



2026

Jamaican Diaspora Impact Awards

Celebrating Legacy, Honouring Impact

SOUVENIR MAGAZINE

23 October 2026 | Toronto Botanical Garden

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HOST'S WELCOME



Every strong community is shaped by people who choose to serve: people who recognize a need, accept responsibility and act, often without applause or expectation of reward.

The JDIA was conceived from a firm belief that meaningful service should be seen, valued and celebrated. Throughout the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, Jamaican Canadians are building organizations, mentoring young people, preserving our culture, supporting families, creating opportunities and opening doors for others. Much of this work is carried out quietly and consistently, without expectation of recognition.

Yet its impact is profound. Impact lies at the heart of these awards. While achievement speaks to what a person has accomplished; impact speaks to the lives changed, opportunities created and communities strengthened because that person chose to act.

The JDIA brings these stories into the light ensuring that those who give yeoman's service, including our often-unsung heroes, know that their work has not gone unnoticed. It allows us, as a community, to say with one voice: we see you, we value you and we thank you.

The JDIA also tells a larger story. Wherever Jamaicans have settled, they have contributed, led and built. Here in Canada, the Diaspora strengthens the communities in which it lives while preserving an enduring connection to Jamaica. Its service, expertise, enterprise and cultural influence form an essential part of Jamaica's national story but also Canada's story.

I extend heartfelt congratulations to our 2026 awardees. This recognition honours your decision to use your talents, experience and influence in the service of others. Your example reminds us that leadership is defined not only by title or prominence, but by responsibility, consistency and purpose.

By celebrating those who serve, we create examples for others to follow. We encourage a new generation to believe that their contribution matters and that each of us can leave our community stronger than we found it. May the stories celebrated through the JDIA inspire us to recognize service, encourage excellence and make an impact of our own.

Kurt Davis
Consul-General

The evening programme

| 6:00 p.m. Green Carpet Reception | 7:00 p.m. Gala Dinner and Awards |
| 10:30 p.m. Afterglow Party |

Land Acknowledgement - James Davis

Ancestral Land Acknowledgement - Steven Getten

National Anthems of Canada and Jamaica

Performance - Kids in Dance

Official Welcome - Kurt Davis, Consul-General

Greetings - H.E. Marsha Coore Lobban, High Commissioner of Jamaica

Ministerial Address
The Hon. Edmund Bartlett, OJ, CD, MP, Minister of Tourism

DINNER

Presenting Partner Spotlight - Leighton Smith, VM Group

Musical Performance - Steele & the Hardcore Band

Sponsor Recognition - Dr. Suzanne Robinson Davis

LIVE AUCTION

featuring Exclusive Travel Experiences from Porter Airlines and Couples Resorts

AWARDS CEREMONY

Presentation of the 2026 JDIA

| Diana Burke | Dionne Sinclair | Dwayne Holness |
| Maureen Henry | Verna Andrade |

Presentation of the 2026 JDIA Icon Award

| Dr. Trevor Massey |

Musical Performance - Steele & the Hardcore Band

Vote of Thanks - Marcia Brown, JDIA Ambassador and 2025 JDIA Awardee

Tonight's menu

A CONTEMPORARY TASTE OF JAMAICA

AT THE TABLE

Warm Artisanal Rolls
Cinnamon Honey Whipped Butter

STARTER

Jamaican Corn & Coconut Bisque
Sweet Corn, Coconut, Ginger, Thyme & Pimento, Scallion Oil
Crispy Plantain

MAIN COURSE (Choice of)

Jamaican-Spiced Braised Short Rib
Herb-Roasted Potatoes - Seasonal Vegetables - Beef Jus

Oven-Roasted Chicken Supreme
Rice & Peas - Seasonal Vegetables - Roasted Chicken Jus

Vegetable Roulade
Lentils, Quinoa & Garden Vegetables
Herb-Roasted Potatoes - Seasonal Vegetables - Roasted Vegetable Demi-Glace

DESSERT (Choice of)

Jamaican Plantain Cake
Rum Caramel - Brown Butter Cream Cheese Frosting - Sorrel Gastrique

Jamaican Black Cake
Sorrel Gastrique

Coffee & Tea Service

Please advise your server of allergies or dietary needs.

Prepared by Chef Noel Cunningham
Cuisine By Noel Inc.


