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# NEWSLINE

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VOLUME 7 ISSUE 16

April 18, 2025 - April 25, 2025



**EFFORT TO  
STAMP OUT  
ILLEGAL TOURISM  
TAXIS GAINS  
MOMENTUM  
- PG3**



**ISLANDERS MUST  
HAVE FIRST  
PRIORITY IN  
WORKFORCE - PG4**

# ANOTHER ACTIVE ONE

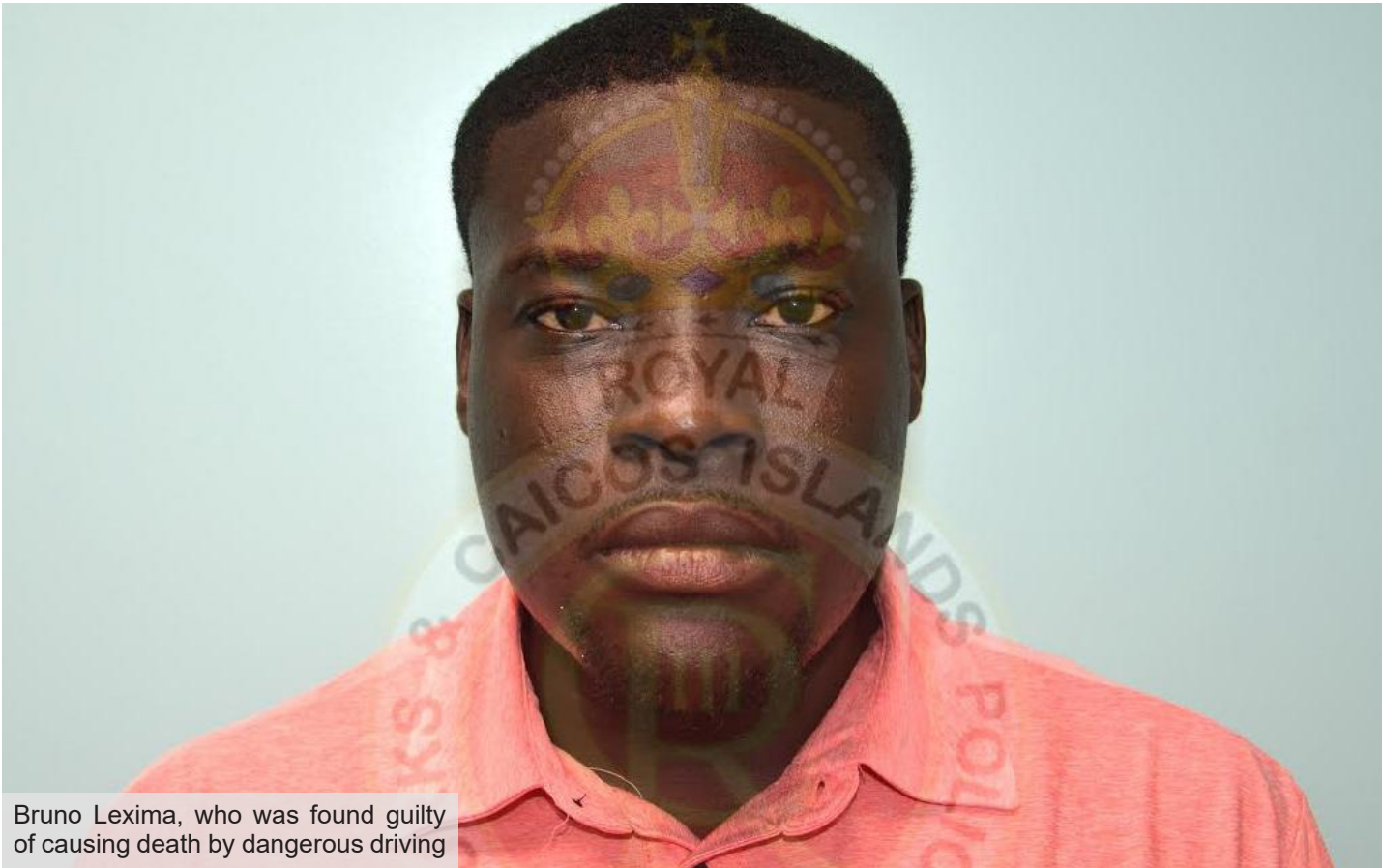


● **North Carolina State University Forecasts Busy Hurricane Season**

● **Up to Eight Hurricanes Possible**

**SEE PAGE 5**

# Driver Gets 3 Years Prison Sentence for Mowing Down Senior Citizen Along Millennium Highway



Bruno Lexima, who was found guilty of causing death by dangerous driving

The man responsible for a 2020 traf-  
fic collision that claimed the life of a  
senior citizen has been sentenced to  
three years in prison by the Supreme  
Court in Grand Turk.  
Bruno Lexima, 34, of Kew Town, Prov-  
idenciales, was sentenced on April 8,  
2025, in connection with the fatal in-  
cident that occurred along Millenni-  
um Highway in November 2020.  
The court imposed the following  
penalties:

- Three years’ imprisonment  
for Causing Death by Dangerous Driv-  
ing
- Four months’ imprisonment

for Dangerous Driving  
Both sentences will run concurrently,  
meaning Lexima will serve a total of  
three years.  
Additionally, the court ordered that  
Lexima’s driver’s license be suspend-  
ed for 12 months following his re-  
lease. While in prison, he is required  
to:

- Complete a Dangerous Driv-  
ing Education Program facilitated by  
the Department of Rehabilitation
- Undergo psychological treat-  
ment through the Department of Be-  
havioral Health Services

The collision occurred on the morn-

ing of November 23, 2020, at approx-  
imately 5:30 a.m., when police re-  
sponded to reports of a serious crash  
involving pedestrians along Millenni-  
um Highway.  
A white four-door Toyota Wish, driv-  
en by Lexima, struck two pedestri-  
ans. One of the victims, Kenneth  
John Walters, a 70-year-old pension-  
er from Blue Hills, was pronounced  
dead at the scene. A 40-year-old fe-  
male pedestrian also sustained inju-  
ries and was treated at Cheshire Hall  
Medical Centre for non-life-threaten-  
ing wounds.  
Following a comprehensive investi-

gation, Lexima was formally charged  
and brought before the court.  
The sentencing concludes a  
long-standing case that has left a last-  
ing impact on the Blue Hills commu-  
nity and underscores the dangers of  
reckless driving on public roads.

**VERNAL COX**  
Blue Hills, Millennium Highway  
Providenciales

FIRST TIME WORK PERMIT  
Seeks a

**DOMESTIC  
WORKER**

to cook, clean & care  
Baby sit  
WAGE \$8.25 an hour

Interested persons call  
**231-9717**

**Robert SMITH**  
Leeward Palms East Providenciales

FIRST TIME WORK PERMIT  
Seeks a

**DOMESTIC  
WORKER**

to cook, clean and care for  
Dog  
WAGE \$8.25 an hour

Interested persons call  
**231-9717**

# Male Charged with Unlawful Entry Following Police Operation in Leeward Palms



A Royal Turks and Caicos Islands mugshot of Rushawn Dwayne Miller

A 36-year-old male has been  
charged with unlawful entry fol-  
lowing a police operation con-  
ducted early Saturday morning,  
April 12th, 2025.  
Between the hours of 6:00 a.m.  
and 7:10 a.m., officers from the  
Tactical Unit and the Serious  
Crimes Unit executed a search  
warrant at a residence in Leeward  
Palms, Providenciales. The oper-  
ation was part of ongoing investi-  
gations into a robbery and ag-  
gravated burglary that occurred  
on March 18th in the Grace Bay  
area.  
During the search, it was discov-

ered that the individual, identi-  
fied as Rushawn Dwayne Miller,  
had entered the Turks and Caicos  
Islands without going through an  
authorized port of entry and had  
not received the necessary clear-  
ance from an Immigration Officer.  
As a result, Miller was formally  
charged with the offence of Un-  
lawful Entry. He remains in police  
custody pending a court appear-  
ance.  
Authorities continue to investi-  
gate the broader circumstances  
surrounding the March 18th in-  
cident and are urging anyone with  
information to come forward.



# Effort to Stamp Out Illegal Tourism Taxis Gains Momentum



COX....“Everyone, from the security guards to the executives, has a duty to safeguard the tourism sector.”

The Department of Tourism Regulations, in a joint effort with the Turks and Caicos Hotel and Tourism Association (TCHTA) and the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force’s Traffic Enforcement Unit, is stepping up its crackdown on illegal taxi operations across the Islands. Tourism stakeholders are being warned that any involvement in encouraging, facilitating, or promoting the use of unlicensed taxi services is a serious offence that carries a fine of \$1,000. This includes hotels, restaurants, business operators,



Hon. Zhavargo Jolly, Minister of Tourism, Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment

and tourism ambassadors who refer or enable unlicensed drivers in any capacity. “This Ministry stands with every licensed taxi operator who plays by the rules and contributes to the safety, credibility, and professionalism of our tourism industry,” said Hon. Zhavargo Jolly, Minister of Tourism, Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment. “Illegal operators not only endanger lives—they undermine the hard work of those who do things the right way. We will not allow a few bad actors to tarnish the reputation our people

have worked so hard to build.” The growing number of unlicensed taxis, often operating without insurance or safety checks, has sparked concern among law enforcement and tourism officials alike. With tourism being the backbone of the national economy, authorities are moving swiftly to protect the integrity of the sector and ensure the safety of all who visit and reside in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Mr. Avi Adams, Director of the Department of Tourism Regulations, reminded the public of the legal consequences associated with illegal taxi operations. “Operating an unlicensed taxi or public service vehicle is a serious offence under the laws of the Turks and Caicos Islands,” he said. “Illegal taxi operations undermine our tourism sector’s safety, quality, and reputation, and they pose a risk to both residents and visitors.” The TCHTA has also issued a firm reminder to its members about their responsibility to uphold the law. “The safety of our employees and visitors is paramount to the success of our industry,” said Mrs. Stacy Cox, CEO of the TCHTA. “Everyone, from the security guards to the executives, has a duty to safeguard the tourism sector, and that can only be achieved by

doing what is lawful and right.” Drivers of illegal taxis are being cautioned that operating a public vehicle without the required license—or without a valid public service operator’s license—is an offence under the Road Traffic Regulations. In addition, these drivers often lack the necessary insurance coverage, further compounding the risk to passengers. “To obtain insurance coverage, operators must comply with the requirements set out under the Insurance Act,” said acting Inspector Damien Mitchell, Head of the Traffic Enforcement Unit. “Failure to meet these legal obligations not only puts lives at risk but also constitutes a serious violation of the law. We are appealing to the public to refrain from operating unlicensed public vehicles and urge members of the public not to patronise such illegal services.” Violators can face a fine of \$1,000 per offence if found guilty. Additional penalties under the Insurance Act may include disqualification from driving. To report illegal activity or seek guidance, members of the public are encouraged to contact the Department of Tourism Regulations at [tourismregulations@gov.tc](mailto:tourismregulations@gov.tc) or call +1 (649) 338-5349.



## JOB FAIR

Wednesday, April 23, 2025

8:30am

## DREAM BIG WITH US!

Opportunity, training, education, and the potential to turn dreams into a better life, that is the story of Beaches Turks and Caicos Resorts and it can be yours too. Join us in our mission to create Caribbean moments and memories that inspire people, their families, and our global community to dream bigger and live more prosperous, sustainable, and fulfilling lives.

- |                            |                     |                      |
|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| • Assistant Butler Manager | • Houseman          | • Restaurant Servers |
| • Boat Captains *          | • Cook 1,2,3        | • Groundsman         |
| • Scuba Instructors*       | • Room Technicians  | • Bartenders         |
| • Dive Master*             | • Stove Technicians | • Bar Porters        |
| • Projects Coordinator     | • Finish Carpenter  | • Laundry Attendants |
| • Room Attendants          | • Security Officers | • Stewards           |

**REQUIREMENTS:** Updated Resume | Passport | Freelance Permit | Residence Permit | Permanent Resident | Local Status Document [Belonger Card Certificate, Naturalization Certificate] | Qualifications/Experience required

**BENEFITS:** Healthcare | Education and Training | Staff Transportation | Competitive Salary Packages | Opportunities for Growth & Development

Bring along your banking details [bank name, branch name & account #]



# Turks and Caicos Islanders Must Have First Priority in Workforce, Says Labour Department



ROBINSON: "This Government remains resolute in its commitment to placing Turks and Caicos Islanders at the forefront of national development."

The Labour and Employment Services Department has reaffirmed that Turks and Caicos Islanders must be given first priority for all job opportunities across the country, as the nation faces a growing worker shortage driven by rapid development.

Emphasising its legal and moral obligation, the Department is urging employers to actively recruit qualified Islanders before seeking migrant labour, reinforcing its commitment to fair employment and local empowerment.

The call comes amid an ongoing labour crunch fuelled by a significant rise in construction, tourism, and infrastructure projects across the

Turks and Caicos Islands. While the surge in development is viewed as a positive sign of economic growth, it has also created staffing challenges for employers, some of whom have turned to foreign labour as a solution.

In a public statement, the Department acknowledged the urgency of filling critical roles but stressed that Turks and Caicos Islanders must not be bypassed in the hiring process.

"The rapid pace of development is exciting, but it must be inclusive," said a spokesperson for the Labour and Employment Services Department. "Every qualified Islander deserves the opportunity to benefit from the prosperity these projects

bring. We remain firm in enforcing the laws that protect local jobs."

The Employment Ordinance and Immigration policies clearly state that Turks and Caicos Islanders must be considered first for all employment vacancies, and only when there is no qualified local applicant should a work permit be issued to a non-national. The Department has made it clear that it will uphold this standard without compromise.

To strengthen its oversight, the Department is ramping up efforts to register unemployed and underemployed Turks and Caicos Islanders. This registration drive aims to gather detailed information on the local workforce, including individu-

al skillsets, training needs, and employment availability. The resulting database will play a key role in evaluating job applications and matching residents with open positions.

