

Laureate News



ANTHONY N. SABGA
AWARDS
Caribbean Excellence



About Us

The Anthony N Sabga Awards were established in 2005, to recognise and support excellence in human endeavour that uplifts the region.

Since then, we've awarded 62 laureates, presenting them with over TT\$30 million to further their careers.

The Awards' E-News is a bi-monthly publication – all about our laureates and the infrastructure that selects and supports them.

[Learn More](#)

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Merry Caribbean Christmas

As we celebrate this festive season, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support. Together, we've achieved quite a bit this year!

As you all know, the Awards programme is administered by the ANSA McAL Foundation. It is our major initiative, but not the only one. For over 30 years, we have supported civil society in T&T with funding that 'Helps People to Help Themselves'.

Our civil society partners are varied: From an NGO that equips primary school libraries to a team of surgeons that improves mobility through complex upper limb surgeries, a ministry for foreign migrants, and dozens more. In 2024, we increased our funding outreach by 50%, which has strengthened and broadened our social impact.

On the Awards side, we welcomed five outstanding Caribbean professionals to our College of Laureates at a grand ceremony in





Students from Barbados's Queen's College arrive at the ceremony

Barbados. The atmosphere of regional respect in the ballroom on that night left us feeling buoyant, as always.

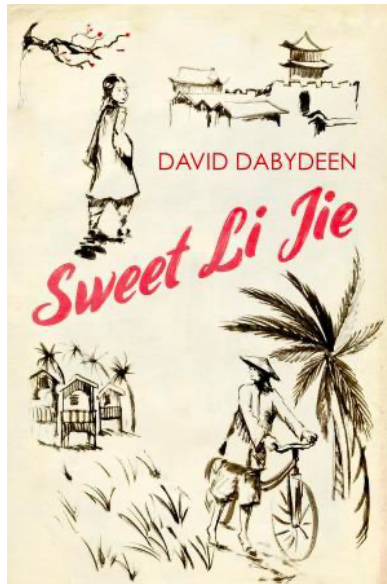
2025 will be a year of celebration for us as the Awards marks 20 years since Dr Anthony N Sabga and a group of close friends and confidants conceived of a programme to recognise work that uplifts the Caribbean.

My father's vision would never have been implemented without the hard work of the five Country Nominating Committees (CNCs) and the Regional Eminent Persons Panel (EPP). We are indebted to you all for your thoroughness and drive in spotting, nominating and screening talent.

On behalf of the Board, I wish our Laureates, CNCs, EPP, and the extended ANSA McAL Family, a joyous Christmas season and a bright and prosperous new year.

Warm regards,
Andrew N Sabga
Chairman
The ANSA McAL Foundation





2008 Arts & Letters Laureate Professor David Dabydeen (left) with Professor of Literature Ken Ramchand and 2006 Arts & Letters Laureate, filmmaker Robert “Yao” Ramesar

From Guyana with love

“Sweet Li Jie”, by 2008 Arts & Letters Laureate Professor David Dabydeen, is scheduled to be published in December by Peepal Tree Press. The 166-page novel tells the story of Jia Yun, who emigrates from Guyana to China in the late 19th Century and documents his life on the Guyanese plantations through letters to his ‘Sweet Li Jie’ still living in China.

Dabydeen is perhaps well placed to write a novel such as this, having served as Guyana’s Ambassador to China for five years between 2010 and 2015. He has written eight novels and three poetry collections.





Mustard Seed sprouts and flourishes

Mustard Seed Communities – the brainchild of 2006 Public & Civic Contributions Laureate Monsignor Gregory Ramkissoon – continued its impressive expansion with the recent opening of a home for children with disabilities in the Dominican Republic.

Hogar Niños de Dios was opened on the outskirts of Santiago in October with residential cottages for 20 children, therapy resources, and a prenatal clinic for the community. Expansion to cater for 56 children has already begun.

The first Mustard Seed home, for abandoned children with disabilities, was founded by Gregory Ramkissoon in 1978 in Kingston, Jamaica, before he was ordained a priest and subsequently elevated to the status of Monsignor. Mustard Seed Communities has evolved into a network of homes, schools, and small businesses, in Jamaica, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Zimbabwe and Malawi.





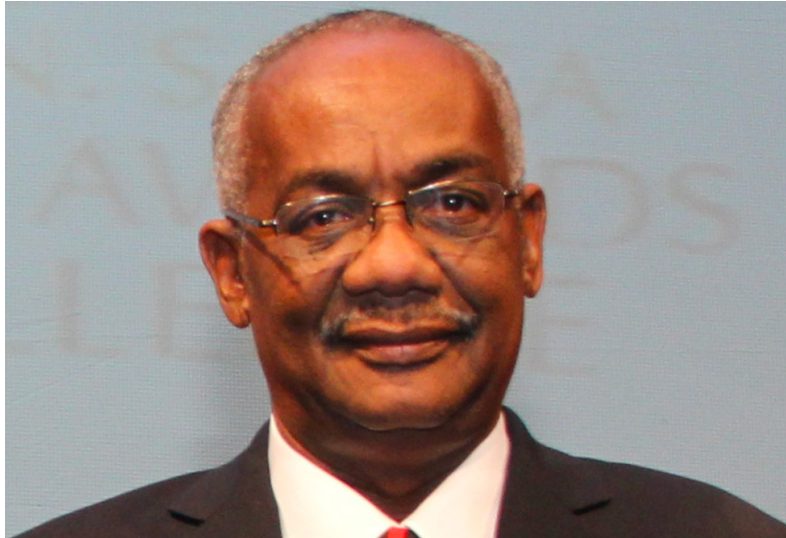
President Lula da Silva receives Ambassador Professor Bourne's credentials in Brasilia in November

Prof Bourne in Brasilia

The Chairman of the Regional Eminent Persons Panel (EPP) which selects our laureates annually - Ambassador Professor Compton Bourne - presented his credentials as the Co-Operative Republic of Guyana's Ambassador to Brazil in a simple ceremony in the federal capital of Brasilia in November.

