

Caribbean
DISABILITY
CONFERENCE

*Breaking Barriers: Advancing
Inclusive Education for All Abilities*

OCTOBER 17 - 22, 2025
WYNDHAM GRAND BARBADOS
BRIDGETOWN, BARBADOS



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About the Conference

The Caribbean Disability Network (CDN) is excited to welcome delegates, partners, and advocates to Bridgetown, Barbados, for the second annual Caribbean Disability Conference, themed “Breaking Barriers: Advancing Inclusive Education for All Abilities.” Building on the success of our inaugural event in Grenada, this year’s conference brings together a vibrant community committed to advancing equitable and inclusive education across the Caribbean.

Inclusive education is increasingly embedded in regional policy and development strategies, with progress in integrating disability considerations, adopting inclusive education policies, and expanding access to mainstream schools. Yet, significant gaps remain. UNICEF and UNESCO report that thousands of children with disabilities are still not enrolled or lack adequate support. Teacher preparation, assistive technology, and school accessibility remain uneven and require sustained investment (UNICEF, 2021; UNESCO GEM Report, 2023).

Anchored in the CRPD and SDG 4, this conference presents a pivotal opportunity to transition from commitment to coordinated regional action. It will:

- Promote best practices and inclusive education frameworks.
- Amplify the voices and lived experiences of persons with disabilities.
- Foster inter-sectoral collaboration for inclusive learning environments.
- Develop a regional action plan and declaration.
- Showcase innovative models and solutions through a regional poster presentation.

Participants will include government officials, educators, representatives from organizations serving people with disabilities, researchers, students, families, non-governmental organizations, funding agencies, and frontline service providers. More than a forum for dialogue, this gathering is a catalyst for transformation. By its close, CDN and partners will adopt a Caribbean Declaration on Inclusive Education and a regional action plan to drive implementation across the region, ensuring that no learner is left behind.

Article 6 of the Inter American Democratic Charter gives the network authority to effect mandates of citizen participation for persons with disabilities.

About the Conference



VENUE

WYNDHAM GRAND BARBADOS

Sam Lords Castle, Long Bay
Bridgetown



ZOOM LOG-IN CREDENTIALS

Meeting ID: 859 7429 5535 Password: 814888

Dial In (Emergency): +1 xxx



MASTER OF CEREMONY

Most Honourable Kerryann Ifill FB



HOSTS

Caribbean Disability Network
Government of Barbados
Caribbean Development Bank



Agenda

DAY 1 | FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2025

2.00 PM - 8.00 PM CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

DAY 2 | SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2025

LEGACY PROJECT

10.00 am **Press Briefing**
Barbados Council for the Disabled - Harambee House, St. Michael

DAY 3 | SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2025

CONFERENCE OPENING

9.00 am -
4.00 pm Conference Registration

4.00 pm Poster Presentation

6.00 pm Welcome Reception

Parade of Country Flags
National Anthem

6.08 pm **Invocation**
Pastor Dale Haynes
Director of Community Services and Possibility Ministries
East Caribbean Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists

6.13 pm	Welcome Remarks Andrew Sharpe President, Caribbean Disability Network Chairman, Authentic Caribbean Foundation
6.20 pm	Remarks Patricia Padmore-Blackman President Barbados Council for the Disabled
6.25 pm	Saxophone Performance Mr. Wayne Nurse Director, National Disabilities Unit
6.30 pm	Remarks Dr. Isaac Solomon Vice President Caribbean Development Bank
6.40 pm	Hon. Chad Blackman, MP Minister for Education and Transformation Barbados
6.55 pm	Song Performance Juanita Paul Gibbs
7.00 pm	Guest Speaker Hon. Kirk D. M. Humphrey, MP Minister for People Empowerment and Elder Affairs Barbados
7.10 pm	Hors d'Oeuvres and Networking
7.30 pm	Performance Springer Memorial School & Grajydon Sealy Band
9.00 pm	Closing

DAY 4 | MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2025

7.00 am Breakfast (on your own)

Masters of Ceremony

Sorana Mitchell & Most Hon. Vernee Sobers FB

8.30 am **Opening Ceremony and Keynote Speakers**

Patricia Padmore-Blackmore

President

Barbados Council for the Disabled

Video and Photos of the Legacy Project

Senator, the Hon Gloria A. Thomas

Minister for Social and Community Development, Housing and Gender Affairs,
Grenada

Daniel Best

President

Caribbean Development Bank

Performance - Spoken Word by Nosamudianna Iyare

Hon. Sandra Husbands

Minister of Training and Tertiary Education
Barbados

Performance - Song by Shane Headly

Hon. Kirk D.M. Humphrey, MP

Minister of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs
Barbados

Handover of Cheque for Legacy Project

PLENARY 1: The State of Inclusive Education in the Caribbean

9.45 am A regional overview of the status of inclusive education, highlighting both progress and persistent gaps. An examination of national strategies, enrollment trends for students with disabilities, accessibility of schools, and the implementation of inclusive practices across Caribbean education systems.

Dr. Jacqueline Huggins, UWI Consultant, Caribbean Development Bank Regional Disability Assessment - Inclusive Education
Prof. Stacey Blackman, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill
Dr. Richard Rieser, General Secretary, Commonwealth Disabled People Forum, World of Inclusion Ltd.

11.15 am Coffee Break

PANEL DISCUSSION: Policy and Legislation

An exploration of how Caribbean countries' national policies and legislative frameworks align with international conventions such as the UN CRPD and SDG 4. An addressing of the need for harmonized regional approaches, enforcement mechanisms, and accountability for inclusive education commitments.

11.30 pm Moderator - Senator Andwele Boyce, Barbados

Janice Gibbs, Education Consultant, Ministry of Education, Barbados
Dr. Dwayne Devonish, Professor, UWI, Cave Hill
Edmund Hinkson, S.C., Attorney-at-Law, Barbados
Magda Embury, National Council for Persons with Disabilities, Cayman Islands
Eric Rosenthal, Disability Rights International (Virtual), USA

PANEL DISCUSSION: Regional Alignment

This session connects with and flows from the panel discussion on Policy and Legislation.

Moderator: Sorana Mitchell, Member, Caribbean Development Network

Charlotte Vuyiswa McClain-Nhlapo, Global Disability Advisor/Global Lead Social Specialist, The World Bank

Lyston Skerrit, Adolescent Development Specialist, UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean Area

Dr. Martin Baptiste, Social Sector Division Chief, Caribbean Development Bank

Dr. Verna Knight, Faculty of Humanites and Education, School of Education, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill

1.00 pm Lunch

2.15 pm PARALLEL WORKSHOPS

TRACK A: Inclusion in Early Childhood and Primary Education

Focus will be on ensuring early identification, intervention, and support for young children with disabilities. The session will address access to inclusive preschools and primary schools, family engagement, teacher preparedness, and the developmental benefits of inclusive settings from the start of formal education.

