically disadvantaged individuals by providing the necessary resources to increase their standard of living, foster self-improvement, and maximize self-empowerment.

In addition to services that help people shop, compare, and enroll in health insurance, New Opportunities, Inc. offers: elderly services; family empowerment services; energy assistance and weatherization; parenting support; vocational education and training; early childhood education programs; and housing assistance.

West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District,
www.westhartfordct.gov is located at **580 Cottage Grove Road, Bloomfield, (860) 561-7918.**

The West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District is a regional health department servicing West Hartford and Bloomfield. It provides full-time professional public health services to residents in both towns, with an emphasis on encouraging healthy behavior through health education efforts that stress prevention and individual responsibility.

Along with providing a full-time Navigator to help area residents shop, compare and enroll in health insurance, the West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District offers a variety of other social services, including: immunization clinics; senior wellness clinics; communicable disease surveillance and follow-up; health education; restaurant inspections; lead and radon consultations; septic system plan and review; and swimming pool inspections.


There are other ways to get Free in-person help during October and November.

October: Access Health CT will host Community “Health Insurance Chats” in every county in the state. These Insurance Chats are educational community sessions that offer people a way to learn more about things like the enrollment process, cost and financial help, how to pick a plan, and how and where to enroll.

November: The Open Enrollment Period begins on Nov. 1, and Access Health CT will offer many ways to get free in-person assistance including: 30 enrollment fairs, five enrollment locations, help from Certified Brokers and Enrollment Specialists.

For more information visit: Learn.AccessHealthCT.com/events. Additional, free help can be found online at AccessHealthCT.com, via Live Chat, or over the phone at 855-805-4325.



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