Receiving Ambassador Bourne's credentials was Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Ambassador Bourne, appointed to chair the EPP in 2022, continues to serve the Awards.





Justice Blackman, OFB

Retired Court of Appeal Judge and member of the Eminent Persons Panel, Justice Christopher Blackman, was among three esteemed citizens to receive Barbados's highest honour this year. Justice Blackman was presented with the Order of Freedom of Barbados (OFB) in recognition of "exemplary service to Barbados, and his exceptional leadership" of the Constitutional Reform Commission.

"I am humbled to have been considered," Justice Blackman told online publication Barbados TODAY. "Certainly, when I was growing up this had never crossed my mind. It's an early birthday present."





On the cusp of 20

We didn't quite collapse in exhaustion, but we certainly breathed a sigh of relief!

Completing a successful ceremony at the Hilton Barbados was the highlight of the Programme Office's year. The lead-up to ceremonies is often arduous, and doubly so when it's held in a country other than T&T. Yet the smiles on laureates' faces, the warmth of our Barbadian hosts, and the conviviality of our guests from across the Caribbean made it all worthwhile.

Now we pivot to a major milestone. In 2025, the programme celebrates 20 years since the Awards were established by Dr Anthony N Sabga in 2005, though our first awards were presented in 2006. In the interim, we've assembled a College of 62 Laureates, supported with funding of over TT\$30 million.





The anniversary year will be a time for reflection and celebration. We've already begun to conceive of a ceremony with a little extra razzle dazzle, so please put a shiny gold star beside June 7 on your calendars, for an awards ceremony/20th anniversary celebration to be held in Port of Spain. (Save-the-dates and invitations to follow!)

We hope each of you enjoys Christmas in your own way, as a season of faith, rejuvenation and hope. Merry Christmas to you all!

Mrs Maria Superville-Neilson
Programme Director
The Anthony N Sabga Awards, Caribbean Excellence





Janet Jagan

Freedom Fighter of Guyana
Patricia Mohammed

A powerful narrative, illustrated with sectional photographs, cataloguing an extraordinary journey and life!

In 1943, Janet Jagan *mét* Rosenberg, gave up her studies in nursing in Chicago, USA to marry Cheddi Jagan from British Guiana and followed her new husband to this little-known British colony in that same year. In a unique political partnership, which would last for fifty-four years, this revolutionary couple charted a new course in Guyana's anti-colonial history. With a few like-minded individuals, they would create the People's Progressive Party (PPP), the first mass party in this country. Janet was a committed and disciplined stalwart of the party, holding the role of general secretary for decades and ministerial positions when the PPP held parliamentary power. By 1997, she was elected as the first female President of Guyana, but for Janet Jagan's entire career, she was painted by the Western media as a rigid, one-dimensional and uncompromising Cold War Marxist.

In this book, Patricia Mohammed now provides readers with a different, more rounded Janet Jagan based largely interviews with those who knew her well including some who were not her supporters.

Who was the real Janet Jagan?

- The first female president of Guyana;
- The woman who struggled for democracy, women's and workers' rights;
- One who was committed to the cultural advancements of Guyana through advocacy and by her own literary contributions;
- A pioneer in the development of and mentor to a generation of journalists in Guyana;
- A woman globally recognised by *Time* magazine as one of history's most rebellious.

Paperback • 564 pages
ISBN: 978-976-96283-9-7
US\$35.00

Patricia Mohammed is Emerita Professor of Gender and Cultural Studies at The University of the West Indies. She is a pioneer in the feminist movement in the Anglophone Caribbean.





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The real Janet Jagan

Professor Patricia Mohammed - T&T Country Nominating Committee (CNC) member and Emerita Professor of Gender and Cultural Studies at UWI - has published a new book, on Janet Jagan, the first female President of Guyana.

Mohammed promises a more rounded view of a Jewish girl from Chicago who married Guyanese Cheddi Jagan and played a seminal role in Guyana's politics for over 50 years, as a senior figure in the socialist People's Progressive Party and President Cheddi Jagan's wife.





Professor Patricia Mohammed, author of "Janet Jagan: Freedom Fighter of Guyana"

Described by Western media as a “rigid, one-dimensional and uncompromising Cold War Marxist”, Mohammed seeks to assemble a more complete picture of a politician deeply committed to women’s and workers’ rights, through interviews with those who knew her.

“Janet Jagan: Freedom Fighter of Guyana” is published by Ian Randle Publishers. It’s available on Amazon and at Paper Based Bookshop in Trinidad.

