

JCA's Five Strategic Priorities

Education: building individual skills – financial literacy, computer training, planning for retirement, citizenship classes

Culture: preserving and promoting Jamaican, Caribbean, African culture

Advocacy: addressing issues that adversely impact the Jamaican, Caribbean, African communities

Community Hub: a gathering space for community events – social, political, educational

Youth: creating a 'village' for children & youth – mentorship, tutoring, skills building, promoting education

Dear members and friends,

I hope you are well and easing into fall. It has been some time since the board provided an email update but given the awesome time 53 of us had on the recent Jamaica trip, it is an opportune time for one. My personal theme this year is 'gratitude is a must' taken from the song Toast by Jamaica's rising reggae star Koffee. President Obama added her song to his playlist so you should too! (here is the song and lyrics: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AgBHweR263s>)

Since the AGM last May, JCA and the Centre has been a hopping place. Renea Douglas was re-elected Vice President, Yolande Davidson and Michelle McKenzie-Dolly were re-elected as Directors. Kashane Denton was elected Director of Communications. They, along with Jodieka Williams - Executive Secretary, David Betty - Treasurer, Janet Lewis - Director of Fundraising, Natalee Johnson - Director and I continue to lead this important organization. In addition, JCA is fortunate to have several committee chairs that do the lions share of the planning and execution of activities and events:

- Camille Hannays - Women's Committee Chair
- Dr. Shawnee Hardware - Education & Culture Chair
- Orville Patrick - Building Committee Chair
- Demar Hewitt - Youth Chair
- Sandra Young - Membership Chair
- Hyacinth Wilson - Awards Committee Chair
- Ismay Murray, Loy Manning, Pam Reynolds - Caribbean Canadian Seniors Coordinators

To read a review of activities and outcomes from the past fiscal year, open this link.

<https://jcaontario.org/about-us/annual-report/>

Summer 2019

If you missed the annual picnic at the Caledon Conservation Authority, the Jamaica Independence Flagraising and Church Service, the 57th Annual Independence and Anniversary Gala, you certainly missed an exciting summer! Each of these activities provided an opportunity to meet and spend time with the JCA family, celebrate our culture and Jamaica. This year's Gala, chaired by VP Renea Douglas, was one for the history books. Special thanks to Renea and her team for a job well done. Not only did we enjoy great music, a beautifully transformed hall three into a reception area, good food, great people, and a thought-provoking keynote by Denham Jolly, he also blessed JCA by donating \$314,750 to pay off the balance of our mortgage on the Centre. We are truly grateful for this gift. We are also thankful for all the individuals who contributed to the purchase, renovation and sustainability of 995 Arrow Road since 1996. Your commitment to 'burning the mortgage' exemplifies the JCA spirit of collective impact.





You may have noticed that we continue to advertise the **\$25,000 Challenge** from past president Kamala Jean Gopie. She felt it important to continue pushing to raise \$25,000 by December 31 but divert the funds to much needed building maintenance. If you have not yet donated, please consider supporting this campaign. Kamala Jean will donate \$25,000 in matching funds.

<https://jcaontario.org/donor-matching-challenge/>

Immigration Town Hall

JCA hosted a town hall /information session with the Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship on July 13th, at which the Minister provided information on changes to immigration that impact the Jamaican, Caribbean and African communities. During the nearly 2-hour session, attendees were able to directly ask the Minister questions about system improvements and pathways to residence or citizenship.

Members Lounge

Did you visit the Members Lounge during July and August? The Members Lounge team piloted the concept and worked hard to provide a diversity of activities each Thursday to Saturday over the two months. From bingo, games night, oldies, family night, you name it, people had fun

together. The Board will be reviewing the feedback and evaluation and working with the team to determine who to make this a more regular initiative. Thank you Chairperson – Owen Dunbar, Deputy Chairperson – Chris Williams, Secretary – Jennifer McFarlane, Grace & Roy Williams, Orville Patrick, Winston Brown, Noel Lewis, Gifford Walker and Leon Sutherland for a job well done.

Past Presidents & Board Dinner

Special thanks to past president Herman Stewart for hosting a dinner for board members and the past presidents. Over dinner we spoke about the organization, its past, present and future. I am grateful for the support, guidance and mentoring we receive not only from the past presidents but from so many long-time members.



We have been intentional about showcasing the JCA brand, represented by our distinct logo, members and long service to the community. Thank you for being an ambassador for JCA. The feedback on JCA's increased presence in the community has been noted.