"This Government remains resolute in its commitment to placing Turks and Caicos Islanders at the forefront of national development," said Hon. Jamell Robinson, Deputy Premier and Minister of Immigration and Border Services.

"The priority is, and will always be, to ensure our people are afforded every opportunity to participate meaningfully in the labour market," Minister Robinson continued. "We will continue to enforce the policies and laws that safeguard this principle, and we urge all stakeholders—employers, recruiters, and business owners—to do the same. The prosperity of these Islands must begin with the empowerment of its people."

Employers are being reminded that all applications for foreign workers will be rigorously scrutinised. Work permit approvals will only be granted when employers can prove that no suitable Islander was available for the role, and that efforts were made to advertise and recruit locally through approved channels.

The Department is also calling on all Turks and Caicos Islanders actively seeking employment to submit their resumes, qualifications, and contact details to the job registry via email at [jobregistration@gov.tc](mailto:jobregistration@gov.tc). Officials say this process is key to making sure that no jobseeker is left out of the national workforce development effort.

"Registering helps us understand who is available and what skills they bring to the table," the Department spokesperson explained. "It's a vital step in making sure our people are given every chance to find meaningful employment."

As the country continues to attract large-scale investments and development projects, the Labour and Employment Services Department has vowed to stay vigilant and proactive in defending the interests of local workers. Additional initiatives aimed at workforce training, skills development, and job readiness are expected to be introduced in the coming months.

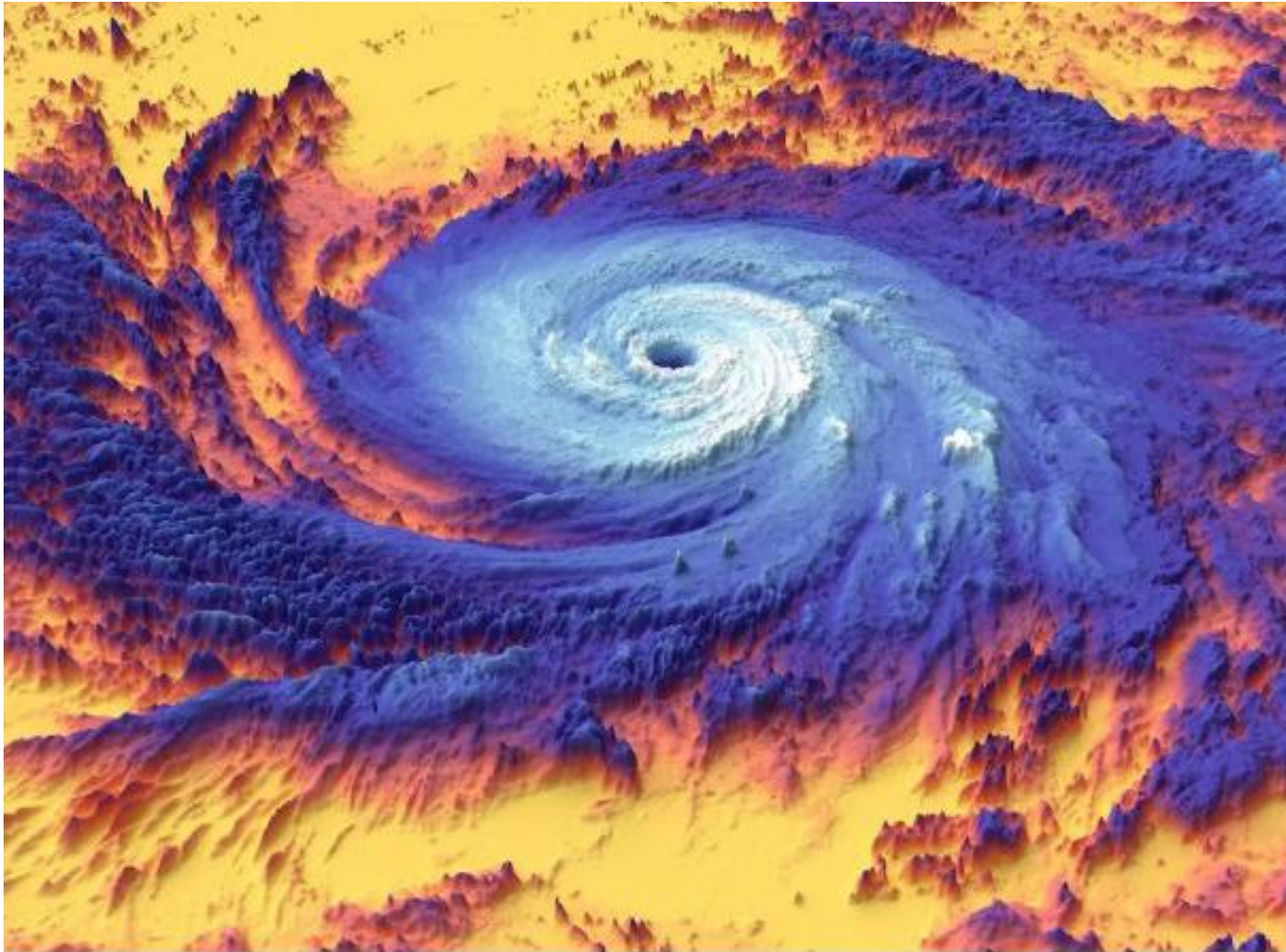
In closing, the Department reiterated its appeal to all sectors of society—public and private—to work together in creating an economy that grows from the inside out, placing Turks and Caicos Islanders at the centre of progress.



# ANOTHER ACTIVE ONE

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief

## North Carolina State University Forecasts Busy Hurricane Season Up to Eight Hurricanes Possible



The upcoming Atlantic hurricane season could be more intense than usual, with meteorologists at North Carolina State University predicting as many as eight hurricanes, including up to three major ones.

In a forecast released Tuesday, NC State researchers projected that between 12 and 15 named storms could form in the Atlantic basin during the 2025 hurricane season, which officially runs from June 1 through November 30. Of those storms, six to eight are expected to strengthen into hurricanes — exceeding the long-term historical average of six hurricanes per season.

“We’re looking at a season that is slightly above the long-term average in terms of activity,” said Dr. Lian Xie, professor of marine, earth and atmospheric sciences at NC State. “While it’s not record-breaking, it’s enough to warrant close monitoring and preparation.”

Historically, the Atlantic has averaged 11 named storms annually between 1951 and 2023, but in

recent decades, that number has risen. From 1994 to 2024, the average climbed to 15 named storms per season. The forecast for this year aligns with that upward trend. The Atlantic basin includes a wide swath of tropical waters — encompassing the entire Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean Sea — and remains one of the most hurricane-prone regions in the world. Storms that develop in this region often impact the eastern and southeastern United States, as well as countries throughout the Caribbean.

Xie and his team use a forecasting methodology that draws on more than a century of historical hurricane data, including storm intensity, location, atmospheric conditions, and sea-surface temperatures — all key variables in cyclone development.

“The data we analyze provides a long-range perspective,” Xie said. “This helps us estimate not only the number of storms, but also their potential severity.”

The latest NC State forecast fol-

lows a similar prediction made by Colorado State University earlier this month. That forecast called for a more active season, with 17 named storms, nine hurricanes, and four major hurricanes. Despite slight variations in numbers, both forecasts agree on one key point: 2025 is shaping up to be an above-average season.

Major hurricanes — defined as Category 3 or higher, with sustained winds of at least 111 mph — pose the greatest threat to life and property. NC State anticipates that two to three such storms could form this year, consistent with the recent average.

From 1991 to 2000, the Atlantic experienced an average of 14.4 named storms annually, reinforcing the trend toward more frequent and intense storm activity in recent decades. Scientists have linked this increase in part to warming sea-surface temperatures, a factor closely monitored in seasonal forecasting.

With just six weeks before the official start of the hurricane season,

experts are urging residents in coastal and vulnerable inland areas to begin preparations early.

“People should not focus solely on the number of storms,” Xie cautioned. “It only takes one hurricane making landfall in your area to create a disaster.”

Emergency management agencies and meteorologists across the country are echoing that message as the season approaches. As always, preparedness and vigilance remain key in weathering the storms to come.

The names listed for the 2025 hurricane season are: Andrea, Barry, Chantal, Dexter, Erin, Ferdinand, Gabrielle, Humberto, Imelda, Jerry, Karen, Lorenzo, Melissa, Nestor, Olga, Pablo, Rebekah, Sebastien, Tanya, Van, Wendy.

Since 1953, Atlantic tropical storms had been named from lists originated by the National Hurricane Center. They are now maintained and updated through a strict procedure by an international committee of the World Meteorological Organization.

According to the Hurricane Centre, the list is used in rotation and re-cycled every six years, i.e., the 2023 list will be used again in 2029. The only time that there is a change in the list is if a storm is so deadly or costly that the future use of its name for a different storm would be inappropriate for reasons of sensitivity. If that occurs, then at an annual meeting by the WMO committee (called primarily to discuss many other issues) the offending name is stricken from the list and another name is selected to replace it. Several names have been retired since the lists were created.

If a storm forms during the off-season, it will take the next name in the list based on the current calendar date. For example, if a tropical cyclone formed on December 28th, it would take the name from the previous season’s list of names. If a storm formed in February, it would be named from the subsequent season’s list of names.

In the event that more than twenty-one named tropical cyclones occur in the Atlantic basin in a season, any additional storms will take names from an alternate list of names approved by the WMO.



# God, religion and a reluctant church

By Sir Ronald Sanders



Ralston Nembhard

Recently I decided to pay a long-standing visit to one of my tertiary alma maters, United Theological College of the West Indies (UTCWI). The college was founded in 1966 and emerged in response to the need by the largely mainline churches to consolidate the ecumenical training of men and women in the Caribbean for ministry in the Church. It became the fulcrum of theological education in the Caribbean, and students from Christian denominations across the Caribbean were sent there to be trained. In my time as a student there were about eight denominations in attendance.

In a real sense, UTCWI functioned as the theological or divinity faculty of The University of the West Indies (the UWI). Students could elect to do theological courses as part of their primary course offerings, and some did. It was a de facto hall of The UWI, participating in intercollegiate sports and other activities. The president of UTCWI student body sat on the Guild of Undergraduates of The UWI. When I became president of the student body this was one of my seminal introductions to the veracity of student politics. It was an enlightening experience for me.

The visit for me was quite depressing. I had read earlier that the student body had dwindled immeasurably. When I was a student in 1976, there were over 80 students at the college. It was a robust student environment teeming with a lot of activities. When I learnt that there were only 19 students on a regular basis there now, my jaw fell to the

ground.

You can see all the indications of stagnation. A once-thriving student body has been reduced to a few students. Cottages have been shuttered and you get a strong sense of drought as only a few students walk along corridors once filled with many students going about their activities. When I ended the visit, my mind went back to that powerful social critique of the deserted village of Auburn in 1770 given by Oliver Goldsmith in his immortal poem, *The Deserted Village*.

I need to be very clear that this is not to blame the present administration for the state of things, neither can I attribute blame to previous administrations. What seems obvious is that this state of affairs has existed for a long time and has been a gradual progression over the years. This is related to the fact that there has been a dramatic decline in interest in mainline churches which largely supported institutions like UTCWI.

More fundamentally, I believe that what has happened to UTCWI is a microcosm of the general crisis in theological education in the Caribbean and wider world. If you examine theological education in some of the premier theological institutions in the world, you will see evidence of this declining interest. The Episcopal Church in the United States is a case in point. Inevitably, declining interest in religion will lead to a decline in the number of people who would want to offer themselves for ministry in the Church.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic this declining interest has been placed

on steroids. The pandemic not only upended church as usual, but represented a critical turning point in the life and ministry of the Church. Many, who used to physically attend church but got accustomed to the digital presentation of ministry, no longer saw the need to return to brick and mortar structures to praise God. They could now do so from the comfort of their homes, unencumbered with all the things that physical attendance represented.

But there is something more fundamental that has occurred and which started well before COVID-19. Many people had reached the stage at which religion and faith no longer functioned as being important in the ordering of their lives. COVID-19 merely confirmed this for many. High profile scandals in the Church did not help. Modern technology, especially with artificial intelligence becoming more mainstream, has led many to question the notion of God. For some, it is not necessarily a question of whether God exists, but how he can exist as an important arbiter in their daily lives.

The good news is that although the number of people not having faith in God has grown, those who believe that there is a God, or some semblance of God in their lives, have not diminished. They may not express faith or interest in the Church as an institutional reality, but there is still that sense for many of a divine power outside of themselves which still functions as an agent of social control or personal control over their worst indulgences.

My sense of despair at what I saw at UTCWI was assuaged by one unassailable principle: The Church's one foundation is still Jesus Christ, her Lord, that with all the changing nature of life in the world, the gospel remains inviolably the word of God to us which can transform lives for the better as it has done for past generations. But there is a great deal of work to be done. Churches will have to fundamentally investigate how they practice ministry and how they engage people with this word in helping them to see its relevance to their lives. It cannot be business as usual. They have to revisit their constitutions, canons, and other forms of denominational governance to see the extent to which these are functioning as humbugs to ministry and making many churches mere institutional fossils. To what extent are these mere impediments to the shepherding work to which most sub-


scribe?

We are now in Holy Week when we consider the passion, death, and resurrection of the Son of God. Perhaps we can use this period to begin a very serious conversation with ourselves, for as Peter reminds us, judgement must begin in the household of God (1 Peter 4: 17). We have taken too many things for granted and the old models are crumbling around us. We can lull ourselves into the illusion that none of this is happening, but where is the evidence of the vibrancy of the ministry akin to the enthusiasm of the First Century Christians? We are here to serve and not to be served, to give and not to count the cost, to labour and not to seek for any reward, to decrease that the Christ in us may increase. Let this be the beginning of our resurrection experience this Easter.

I would like to congratulate my good friend, Bishop Leon Golding, on his election as the Anglican diocesan bishop for Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. He assumes his office at a critical turning point in the mission of the Church in Jamaica.

I do not only wish him well as he takes up this task, but that God's wisdom will attend him as he stands on a bridge in history, pulsating for radical change in carrying out the perceived will of God. My prayers are with you, my brother.