Moderator: Leonid Johnson, Member, Caribbean Development Network

Lee Carter, Peripatetic Learning Support Teacher, Student Support Services, Ministry of Education, Barbados

Gayle Carter, Preschool Educator, Child Care Board, Barbados

Shelly-Ann Harper, Early Childhood Development Specialist, UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean Area

Brent Holt, Education Psychologist, Inclusion Cayman

Gayle Mohammed Oxley, Educator, Counselor and Theologian, G.O. International Academy of Learning

Dr. Josephine Claxton-Richardson, Director, St. Kitts Spectrum Services Centre

TRACK B: Teacher Training and Inclusive Curriculum

A discussion about teacher preparation programs, in-service training, and professional development initiatives that equip educators with the skills to teach diverse learners. The session will also examine the need for curriculum adaptations, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and inclusive pedagogical tools.

Moderator: P.S. Zahnela Claxton, Ministry of Education St. Kitts & Nevis

Prof. Stacey Blackman, Director, School of Education, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill

Dr. Judy-Ann Auld, Deputy Chief Education Officer (AG), Special and Inclusive Education Unit, Ministry of Education, Grenada

Beverly LeBlanc, Circle of Friends, Dominica

Michele Francis, QS Behavioural Services, Grenada and USA

Jacqueline Bennett, Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities

Dr. Richard Leslie Rieser OBE, World of Inclusion

Ltd./Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum

TRACK C: Assistive Technology in the Caribbean

An exploration of the role of assistive technologies, both high-tech and low-tech, in supporting learners with disabilities. Topics may include accessibility tools, funding and procurement challenges, digital equity, and training for teachers and students in using these tools effectively.

Moderator: Janeil Odle. Member, Caribbean Development Network

The Most Hon. Kerry-Ann Ifill FB, Vice President of the Barbados Council for the Disabled

Dr. Christine Hendricks, Executive Director, Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities

Rene Lambert, Caribbean American Diaspora Newspaper (virtual)

Ronnell Murell, Educator, Advocacy Grenada

Erin Brown, Director, Office of Disabilities and Compliance, University of The Bahamas

TRACK D: Technical and Vocational Training

An exploration of how TVET can be a powerful driver of inclusive growth. Panelists will share information on best practices in adaptive training methods, assistive technologies, and partnerships that expand access to technical skills training.

Moderator: Peter George Smith, Member, Caribbean Development Network

Heather Grazette-Corbin, Supervisor, Barbados Association for Supportive Employment

Angela Lowe, Senior Manager, Examinations Services Division, Caribbean Examinations Council

Regina Snowden, Member, Caribbean Disability Network

Gevariah Young, President, Barbados National Students' Council

Fabian Bartlett, National Coordinator, National Financial Literacy Programme, Ministry of Energy and Business, Barbados

TRACK E: Youth Voices Panel (Moderated Interventions)

Focus on the lived experiences and perspectives of youth with disabilities. The panel will provide a platform for young people to share their challenges, aspirations, and recommendations regarding inclusive education, leadership, and participation in decision-making.

Moderator: Gillian Rose, Member of Future Leader Network, Caribbean Development Bank

Ganesh Singh, Director, Commonwealth Disability Forum

Joshuanette Francis, President, Good Humans 268, Inc., Antigua and Barbuda

Zinzee Noel, Director, Advocacy Grenada, Inc.

Cion Greenidge, National United Society of the Blind Youth Empowerment Group

Kim Farren, Gender and Data Management Analyst, UNFPA Subregional Office for the Caribbean

Working Group Session - Drafting the Regional Declaration

4.30 pm

Peter George Smith, Michelle Brathwaite, Janeil Odle, Andrew Sharpe, Caribbean Development Bank, UWI, OECS

5.30 pm

Closure

DAY 5 | TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2025

ACTION AND COMMITMENT

Master of Ceremony: Sorana Mitchell

08:10 am Welcome

PLENARY 2: Leadership for Inclusive Systems

Focus on how school leaders, education officials, and policymakers can drive systemic change. Key topics may include inclusive school culture, data-driven decision-making, cross-sector collaboration, and leadership training for equity and inclusion.

09.00 am **Erice Reid**, President, Inclusive Schools Caribbean/University of Pennsylvania GSE
Merphilus James, President, National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities, St. Lucia
Lorin Peters-Alexander, Dean, School of Continuing Education, T.A. Marryshow Community College, Grenada
Charlotte Vuyiswa McClain-Nhlapo, Global Disability Advisor/Global Lead Social Specialist, The World Bank
Dr. Lesvie Nicole Archer, Policy Fellow, University of The Bahamas

9.45 am Coffee Break

ROUNDTABLE: Regional Action Planning for Inclusion

10.00 am Forward-looking session to facilitate dialogue on shared goals, benchmarks, and partnerships for advancing inclusive education. It will result in concrete action points for cross-country collaboration, resource mobilization, and follow-up on commitments made during the conference.

Moderator: Ian Bourne

Dr. Jacqueline Huggins, UWI Consultant, Caribbean Development Bank Regional Disability Policy Brief, Inclusive Education
Dr. Ioana Creitaru, Programme Specialist, UNDP Crisis Bureau, Geneva

Paula Antezana Rimassa, Programme Specialist, UNFPA Latin American and the Caribbean Region Office
Kaye Sargeant, Senior Education Officer, Student Support Services Unit, Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training
Michelle Brathwaite, Vice President, Caribbean Disability Network
Senator Andwele Boyce, Disability Advocate, Ministry of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs, Barbados

11:00 am Performance

11:30 am Presentation of Working Group Outcomes and Draft Declaration

12:30 pm Lunch

1.30 pm Wayne Nurse
 Director
 National Disability Unit, Barbados

1.40 pm Caribbean Disability Network Members Highlight

2.30 pm Conference Reflections, Call to Action and Whitepaper
 Peter George Smith, Michelle Brathwaite, Andrew Sharpe, Janeil Odle, Erin Brown, Sorana Mitchell, Stafford Grant, Leonid Johnson

3.30 pm Closing Remarks

Hon. Jeremiah Norbert
 Minister with Responsibility for Persons with Disabilities
 St. Lucia

Senator, the Hon. Crystal Caesar, JP
 Minister of Education, Bermuda

Dr. Isaac Soloman
Vice President Operations
Caribbean Development Bank

Pauline Miller
Assistant Director
National Disability Unit
Barbados

4.00 pm Cultural Programme
MC: Sorana Mitchell

6.00 pm Closing



Ministers of Government



**MOST HON. JEROME
WALCOTT**

Senior Minister, Sen. Dr. The Most Hon. Jerome X. Walcott, FB, MBBS, FRCS, JP, Minister of Health and Wellness, was raised in Bridgetown and was educated at St. Angela's Primary and also studied at London Business School.