JCA Trip to Jamaica

Well, 53 of us just returned from Yaad! What an experience that was! My heart was full, and I enjoyed every moment with long serving members, new members and others who entrusted us to organize our first large scale overseas trip. We collectively shared so many memories, laughs and experiences of the diversity and complexity of Jamaica. The Government of Jamaica acknowledged our presence in so many ways – special thanks to Minister Olivia ‘Babsy’ Grange and her team. Big thanks and respect to Audrey Campbell and Michelle McKenzie-Dolly for coordinating this trip.

Trip Recap

On September 5th, Pearson International Airport was set a buzz as everyone sought to find out who this very important 'Miss Lou' was. The cause of this was the 53 members of the JCA that were heading off to Jamaica in their bright red 'Miss Lou 100' tees.



The JCA came together, coordinated attend the civic ceremony renaming the Gordon Town Square to Louise Bennett Coverley Square in Gordon Town, Jamaica to commemorate the centenary of her birth.

The JCA group arrived in Montego Bay in high spirits and looking forward to an amazing time. After navigating immigration and customs and fielding questions on who we were we headed off to Royal Decameron, Runaway Bay but not before stopping at a Juici Patties restaurant to indulge in some good Jamaican Patties.

The first days were allocated free time, persons went to explore, visit family or just relaxed at the beach. Word has it that the beach was the place to be as laughter was in abundance.

On Sunday, September 8th, the group had a healthy lunch and loaded up the bus for the main event. The drive was filled with stories and reminiscing of what the country was like and how it has evolved over the years. The excitement was felt and not even the showers that preceded the event could drown it. Once we arrived, we were greeted by Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport Olivia Grange and her team who had ensured the JCA had reserved seating close to the stage. The event was well done. There was a beautiful rendition of the National Anthem and performances to keep us entertained. Prime Minister, The Right Honourable Andrew Holness, Member of Parliament Juliet Holness and Minister Grange brought their greetings in addition to greetings by Miss Lou's son Fabian Coverley and co-executor of her estate Pamela Appelt.

The JCA was also presented with a story board to be displayed in the centre as part of the ceremony.



The Prime Minister greeted our group and sat for a picture.



After all the excitement of Sunday, Monday was another rest day.

On Tuesday, the group headed out again to visit a few historic locations. Stops included Gordon House, where Parliament convenes, Liberty Hall, home of the Marcus Garvey Museum and Devon House. Minister Robert Montague stopped by the gallery in Gordon House to say 'hello' to the JCA family.



The trip is possibly the largest ever undertaken by the JCA in its 57 year history and it was a rousing success!



What's Next?

Events

If you don't have your tickets for the 17th Annual Scholarship Dinner on September 21 (<https://jcaontario.org/jca-17th-annual-scholarship-awards/>) and the Annual Seniors Brunch on September 22 (<https://jcaontario.org/caribbean-canadian-seniors-brunch/>) please get them now! You can go online or call 416-746-5772 during business hours.

Member Survey - we created a survey to will help us better understand the demographics of our membership; the aggregate information will be used to secure sponsorship and ensure we are offering the right mix of programs. Please take a moment to complete it.

Operational Update

As reported at the August Quarterly, we are in the process of creating a Hall Rental Review Committee to provide a comprehensive review and recommendations to ensure our primary business is operating as it should. This work includes review of policies and procedures, rates, update to the 2016 analysis on hall rental usage as well as clarifying roles and responsibilities of the Hall Rental Coordinator, Building Chair, custodians and cleaning company. The Committee will also recommend targets. This Committee will work closely with the Finance Committee who has also been reviewing aspects of the hall rental business. This is a time limited committee that will wrap up its work by the end of 2019. Findings will be shared at a future Quarterly meeting. For historical context, this is second review in the past eight years. Given the current reality of relying almost exclusively on hall rental, it is important to ensure we are maximizing opportunities to generate revenue for long term sustainability and growth.

Committee Members: Wendel Clarke, Alvin Knight, Herrol Mattocks, Sylvanus Thompson, Orville Patrick, David Betty (Treasurer), Jennifer McFarlane (staff rep) and I.

As always, we welcome your feedback. Email president@jcaontario.org or communications@jcaontario.org.

Blessings,

Adaoma

President

On behalf of Renea, David, Jodieka, Kashane, Janet, Yolande, Michelle, Natalee