**Dr Raulston Nembhard is a contributor for the Jamaica Observer. He is a priest, social commentator, and author of the books *Finding Peace in the Midst of Life's Storms*; *Your Self-esteem Guide to a Better Life*; and *Beyond Petulance: Republican Politics and the Future of America*. He hosts a podcast — *Mango Tree Dialogues* — on his YouTube channel. Send comments to the Jamaica Observer or [stead6655@aol.com](mailto:stead6655@aol.com).**



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Vivian Tyson – Editorial Department



# TCI Cadets Can Qualify for Pilots Scholarships



Captain Chaka Skippings (left), Second in Command of the Turks and Caicos Islands Cadet Corps is photographed with Minister of Education Youth Sports and Culture Hon. Rachel Taylor (right) at the launch of the A. Louise Garland Thomas High School Aquaponics Farm by cadets who are students at that school.

The Turks and Caicos Islands Cadet Corps has taken flight with an exciting new initiative aimed at preparing young cadets for careers in aviation. The Air Program opens a pathway

for cadets to pursue their private and commercial pilot licenses—a first for the organization. According to Captain Chaka Skippings, Second in Command of the Turks and Caicos Islands Cadet

Corps, the program is made possible through the support of a sponsor who covers the cost for cadets or aspiring pilots to attend flight school in Texas. “This is a two-month course,” explained Captain Skippings. “Once the cadets are on break, they will travel to the school to gain hands-on flying experience. The flight hours they complete will count toward their licensing requirements.” Cadets can qualify for a private pilot license at age 17 and a commercial license at 21. While the exact cost of the program is not confirmed, estimates suggest it could range between \$40,000 and \$50,000—costs that are absorbed through sponsorship. Skippings emphasized the importance of academic performance for those wishing to take part. “We look at grades. Even though the pass mark might be 60 or 70 percent, I always encourage the cadets to aim higher,” he said. “Based

on their academic standing, we select those eligible for the opportunity.” What makes the program even more accessible is its online component, allowing cadets to begin coursework remotely before traveling for their in-air training. While aviation is the highlight of the new initiative, the Cadet Corps continues to provide training in several career paths. Cadets receive certification in areas such as first response and CPR, which serve as a strong foundation for careers in healthcare, nursing, or the military. Some former cadets have gone on to fly commercially, while others have pursued degrees in engineering. “The Cadet Corps is much more than just drill,” said Captain Skippings. “We’re building futures here—whether it’s in the air, on the ground, or in service to the community.”

# OLIMEISHA WILLIAMS APPOINTED AS BUDGET ANALYST



Olimeisha Williams

The Office of the Deputy Governor has announced the appointment of Ms Olimeisha Williams as Budget Analyst in the Budget Office in the Ministry of Finance, Trade, and Investment. Ms Williams graduated Summa Cum Laude from Florida International University in 2024, earning her Bachelor of Business Admin-

istration (BBA) in International Business. Her exemplary academic performance led to her induction into the FIU Business Dean’s High Achievers Society, a recognition of her commitment and excellence in her field. Prior to her studies at FIU, Ms. Williams completed an Associate Degree in Business Administration

from the Turks and Caicos Islands Community College in 2021. In terms of practical experience, Ms Williams served as a Finance Intern with the Turks and Caicos Islands National Insurance Board (NIB) during the summers of 2023 and 2024 through the Turks and Caicos Islands Internship and Apprenticeship Program, where she honed her skills in financial reporting, budgeting, and data analysis. In reflecting on her new role, Ms Williams said, “Stepping into this role as Budget Analyst, I am incredibly excited and grateful to contribute to the Ministry’s efforts in fiscal planning, budget management, and economic sustainability. “This appointment marks a significant milestone in my professional journey, and I look forward to applying my skills and knowledge to support effective budgetary policies and financial strategies that promote economic growth and stability in the Turks and Caicos Islands. “As Nelson Mandela once said, ‘Everyone can rise above their circumstances and achieve success if they are dedicated to and passionate about what they do.’ This quote resonates deeply with me because dedication and passion have been the driving forces behind my academic and professional journey. I am truly honoured to have been entrusted with this responsibility

and am committed to making a meaningful contribution to the financial governance of my country. “I embrace this new chapter with enthusiasm and determination, excited for the opportunities that lie ahead. I thank God for allowing me to apply myself in a role that aligns with my passions and aspirations. His guidance has been instrumental in my journey, and I am beyond grateful for His blessings. “I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my parents, family, and mentors, whose unwavering support, encouragement, and belief in me have helped me reach this milestone. Their guidance has played a crucial role in my personal and professional growth.” In congratulatory remarks, Deputy Governor and Head of the Public Service H. E. Anya Williams said, “It is with great pleasure that I extend congratulations and well wishes to Ms Olimesha Williams on her appointment as a Budget Analyst in the Budget Office in the Ministry of Finance. “I have known Olimesha since her childhood years as a student at the Eliza Simons Primary School and am very proud of her and her academic accomplishments. We welcome her and other returning students to the public service with open arms as the future generation of potential leaders in the public service.”



# “A Life Well Lived”: South Caicos’ Oldest Woman Reflects on the Past and Looks to the Future

By Vivian Tyson, Editor-in-Chief



Ms Adina Clare...“I grew up in a Christian home. My mother was a Christian. We went to church, Sunday school... after that, church again,”

remembers. “People in the pond raking the salt. They work from 6 in the morning—two shifts—until the ship loads up and sails away.” Back then, South Caicos was a hub for employment and opportunity, drawing people from Middle Caicos and other islands in search of work. Ms. Clare witnessed it all, and even now, as she watches the island slowly awaken again with new hotels rising and tourists set to arrive, her heart swells with hope.

“South Caicos was down for a long time,” she says with a thoughtful smile. “Time for it to come up now. Time for something good to happen for South Caicos.”

She is proud of her lineage—her seven children, her grandchildren, and her late husband’s extended family—some of whom were quietly seated nearby during our conversation. Her warmth and motherly energy are unmistakable, qualities shaped by a deeply rooted Christian upbringing.

“I grew up in a Christian home. My mother was a Christian. We went to church, Sunday school... after that, church again,” she says. She’s a member of Mount Olivet Baptist Church, a spiritual anchor in her life that has helped her weather many storms.

But like many of her generation, Ms. Clare sees the changing tides among young people today.

“Most of them... they don’t go to church. Some do, some don’t care,” she says sadly. “Too much distraction now. Too much violence. We have to pray to God that he will help us... oh yes, one day.”

Despite the concerns, her message to the youth of South Caicos is full of encouragement and wisdom: “They have to take all they can get. In my day, we didn’t have the opportunity, but they have it now and they must embrace it.”

When asked about her greatest hope for the island that has shaped so much of her life, her answer is simple, yet powerful: “That God will be with South Caicos. That He will bring the people together more than they are, and Christians will walk with one another and come to know the Lord more better.”

At 92, Rubetha Adina Clare is not just a symbol of resilience, but a living chronicle of South Caicos’ history, faith, and strength. As she looks forward to her 100th birthday with optimism, we, too, look forward to celebrating with her — a woman of unwavering faith, deep roots, and timeless wisdom. And if you ask anyone in South Caicos, they’ll tell you the same: “Miss Rubetha is strong. Strong in spirit. Strong in faith. Strong in love.”

May her story continue to inspire generations.

On a quiet morning in South Caicos, just hours before the inaugural American Airlines flight touches down on the island on March 15, I had the distinct honor of sitting down with a woman whose life spans nearly a century—Rubetha Adina Clare.

At 92 years old, she holds the distinction of being the oldest woman currently living on South Caicos, a title she accepts with humility and grace.

“It feels good,” she tells me, her voice gentle yet firm. “Sometimes you’re up and sometimes down, but still I don’t give into it. When I can move about, I move about. I go to church, I go to Bible study... anything spiritual, I go to it.”

Born in Middle Caicos, Ms. Clare moved to South Caicos as a young girl and has called it home ever since. Her memories of “Big South” — as the island was once affectionately known — are vivid and alive. She recalls a bustling community where salt was king, and everyone played their part in its production. “I used to walk to the plants,” she



Miss Adina Clare joins a rich list of dignitaries at the Norman B. Saunders International Airport ready to greet the inaugural American Airlines flight on March 15, 2025.



# Minister Leads Infrastructure Assessment Mission to South Caicos



Minister of Physical Planning and Infrastructure Development Hon. Arlington Musgrove and his team in South Caicos.

The Ministry of Physical Planning and Infrastructure Development has announced the successful working visit to the island of South Caicos, which took place on Thursday, 10 April 2025.

Leading the visit was the Hon. Arlington Musgrove, accompanied by his Executive Team, including Permanent Secretary Mrs Bridgette Newman, Acting Deputy Permanent Secretary Mr Garvin Thomas, Deputy Director of Planning Mr Toriano Williams, and a team of technocrats from the Department of Public Works and Estates Management.

The team was joined by Hon. Tamell Seymour, Member of Parliament for South Caicos and Mrs. Yvette Cox, District Commissioner for the Island.

The purpose of the visit was to assess the state of government-owned infrastructure, explore potential new buildings for use, identify land parcels for development by the government, and address ongoing challenges faced by public facilities.

This initiative, according to a news release, underscores the ministry's commitment to ensuring that South Caicos residents have access to well-maintained and



functional public facilities. During their time on the island, the team conducted site visits to several key locations, including the Marjorie Basden High School, Iris Stubbs Primary School, the Eliza M. Basden Aged Care and Special Needs Center, various government offices, and the South Caicos Morgue.

Hon. Musgrove emphasised the importance of the visit, stating: "Our visit to South Caicos highlights my Ministry's dedication to identifying areas of improvement in public infrastructure and addressing the challenges that impact the community. By engaging directly with the facilities and its stakeholders, we can prioritise meaningful investments that benefit the residents of South Caicos."

As part of this ongoing initiative, the Minister and his team plan to carry out similar assessments in Grand Turk and Salt Cay in the coming weeks. Assessments on the other islands across the Turks and Caicos have already been completed, with work scheduled to commence soon. The Ministry of Physical Planning and Infrastructure Development remains committed to working collaboratively with stakeholders and the local community to deliver tangible improvements to public infrastructure across these beautiful Turks and Caicos Islands.



# National Scholastic Performing Arts Showcase Lived Up to Expectation

By Vivian Tyson, NEWSLINE Editor-In-Chief



Raymond Gardiner students added much spark to the event



This Michael Jackson Impersonator, singing 'Man in the Mirror', was a hit with the crowd



This Maranatha male quartet delivered a scintillating performance at the event

This year's National Scholastic Performing Arts – An Event of Excellence, held at the Gustavus Lightbourne Sports Complex on April 10, 2025, delivered an unforgettable night of creativity, culture, and student brilliance. As one of the signature events on the Ministry of Education's calendar, the showcase brought together primary and high school students from across the islands to perform in front of a packed audience. The evening featured a rich array of performances, including music, drama, dance, spoken word, and cultural presentations — each reflecting the talent and hard work of students and their teachers. The Hon. Rachel

Taylor, Minister of Education, Youth, Sports, and Social Services, was full of praise, noting that this year's standard was even higher than 2024. "I must say they have superseded last year's performance," Minister Taylor said. "We had a diverse range of cultural expressions, and I was especially proud to see participation from North Caicos, which was not a part of the event last year." Taylor highlighted that North Caicos schools made a noticeable impact this year, thanks in part to the addition of new musical instruments and a newly appointed music teacher. "They made an assertive effort, and the improvement was evident," she

noted. As the event continues to grow, the Education Ministry is actively considering changes to its structure. Minister Taylor suggested the possibility of dividing the event into two separate showcases — one for primary schools and another for high schools — to allow for more tailored performances and recognition. "I really think next time we'll need to separate into different categories," she said. "That way, we can give each group the appropriate space and recognition while also incorporating more cultural elements into the entertainment." Minister Taylor attributed the contin-

ued improvement in student performances to the Ministry's investment in creative arts through the SEPC (Student Enrichment and Personal Capacity) after-school program. The program, which embeds performing arts in after-school activities, has become a key platform for student development. "Because we have dedicated time now to focus on the children and their talents, we're seeing better outcomes," she explained. "The impact of this is being seen on stages like this one." Looking forward, the Minister reaffirmed the Ministry's goal of integrating performing arts into the national curriculum over the current five-year strategic period. This would not only enhance access to arts education in schools but create a clear academic and professional pathway into tertiary studies. "My team and I are currently exploring how we can bring performing arts directly into the curriculum," she said. "We envision this continuing into the Turks and Caicos Islands Community College, giving students more opportunities to pursue the creative arts seriously." Even though performing arts is not yet a formal part of the high school curriculum, Taylor noted that students are already embracing it through extracurricular and tertiary avenues. In closing, she applauded all the participating schools and performers for their dedication and passion. "This event was more than just entertainment," Minister Taylor said. "It was a celebration of culture, identity, and the extraordinary potential of our young people."



# Rock House Resort Honors First Quarter Winners for Excellence



Laila Rigby (centre) of the Accounts Department collects her Leader of the Quarter Awards from Celianise Forbes (left) Director of Human Resources at Rock House and Rosemary Ocampo of the Accounts Department.



Jovenel Charles (centre) is all smiles as he collects his award for Employee of the Quarter for Back of House, from Devina Sunnotah, Director of Owner Relations. Sharing in the moment is Alen Francois - Assistant Housekeeping Manager.

Rock House celebrated its standout team members on Friday during its First Quarter Staff Awards Ceremony, recognizing those who have gone above and beyond in delivering exceptional guest experiences.

Laila Rigby of the Finance Department took top honours, walking away with the Leader of the Quarter award. Gregory Theodore of the Engineering Department was recognized as Supervisor of the Quarter, while Front of House Employee of the Quarter was awarded to Jodson Mondesir of the Pool and Beach team. Back of House Employee of the Quarter went to Jovenel Charles from the Housekeeping Department.

General Manager Franck Chantoiseau praised all the nominees, expressing heartfelt appreciation for their dedication and passion.