He graduated from the University of the West Indies in 1982 and is a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons.

Walcott was MP between 2003 and 2008, and since 2001 was Leader of Government Business in the Senate and later served as minister of health under the tenure of Owen Arthur. Between 1995 and 1997, he served as Assistant Secretary of the Labour Party and has been its chairman as of 2021. He was also appointed as a senator in 2013.



HON. KIRK HUMPHREY

Hon. Kirk Humphrey is the Member of the House of Assembly for St. Michael South and serves as Minister of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs. He holds an honours degree from the University of the West Indies, a Master's in Social Policy and Planning for Developing Countries from the London School of Economics, and a Master's in Public Administration from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

His extensive career spans public and private sectors, including leadership roles as Manager of the Child Care Board and Director at the Bureau of Social Policy, Research and Planning, and the Department of Constituency Empowerment. He has also lectured part-time at UWI Cave Hill in Government, Sociology and Social Work. From 2014 to 2018, he served as Senior Development Officer at the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD) in Barbados.



Hon. Ms. C. Sandra V. Husbands, M.P., represents St. James South in the House of Assembly and serves as Minister in the Ministry of Training and Tertiary Education. She holds a degree in Sociology and Law and a Master's in International Trade Policy, complemented by advanced leadership training in Singapore, facilitation training in the United States, and courses in Training of Trainers and Business Process Management. With two decades of experience in human resources development, she has worked across multiple sectors including management consulting, broadcasting, sales, market research, and tourism.

HON. SANDRA HUSBANDS Minister Husbands has also made notable private sector contributions. She was the first female and longest-serving President of the Barbados Small Business Association, chaired the National Council on Substance Abuse and SBA Enterprises Inc., and co-founded the Caribbean Association of Small and Medium Enterprises. Additionally, she served as First Vice President of both the National Organisation of Women and the Caribbean Facilitators Network.



Hon. Chad Blackman is a Barbadian politician and former diplomat who currently serves as Minister of Educational Transformation. He previously held senior international roles, including Senior Advisor to the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva, Vienna, and Rome. He also served as Ambassador to Austria, Hungary, and Serbia.

HON. CHAD BLACKMAN Minister Blackman has chaired the WTO Trade and Environment Committee and the Trade and Development Committee, led the SIDS Group at UNCTAD, and served as Americas Coordinator for the Government Group in the ILO. He is also a member of the UN International Gender Champions Global Board. He holds a Law degree and a Master's in International Trade Law from the University of Essex.



Honourable Crystal Caesar is a Certified Public Accountant with over two decades of experience spanning government, regulation, banking, insurance, and the corporate sector. Her career reflects a powerful blend of financial acumen, public service, and commitment to national development. She began her professional journey in Atlanta, Georgia, gaining expertise in international accounting and financial systems before returning to Bermuda in 2000 to strengthen financial management and organizational accountability in both the public and private sectors.

HON. CRYSTAL CAESAR Her leadership and governance experience include service on key national boards such as the Bermuda College Board of Governors, the Board of Education, the Bermuda Independence Commission, and the Development Applications Board. In 2020, Crystal made history as the first Progressive Labour Party (PLP) representative, and the first woman, to win the Southampton West Central seat in over fifty years. She previously served as a Senator and Junior Minister across multiple portfolios, including Health, Home Affairs, Economic Development and Tourism, Immigration, Transport, and National Security.

Appointed Minister for the Cabinet Office in 2024, she oversaw several critical departments, and in 2025 became Minister of Education, championing innovation, equity, and excellence. A devoted mother of two, Crystal is guided by fairness, compassion, and a commitment to building a more inclusive Bermuda.



**SENATOR THE HON.
GLORIA THOMAS**

Senator, the Honourable Gloria Thomas is the Grenadian Minister for Social and Community Development, Housing and Gender Affairs. She was appointed as Senator in the Parliament of Grenada on in June 2022.

Minister Thomas holds a master's degree in counselling psychology from the University of the Southern Caribbean, an MBA with a project management concentration from Walden University in the USA and a bachelor's degree in social work from the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica.

Her professional career and achievements include being a teacher at St. Mary's R.C School (La Fillette, St. Andrew's); Coordinator of Adult & Continuing Education, Grenada National College; and Supervisor of School Attendance and Clinical Supervisor of Guidance Counselling in the Ministry of Education.



P.S. ZAHNELA CLAXTON

Miss Zahnela Claxton (B.A., MSc., MPM) is a native of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis, Nevis and Texas, USA. Her leadership roles include: Director of Youth Development, Principal Education Officer and her current assignment of Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, Information Technology and Library Services, Nevis Island Administration.

She has served as a member of the St. Kitts and Nevis Child Welfare and Probation Board and is currently a member of the St. Kitts and Nevis Accreditation Board. Miss Claxton is currently pursuing an EdD in Education Leadership with a focus on Organizational Justice, Inclusion and Equity at Western Illinois University. Her research focuses on transformational leadership as the foundation for inclusive schools on Nevi



HON. JEREMIAH NORBERT

Honourable Jeremiah Norbert, 35, is the youngest Minister in Saint Lucia's current Cabinet and the first to hold direct responsibility for disability affairs. Before entering politics, he served as a Police Detective in the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force from 2010 to 2020. His life took a defining turn in 2021 when a tragic accident led to the amputation of his right leg, an experience that has deeply shaped his commitment to inclusion and empowerment.

He began his political journey as Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly (2021-2024) before being appointed Minister with responsibility for Home Affairs, Crime Prevention, and Persons with Disabilities. His leadership reflects a strong focus on advancing equity, accessibility, and the dignity of persons with disabilities.

Currently pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Political Science, Minister Norbert envisions a society where systems are designed to foster independence and ensure equal participation for all citizens in national development. His journey embodies resilience, leadership, and a steadfast commitment to inclusion.

Speakers and Panelists



DR. LESVIE ARCHER

Dr. Lesvie N. Archer is a Policy Fellow at the Government and Public Policy Institute of the University of The Bahamas, where she has served for the past five years. She holds a Ph.D. in Cultural Studies and brings an interdisciplinary background with degrees in Marketing and International Hospitality and Tourism Management.

Her work focuses on cost-of-living studies among working- and middle-class communities and the management of international grants supporting conservation and sustainable development. She is widely recognized for her ability to facilitate dialogue among diverse stakeholders, creating neutral and constructive spaces for collaborative policy advocacy and development.