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October 23, 2026

A MESSAGE FROM PREMIER DOUG FORD

Tonight is about celebrating outstanding individuals whose leadership, public service and advocacy have made a meaningful difference in the lives of others. Through their dedication and selflessness, these honourees have enriched the communities they serve.

Welcome to the 2026 Jamaican Diaspora Impact Awards Gala.

Ontario is proud to be home to a vibrant Jamaican Canadian community whose contributions have helped shape our province's social, cultural and economic success. Through entrepreneurship, public service, volunteerism and community leadership, generations of Ontarians of Jamaican heritage have played an important role in building a stronger and more prosperous province.

I would like to thank Consul General Kurt Davis and the Consulate General of Jamaica in Toronto for recognizing these amazing individuals whose leadership and service continue to strengthen the Jamaican Canadian community.

Congratulations to this year's honourees on this well-deserved honour. My best wishes for a memorable gala.

Doug Ford
Premier



Message From
Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith, JP
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade
Jamaican Diaspora Impact Awards Gala
23rd October 2026

I am pleased to extend warm greetings on the occasion of the 2026 Jamaican Diaspora Impact Awards Gala.

This Gala and the Awards which underpin it, allow for a meaningful celebration of Jamaicans in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area whose service, leadership and commitment have made a lasting difference in the lives of others. It also reflects the strength of the bond between Jamaica and its Diaspora, a bond sustained by shared identity, mutual responsibility and a continuing belief in Jamaica's promise.

I congratulate the 2026 Awardees, Diana Burke, Dionne Sinclair, Dwayne Holness, Maureen Henry, and Verna Andrade, and salute Trevor Massey, recipient of the JDIA Icon Award. Their achievements affirm that impact is built through consistent service, courage, generosity and the willingness to use one's God-given gifts for the advancement of community.

For Jamaica, the Diaspora is not distant from our national journey. It is deeply woven into it. Through professional excellence, cultural leadership, philanthropy, entrepreneurship, advocacy and intergenerational connection, Jamaicans overseas continue to strengthen Jamaica's global presence and contribute meaningfully to national development.

The recent Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference was a clear demonstration of the power of structured and meaningful Diaspora engagement, bringing together Jamaicans at home and abroad around investment, innovation, youth leadership, recovery, resilience and long-term development. It affirmed that the Diaspora is a vital strategic partner in shaping Jamaica's future.

Icommend all who have helped to make this celebration possible, and I wish the honourees, their families, and the wider community a successful and inspiring Gala.

Message by
The Honourable Alando Terrelonge, MP, JP
Minister of State
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade



I am delighted to extend heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the Jamaican Diaspora Impact Awards Gala.

This celebration speaks powerfully to the energy, generosity, and leadership of the Jamaican Diaspora. Across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, this year's honourees have made contributions that have uplifted communities, strengthened support systems, inspired young people, advanced opportunity, and demonstrated the deep civic spirit for which Jamaicans are known. We are grateful for your service.

Occasions such as this, remind us that Jamaica's relationship with its Diaspora is not symbolic; it is active, personal, and deeply consequential. The Diaspora is a partner in development, and through service, mentorship, philanthropy, advocacy, and cultural leadership, Jamaicans overseas continue to strengthen both the communities in which they live and our beloved island.

Indeed, Jamaica's progress in recent years offers much for which we can be proud. Under the leadership of the Most Honourable Dr. Andrew Holness, Prime Minister, our country has demonstrated remarkable resilience in navigating unprecedented global challenges while advancing economic stability, fiscal responsibility and national development. We have achieved a historically low unemployment rate of 3.4 per cent, made significant progress in reducing our national debt and strengthened Jamaica's standing as an attractive destination for investment and enterprise. Equally encouraging are the gains in national security, with murders declining by more than 40 per cent in 2025, representing one of the most significant reductions in decades. These achievements reflect the determination of our Government and people to build a safer, more prosperous and opportunity-filled Jamaica.