"Each of these team members consistently goes the extra mile to ensure our guests have an unforgettable stay," Chantoiseau said. "But the winners have truly set themselves apart with exceptional service, leadership, and commitment."

Adding a cultural and comedic flair to the event was David Bowen, former Director of Culture and now with Grace Bay Resorts, who teamed up with Rock House's own Eler for a vibrant performance that drew hearty laughs and applause from the crowd.

A number of exciting quiz prizes were also won by staff members throughout the event, sparking friendly competition and extra cheer. The festivities culminated in a celebratory cake-cutting, marking a sweet end to an evening of recognition, entertainment, and team spirit.

The Rock House Staff Awards continue to reflect the resort's commitment to excellence and appreciation for the people who make every guest experience unforgettable.



Gregory Theodore is presented with the Supervisor of the Quarter Award by Celianise Forbes (left), Director of Human Resources at the Rock House Resort, and Theo Rock, Director of Engineering.



Eler (left) and David Bowen provided entertainment for the occasion.



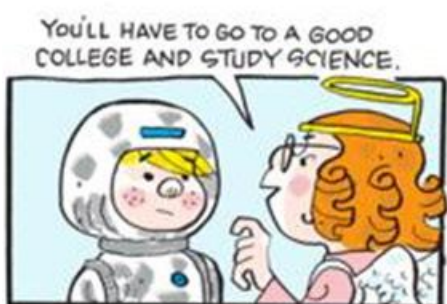
Jodson Mondesir (centre) of Pool and Beach poses for the camera shortly after collecting his award for Employee of the Quarter for Front of the House, from Celianise Forbes, Director of Human Resources at Rock House. Sharing in the occasion is Woodens Corvil, Pool and Beach Manager.



Hank Ketchum's

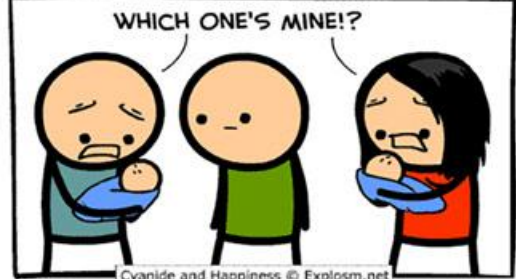
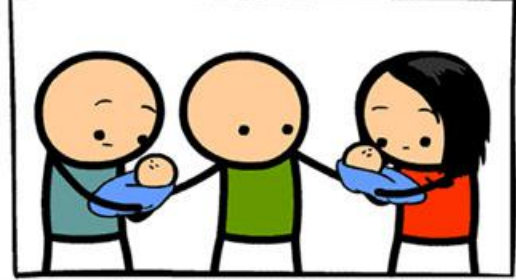
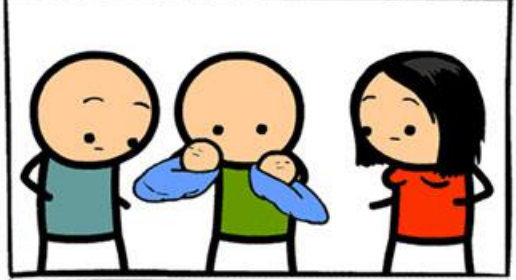
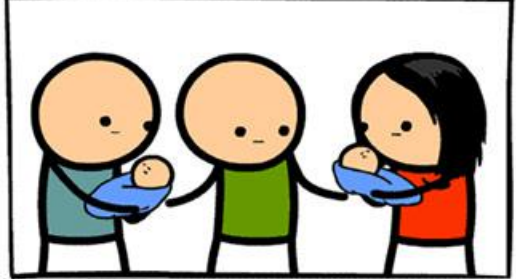
Dennis the Menace

Miss NO-it-all



NEWSLINE

COMICS



Cyanide and Happiness © Explosm.net



# TURKS head cactus

NEWSLINE  
Journal of Accuracy, Balance & Courage

TURKS  
HEAD  
CACTUS

The Turks head cacti (*Melocactus intortus*) is a variety of small barrel cactus. A reddish cap tops the cacti, and it's easy to see where the cacti got its name as this cap resembles a Turkish fez hat. The Turks head cacti appears on both the Turks and Caicos flag and coat of arms. Due to the lack of competition, the Turks head cacti is typically found in exposed and dry regions. In the Turks and Caicos, these areas are usually natural eroded limestone bedding landscapes, or in some cases, hard sandy dunes. Unfortunately, the cacti has largely disappeared from the main populated islands. The majority of existing plants are located on East Caicos and Big Ambergris Cay, with small clusters on Middle Caicos and a select few other cays.



# RAYNAE MYERS APPOINTED INVESTIGATIVE OFFICER



Raynae Myers

The Office of the Complaints Commission announce the appointment of Ms. Raynae Myers as the new Investigative Officer within the Office of the Complaints Commission.

Driven by purpose and guided by faith, Ms. Myers is a dynamic individual committed to making a significant impact throughout the Turks and Caicos Islands. With resilience at her core and a passion for justice, she embraces challenges as opportunities for growth. Known

for her eloquence and profound commitment to service, Ms. Myers continues to use her voice and platform to empower others and champion fairness in every space she enters.

Ms. Myers began her academic journey at the Turks and Caicos Islands Community College (TCICC), where she obtained an Associate's Degree in General Studies with a concentration in Law, Politics and Sociology. She continued her education at the University of

Manchester, where she obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Law and Politics. While at the University of Manchester, Ms. Myers made a significant contribution to the university community by publishing her first article on their website. She is now preparing to pursue her Master's degree (online), continuing her quest to broaden her expertise in the legal field.

A passionate advocate for justice, Ms. Myers worked as a Legal Apprentice at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), gaining hands-on experience in legal research, case preparation and advocacy. This role strengthened her resolve to contribute to the legal community, where she has been driven to pursue fairness and uphold the law in all aspects of her career.

Throughout her life, Ms. Myers has demonstrated leadership and a commitment to service. She currently serves as the Fundraising Director of the Rotaract Club of Grand Turk, focusing on youth empowerment and community development. Additionally, as a former Youth Parliamentarian, she

gained valuable insight into public policy, which she later applied in various roles. Her time on the Student Guild at TCICC allowed her to further cultivate her leadership and organizational skills, building a foundation for her future advancement.

Reflecting on her appointment, Ms. Myers shared, "This is a significant milestone in my journey, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve in this role. My faith has always been a guiding force in my life, and I am reminded of Philippians 4:13, 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.' I look forward to contributing to the Office of the Complaints Commission and making a positive impact on the legal landscape of our community."

Hon. Rita Gardiner, Complaints Commissioner commented, "As we continue in our campaign to educate and bring awareness to the Office of the Complaints Commission, I am confident that Ms. Myers will bring a new and fresh perspective to the institution. With her drive and outgoing personality, she will be a great asset to the office."

# JACQUELINE HENRY APPOINTED VICE PRINCIPAL AT ONA GLINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL



Jacqueline Henry

Ms. Henry holds a Bachelor of Education in Primary School Education, achieving Second Class Honours (Upper Division) from the Council of Community Colleges of Jamaica. She also has an Associate Degree in Primary Education, for which she received the Deputy Premier's Award for Outstanding Performance in Teaching Practicum from Turks and Caicos Islands Community College in June 2007.

Her employment history with the Turks and Caicos Islands Government includes being an Upper Primary Teacher at the Eliza Simons Primary for the 2024 – 2025 academic year and her previous position as an Upper Primary Teacher at Ona Glinton Primary from 2007 to 2024.

Additionally, she served as Acting Vice Principal at Ona Glinton Primary from 2021 to 2022. In her capacity, Ms. Henry has led the Ona Glinton Primary School Ripsaw Band, facilitated Natural Hazard Training, served as a Drill Instructor, and been involved in various competitions, including the TCI National Spelling Bee and the Math Lab Mathematics Competition.

Ms. Henry has received numerous awards recognizing her dedication and outstanding contributions to the educational field. These include a Long Service Award for 17 years in the Turks and Caicos Islands Gov-

ernment in June 2024 and multiple Teacher of the Year Awards from various organizations, acknowledging her innovative teaching strategies and professionalism.

Her project involvement ranges from the Reading Progress Program to developing the Ona Glinton Primary School Disaster Management Plan. Furthermore, Ms. Henry has participated in various trainings, such as the American Federation of Teachers Professional Learning on Collaborative Wellness and the Eight Dimensions of Educator Wellness.

Ms. Henry possesses a wide array of skills, including proficiency in Microsoft Office applications, online learning platforms, and classroom technology. Her strong background in behaviour management, classroom evaluation, and student assessment, combined with her organizational skills and ability to engage students, makes her ideal for this role.

Ms. Henry expressed her gratitude, stating, "I am deeply honoured and profoundly grateful to be appointed as the Vice Principal of my beloved alma mater, the Ona Glinton Primary School. This milestone is a testament to the unwavering support of my mother, Dorothy Been, along with my family and friends, whose encouragement and belief in me have been my foundation."

"Guided by Jeremiah 29:11 - 'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future,' I step into this role with unshakable faith, purpose, and determination, embracing the privilege of giving back to the institution that shaped me."

"With God's wisdom as my guide, I am committed to excellence, professionalism, and service while empowering students, collaborating with stakeholders, and fostering a culture of growth. Together, we will continue to soar to even greater heights of success."

H.E. Anya Williams, Deputy Governor and Head of the Public Service congratulated Ms. Henry, stating, "It gives me great pleasure to officially congratulate Ms. Jacqueline Henry on her appointment as the new Vice Principal of the Ona Glinton Primary School."

"Her dedication to education and commitment to student success and youth development have not gone unnoticed. This promotion is not just a recognition of her hard work but also a testament to her passion for teaching and the positive impact she has had on her students throughout her teaching career. Your efforts to inspire and support others are truly commendable."

The Office of the Deputy Governor has announced the appointment of Ms. Jacqueline Henry as the Vice Principal of the Ona Glinton Primary School within the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, and Culture.



Life Line

FEATURED CHURCH

This week on Newsline Featured Church, we shine the spotlight on the Church of God of Prophecy, located in Blue Hills, Providenciales. The church is led by pastor Andrew Stone. There are at least six opportunities for worship during the week. On Sunday at 9:30a.m. is Sunday School. On Sunday 11a.m. is Divine Sunday Morning Service. On Sunday at 7:30p.m. is Evening Ser-vice. On Tuesday at 7:30p.m. is Prayer Meeting. On Wednesday at 7:30pm is Bible Study, and on Friday at 7:30pm is Youth Ministry. For further about any of the worship opportunities, contact 1 649-941-3438.



CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY, BLUE HILLS

LIFE LINE CHURCH DIRECTORY

Looking for a worshipping house to praise God and fellowship with members of the body of Christ, here is a list of some of the available sanctuaries you can attend throughout the Turks and Caicos Islands.

- Firm Foundation Ministries International**  
Lee Street, South Caicos.  
Telephone: 649-348-3581
- Christ is the Answer Ministry,**  
George Alley Off Aviation Drive, Providenciales  
Tel: 241-8030
- One Nation Empowerment Center**  
Church Ministry, Suite #12 Alliance  
Business Center, Princess Drive, Grace Bay, Providenciales.  
Tel: (649) 244-6194. Email: apostleyoung1952@yahoo.com.
- Touch of Love Ministries International Center**  
Industrial Park, Five Cays, Providenciales  
Tel: 941-4903 Fax: 941-7731
- Abundant Life Ministries International**  
P.O. Box 696 Christian City, Leeward  
Highway, Providenciales  
Tel:941-941-4750 Fax: 941-4755
- Anglican Church Rectory Grant Turk,**  
Front Street, Grand Turk. Tel:946-2289
- Bethany Baptist Church,**  
Blue Hills, Providenciales  
Tel:941-4803 / 941-5632 / 941-5118
- Church of God of Prophecy,**  
Lower Bight, Providenciales  
Tel: 941-8854
- Bible Study Ministries, Grand Turk**  
Tel:946-1866
- Calvary Baptist Church,**  
South Caicos. Tel:946-3212
- Harvest Bible Chapel TCI,**  
Leeward Highway, Long Bay, Providenciales.  
Tel: 1649 333-2009  
Email: hbctciinfo@gmail.com.  
<https://www.harvesttci.tc>.

- Firm Foundation Ministries International**  
19 Honour Lane, Behind Smart Supermarket ,  
Providenciales. Telephone: 649-332-6240
- Church of God of Propesy,**  
Providenciales Tel:941-3438
- Roman Catholic Church,**  
Providenciales, Tel: 941-5136
- Faith Tabernacle Church of God,**  
Providenciales, Tel:946-4073
- New Testament Church of God,**  
Orea Alley, Grand Turk Tel:946-2175
- New Testament Church of God,**  
South Caicos Tel:946-3631
- Methodist Church,**  
Grand Turk Tel:946-2352
- Healing Waters Ministries,**  
Blue Hills Providenciales Tel: 941-5867
- House of Prayer Church of God,**  
Long Bay Road Providenciales Tel: 941-8309
- Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses,**  
Darrell Road, Grand Turk Tel:946-2727
- Mount Mariah Baptist Church,**  
Conch Bar Middle Caicos Tel:946-6205
- New Beginning Harvest Ministry,**  
Pond Street, Grand Turk Tel:946-1759
- New Testament Church of God**  
Orea Alley  
P.O. Box 495 Blue Hills, Providenciales  
Tel: 946-1255  
Airport Road, South Caicos  
Tel:231-2402

- Firm Foundation Ministries International**  
Waterloo Road, Grand Turk.  
Telephone: 649-332-624
- Paradise Baptist Church,**  
Five Cays, Providenciale  
Tel:941-4349
- Revival Faith Center,**  
North Backsalina, Grand Turk  
Tel:946-2349
- Salem Baptist Church,**  
Mission Folly, Grand Turk  
Tel:946-2565
- Solid Rock Apostolic Ministries**  
International,  
Discovery Bay Providenciales  
Tel: 946-5181
- St. Monica’s Anglican Church**  
P.O. Box 866 Cheshire Hall Providenciales  
Tel: 946-4046  
Fax:946-4046;941-8499
- Turks and Caicos Mission of Seventh**  
Day Adventists,  
P.O. Box 803, Providenciales
- United Pentecostal Church,**  
Brown’s Plaza, Leeward Highway,  
Providenciales Tel: 956-5852
- Wesleyan Methodist Church,**  
Blue Hills, Providenciales  
Tel: 946-4075; 941-4223; 941-3596
- Editor’s Note: If your Ministry is not listed and/or you would like for it to be part of the NEWSLINETCI Church Diary, contact us at:contact@newslinetci.com



# FLASHBACK TO DRCS NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL SPEECH COMPTITION

The Department of Rehabilitation and Community Supervision staged its Second Annual National High School Speech Competition held at Beaches Recently. Rerianna Nikes of the Clement Howell High School was adjudged as the winner. The following are flashback photos of the event.