A strong advocate for equity, Dr. Archer integrates disability inclusion into her policy work, ensuring it remains central to building inclusive and resilient communities. Her approach bridges research, policy, and practice—strengthening systems that support social and economic well-being for all.



DR. JUDY-ANN AULD

Dr. Judy-Ann Allison Auld is a distinguished educator and advocate for inclusive learning, currently serving as Deputy Chief Education Officer for Special and Inclusive Education at the Ministry of Education in Grenada. With over 30 years of experience, she has been a steadfast champion of equitable access and support for all learners.

Her academic achievements reflect her deep commitment to educational advancement. She holds a PhD in Education from the University of the West Indies, a Master's in Inclusive Education and a Certificate in Inclusive Education from the University of Roehampton, as well as a Bachelor's in Educational Leadership and Management and a Teachers' Certificate in Elementary Education.

Dr. Auld spent 21 years as a primary school educator and 12 years as principal of a special education institution. She currently lectures at the T.A. Marryshow Community College and St. George's University, where she has also developed specialized courses in Educational Psychology and Inclusive Education. Her research contributions include work with the Caribbean Education Research Centre and presentations at international conferences in the U.S., Canada, and the Caribbean.

An active member of AERA and BERA, Dr. Auld continues to shape policy and practice. Guided by her belief that “Every learner deserves to be seen, heard, and empowered,” she works to make education a bridge, not a barrier.



DR. MARTIN BAPTISTE

Dr. Martin Baptiste, the Division Chief, Social Sector Division, has oversight of the Caribbean Development Banks' programme in the region for the areas of education, agriculture and rural development, human settlement, citizen security, health, social protection, gender and youth development.

Dr. Baptiste holds a Ph.D in Education Planning and Policy from the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill Campus. He is also a graduate of the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris, France. Immediately before joining the CDB in 2008, Dr. Baptiste was the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Grenada, and prior to that, held the post of Chief Education Officer.



FABIAN BARTLETT

Fabian Bartlett is the National Coordinator of the National Financial Literacy Programme under the Ministry of Energy & Business, Government of Barbados. A seasoned finance professional, entrepreneur, and motivational speaker, he brings over two decades of experience from institutions such as Scotiabank, Sagicor, PwC, and Digicel.

He holds degrees in Finance & Investments, Banking & Finance, and Financial Sector Management, and is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Theology. Fabian also serves as an Ordained Minister and Elder at Sanctuary Empowerment Centre, where he leads initiatives in young adult ministry, wealth creation, and entrepreneurship.

He is deeply passionate about national development, financial empowerment, and Kingdom leadership. Above all, he treasures his role as husband and father



PROF. STACEY BLACKMAN

Stacey Blackman is a Professor of Inclusive Education and Disability Studies at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill Campus. She completed her undergraduate and graduate studies at UWI and earned her PhD from Cambridge University on a Cambridge Commonwealth and Chevening Scholarship. She currently serves as editor of Routledge's forthcoming series *Equity in Education in Developing Nations* and Information Age Publishing's *Caribbean Discourse in Inclusive Education*.

Her administrative leadership at UWI has included roles as Chairman of the Committee of Examinations, Deputy Dean (Outreach), and Coordinator of the Associate and B.Ed. Degree programs. A dedicated educator, she began her career as a secondary school teacher and has presented at major international conferences, including AERA, CIES, and the Council for Exceptional Children.

Professor Blackman is deeply committed to advancing teacher professional development and scholarship in inclusive and special education. Her extensive research, campus and community service, and consultancy work address a wide range of issues including pedagogical practices, special education, inclusion, pupil perspectives, and the rights of persons with disabilities in the Caribbean.



GALE CARTER

Mrs. Carter's passion for education is reflected in both her academic achievements and her professional impact. She holds an Associate Degree in Education, a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with First Class Honours, a Post-Graduate Diploma in Education Leadership with Distinction, a Post-Graduate Certificate in Early Childhood Education where she graduated as Valedictorian, and a Master of Education in Inclusive Practices for Special Needs.

Currently, she leads the early childhood development programme at the Child Care Board, where she plays a key role in shaping early learning experiences across Barbados. Her leadership extends beyond the island; she has represented Barbados as an Early Childhood Development Leader at workshops with UNICEF and the OECS. She has also conducted numerous professional development sessions on Early Childhood Care and Special Education Needs in both public and private educational settings.

Purpose-driven and guided by empathy, Mrs. Carter embraces the belief expressed by George Evans: "Every student can learn, just not on the same day or in the same way."

CARIBBEAN DISABILITY CONFERENCE



LEE CARTER

Mrs. Carter has worked in the field of Special Education for the past twenty-eight years, demonstrating sustained commitment to educational excellence and student advocacy. Her professional qualifications encompass teacher certifications in General Education, Special Needs Education, and Psychometric Testing, complemented by training in Neurodiversity education.

She holds a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and a Master's degree in Innovation in Learning and Teaching. Her scholarly work includes presenting research on neuroplasticity within the Barbadian educational context at the Sixth International Conference on Higher Education in 2018. Also, in recognition of her pedagogical contributions, she was awarded the Royal Fidelity National Distinguished Teachers Award in 2016. Mrs. Carter maintains active professional affiliations with the British Psychological Society.

Currently, she functions as a Peripatetic Learning Support Teacher within Student Support Services at the Ministry of Educational Transformation. She is also a part-time tutor at Erdiston Teachers' Training College, where she facilitates the Neuroscience and Special Education course in the Post Grad Diploma in Special Education. She is also an ordained Minister.



**DR. JOSEPHINE CLAXTON
RICHARDSON**

Dr. Josephine Claxton-Richardson is a leading advocate for inclusive education, autism support, and early childhood development in St. Kitts and Nevis. As Director of the St. Kitts Spectrum Services Centre, she leads initiatives that support children with developmental disabilities and their families, advancing inclusive practices across the education and health sectors.

With over 30 years of experience in mental health and disabilities, Dr. Claxton-Richardson brings a unique blend of clinical and educational expertise. She is a qualified nurse, graduate teacher, and approved mental health professional with specialization in mental health law. She holds a Master's in Education and Special Needs and a degree in Social Work and Applied Social Sciences. Her research on administrators' perceptions of inclusive education in St. Kitts and Nevis has influenced national educational strategies.

A Certified Autism Specialist and ADOS-2 Certified practitioner, she is also a PLAY Project Consultant, providing assessments, observations, and strategic recommendations to educators and families. She has coordinated UNICEF Early Childhood Training for supervisors and parents, strengthening sector capacity.