Yet, even as we celebrate these accomplishments, we remain mindful of the challenges that continue to test our national resolve. The devastation caused by Hurricane Melissa has reminded us of our vulnerability to climate-related disasters and the importance of building a more resilient nation. In response, the Government has established the National Reconstruction and Resilience Authority (NaRRA) to coordinate and accelerate national reconstruction, guided by a commitment not simply to restore what was lost, but to rebuild stronger, smarter and better prepared for the future. In this undertaking, the partnership of our Diaspora remains invaluable. Your generosity, expertise, investments and continued solidarity are essential to restoring communities, protecting livelihoods and creating sustainable opportunities for generations to come.

Jamaica's engagement with its Diaspora has continued to evolve in meaningful ways, moving beyond sentiment and goodwill toward more structured partnership, investment, knowledge-sharing, youth engagement, and community impact. The recent Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference underscored this direction, placing Diaspora partnerships at the centre of resilience, recovery and national development. This reflects a modern understanding of Jamaica as a global nation, one whose strength is found not only within our borders, but in the talent, commitment, and generational pride of Jamaicans everywhere.

I commend all who have helped to make this Gala possible. May the evening be a joyful celebration of legacy, leadership, and meaningful community impact.

Grace

GOOD MOVE

TASTE OF TOGETHERNESS

Bring Home the Flavour



Congratulatory Message
by Her Excellency Marsha Coore Lobban
High Commissioner of Jamaica to Canada
on the occasion of the Jamaican Diaspora Impact Awards
hosted by the Consulate General of Jamaica, Toronto



It is my distinct honour to extend warm greetings and heartiest congratulations to Mr. Kurt Davis, Consul-General, and his team, as well as the distinguished honourees, supporters and friends of Jamaica, on the occasion of the second staging of the Jamaican Diaspora Impact Awards (JDIA), being hosted at the beautiful Toronto Botanical Garden.

I commend Consul General Davis for spearheading this important initiative, which serves as one of the avenues through which the Government of Jamaica recognizes and celebrates the outstanding accomplishments of members of our Diaspora. I am particularly pleased that the Honourable Edmund Bartlett, OJ, CD, MP, Minister of Tourism of Jamaica, will be in attendance, further underscoring the high importance that the Government places on its engagement with the Diaspora and on honouring this invaluable partnership.

Jamaicans are renowned for their influence, warmth, resilience and exceptional ability to excel and make a meaningful difference wherever the walk of life takes them. The word impact is, therefore, especially fitting in the context of these awards, as we are indeed a people of impact, whose indomitable spirit and values are revered and celebrated globally.

This year's theme, "Celebrating Legacy, Honouring Impact", aptly encapsulates the significance of the work and contributions of each honouree - Verna Andrade; Diana Burke; Maureen Henry; Dwayne Holness; Dionne Sinclair and Trevor Massey, the evening's Icon Award Honouree. Their individual and collective efforts have strengthened communities, empowered individuals, and contributed meaningfully to nation-building in both Canada andJamaica. Each has built enduring bridges between the two countries they call home and has demonstrated a selfless commitment to service and an exceptional love for country.

I could not be more honoured to be serving as Jamaica's High Commissioner to Canada, and to bear witness to this remarkable generation of legacy builders and brand ambassadors of our heritage. You are exemplary representatives of Jamaica, land we love, and I have no doubt that your achievements will inspire future generations of leaders distinguished by excellence, service and purpose.

On behalf of the Government and people of Jamaica, I extend well-wishes and sincere congratulations to the awardees. I also take the opportunity to thank and commend the members of the selection committee, valued sponsors, family members and everyone involved in making this event a success.

I look forward to joining you for an evening filled with lasting memories, inspiring moments and fruitful exchanges.

CITY OF TORONTO



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

It is my pleasure to welcome everyone attending the 2026 Jamaican Diaspora Impact Awards Gala.

This event recognizes individuals whose leadership, service and contributions have supported Jamaican Canadian communities and the lives of others. Congratulations to all those being honoured this evening.