# Accolades Aplenty At Grace Bay Club's First Quarter Staff Awards



John Hazard (left), Managing Director for Grace Bay Club, Laiela Bassam-Abdi (second left) – Director of Training and Quality Assurance; Joanna Fortunato (third left) – Director for HR, and Sheba Wilson (right) – Vice President of HR, share in the joy with Grace Bay Club First Quarter Staff winners. Jeneise palmer (third left) – (Leader of the Quarter Front of House); Sharlette Mervin (fifth left - Heart of the House); Nicola Smythe-Penn (six left - Supervisor of the Quarter); Islande Desir (seventh left - Leader of the Quarter Heart of House); Gerald Angrand (eight from left - Front of the House); Ketline Wilson (ninth from left – Heart of House); and Fitzroy Pendley (second right - Front of the House).

The team at Grace Bay Club gathered on Tuesday, April 15, for a special occasion as the resort hosted its First Quarter Staff Awards ceremony. Held on the lush grounds of the resort in Grace Bay, the event was a vibrant celebration of employee excellence, teamwork, and dedication during the first three months of 2025.

Staff members from across departments were recognized for their outstanding contributions in front of their peers and supervisors, creating an atmosphere of encouragement, appreciation, and shared success. Awards were presented in several key categories that reflect the resort's commitment to service quality and operational excellence.

In the Front of House category, Gerald Angrand was honored for

his exceptional performance in the Food & Beverage department. His consistent professionalism and attention to detail earned him top praise from guests and colleagues alike. Fitzroy Pendley, from the Guest Experiences team, also received accolades for his warmth, efficiency, and unwavering commitment to guest satisfaction, helping to create memorable stays for visitors from around the world. For those working behind the scenes, the Heart of House awards went to Ketline Wilson of the Housekeeping team and Sharlette Mervin from the Reservations department. Both employees were praised for their reliability, dedication, and the critical roles they play in keeping the resort running smoothly and efficiently.

Recognition was also given to out-

standing supervisors who have demonstrated strong leadership within their teams. In the Front of House Supervisor category, Yves Missick from the Pool and Beach team received honors for his hands-on approach and ability to motivate his team to maintain the highest standards of guest service. Nicola Smythe-Penn, from the Housekeeping department, was likewise celebrated for her meticulous oversight and commitment to excellence in her role.

The coveted Leader of the Quarter award recognized two standout individuals whose leadership, innovation, and service ethic have made a significant impact. Jeneise Palmer of the Food & Beverage team and Islande Desir from the Private Villa Collection both received this top honor, reflecting

their extraordinary contributions to guest experience and team success.

A highlight of the event was the announcement of winners in the Race for the Gold recognition program, which celebrates staff members who receive the most internal mentions and commendations from their peers. Beatrice Tellus was awarded the Bronze recognition with 13 mentions, while Trevion Ginton, a Personal Concierge, took home the Silver with an impressive 24 mentions.

The Grace Bay Club management team congratulated all the winners and expressed gratitude to the entire staff for their hard work and dedication. The ceremony concluded with cheers and camaraderie, setting the tone for another strong quarter ahead.



# CONTESTANTS VYING FOR 2025 TCI TOP MODEL CONTEST TO MAKE THEIR OFFICIAL DEBUT

The anticipation is soaring as the official delegates competing for the coveted title of The Face of the Turks & Caicos -TCI Top Model – have been revealed. Their grand debut is set for Saturday, April 26th, 2025, at the Beauty Personified launch event, kicking off what is expected to be the most transformative cycle in the contest's celebrated history.

Themed "En Vogue," this sixth instalment ushers in a bold new era, as the competition goes co-ed for the very first time. This move toward greater inclusivity reflects the evolving global fashion landscape—providing an equal platform for both male and female talents to shine. Selected from an impressive pool of 28 applicants, ten dynamic contestants are now stepping into the spotlight, each ready to embark on a journey of personal and professional growth, creative transformation, and global opportunity.

The 2025 TCI Top Model Contest Finalists: Shakem Charles, Kavanna Hanna, Juane Familia, Mynisha Chery, Mosderlin Hicher, Diavion Ebanks, Ancy Dorsica, Shenylce Bello, Hubert Jr. Prospere, Niyeca Thompson.

Courtney Robinson, Executive Producer of the TCI Top Model Contest, shared: "This cycle is not just a competition—it's a fashion phenomenon. By opening the runway to both men and women, we're celebrating talent in all its forms and embracing a future where fashion in Turks and Caicos reflects the diversity and dynamism of our people. 'En Vogue' is more than a theme—it's a statement of intent."

The 2025 cycle officially launches with Beauty Personified, an exclusive affair at the reflecting pool of The Spa at The Palms Resort, Grace Bay, Providenciales, beginning at 5PM. Hosted by O'Brian Forbes, this elegant evening—complete with a resort chic dress code—promises island glamour, fashion-forward flair, and a first glimpse at the stars of tomorrow. Tickets are



Shakem Charles



Kavanna Hanna



Juane Familia



Mynisha Chery





Mosderlin Hicher



Diavion Ebanks



Ancy Dorsica



Niyeca Thompson



Shenylce Bello



Hubert Jr Prospere

limited and priced at \$100. Since its inception in 2009, the TCI Top Model Contest has evolved into the premier platform for fashion, beauty, arts, and entertainment in the Turks and Caicos Islands. More than a modelling competition, it is a movement—empowering young creatives through education, mentorship, and international exposure. Now entering its sixth cycle, the

2025 competition is the most ambitious yet, offering over \$35,000 in cash and prizes, global media coverage, and unmatched career-building opportunities. The Winner, along with the First and Second Runners-Up, will be featured in Times of the Islands and Discover Turks and Caicos magazines, and will serve as brand ambassadors for Basic Essen-

tials, Queen of the World Spa, and more. The top three (3) placers will also receive state-of-the-art cellular devices from FLOW TCI, cash awards, and an exciting slate of prizes that affirm their role as cultural influencers and icons of TCI fashion. The countdown begins with Beauty Personified, culminating in a show-stopping Grand Fina-

le on Saturday, May 31st, 2025, at Brayton Hall, Providenciales. This not-to-be-missed event will feature award-winning performances and a high-impact multimedia production that redefines fashion excellence in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Tables and tickets are on sale now. Be there to witness the rise of the next Face of the Turks & Caicos.



# Wymara Resort + Villas Achieves Green Globe Certification, Setting a New Benchmark for Sustainable Luxury in Turks and Caicos



Wymara Resort + Villas is proud to announce that it has officially been awarded Green Globe Certification, a globally recognized standard for sustainable tourism. Timed with Earth Month, this milestone underscores Wymara's unwavering commitment to environmental responsibility, community support, and best-in-class sustainable practices — all while delivering luxury with a conscience, a hallmark of the Wymara experience.

In its inaugural audit, Wymara placed among the top-performing first-time applicants, laying the groundwork for continued progress toward climate-conscious hospitality.

"Achieving Green Globe Certification is a milestone we're incredibly proud of — it reflects not only our values, but the collective passion and effort of our entire team," says Shelley Rincon, CEO, Wymara Resort + Villas. "Sustainability has been woven into our DNA since day one, and this certification affirms our position at the forefront of responsible luxury travel in the Caribbean."

## A True Changemaker in Caribbean Hospitality

Wymara Resort + Villas isn't just checking boxes — it's redefining what sustainable luxury looks like in the Caribbean. With deep-rooted values and a future-focused mindset, Wymara has implemented comprehensive initiatives that not only minimize its environmental impact, but actively invest in the health, culture, and future of the Turks and Caicos Islands — a desti-

nation proudly known as Beautiful by Nature.

This commitment ensures that the island's pristine beauty, rich marine life, and vibrant community are preserved for generations to come.

From eliminating plastics to restoring coral reefs and supporting youth development, Wymara is proof that luxury and sustainability are not mutually exclusive — they're stronger together.

**Plastic-Free Commitment:** Wymara has eliminated single-use plastics resort-wide, including the introduction of wooden key cards and convenient water refill stations located throughout the property, along with other operational changes that remove plastic from daily use.

**Smart Water Management:** In a destination where fresh water is limited and often imported, Wymara has taken steps to reduce unnecessary water use in landscaping. Rainbird sensors have been installed throughout the property's irrigation system to provide precise, real-time readings of soil moisture. These sensors automatically suspend watering when moisture levels exceed preset thresholds — helping to conserve water and reduce strain on local resources.

**Commitment to Marine Conservation:** One of Wymara's most innovative initiatives is its end-of-stay donation program, launched in 2023. Since then, the resort and its guests have contributed tens of thousands of dollars to the Turks

and Caicos Reef Fund, directly advancing coral reef conservation.

In 2025 alone, the program is projected to raise over \$140,000. Guests are invited to contribute \$5 per night, and select menu items donate 10% of proceeds to the Fund. Wymara's long-term vision is to inspire other hotels and water-sports operators across the islands to adopt similar programs — a collective effort that could significantly change the future of reef preservation in Turks and Caicos.

**Community Investment:** \$300,000 donated in the past three years to the Edward C. Garland Youth Centre, directly supporting education and youth development on-island.

**Coastal Clean-Ups:** Wymara organizes monthly beach clean-up days to protect the surrounding coastline and marine environment. These efforts engage both guests and the local community and reflect the resort's recognition that its success is directly tied to the preservation of the island's natural beauty, including the world's third-largest reef and diverse marine life.

**Sustainable Sourcing:** From spa products made with on-site botanicals by The Wildflower Skincare Lab to eco-conscious offerings from 111SKIN, Wymara integrates sustainability into every touchpoint. In the kitchen, menus feature locally caught fish and island-grown produce, reducing the resort's footprint and supporting regional farmers and fishers.

"The precedent-setting support we have received from Wymara for

our coral reef conservation efforts has been instrumental to our ability to expand our operations," says Alizee Zimmermann, Executive Director of the Turks and Caicos Reef Fund, the country's only environmental advocacy NGO. "Coastal and marine ecosystems are culturally valued by the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands, and Wymara Resort + Villas are exemplary when it comes to embodying sustainable practices for all the right reasons."

## Sustainability That Goes Beyond the Surface

As a proud member of Leading Hotels of the World, Wymara's impact goes beyond sustainability. The executive team champions gender equality, employee development, and cultural connection through mentorship programs, staff training, and partnerships that elevate local artisans and suppliers.

Wymara is one of just six resorts in Turks and Caicos to be recognized by Forbes Travel Guide with a Four-Star rating. Now, with Green Globe Certification secured, the resort is doubling down on its pursuit of Five-Star status — blending world-class luxury with meaningful change.

## A Global Endorsement of Impact

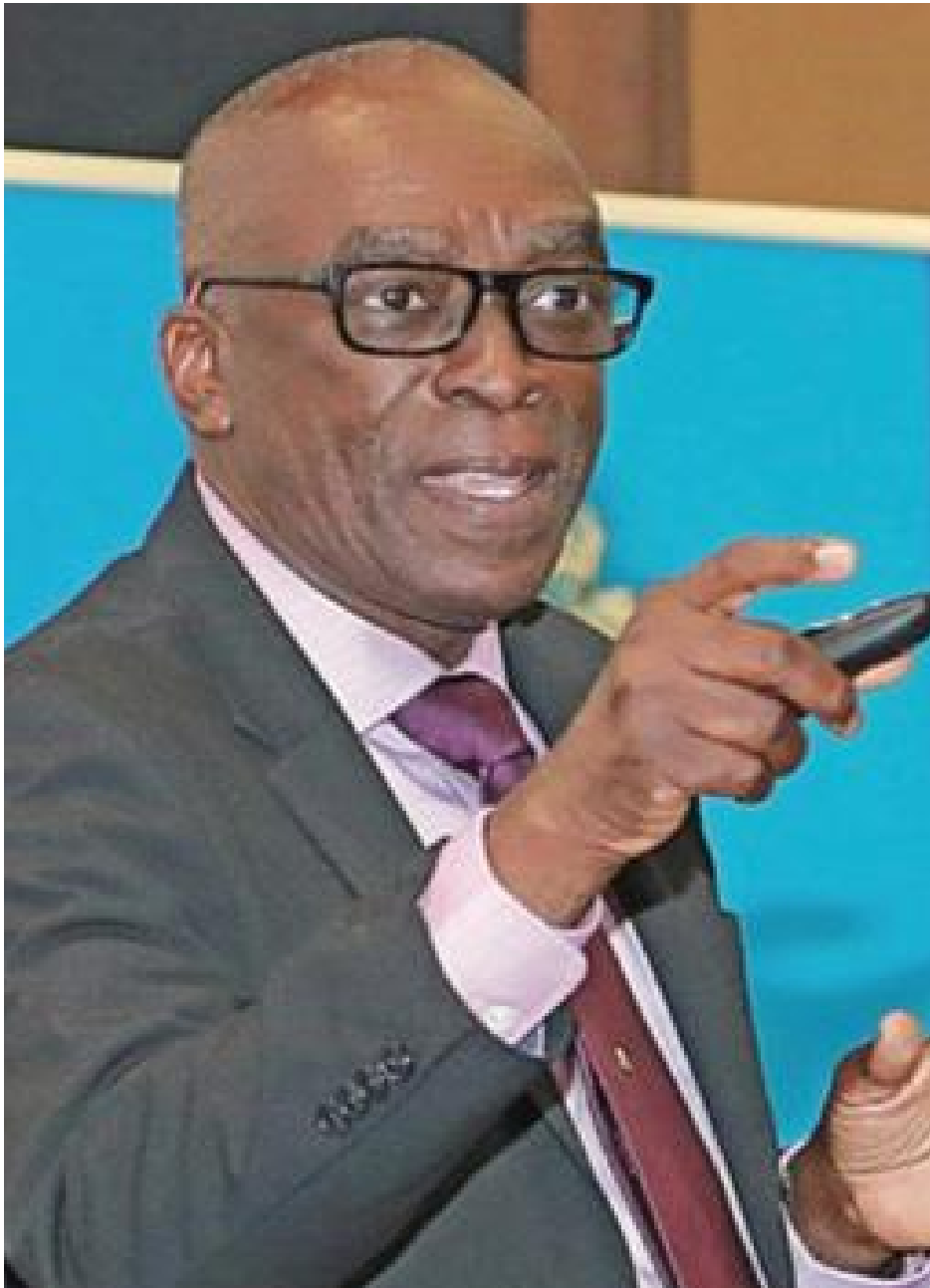
Green Globe is the premier global certification for sustainable tourism. Certified members are independently audited based on over 380 criteria, covering everything from energy use and waste reduction to community involvement and biodiversity protection. With increasing pressure on travel and hospitality brands to meet net-zero targets by 2050, Green Globe Certification provides credible, third-party assurance to travelers who care about their environmental footprint.