Dr. Claxton-Richardson has presented locally and regionally on autism, behavior, and mental health. Her specialized work with girls and women with autism underscores her commitment to equity and tailored support for all learners.



DR. IONA CREITARU

Dr. Ioana Creitaru is a Preparedness and Early Warning Specialist at UNDP's Crisis Bureau, based in Geneva. With over 15 years of experience in the UN System and NGOs, she has advised leaders and teams in more than 30 governments and UN Country Teams to strengthen climate and disaster risk governance. She currently leads UNDP's global portfolio on disaster early warning and preparedness and spearheads the UNDP Preparedness Learning Pathway to build countries' emergency response capabilities.

Dr. Creitaru manages a flagship public-private partnership between UNDP and DHL Group, which has enhanced airport disaster readiness in over 60 countries since 2009. A passionate advocate for disability inclusion and a Gender Equality Champion, she led UNDP's global policy on disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction.

As an active SURGE Advisor, she has supported response and recovery in Afghanistan, Egypt, Papua New Guinea, Syria, Moldova, and India. Dr. Creitaru holds a PhD from the Geneva Graduate Institute for research on securitization, climate change, and disaster response.



PROF. DWAYNE DEVONISH

Dwayne Devonish is a Professor of Management and Organisational Behaviour and the Director of the School for Graduate Studies and Research at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill Campus. He holds a BSc in Psychology with First Class Honours from UWI and an MSc and PhD in Work and Organisational Psychology with Distinction from the University of Nottingham. In 2020, at the age of 36, he became the second youngest person to attain the rank of Professor at UWI and remains the youngest currently serving professor.

His areas of expertise include organisational behaviour and psychology, work-related stress, health and wellness, human resource management, and strategic planning. He has published extensively in regional and international journals, conducted practical training workshops, and led research-based consultancies for various organisations.

A national thought leader in workplace health, Professor Devonish was the lead author of Barbados's 2019 National Workplace Wellness Policy—the only policy of its kind in the country. He continues to contribute to national development through his role on the National Committee on Workplace Wellness under the Ministry of Labour, Social Partnership Relations and the Third Sector.



MICHELE FRANCIS

Michele Francis is a distinguished educator and advocate with over 35 years of experience in special education. A native of Grenada and Petite Martinique, she has dedicated her career to advancing inclusive education and empowering students with diverse learning needs. She holds a Master of Science in Exceptional Student Education and is a PRECISE Scholarship recipient, recognizing her professional excellence.

As founder of QS Behavioral Services, Michele leads initiatives supporting children with behavioral challenges. She also established the QS Sibling Workshops Nonprofit, providing guidance to siblings of children with special needs and strengthening family support. An active member of the Caribbean Disability Network, she advocates for disability rights and inclusion across the region.

Her leadership extends beyond education to community advocacy, cultural ambassadorship, and disaster relief. Known for building strong partnerships with educators, parents, and organizations, she creates strategies that foster student success. Michele Francis remains a respected voice for disability rights, championing empowerment, equity, and opportunity throughout Grenada, Carriacou, Petite Martinique, and the wider Caribbean.



JANICE GIBBS

Janice Gibbs is a seasoned educator whose 40-year career reflects an unwavering commitment to teaching and inclusion. She spent 20 years in mainstream education and another 20 in special needs education, serving 11 years as Education Officer for Special Needs before transitioning into a fulfilling retirement. Teaching remains her passion, and she continues to tutor at Erdiston Teachers' Training College in the Diploma in Special Education programme and with the Barbados Prison Service, where she teaches Remedial English.

Her academic journey is marked by excellence. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Literatures-in-English with First Class Honours from the University of the West Indies in 2001, followed by a Master's in Special Education, Inclusion, and Disability Studies from the University of London on a prestigious Commonwealth Scholarship in 2002. In 2016, she completed her Doctorate in Education at the University of the West Indies.

Janice now serves as a consultant on Special Education and leads JAJL Inclusive Education Consultancy as CEO. Beyond her professional life, she has been married for 39 years, is the proud mother of two daughters, and grandmother to eight-year-old Jadon. A devoted Christian since 1980, she worships at Western Light Church of the Nazarene, grounding her work and life in faith and service.



SHELLY-ANN HARPER

Shelly-Ann Harper is a distinguished Early Childhood Development Specialist with more than 34 years of experience advancing quality education systems across the Eastern Caribbean. A Certified Early Childhood and Primary Educator with a concentration in Special Education Needs, she has dedicated her career to championing inclusive, equitable, and rights-based approaches to learning.

For the past 17 years, Shelly-Ann has served with the UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Office, where she has led and supported transformative initiatives that promote access, inclusion, and quality education for all children, particularly those with developmental challenges and disabilities. Her work emphasizes the fundamental rights of every child to good health, adequate nutrition, safety, protection, and nurturing relationships with responsive caregivers.

A passionate advocate for disability inclusion, Shelly-Ann has advised governments and stakeholders on policy reform, inclusive curricula, and early intervention strategies. Her leadership continues to shape systems that ensure no child is left behind, advancing equity and opportunity for children across the region.



EDMUND HINKSON

Edmund Hinkson, Senior Counsel and 1979 University of the West Indies Scholarship recipient, was called to the Barbados Bar in January 1985 after completing studies at UWI Cave Hill Law Faculty and Hugh Wooding Law School. He later earned a Master's degree in Business Law from the University of Ottawa before establishing a general legal practice in Barbados. Over his 39-year career, he has practiced extensively across multiple areas of the law.

Edmund represented Saint James North as a Member of Parliament from February 2013 to April 2025. During this time, he served as the Opposition BLP's Shadow Education Minister (2013-2018) and later as Minister of Home Affairs (2018-2020).

His long-standing commitment to disability advocacy includes serving as a Director of the Council for the Disabled (2013-2018), Deputy Chairman of the National Advisory Committee on the Rights and Needs of Persons with Disabilities (2003-2008), and Chairman of the National Advisory Committee to Establish a Commission to Improve the Lives of Persons with Disabilities (2022-2023).



BRENT HOLT

Brent Holt is an accomplished Educational Psychologist with over 40 years of experience in education across the Cayman Islands and the United States. Throughout his distinguished career, he has been a steadfast advocate for individuals and families at high risk of exclusion, working to create more inclusive and supportive learning environments.

He served in several key leadership roles with the Cayman Islands Ministry of Education, including Educational Psychologist, Head of Student Services, and Senior Policy Advisor for Inclusion, before retiring from government service in 2013.

Brent also played a pivotal role in advancing inclusive education through civil society. As Chair of the Special Needs Foundation Cayman (SNFC) Board of Directors from 2010, he guided the organization's growth and strategic direction. In recognition of his leadership and lasting contributions, he was named Chair Emeritus in 2016, ahead of the organization's transition to Inclusion Cayman.