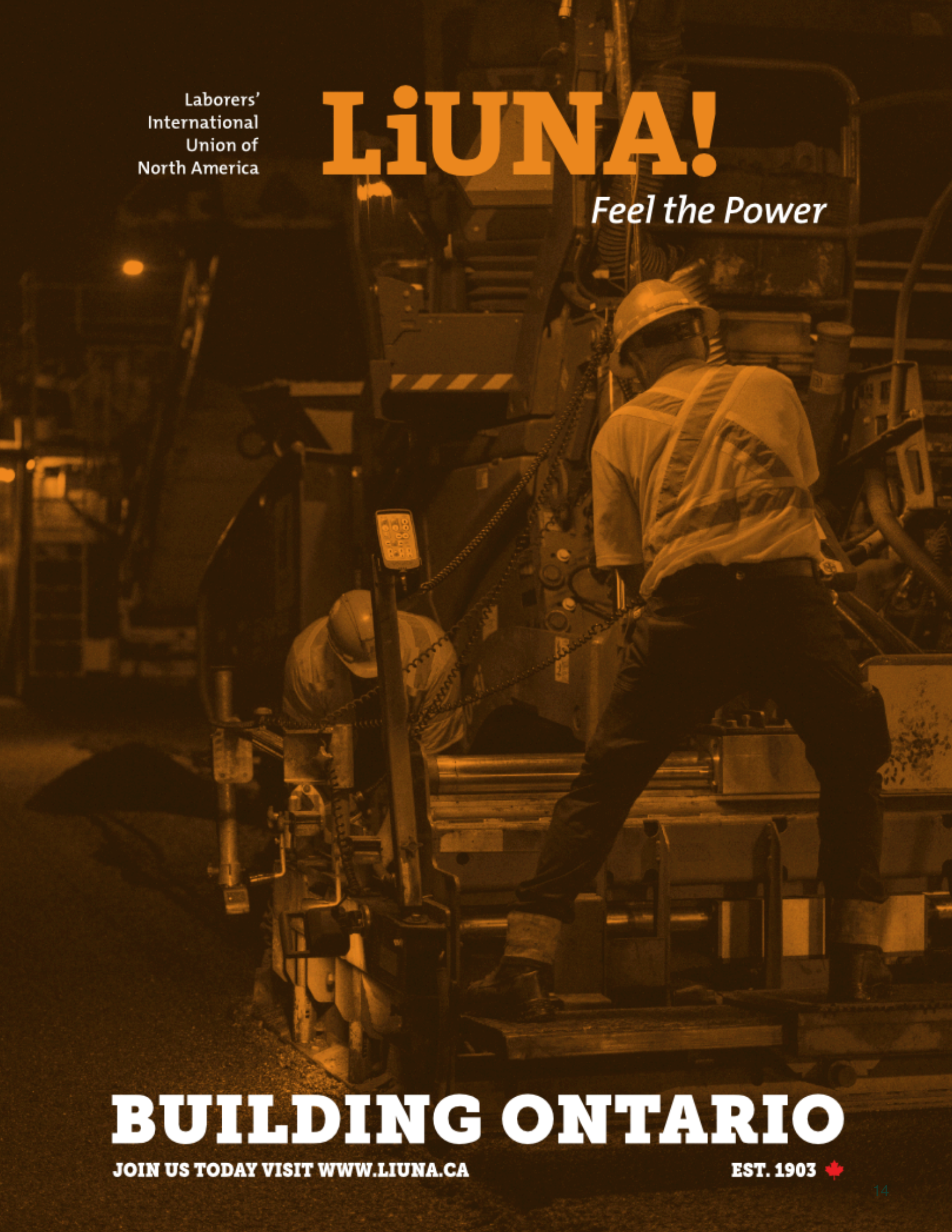
The City of Toronto recognizes the contributions of the Jamaican community in Toronto to the civic, cultural, social and economic life of our city.

On behalf of Toronto City Council, please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable and memorable gala.

Yours truly,

Olivia Chow
Mayor of Toronto

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Recognising community impact

About the Jamaican Diaspora Impact Awards

The Jamaican Diaspora Impact Awards recognise and celebrate individuals of Jamaican heritage in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area whose work contributes to the development, wellbeing and empowerment of the Jamaican Canadian community.

The awards celebrate leadership, service and lasting contributions across community life, youth empowerment, culture, health, education, business and advocacy.

Tonight, we celebrate the people whose dedication strengthens our communities and inspires the next generation.

MEET THE

2026 JDIA HONOUREES

Celebrating Legacy, Honouring Impact

JAMAICAN DIASPORA IMPACT AWARDS
CELEBRATING LEGACY



TREVOR MASSEY

JDIA ICON AWARDEE

A lifetime of leadership in education, youth development and Diaspora service, including founding the Lifelong Leadership Institute.