Green Globe Certification CEO Birte Pelayo congratulated Wymara Resort + Villas, the newest member of the elite sustainable hospitality community.

"The Caribbean is home to some of the first resorts in the world to achieve certification by Green Globe, and we are excited to welcome Wymara to this elite collection of sustainable hospitality businesses," said Birte Pelayo, CEO, Green Globe Certification. "From supporting coral reforestation to eliminating single-use plastics and restoring sand dunes and natural ecosystems, Wymara is active and engaged in preserving and improving its holiday destination."



# Trauma and adverse childhood experiences



Professor Wendel Abel, Professor of Mental Health Policy and Head of the Department of Community Health and Psychiatry at The UWI Mona Campus

TRAUMA OCCURS when individuals are exposed to distressing events that are potentially life threatening and that often overwhelm their ability to cope.

These events may be witnessed and experienced directly, but an individual can also experience trauma by simply being told about a disturbing event. Traumatic experiences include a wide range of adverse events and experiences that an individual may be exposed to over a lifetime.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACE) may be defined as 10 potentially preventable traumatic events or circumstances experienced during childhood before the age of 18. The term emerged out of research done by the Centers for Disease Control and the health provider Kaiser Permanente in the United States several years ago.

According to Professor Wendel Abel, during his keynote pre-

sentation at the GraceKennedy Foundation annual lecture titled 'Breaking The Cycle of Childhood Trauma', the main focus has been on the ACEs because of a large body of literature that has been produced on these original ACEs. The original ACEs include 10 experiences grouped into three main categories:

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- Childhood neglect, which may be physical neglect or emotional neglect;
- Child abuse, which includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse;
- Problems within the household, referred to as household dysfunction, which includes witnessing domestic violence, having a close friend or family member who used alcohol and other drugs, having a close family member with a mental-health problem, having a close

family member who has been incarcerated, and parental separation or divorce.

"Adverse childhood experiences are traumatic for children as they create profound distress. When the experiences are repeated and prolonged, these adverse childhood experiences often lead to mental-health issues, substance misuse, and physical problems as children move through the developmental stages and into adulthood," Professor Abel said.

Research, he said, has shown that not all children who experience ACEs develop problems in life. However, he said there are several factors that determine the likelihood of exposure to adverse childhood experiences and the development of problems later in life.

"Risk factors are those that may increase the likelihood of exposure to ACEs and long-term outcomes associated with them. Some of these risk factors are themselves adverse childhood experiences," Professor Abel said.

Protective factors, he said, are those that may decrease the likelihood of exposure to ACEs and can be linked to the opportunities that are geared at enhancing the mental and emotional well-being of children and youth.

"An understanding of risk and protective factors is critical to preventing ACEs, and a large body of work has emerged around developing strategies to enhance protective factors, mitigate risk factors, and promote resilience and coping. These risk and protective factors may be classified as being at the individual level, at the family, community, or wider societal level," Professor Abel said.

Research demonstrates that typically, eight out of every 10 children in Jamaica experience some form of childhood adversity, which, later in life, may manifest itself in myriad ways, including substance abuse, depression, and other mental-health disorders.

Concise definitions of Adverse Childhood Experiences, which are the root causes of trauma, include examples and concepts that many can relate to: childhood neglect, child abuse, domestic violence, and household dysfunction.

Risk factors, he explained, are those that increase the likelihood of exposure to ACEs: family-related, community, school, societal, and cultural. The reality of these conditions becomes even more

daunting when one realises the systemic nature of risk factors: poverty, poor housing, and lack of quality education.

The most insidious of these he mentioned are historical trauma: past experiences – slavery, colonialism, racism – which many have inherited across generations.

The statistics are staggering: surveys (UNICEF 2023) indicate that 75 per cent of Jamaican youth, ages 13 to 24, experienced violence of one kind or another; one in four females (25 per cent), ages 13 to 24, experienced sexual violence.

Alarming, too, is Professor Abel's claim that many who experience physical violence do not recognise it as physical abuse. His hypothesis begs the question whether we have become desensitised to conditions of violence in Jamaica.

Access to mental health care is critical: 50 per cent of youth who reported an experience of violence (UNICEF, 2023) were incapable of accessing services. He advocates for more resources, programmes, and interventions to save our children to break the vicious cycle of childhood trauma. Professor Wendel Abel is a prominent scholar in the field of psychiatry. He is professor of Mental Health Policy in the Department of Community Health and Psychiatry in the Faculty of Medical Sciences and a consultant psychiatrist at The University Hospital of the West Indies, Mona.

The GraceKennedy Foundation held its annual lecture on 'Breaking the Cycle of Childhood Trauma,' by Professor Wendel Abel to address the pervasive and intense issue of childhood trauma in Jamaica.

"This is not an issue confined to any specific area. It affects individuals across all strata of society and often remains hidden and unresolved, passing from generation to generation if the cycle is not broken. Professor Abel inspires us with hope that with the right mindset and allocation of resources, we can treat this malady," said Fred W. Kennedy, chairman of the GraceKennedy Foundation.

Since 1989, the foundation has invited a person of distinction to lecture on a subject of political, economic, or social concern to Jamaica and the Caribbean. It is the aim of the foundation that the lecture should initiate public debate and commentary at all levels of society.



# Mariah Carey on new music and Rock & Roll Hall of Fame



Mariah Carey has new music in the works. "I'm working on something. We won't say what it is, but something new," said Carey.

It may be hard to conceive of now, but there was once a lull in Mariah Carey's superstar career. In 2001, her film *Glitter* was a commercial flop. The album that followed, 2002's introspective *Charmbracelet*, was met with a muted response. She was at a crossroads. And then everything changed. Carey released *The Emancipation of Mimi* in 2005. It joined her athletic R&B-pop with synth-y hip-hop and fun, flirty, enduring hits — she was now only belting when she wanted to, thank you very much. She sounded free, as the title suggested, and the world embraced her for it once again.

Yesterday the album turned 20. To celebrate, Carey is gearing up to release deluxe, expanded editions of the album on May 30, featuring bonus tracks, new remixes, and

much more — including the official release of *When I Feel It*, a song fans have been waiting for since 2005. It was originally planned for *The Emancipation of Mimi* but was ultimately shelved because of clearance issues with its sample of The Dynamic Superiors' *Here Comes That Feeling*.

"These are new gems as far as I'm concerned," Carey says. "It's exciting to me."

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Carey discussed *The Emancipation of Mimi*, her recent nomination to be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Rihanna, and plans for new music with AP. The interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

Has your relationship to 'The

Emancipation of Mimi' changed over the years?

It's still one of my favourite albums that I've done. And, you know, back then when it first came out, everybody was calling it a comeback album. ... I didn't really agree, because you never think you've gone anywhere. You know what I mean? I just always really loved the songs and the performances. People seem to really be into it. And new fans came from that album.

I hear a lot of creative freedom on that album. Do you think it revitalised your career?

I do think it's got a fun feeling to it and it definitely feels free. I guess it sort of revitalised my career. I spent a while making that album ... working with some great people, and some great collaborators. ... It was an experience that I'll never forget, creating that album.

In June, you'll celebrate another anniversary. Your self-titled debut turns 35. When you think back on that time, did you envision this career?

I don't know. I really was just so involved and entrenched in making the music and this new career that I was embarking on. And it was amazing. I mean, it's what I had wanted to do for my whole life. And then I was doing it.

You're also a 2025 Rock & Roll Hall of Fame nominee.

That's a huge honour. I don't know if I'm going to win it, so I don't want to get too excited about it. So I just want to say that again, it's a huge honour and I guess I didn't expect it. I wasn't really thinking about it. And here we are.

It seems like the Rock Hall has become more fluid in their definitions of genre over the years. Mis-

sy Elliott was inducted in 2023, for example.

I don't really know if genre matters. I feel like people are more open to all different genres, much more than they were, you know? But I feel like a rock star sometimes.

You know, after Dolly Parton was inducted, she released a rock album. If and when you are inducted, will you finally release your '90s grunge album? Fans have been waiting. I mean, I really want to, but I want to do videos, and I have just so many ideas for that.

I don't think I'll be able to pull it together by the summer (before the Rock Hall ceremony) but maybe, maybe I'll release a few songs from it.

During your Christmas Time tour last holiday season, your children Monroe and Moroccan joined you onstage. They played guitar and drums; they were really rocking. Would you ever consider a family rock 'n' roll album?

I would love to. They just have a lot of their own things that they're doing, and I don't want to force them to do anything.

And at your final date in Brooklyn, Rihanna was in the front row of the audience. Would you ever work with her?

I would love to. Did you see what happened? She wanted me to sign her breasts. I was trying to do it neatly, and it didn't come out right. So, I tried.

Your last album of original music, *Caution*, came out in 2018. It's been a minute! Are you working on a new album?

I'm not supposed to talk about it. ... But I'm working on something. We won't say what it is, but something new.

## Inner Circle kicks off Make Reggae Irie Again World Tour



Inner Circle

The "Bad Boys of Reggae", Inner Circle, are bringing the vibes from the US to all over the world as part of their Make Reggae Irie Again World Tour.

Inner Circle, the Grammy Award-winning reggae band is world renowned for the Bad Boys movie theme song, which is also the theme song of the popular television series *\*COPS\**. Another hit song, *Sweat (A La La La La Long)* is certified gold in the United Kingdom over 30 years after its release. Brothers Ian Lewis and Roger Lewis founded Inner Circle over 50 years

ago.

"We look forward to performing and spreading the love and positive message of reggae music all over the globe," said Ian Lewis.

The tour started at Coachella, California, with May dates in Florida and North Carolina. It then moves to Brazil, Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Germany, Macedonia and the Netherlands. Final dates run to September across the US.

Inner Circle's new album *Reality* drops this May, featuring reggae icons Mykal Rose, Tarrus Riley, and Fortunate Youth.



# A song critical of Nigeria's president is barred from airwaves



Nigerian President Bola Tinubu took office in 2023.

Authorities in Nigeria have barred radio stations from playing a song critical of President Bola Tinubu

and his administration's policies, according to a memo seen Friday by The Associated Press.

The country's media regulator described the content of Tell Your Papa in the memo to radio stations as "inappropriate for broadcast".

The song is a response by musician and outspoken government critic Eedris Abdulkareem to recent remarks by Seyi Tinubu, the president's son, who called his father the greatest leader in the country's history.

Empty promises

In the afrobeats track, Abdulkareem asks the younger Tinubu to tell his father that his policies have brought widespread hardship to Africa's most populous country, while highlighting what he calls a string of unfulfilled "empty promises".

Since taking office in 2023, Tinubu's policies such as the removal of subsidies on gasoline have hit hard as Nigeria grapples with fluctuating prices.

Last year, at least 20 people were shot dead and hundreds more were arrested at protests demanding better opportunities and jobs for young people.

In Wednesday's memo, the National Broadcasting Commission said the song violated section 3.1.8 of the country's broadcasting code that prohibits content that is in "breach of public decency". Still, the song has gone viral on social media.

Addressing the ban in an Instagram post, Abdulkareem said constructive criticism is always seen as a crime by the government.

"Any wonder why Nigeria hasn't made impactful strides all these years?" he said.

In 2004, another of Abdulkareem's songs, Jaga Jaga, was banned. It was a critique of former President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration, which he described as corrupt.

The "bizarre ban" of the song is a violation of freedom of expression, Amnesty International said in a statement, describing the action as an abuse of power.

"This clamp down on artistic freedom is an appalling reminder that artistes are at the risk of being silenced," the rights group said.

## Damian Marley, Sean Paul feature on Billboard's 100 Best Songs of 2005 list



Damian Marley (left) and Sean Paul

Twenty years ago, Welcome to Jamrock by Damian 'Jr Gong' Marley and We Be Burnin by Sean Paul, were tearing up charts in America and Europe. Both songs, which have earned multiple music certifications, are ranked among the 100 Best Songs of 2005, released by Billboard magazine on April 15.

Welcome to Jamrock, which won the Grammy Award in 2006 for Best Urban/Alternative Performance, is

ranked at #25 on the Billboard list.

In an interview with Aspen Times in August 2005, Marley spoke about the hit song.

"This is a song about what Jamaicans are living, as opposed to what tourists get. Real Jamaicans don't get the tourist experience, the beach package," Marley told the publication.

Welcome to Jamrock is featured on the gold-selling Grammy winning album of the same name. The song

peaked at #28 in Hungary, #76 in the Netherlands, #13 in the United Kingdom, #55 on the US Billboard Hot 100, #18 on the R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart and #12 on Hot Rap Songs.