HON. KERRYANN IFILL

The Most Honourable Kerryann Ifill FB is a trailblazer in leadership, advocacy, and inclusion. Losing her sight at age five, she became a symbol of resilience, first featured on Barbados's 10¢ stamp during the International Year of the Disabled. At 14, she broke barriers as the first totally blind student at Combermere Secondary School, later earning qualifications from the University of the West Indies, Durham Business School, and Erdiston Teacher's Training College.

For more than a decade, Kerryann championed disability rights through the Barbados Council for the Disabled, leading initiatives in advocacy, research, and assistive technology. In 2008, she was appointed to the Senate, and in 2012, she made history as its youngest President — and the first woman and person with a disability to hold the position. She also serves globally as Vice Chair of the Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum, Chair of the CARICOM Advisory Panel on Disabilities, Director-at-Large of the World Blind Union North America-Caribbean Region, Vice President of the Barbados Council for the Disabled, and PRO of the National United Society of the Blind.

A Rotarian since 2019, she advances inclusion and empowerment projects while serving in church ministry and music for over 25 years. An author and keynote speaker, Kerryann shares powerful messages of resilience and equity. Honoured with the Order of the Freedom of Barbados (2023) and the Anthony N. Sabga Award for Caribbean Excellence (2024), she continues to inspire change worldwide.



MERPHILUS JAMES

Merphilus James is a leading disability rights advocate from Saint Lucia, serving as President of both Disabled People's International North America and the Caribbean (DPI NAC) and the National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities Inc. (NCPD). Born with Amniotic Band Syndrome, he has used a prosthetic leg since age four and draws on his lived experience to champion powerful, rights-based advocacy.

Under his leadership, the NCPD has spearheaded innovative national programmes that expand training, certification, and employment for persons with disabilities, particularly in climate-resilient and emerging sectors. Among his notable achievements are the establishment of a state-of-the-art aquaponics facility run by persons with disabilities, the creation of a modern prosthetic leg manufacturing centre offering subsidized devices, and the launch of a national mobility device distribution programme providing quality aids to those in need.

Merphilus challenges outdated notions of disability as charity, instead promoting community-based rehabilitation and economic inclusion. Since his election as DPI NAC President in 2019, he has been a dynamic voice for equality, transforming systems, reshaping perceptions, and proving that with the right support, persons with disabilities can lead and thrive in every sphere of society.



DR. VERNA KNIGHT

With more than 24 years of experience as an educator, Dr. Verna Knight is a full-time lecturer at the School of Education, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, she serves as Deputy Dean (Planning) in the Faculty of Humanities and Education. She is also the Academic Coordinator for the Eastern Caribbean Joint Board of Teacher Education and Coordinator for the Bachelor of Education programme, both on campus and through franchise arrangements with teacher training institutions across the Eastern Caribbean.

Dr. Knight is deeply passionate about education development in the Caribbean and is committed to advancing the field through research, collaboration, and publication. Her scholarly interests focus on issues affecting student learning, with a particular emphasis on the Eastern Caribbean region. Through her leadership and academic work, she continues to strengthen teacher education and promote educational excellence throughout the region.



RENE LAMBERT

Rene Lambert was born in St. Elizabeth, Jamaica, and raised in Kingston, where greater resources and opportunities helped shape her early years. At 17, she migrated to the United States with her family in 2017. She attended S.T.E.P. Centre and Liberty Academy before completing her secondary education at Manchester High School in Connecticut, graduating with honors in 2019. She recently earned an associate's degree from Manchester Community College and plans to pursue studies in psychology and journalism, maintaining strong academic performance throughout her journey.

Rene is deeply involved in her community. She serves on the Connecticut Persons with Disabilities Council, is a member of CT KASA, and volunteers with BlessBackJamdown Missions, a nonprofit supporting underserved communities in Jamaica. In recognition of her advocacy and service, she received the 2025 Ryan Colburn Award for community involvement and was admitted to the University of Hartford's Honors Program.

An avid writer, reader, and music lover, Rene published her first book, *Uphill Climb - Cerebral Palsy Adventures*, sharing her personal story with authenticity and strength. She continues to balance academics, creativity, and advocacy, remaining grounded and committed to making a difference.



BEVERLY LEBLANC

Beverly Leblanc is a seasoned educator with more than 30 years of experience across multiple levels of the education system. She has served as a classroom teacher, early childhood supervisor, secondary education support teacher, Dean of the Faculty of Education, and Dean of Student Affairs. Currently, she is a senior lecturer and teacher trainer at the Faculty of Education, Dominica State College. She holds a B.Sc. in Education, an M.Sc. in Early Childhood Special Education, an M.A. in Training and Development, and is pursuing a Doctorate in Public Administration with a concentration in Global Leadership.

Deeply committed to inclusive education, Beverly is the Executive Director of Circle of Friends Inc., an NGO focused on advocacy and family support, and the founder of the Achievement Learning Centre, a special education school serving children with disabilities. In 2024, she spearheaded a regional collaboration hosting the "Enabling Inclusion" side event at the SIDS4 Conference in Antigua, amplifying Caribbean voices on disability.

She also founded ECAAM (Education Consulting, Academic Advising, and Mentoring) and is an active member of the Caribbean Disability Network. Her work reflects a strong commitment to equity, capacity-building, and leadership at local, regional, and international levels.



CHARLOTTE MCLAIN-NHLAPO

Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo is the Global Disability Advisor for the World Bank Group, where she leads efforts to advance disability-inclusive development in alignment with the Bank's twin goals of ending poverty and promoting shared prosperity. She supports operational teams to embed disability inclusion in policies, programs, and projects, while driving analytical work and interpreting institutional policy on disability and development.

A distinguished human rights lawyer, Charlotte was appointed by President Obama in 2011 to lead USAID's disability-inclusive development, shaping global strategies and policies. Prior to that, she served as a Senior Operations Officer at the World Bank in East Asia Pacific and Africa. Earlier in her career, President Nelson Mandela appointed her as a Commissioner to the South African Human Rights Commission, where she focused on social and economic rights, disability rights, and child rights. She also played a pivotal role in drafting the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and previously worked for UNICEF as a Child Protection Officer.

Charlotte holds law degrees from the University of Warsaw and Cornell Law School. She has received an Honorary Doctorate from Stellenbosch University in South Africa and is a Rockefeller Fellow. A widely published author and global speaker, she has shared her vision on disability inclusion as a TEDx speaker, continuing to inspire and shape international human rights discourse.