DIANA BURKE

Advancing early childhood education, technology access and philanthropy.



DIONNE SINCLAIR

Championing equitable healthcare, Black nursing excellence and financial empowerment.



DWAYNE HOLNESS

Elevating Jamaican stories through film, entrepreneurship and mentorship.



MAUREEN HENRY

Serving women, newcomers and communities through decades of volunteer leadership.



VERNA ANDRADE

Strengthening education, health care, children's services and community life through lifelong service.

Jamaican Diaspora Impact Awards
2026 Gala | October 23, 2026 | Toronto Botanical Garden

Trevor Massey

JDIA Icon Awardee



A legacy of impact

A lifetime of leadership in education, youth development and Diaspora service.

Trevor Massey has dedicated his life to expanding educational opportunity and developing the next generation of leaders. Born in Kingston, Jamaica, his work across higher education and community service has strengthened connections between Jamaica and Canada for nearly six decades.

During more than 30 years at Centennial College, including as College Registrar, he helped advance student access and institutional growth. His leadership within Ontario's college system contributed to the establishment of the Ontario College Application Service. He later directed Colleges Integrating Immigrants to Employment, supporting skilled newcomers' integration into Ontario's workforce.

His enduring commitment to young people led him to co-found the Lifelong Leadership Institute as a Legacy of Jamaica's Golden Jubilee celebrations. Through its Leadership by Design and SummerUp programmes, the organisation supports educational advancement and leadership development among Black youth. In 2026, the Institute received the University of the West Indies Chancellor's Award.

Trevor's community service also included chairing the Black Business and Professional Association's National Scholarships Program and supporting Jamaican cultural and alumni initiatives. His honours include Jamaica's Prime Minister's Medal of Appreciation, the Harry Jerome Lifetime Achievement Award and an honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Guelph.

Diana Burke

2026 JDIA Honouree



A legacy of impact

Advancing early childhood education, technology access and philanthropy.

Diana Burke has brought the skills of a technology leader to a lifelong commitment to education and community development. A former Senior Vice-President and Chief Information Security Officer at Royal Bank of Canada, she has helped turn professional expertise and philanthropic partnerships into opportunities for children and families.

As President of PACE Canada, the Project for the Advancement of Childhood Education, Diana has championed access to early learning. In 2003, she pioneered a mobile computer laboratory programme that reached more than 5,000 children in remote Jamaican communities.

When pandemic school closures disrupted learning, she led PACE's distribution of 2,500 OneTab educational devices to 500 kindergarten schools across Jamaica. The devices provided reading, writing and mathematics activities without requiring internet access, helping address a critical barrier to learning.

Through the People Bridge Charitable Foundation, Diana has mobilised support for charities across Canada and abroad. She has supported music and skills training at Alpha Boys' Institute and medical equipment for Jamaican hospitals. Her wider service includes advancing women's leadership and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Across these commitments, she has connected innovation, resources and people to create practical, lasting opportunities.

Dionne Sinclair

2026 JDIA Honouree



A legacy of impact

Advancing equity in healthcare and community life

Dionne Sinclair combines healthcare leadership with a commitment to opening doors for others. As Vice President, Clinical Operations and Chief Nursing Executive at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto, she champions compassionate care, professional excellence and greater equity within the healthcare system.

She initiated CAMH's Career Day programme, connecting students from Greater Toronto Area schools with Black healthcare leaders. Through exposure and mentorship, the initiative helps young people see possibilities for themselves in professions where Black leadership remains underrepresented.

As founder of the Canadian Black Nurses Network, Dionne has created opportunities for Black nurses to connect, support one another and advance within their profession. Her commitment to education also extends through academic appointments at the University of Toronto, Oxford Brookes University and Toronto Metropolitan University.

Beyond healthcare, she serves on the board of Curling Jamaica, supporting new opportunities for Jamaican athletes. Her financial literacy work helps families strengthen their financial knowledge and plan for future generations.

Named a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Nursing in 2024, Dionne brings a consistent purpose to her work: helping people gain the confidence, access and support to thrive.

Dwayne Holness

2026 JDIA Honouree



A legacy of impact

Elevating Jamaican stories through film, entrepreneurship and mentorship.