It has been certified gold in the United Kingdom and Brazil and was ranked at #270 on Pitchfork Media's Top 500 Songs of the 2000s list.

Renaissance Disco's Delano Thomas, who along with Michael 'Factor' Jarrett and Andre Saunders produced Sean Paul's We Be Burnin, the first single from Sean Paul's 3rd studio album, The Trinity, was upbeat when he learnt of the song's #86 placement on the Billboard list.

He said the overall production of the song and the vibes helped to make it the international hit that it became.

"Well, we knew the song sounded and felt good after we put the mix and touches to the production, but we didn't know that it would connect with the new generation. What was special about the song that made it a hit, was the production and structure. The rhythm (Stepz) was hot, the happy good feeling of the song, and of course Sean Paul putting down the vibes," Delano told Observer Online.

We Be Burnin was recorded at the

Renaissance studio. Thomas recalled working with Sean Paul on the track.

"We always had a good vibe with Sean and the Dutty Cup Crew from start, and its always fun working with him," said Thomas.

We Be Burnin is the biggest solo hit for Sean Paul, having topped out at #2 on the UK Singles chart in 2005. It also reached the Top Ten in 10 other countries including the United States (Billboard Hot 100), Germany, Italy and Ireland.

The video accompanying the song, was shot in Southern California in the desert and it was directed by Jessy Terrero.

The song has been certified gold in Canada, Denmark, Germany, Japan and the UK. Over in the US, it received a platinum certification.

Other songs making the Billboard 100 Best Songs of 2005 list include Pon De Replay by Rihanna (#6), Let Me Love You by Mario (#27), 1 Thing by Amerie (#20), Gold Digger by Kanye West and Jamie Foxx (#4), Mariah Carey's comeback hit We Belong Together (#3) and Hollaback Girl by Gwen Stefanie (#2).

Mr Brightside by The Killers is #1 on the list.



# Former Jamaica Prime Minister PJ Patterson Celebrates 90th Birthday with Caribbean and World Leaders



Prime Minister Andrew Holness congratulates former Prime Minister PJ on his 90th birthday on Saturday at the PJ Patterson Institute for Africa-Caribbean Advocacy on The University of the West Indies, Mona campus.

there is a thread, which most of you know because I speak about it very often, it is not by accident that we come, both of us, from the same parish, Hanover, and we go further, we come from the same community...and we go further in that his principal was my maternal grandfather," Patterson said.

"So William James has produced two prime ministers who have reached this age, and it also is the case that until now, when you combine our years of service, he and I are the two longest [serving] prime ministers to date, to date," he emphasised, eliciting laughter.

Patterson then revealed that The UWI has a plan for the area where the function was being held.

"The vice chancellor and the principal of the Mona campus have authorised me to say, the intention is to convert this entire area into a cultural heritage park, but more of that anon," he told guests.

Then, before moving with a small group to a section of the property



Former Prime Minister PJ Patterson celebrates his 90th birthday with his son Richard on Saturday at the PJ Patterson Institute for Africa-Caribbean Advocacy on The University of the West Indies, Mona campus.



Patterson cuts his 90th birthday cake on Saturday with three of his grandchildren — Andrew, Gabrielle (second right) and Breanna at his birthday celebration at the PJ Patterson Institute for Africa-Caribbean Advocacy on The University of the West Indies, Mona campus.

IT wasn't an evening for speeches. But given that PJ Patterson was celebrating his 90th birthday he was allowed to say a few words, and while expressing gratitude for the event the former prime minister accentuated the diverse mix of guests.

"Thank you all for coming, your presence here symbolises the unity which, at this time, we need, not only in our nation, but in the Caribbean region and the developing world to which we belong," Patterson said to applause.

Politicians from both sides of the divide, including Prime Minister Dr Andrew Holness, former Prime Minister Bruce Golding, current Government ministers, Opposition Leader and People's National Party President Mark Golding, his prede-

cessor Dr Peter Phillips, Opposition legislators, business leaders, academics, former Caribbean leaders, and Ambassador Nick Perry, who recently ended his tour of duty as the United States' top diplomat in Jamaica, were among the guests who turned up at the PJ Patterson Institute for African-Caribbean Advocacy on The University of the West Indies (The UWI), Mona campus Saturday evening to celebrate with Patterson.

That the list was long and impressive didn't escape Patterson, who revealed that he had nothing to do with the planning of the event. He was just ordered to be present.

UNICEF and PAHO laud government on approval of national school nutrition policy

"I'm obliged to say something by

way of an expression of thanks," he said after cutting his birthday cake with three of his grandchildren — Breanna, Gabrielle, and Andrew.

"If I were to do it in a protocol order, we would be here all night in light of the very distinguished gathering which you constitute. So I will simply say family and friends, and everyone here falls within one of those two categories."

However, Jamaica's sixth prime minister and the man who holds the record of serving in that office the longest — 1992 to 2006 — shared that he is the second Jamaican head of Government to have ascended to the rank of nagenarian.

"The other is none other than our first prime minister, the Right Excellent Alexander Bustamante and

where a Barrington Watson mural of 17 pan-African legends was unveiled, Patterson delivered one of his trademark quips.

"Looking around, I see people who have shared the journey with me from the very beginning. There are people now singing Frank Sinatra's

My Way not remembering that the song begins, 'the end is near'. I am not in any hurry to face the end," he assured, triggering more laughter.

Before the formalities, Patterson and his guests watched video vignettes with birthday greetings from his family, Caribbean leaders, and friends, among them Sheryl Lee Ralph, Veronica Campbell-Brown, Courtney Walsh, and Donna Scott Mottley.



# Trump wants Congress to end daylight saving time



President Donald Trump on Friday urged Congress to “push hard for more Daylight at the end of a day” in his latest dig at the semiannual changing of clocks.

Trump, in a post on his Truth Social media network, said it would be “Very popular and, most importantly, no more changing of the clocks, a big inconvenience and, for our government, A VERY COSTLY EVENT!!!”

The Republican president’s position calling for more daylight would push the schedule forward, keeping the country on daylight saving time. His post came a day after a Senate panel heard testimony examining whether to set one time

all year instead of shifting.

There has been growing interest in states to standardize daylight saving time in recent years.

But daylight saving time, when clocks are set from spring to fall one hour ahead of standard time, is still recognized in most parts of the country. It was first adopted as a wartime measure in 1942.

Trump last year called for the Republican Party to eliminate daylight saving time, saying it was “inconvenient, and very costly to our Nation.”

But he backed off that call last month, with another post on social media calling it a “50-50 issue.”

# Ghana bans foreigners from local gold trading in major overhaul



Gold miners work at a mining site in the Cameroon town of Betare Oya on April 4.

Ghana on Monday announced it was banning all foreigners from trading in its local gold market as part of sweeping reforms aimed at boosting foreign exchange reserves and stabilising the local currency.

The ban takes effect on May 1, 2025, and grants exclusive authority to a state body, the Ghana Gold Board

(GoldBod), to regulate and control artisanal and small-scale gold mining. “All foreigners are hereby notified to exit the local gold trading market not later than 30th April, 2025,” said Goldbod spokesperson Prince Kwame Minkah in a statement.

Foreigners may however “apply to the GoldBod to buy or off-take gold

directly from the GoldBod,” he added.

Many Chinese nationals have been active in Ghana’s informal mining and trading ecosystem, and have been repeatedly accused of illegal activities, including unauthorised gold exports and environmental degradation.

Ghana, the largest gold producer in

Africa, derives more than a third of its gold output from small-scale miners. But illegal small-scale mining, known locally as *galamsey*, has been a dominant and emotive issue in Ghana’s political campaigns, with successive governments vowing to tackle the environmental destruction and loss of revenue it causes.

The establishment of GoldBod and the ban on foreign participation in gold trading is widely seen as the first concrete step by the new administration of President John Mahama to assert control over the sector and deliver on its anti-*galamsey* campaign promises.

The sector provides livelihoods for over one million people but has long been a source of concern for authorities due to smuggling, unsafe practices, and illicit foreign involvement — particularly by Chinese nationals.

# OPEC cuts 2025 oil demand forecast over US tariffs



OPEC slightly lowered its forecast for oil demand growth, citing the

impact of US tariffs on the world economy.

The Saudi-led oil cartel said in a monthly report that it now expects demand to grow by 1.3 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2025, down from a previous forecast of 1.4 million bpd.

The “minor adjustment” was mainly due to first-quarter data and “the expected impact on oil demand given recently announced US tariffs”.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries now sees global demand reaching at total 105.05 million bpd this year.

It also slightly lowered its global economic growth forecast to three per cent.

“The global economy showed a steady growth trend at the beginning of the year, however, the near-term trajectory is now subject to higher uncertainty given the recent tariff-related dynamics,” OPEC said in the report.

Oil prices sank to a four-year low last week, dipping under \$60 per barrel over concerns about the impact of President Donald Trump’s tariffs.

Prices were up on Monday, with the international benchmark futures contract, Brent North Sea crude, rising 1.3 per cent to \$65.62 per barrel.



# Family seeks homicide charges against owners of collapsed Dominican nightclub



Relatives of singer Rubby Perez, Dominican Republic President Luis Abinader (2nd right), and his wife Raquel Arbaje (2nd left) attend the wake of the famed merengue singer, who died after the roof of the Jet Set nightclub where he was performing collapsed, at the National Theatre in Santo Domingo on April 10. The death toll in the collapse has reached 218, security forces reported, as they concentrate on finding the last bodies in the area of the tragedy. More than 500 people were injured in the April 8 incident.

The family of one of the 231 people killed when a Dominican nightclub roof collapsed last week is seeking involuntary manslaughter charges against the establishment's owners, a legal filing showed Tuesday. "There is sufficient evidentiary

merit to indict" the owners of the Jet Set nightclub, said a complaint filed with prosecutors by the widow and parents of victim Virgilio Cruz. The family indicated it would also pursue a civil liability claim against Dominican authorities "both for

unlawful acts committed by its agents and for omissions in fulfilling its legal duties." The roof of the Jet Set nightclub in the capital Santo Domingo came crashing down in the early hours of Tuesday last week on hundreds of people attending a concert by

merengue star Rubby Perez, who also died in the Caribbean nation's worst disaster in decades.

By Monday, authorities put the death toll at 231, with hundreds more injured.

More than 300 rescuers, aided by sniffer dogs, worked tirelessly for days to find survivors, and pulled 189 people alive from the mounds of twisted steel, zinc and brick that remain of the structure.

The Dominican government has announced a commission of national and international experts to investigate the calamity.

A preliminary list of victims includes an Italian, two French citizens and, according to the US State Department, "several" Americans. Aerial images of the site show a scene resembling the aftermath of an earthquake.

A video posted on social media showed the venue, which could hold 1,700 guests, suddenly plunged into darkness while Perez was singing, followed by crashing sounds and screams.

Besides 69-year-old Perez, other high-profile victims included two retired Major League Baseball players and a provincial governor.

## Brazil prohibits hormone therapy for transgender minors



Brazil on Wednesday raised the legal age for transgender people to receive hormone therapy from 16 to 18, becoming the latest country to deny the treatment to minors

who do not recognise their birth gender. Brazil's CFM medicines council had authorised the therapy for people 16 and older in 2019, but on

Wednesday published a resolution saying hormone treatment will henceforth be "prohibited before the age of 18."

It also banned the prescription of puberty blockers for "children or adolescents" with gender dysphoria, which is when a person's gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.

The CFM raised the minimum age for sexual reassignment surgery "that involves a potentially sterilising effect" from 18 to 21 years.

Several bills seeking to impose prison sentences on doctors providing hormone treatment to minors are under review in the Brazilian Parliament, which has a conservative majority.

Brazil's move was the latest blow for transgender rights after Britain's Supreme Court ruled Wednesday that the legal definition of a "woman" is based on a person's sex at birth.

Elsewhere in Latin America, Argen-

tina in February banned gender transition procedures for minors, part of President Javier Milei's war on what he calls "woke ideology".

Supporters of hormone therapy argue it alleviates the suffering of minors with gender dysphoria by allowing their bodies to develop in line with their gender identity.

But it is the subject of growing scientific and legal debate in many countries.

Transgender people have become a flashpoint in the culture wars spearheaded by the United States, which under Donald Trump now only recognises two sexes, male and female, as defined at birth.

Half of US states prohibit hormone treatment for minors. The conservative-leaning Supreme Court is to rule by June 2025 on minors' access to such therapy.

Several other countries that had authorised hormone treatment for transgender minors have recently stepped back as a precaution.



# CLAUSURA KO CHAMPS



**SWA Sharks Whip Provo United 4-1 to crown champions**

**See Story on Page 32**



# 16-Y-O TCI Rising Talent Dylan Morris Dominates Bahamas Basketball High School League



Dylan Morris collecting his MVP Trophy after leading his team to the Hugh Campbell Basketball Championship.

Sixteen-year-old Turks and Caicos Islander Dylan Morris earned recognition as one of the top high school basketball talents in the Bahamas after a dominate 2024-2025 high school season which saw him lead the Tabernacle Baptist Falcons in a return to prominence with a historic sweep of championship titles that included the coveted Hugh Campbell Basketball Championship (de facto National Championship) for which he won MVP.