GALE MOHAMMED-OXLEY

Gale Mohammed-Oxley is a dedicated educator, counselor, and theologian from Trinidad, with more than 25 years of service spanning early childhood, primary, secondary, and tertiary education. Her academic achievements include a B.A. in Theology from the University of the West Indies (UWI), a B.Sc. in Elementary Education from Andrews University in Michigan, and a Certificate in Mathematics Education from UWI. She also holds an M.A. in Education with a specialization in Special Education, reflecting her strong commitment to inclusive learning.

Gale's professional journey includes serving as an Assistant Examiner in Sociology (CAPE) and Social Studies (CSEC) with the Caribbean Examinations Council. She has taught foundation courses at CREDI and spent nine years as an e-tutor with UWI's Online Campus. Her extensive training spans peace education, curriculum design, online teaching, AI in education, and assessment.

Deeply rooted in community service, Gale has held several leadership roles, including President Emeritus of the Catholic Teachers' Association, Chair of the TTUTA Special Education Committee, and Spokesperson at the IX Summit of the Americas for the Caribbean Subregion. Her work reflects a lifelong commitment to education, equity, and service.



LORIN PETERS-ALEXANDER

Lorin Peters-Alexander is a dynamic higher education leader and currently serves as Dean of the School of Continuing Education at T.A. Marryshow Community College (TAMCC), Grenada, a role she has held since August 2020. Her leadership journey includes key positions as Associate Dean and Coordinator for Access & Professional Studies, where she excelled in curriculum oversight, operational direction, strategic budgeting, and faculty performance evaluations. Her expertise spans Adult Education, Assessment and Evaluation, Human Resource Management, and partnership development.

A committed institutional leader, Ms. Peters-Alexander is an active member of TAMCC's Senior Management Team, Academic Board, Programmes Review Board, and Finance Committee. As Chair of the Gender Committee, she advanced a draft Gender Policy to promote inclusion. She holds a Master's in International Business from St. George's University and a B.Sc. in Business Administration and Accounting, and is the author of *Carriacou: The Power of the Drums* (2023).

Beyond academia, she serves as Director of QS Behavioural Services and is a member of the Caribbean Disability Network. Her civic engagement builds on her role as Project Manager for the IYF/USAID Project, where she led implementation, conflict resolution initiatives, and partner reporting.



ERICE REID

Erice Reid is an Inclusion Strategies Specialist and State Implementation Specialist with the New Jersey Department of Education's Office of Special Education. She is also pursuing her doctorate at the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education, where her research uses behavior change and postcolonial theory to explore the factors that influence Caribbean school leaders' readiness to implement inclusive education.

In her role at NJDOE, Erice partners with district leaders to strengthen teaching and leadership through inclusive instructional practices. With specialized training in implementation science, she helps school districts apply evidence-based strategies to improve outcomes for students with disabilities and build sustainable systems for selecting, implementing, and scaling effective literacy practices.

Her passion for advancing equity extends beyond the United States. She is the founder of Inclusive Schools Caribbean and cofounder of the Fortis and Friends Foundation, two organizations focused on expanding access to inclusive and equitable education throughout the Caribbean.

Through her leadership, research, and advocacy, Erice Reid continues to champion inclusive education as both a practice and a movement, transforming classrooms, empowering educators, and creating opportunities for all learners.



RICHARD RIESER

Richard Rieser is the Managing Director of World of Inclusion Ltd and General Secretary of the Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum. A disabled activist, teacher, trainer, filmmaker, and writer, he has spent over 30 years advancing disability equality and inclusive education in the UK and worldwide. He advised the UK Government on special educational needs, led landmark projects on reasonable adjustments and curriculum development, and produced more than 20 training films and resources on inclusive practice.

As founder of Disability Equality in Education, Richard trained 150,000 educators and developed widely used teaching materials. Internationally, he has delivered keynotes, training, and policy support on inclusive education in more than 50 countries, partnering with UNICEF, UNESCO, the Commonwealth Secretariat, and national governments. A contributor to drafting the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, he helped shape Article 24 on inclusive education.

Richard has lived with the effects of polio since infancy and worked as a teacher and lecturer for 25 years. He has served on the SEN and Disability Tribunal since 2001. In recognition of his global impact, he was awarded an OBE and received an Honorary Doctorate from the Open University in 2022.



KAYE SARGEANT

Kaye Sargeant is a dedicated education professional and proud graduate of the University of the West Indies. She holds a Diploma in Special Education from the University of Winchester – Southampton, England, and a Master's degree in Inclusive Education and Curriculum Design from Mount Saint Vincent University in Canada. With over 30 years of experience in various capacities within the realm of special education, Kaye currently serves as a Senior Education Officer in the Ministry of Educational Transformation in Barbados.

Throughout her career, Ms Sargeant has been instrumental in enhancing educational opportunities for children with disabilities. Her roles have included Education Officer responsible for Special Education and Principal of a Special School. Currently, she oversees the Student Support Services Department within the Ministry, where she leads initiatives aimed at fostering inclusivity in education.

Kaye has actively represented the Ministry of Educational Transformation on numerous boards of management for non-governmental organizations. She has successfully fostered intergovernmental collaborations, working closely with various government agencies, including the Ministry of Health and Wellness and the Ministry of Social Transformation, to ensure comprehensive support for children with disabilities.

Deeply committed to the belief that all children can learn, Kaye's guiding principle is centered on the idea that it is our responsibility to find the most effective ways to teach them. Her passion for inclusive education continues to inspire those around her as she advocates for equitable educational practices in Barbados and beyond.



GANESH SINGH

Ganesh Singh is a passionate disability rights advocate who has dedicated his life to advancing the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities at the national, regional, and international levels. Blind since childhood, he has become a respected leader and voice for change in Guyana and beyond.

He currently serves as Chairman of the National Commission on Disability and Programme Manager of the Guyana Council of Organisations for Persons with Disabilities (GCOPD). His leadership extends to national development through his roles on several statutory boards, including the Board of Industrial Training and the Council of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), where he champions accessible education and employment opportunities.

Beyond policy and advocacy, Ganesh is a communicator and influencer, producing and presenting two radio programmes and one television programme that highlight disability issues and amplify community voices. His academic background includes a Post Graduate Diploma in Education with a focus on Higher Education and a Master's degree in Social Work, reflecting his commitment to empowerment through education and social development.

Ganesh Singh's work embodies resilience, leadership, and service, making him a driving force in advancing inclusion and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.



DANIEL BEST

Mr. Daniel Best is the 7th President of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the Region's sole indigenous multilateral development finance institution based in Barbados. A highly professional and diverse leader, Mr. Best was a Senior Infrastructure and Development Advisor to the Office of the Prime Minister of Barbados, seconded from his role as Director, Projects Department at CDB. With over 30 years of experience as a Civil Engineer, Project Management Professional, and Development Banker, he is known for his ability to foster strong working relationships and leading teams to success.