Dwayne Holness uses film, entrepreneurship and mentorship to amplify stories and create opportunities for others. Raised in Toronto's Jane and Finch community after moving from Kingston as a child, he is the Founder and Creative Director of Corex Creative Inc., a cinematic storytelling agency serving major Canadian organisations.

His directing work includes Hodan's Story for CBC Docs Shorts and The Blackburn Story for Historica Canada, bringing Black lives, history and achievement to wider audiences. His career also includes creative work with international artists and productions across Canada and Africa.

Dwayne's community commitment extends beyond the screen. He mentors emerging filmmakers, serves on the Black Screen Office's Advisory Board and contributes to creative programme development at Centennial College. Through Creative Connect, he helps creative entrepreneurs understand business ownership and build sustainable careers.

Following Hurricane Melissa in 2025, he co-founded Jamaica Strong, raising more than $20,000 in nine days for relief efforts. His subsequent documentary recorded the experiences of affected Jamaican communities. Dwayne also mentors a Jamaican entrepreneur through Kingston Creative's CreaTech Incubator, connecting his professional experience with the growth of creative enterprise at home.

Maureen Henry

2026 JDIA Honouree



A legacy of impact

Serving women, newcomers and communities through decades of volunteer leadership.

Maureen Henry has devoted decades to helping women, young people and newcomers build confidence and independence. Born in Kingston, Jamaica, she began volunteering in early childhood education, establishing a commitment to service that continued throughout her life in Ontario.

Her career in the financial sector provided an opportunity to teach financial literacy to Grade 8 students. She later expanded her community work through more than 15 years on the Board of Directors of Community MicroSkills Development Centre, serving in leadership roles that supported training, employment and economic independence.

Returning to school in 2009 to become a Community Social Service Worker, Maureen brought fresh skills to her longstanding commitment. Through her placement at COSTI and her work as an Employment and Mentorship Counsellor, she helped newcomers and internationally trained professionals navigate settlement and employment challenges in Canada.

Her leadership with the Jamaican Canadian Association and CAFCAN strengthened community partnerships and social services. Through more than 15 years with Opportunity for Advancement, she also supported women through mentorship, training and advocacy. Her contributions have been recognised with the Rosemary Brown Racial Justice Award and acknowledgement of her volunteer support for Hurricane Melissa relief efforts.

Verna Andrade

2026 JDIA Honouree



A legacy of impact

Strengthening education, health care, children's services and community life through lifelong service.

Verna Andrade has built a lifetime of service around education, healthcare and the wellbeing of children and families. Born in Johnson Mountain, St. Thomas, Jamaica, she came to Canada as a domestic worker, continued her education and built a career as a Registered Nurse.

Her commitment to educational opportunity led her to personally fund the construction of a basic school in Jamaica. She also established a primary school library and continues to provide books and learning resources, sustaining her support beyond the initial investment.

As President of the Canadian Friends of St. Thomas Health Care Organization, Verna supports annual visits to Jamaica providing eye testing and free eyeglasses. The initiative helps children and adults access vision care that supports learning and everyday life.

In Canada, she has volunteered for more than two decades as a driver with children's aid organisations, sometimes travelling up to 500 kilometres in a day to help children reach appointments and essential services.

Her longstanding involvement with Jamaican and Caribbean community organisations reflects the same dedication. Through practical acts of care, Verna has helped strengthen families and sustain connections between communities in Canada and Jamaica.


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With Appreciation

We extend gratitude to the many who worked together to make the JDIA Gala possible.

Organising Committee

Kurt Davis - Chair
Donna Fanfair - Event Coordinator
Dr. Hugh Simmonds
Neil Armstrong
Dr. Suzanne Robinson Davis
Marcia Brown

Judges

Dr. Mary Anne Chambers, O.Ont
Bishop Dr. Lennox Walker, OD
Nimal Amitirigala
Jacqui Mills
David Betty

Staff and Volunteers

Marva Campbell
Dwayne Campbell
Kristan Clarke Dawkins
Rahmone Anderson
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Ivan Dawns
Nicole Jarrett
Stacy-Ann Antoine
Sushawn Simpson
Derrick McIntosh
Britiney Franklin
Derrick Campbell
Ron Kirby

Thank you for celebrating community impact with us.

CONGRATULATIONS

to the honourees and nominees of the Jamaican Diaspora Impact Awards

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