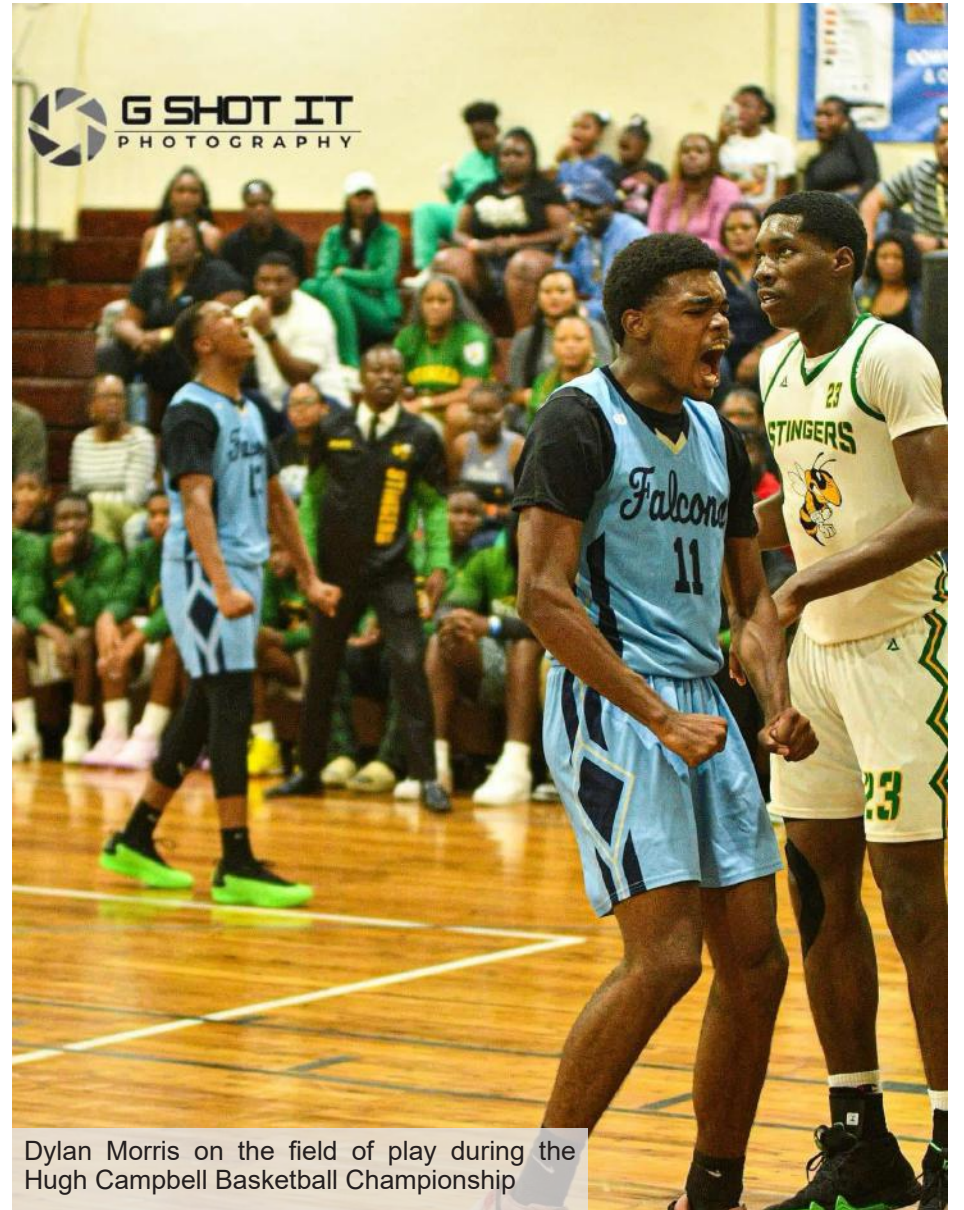
In his first visit home since amassing the accolades, the performance also earned him a visit with the Premier of the Turks and Caicos Islands Hon. Charles Washington Misick, Acting Governor of the TCI, Hon. Anya Williams, and Minister of Education, Youth, Sports, and Culture, Hon. Rachel Taylor and members of Cabinet.

Extending heartfelt congratulations to Morris on his outstanding achievement Hon. Taylor stated "Your dedication, discipline, and sportsmanship are an inspiration to students across the nation and the Bahamas alike. You have made your school and country proud, and we look forward to witnessing your continued success both on and off the court."

In his first season in the Bahamas Morris established himself as a top 5 national player being named Most Valuable Player of the 41st Hugh Campbell Basketball tournament, Grand Bahama High School Basketball player of the year runner-up, and the defensive player of the year for the Grand Bahama High School Basketball Championship, The tip-off Classic and The

Hon. Mario Bowleg Best of the Best Championship.

The Acting Director of the TCI Sports Commission, Alvin Parker, accompanied Morris on the Cabinet visit. Commenting on Morris' phenomenal first season stated "Dylan has proven we have talent that can compete with the best in the region. The Bahamas has become a Caribbean leader in producing NBA talent, so for him to have an MVP performance on their biggest stage, speaks volumes to



Dylan Morris on the field of play during the Hugh Campbell Basketball Championship



Dylan Morris (centre) is photographed with the TCI Cabinet, including Premier Hon. Washington Misick (in suit in front of Morris), Deputy Premier Hon. Jamell Robinson (fifth from left), Deputy Governor Her Excellency Anya Williams (sixth from left), Hon. Rachel Taylor (fifth from right) and the Sports Commission's Alvin Parker (right) and Joddy Harvey (second right).

the talent we can produce." Morris stated that he is overwhelmed by the support he has gotten from the entire TCI and grateful for the work of his local coaches. He added that it feels good knowing that there are people to help lift him up and that is what keeps him motivated. He also

expressed gratitude for the acceptance and efforts of the Falcons coaching staff.

His recruitment by the Tabernacle Falcons came the following a stellar performance in the TCISS High School Championship for his former school A. Louise Garland Thomas High school and a short stint in the United States. Since

joining the Falcons in 2024 Morris has also competed in the AAU Texas circuit for team Buddy Buckets; A team overseen by former Tabernacle Falcon and current NBA player Buddy Hield. The coaching staff of the Tabernacle Falcons are now preparing Morris for another AAU showing and possible transition to the US.



# “A Championship Year with a Championship Team”

An Op-Ed by Jarrett Forbes, Director of the TCI Sports Commission



As we close out the financial year (April 2024 – March 31, 2025), I want to share a few reflections to honor my incredible team at the Turks and Caicos Islands Sports Commission.

My team has done exceptional work this year, often behind the scenes, through late nights, early mornings, weekends, and with limited resources. Their sacrifice, leadership, care, and collaboration made all of these moments possible. This was a year of national service through sport, and my team carried that responsibility with excellence. I am honored to be a part of this movement, and I simply want to say: thank you!

This year, we placed a strong focus on athlete development, and the results have been deeply rewarding. Our Sports Performance team supported hundreds of athletes in training smarter, building strength, and preparing for peak performance. We advanced our efforts further with the launch of the Long-Term Athlete Development Framework and our first-ever Sports Psychology Clinic, equipping

athletes with the mental tools to stay focused, confident, and resilient. And in partnership with Grace Bay Medical, we took an important step by integrating sports medicine into our programs, ensuring our athletes receive the care, guidance, and medical support they need to train and compete safely and sustainably.

We introduced the National Athlete Database; a centralized platform designed to track, support, and promote athletes across the country. This tool is already proving to be a game changer for athlete profiling, performance monitoring, and scholarship opportunities. Our Athlete Development Fund (ADF) continued to grow, providing direct support for training, travel, equipment, and access; making it one of the most impactful resources we have for unlocking potential.

At the Sports Commission, my Programmes team understood the importance of early youth engagement and intervention, and we enhanced our grassroots and youth programs. We rolled out our robust Summer Camps, reaching

children in every island with structured, meaningful programming, promoting fun, safety, and positive engagement. Alongside that, the Police Action League expanded its reach, building trust and discipline through sport while connecting youth with mentors and officers in a positive environment.

From October through March, our inter-school sports season reached over 1,000 athletes from 31 schools across five sport disciplines; a dynamic journey that included football, basketball, softball, and concluded with both the Inter-High and Inter-Primary Track and Field Championships. Each sport ended with exciting, well-supported championship events. These weren't just sports events, they were national celebrations of school spirit, pride, and youth potential.

At the heart of the Turks and Caicos Islands are our communities, tight-knit, resilient, and filled with untapped potential. That's why our team at the Felix Morley Community Center and our Sports Development Officer based in North and Middle Caicos has made it a priori-

ty to edify and empower residents through consistent, meaningful programming. From youth to the elderly, we've created spaces that strengthen minds, bodies, and spirit; whether through sports, wellness, or community engagement. These initiatives may seem small in scale, but they are powerful acts of nation-building; reminding us that real transformation begins when we invest in people, right where they are.

With lifestyle-related illness accounting for over 70% of health challenges in the TCI, we partnered with the Ministry of Health to launch Let's Move TCI for the fourth consecutive year; a health and wellness movement that empowered residents across the islands to take charge of their fitness and lifestyle. From workouts to wellness tips and nutritional guidance, the campaign brought us together around one unifying idea: movement matters.

Throughout it all, we never wavered in our commitment to sport governance and development. My Compliance and Support team managed grants, supported national federations, and strengthened the foundation of sport across the country. Our efforts directly impacted hundreds of athletes through federation grants and individual athlete assistance. One major milestone was the hosting of our Sports Governing Bodies Workshop, aimed at strengthening capacity, collaboration, and governance within our sport ecosystem. We also hosted several exciting events this past year that brought people together to honor and support our youth. We began the financial year with the Ripple Effect screening — a short film created by our Project IDEA Media Club; a sold-out event that sparked powerful conversations across the country. We followed it up with an island-wide school tour, meeting with hundreds of students and having real discussions about life choices, identity, and transformation. And just when it seemed we couldn't do more, the team delivered three major events over two weeks, culminating this past Saturday with the ADF Fight Night: TCI vs. Canada; a sold-out showcase that proved we can host world-class sports experiences right here at home.

Behind every successful event and program stood the tireless efforts of our Facilities Team; ensuring our spaces were clean, safe, function-





al, and always ready to serve. This team not only supported our programming with excellence but also closed the year as the Commission's top revenue earner. Their commitment to day-to-day operations was foundational to everything we accomplished. At the same time, we made significant strides in our major facility upgrade and community parks enhancement projects. After months of planning and development, parks across the country are being transformed; creating safe,

inclusive spaces where children, families, and entire communities can gather, play, and thrive. This past financial year also brought sport into homes across the Turks and Caicos Islands, and beyond. Our activities and event surpassed 2.8 million views, with overall engagement reaching unprecedented levels. It's a clear sign that our reach is growing, not just nationally, but regionally and internationally. Thanks to the exceptional work of our Media and Marketing Team,

the Sports Commission has been able to tell powerful stories, showcase athlete success, and deliver live coverage that connected our mission to the world. Their efforts have not only elevated our visibility, they've deepened public pride and engagement in TCI sports. In every organization, there are unsung heroes and ours are found in our Finance, HR, and Administrative teams. From managing budgets and payments, to supporting staff and keeping operations running,

their quiet, steady work allowed us to operate smoothly and deliver at a high level. A special thank you to my Executive Team and the Board of Governors, for your leadership, strategic oversight, and steady hands in navigating the complexities of this year. Your ability to hold the vision while managing the details made all the difference. I'm grateful for the collaboration, trust, and focus you've brought to the work.

To our National Federations, volunteers, community partners, and corporate sponsors – thank you for working with us and believing in our young people. You made this year unforgettable.

And to the Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands, thank you for your unwavering support and belief in the power of sport. Your investment in youth, health, and community development is bearing fruit in visible and lasting ways. We are proud to help carry this national mandate forward.

It is truly More Than Just Sports. This is why I believe in sport. Because behind every program, every event, every renovated facility are lives being changed. We are not just building athletes. We are building a stronger, healthier, more unified Turks and Caicos Islands. And we are just getting started.



# SWA Sharks Crowned Champions in TCIFA Clausura Knock Out Final



Billy Forbes, the Player of the Match celebrates with the championship trophy.

In a thrilling conclusion to the Turks and Caicos Islands Football Association (TCIFA) Clausura competition, SWA Sharks FC delivered a commanding performance to claim the title of Knock Out Final champions, defeating Provo United Sports Club 4-1 in an action-packed showdown on Sunday.

From the opening whistle, the Sharks displayed intent and urgency, pressing high and attacking with precision. Their efforts paid off almost immediately as team captain and talisman, number 7 player Billy Forbes opened the scoring in the 3rd minute. A fast break and a perfectly placed shot into the corner set the tone for the rest of the match.

Forbes, the undisputed leader on the pitch, would go on to double his tally just before the halftime whistle, slotting home

his second goal in the 45th minute after a defensive lapse from Provo United.

Before Forbes' second, however, Provo United briefly threatened to swing the momentum in their favor. In the 7th minute, their number 9 player, Stanley Israel, capitalized on a loose ball and found the back of the net with a sharp finish, equalizing the score at 1-1. It was a moment of hope for the Provo United fans, and Israel's efforts earned him the title of Player of the Match for his team.

But SWA Sharks regained control quickly, and by the 20th minute, they were ahead once more. Striker, number 9, Dulcio Roobenson made a darting run into the box and calmly slotted the ball past the Provo United goalkeeper, restoring the Sharks' lead. The Sharks' relentless offensive approach kept



Provo United Sports Club's Player of the Match, Stanley Israel.

their opponents on the back foot throughout the first half.

At halftime, the scoreboard read 3-1 in favor of SWA Sharks FC, with the match already tilting heavily in their favor.

The second half saw a more measured approach from the Sharks, who focused on maintaining their structure and managing the tempo of the game. Despite some pressure from Provo United, who attempted to claw their way back into the match, the Sharks' defense remained resolute.

Any hopes of a Provo United comeback were dashed in the 77th minute when number 6, Junior Belizaire, added a fourth goal for SWA Sharks, with a composed finish from just inside the penalty area. It was the final blow in a match that had clearly swung in the Sharks' favor.

In terms of discipline, the match saw a few yellow cards issued. SWA Sharks' number 17, Junior Paul, was cautioned in the 60th minute, while Provo United's number 25, Wensky Louis, and number 3, Compere Wisly, received bookings in the 29th and 77th minutes, respectively.

Billy Forbes was rightfully named Player of the Match for SWA Sharks FC, capping off a stellar performance with two goals and a commanding presence throughout the final.

With Match Commissioner Rose Edwards overseeing the day's proceedings, the final was conducted in high spirits and competitive fairness. The victory cements SWA Sharks FC's status as one of the premier teams in the Turks and Caicos Islands and marks a proud chapter in their club's history as the 2025 Clausura Knock Out champions.