DR. ISAAC SOLOMON

Dr. Isaac Solomon is the Vice-President (Operations) at the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), where he provides strategic leadership and direction to the Economics and Projects Departments, the Private Sector Division, and the Strategy and Accountability Office. He leads the Bank's climate action agenda, focusing on climate finance and infrastructure, and brings extensive expertise in corporate strategy, planning, transformation, and leading change.

From January 2024 to January 2025, Dr. Solomon served as Acting President of the Bank, guiding its strategic priorities during a critical period. He holds a Doctorate in Business Administration, a Master of Science in Financial Management, and professional designations as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE).

Throughout his career, Dr. Solomon has served on the boards of numerous financial, telecommunications, and aviation institutions across the region, bringing his strategic insight and leadership to diverse sectors.



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ANDREW SHARPE

Andrew Sharpe, founder and CEO of Authentic Caribbean Foundation Inc. (ACF) in Boston, is a Jamaican-born festival and tourism professional dedicated to empowering individuals with disabilities in the US and Caribbean.

As the host of “Caribbean Diaspora Connect,” he focuses on inclusivity in economic activities and festivities. With a diploma in Tourism and Business Management, Andrew has led ACF to receive multiple proclamations for its advocacy work. He also promotes awareness of June as National Caribbean American Heritage Month in Massachusetts.



MICHELLE BRATHWAITE

Michelle Brathwaite, principal of the School for the Deaf in Grenada for over 16 years, supports deaf students in mainstream schools. She founded Advocacy Grenada Inc., aiding persons with disabilities.

With a master's in special education from Roehampton University and an associate degree from the University of the West Indies, she holds various certifications in education and advocacy. An active member of the Grenada Paralympic Committee, she facilitates special education and lectures online.

In her free time, Michelle enjoys traveling and dancing, having visited numerous countries. Her mantra is “ALL MEANS ALL,” emphasizing inclusive education for all students.



SORANA MITCHELL

Sorana Mitchell is a media professional based on the island Grenada. She is an active member of the Friends of the Mentally Ill, which is a non-profit organization that helps persons living with mental illnesses and their families.

Sorana is also a mother and author of the memoir, “Still Smiling” found on Amazon.

The singer-songwriter enjoys socializing, laughing, reading, and creating/telling stories and poetry.

PETER GEORGE SMITH



Peter George Smith, a Jamaican, is a Managing Consultant at Jonstar Consulting Group, a management consulting firm in South Florida. He is also a doctoral faculty at California Intercontinental University and Walden University. He has international experience, including roles as commercial attaché in the Jamaican embassy in Brussels and deputy trade commissioner in London, and significant positions in the FinTech sector, such as VP at Fidelity Bank, Bahamas, and Head of the Caribbean for MoneyGram International.

Smith actively volunteers with nonprofits, is a Paul Harris Fellow, founding member of the Rotary e-Club of Raleigh International, and vice president of the University of the West Indies Alumni Association Florida Chapter. He mentors university students and is fluent in French and Spanish. He holds multiple degrees from Jamaica, France and the USA, and shares his travel and cultural experiences on his blog, "Through My Periscope."

REGINA SNOWDEN



Regina Snowden is the Emeritus Founder and Executive Director of Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD), established in 1985. She has significantly contributed to developing innovative programs for youth with disabilities, focusing on mentoring, education, and inclusion. PYD has received numerous awards from prestigious organizations, including Children's Hospital and The White House.

Their collaboration with UNICEF produced a white paper on the needs of youth with disabilities, presented at a UN convention. PYD has gained national and global recognition, with Regina citing Maya Angelou: "If you are always trying to be normal, you will never know how amazing you can be."

LEONID JOHNSON



Leonid Johnson is a dedicated community leader and volunteer, actively involved in various nonprofit boards, including the Authentic Caribbean Foundation. He is the CEO, President, and Founder of the CommUnity of the Deaf, Inc., advocating for the deaf community in the Caribbean to utilize sign language and have their interests represented.

Currently, he serves on the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association's committee and has participated in the United Nations Civil Society Conference. Johnson has completed training in education advocacy and business basics. His advocacy focuses on early intervention, education, and youth leadership to advance policies and programs for deaf and disabled children, aiming to impact future generations.

ERIN BROWN



Erin Brown (she/her), a blonde-haired black woman and mother of three, is an adaptive athlete and advocate for people with disabilities. After an above-the-knee amputation due to bone cancer in 2004, she has worked to challenge stereotypes and lead Paralympic development as the first Para triathlete hopeful.

As a Disability Inclusion Consultant, Erin founded Erin Brown Connects, the first disability-led consultancy in The Bahamas. At The University of The Bahamas, she promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion for individuals with disabilities in educational policies and practices.



KEITH JONES

Keith Jones is the President and CEO of SoulTouchin' Experiences LLC, focusing on access, inclusion, and empowerment for individuals with and without disabilities. He conducts multicultural, cross-disability education and outreach, addressing issues like immigration, criminal justice reform, healthcare, and environmental justice.

Additionally, Jones is a talented artist and co-founder of Krip Hop Nation, an international collective of artists with disabilities, which recently celebrated 14 years and an Emmy Award for their song in the Netflix documentary "Rising Phoenix."



STAFFORD GRANT

Stafford Grant is a retired soldier from the Jamaica Defence Force, currently serving as the Chairman of the Jamaica Diaspora NE Citizen Security Sector, 1st Vice President of the Bethlehem Township Lions Club, and Founder/President of the Jamaica Ex-servicemen and Women Foundation USA. Passionate about volunteering, he established the Jamaica Ex-servicemen and Women Foundation Inc. USA in 2022 to promote community development through fundraising for educational and social initiatives.

He focuses on supporting the disabled, elderly, and youth, and finds joy in volunteering for the Diaspora Disability Conference. He resonates with quotes from Martin Luther King Jr. and Horace Jackson Brown, Jr. about serving others.



JANEIL ODLE

Janeil Odle is a National Advocate for Persons with Disabilities in Barbados and the first blind Attorney-at-law in the country. She overcame challenges as a blind individual, being the first to take the Common Entrance Examination in braille in 2007. She later excelled at the Barbados Community College, becoming valedictorian in 2014, and graduated with first-class honors in Law from the University of the West Indies in 2017. Janeil also holds a Master's Degree in Public Law.

From June 2022 to March 2023, she contributed to the National Advisory Committee to Improve the Lives of Persons With Disabilities, assisting in research and drafting legislation. In December 2023, she became the National Advocate for Persons with Disabilities, where she will advise the government on implementing policies to enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities in Barbados.

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Benjamin Franklin

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