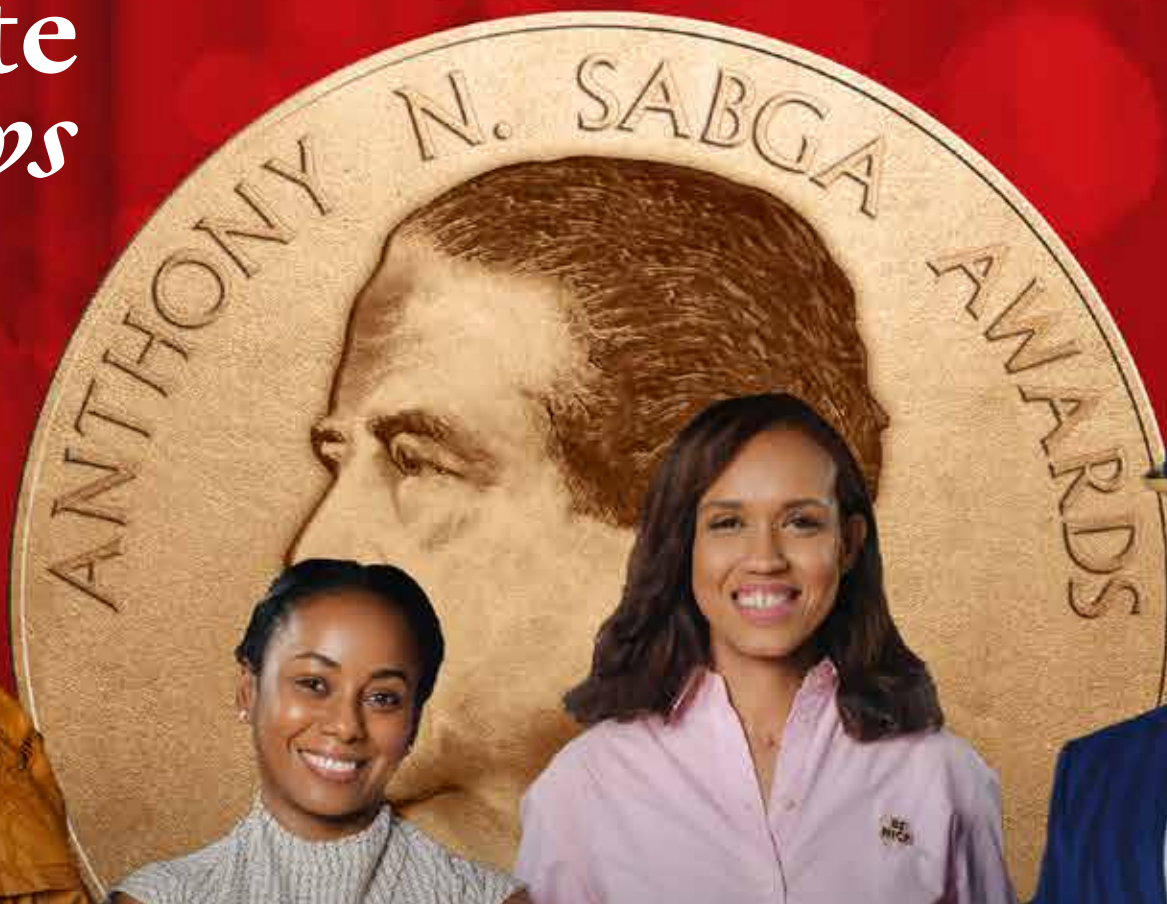


# Laureate *News*



ANTHONY N. SABGA  
AWARDS  
*Catholic Leadership*



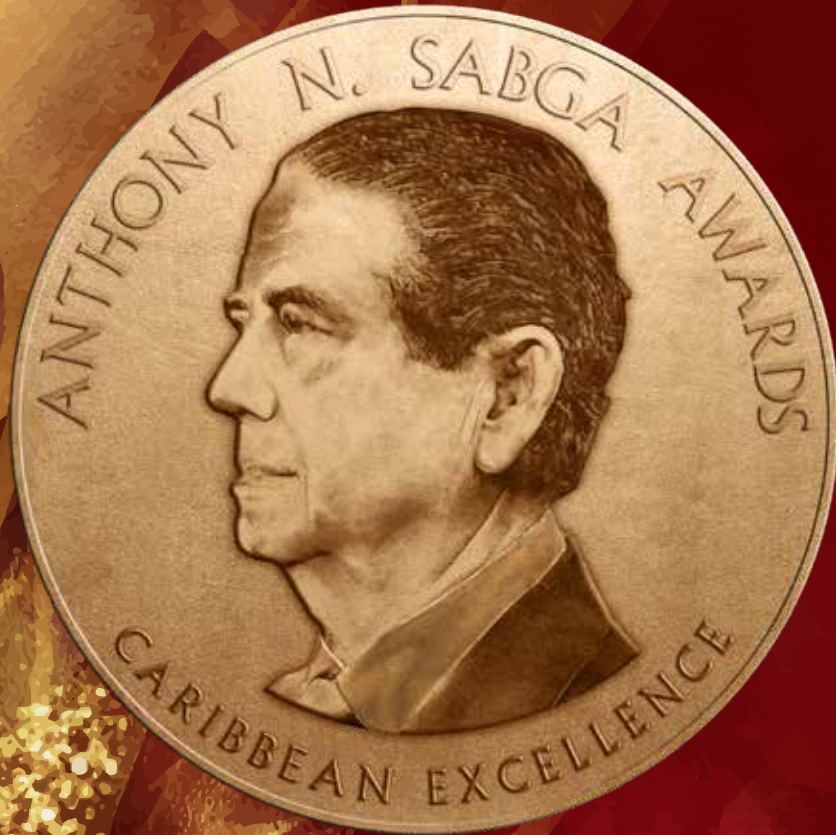
# About Us

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

Since then, we've awarded 66 laureates, presenting them with over TT\$32 million to further their careers.

The Awards' Laureate News is a regular publication – all about our laureates and the infrastructure that selects and supports them.

[Learn More](#)



# Contents

01-07

Our 20th anniversary ceremony

08

‘I’ll take the fish’

09

Guyana rice for T&T farmers

10

A scroll for Prof Teelucksingh

11

Commonwealth shortlist  
for Joanne C.

12

Marlon James, Professor Emeritus

13

Kwame gets a standing ovation

14

Anuskha, Advisor to the President

15

Sweet Li Jie and the Kalinagos

16

My honour, Monsignor

17

"Building a Better Future"

18

Survive and Thrive

19

Our condolences

# 20



## Our 20th anniversary ceremony

We welcomed over 380 guests to our ceremony on June 7 at the Hyatt Regency, Trinidad to celebrate a proud 20-year history in which we've awarded 66 Caribbean laureates with over TT\$32 million in funding.

The evening included videos on our 2025 laureates and well-received acceptance remarks. We also presented a video on our history, which was scored 'live' by a mini-orchestra and narrated by Wendell Manwarren of T&T rapso group 3 Canal. Closing out a memorable night was a jazz performance by 2025 Arts & Letters Laureate Etienne Charles and a jazz sextet that included several Grammy-nominated musicians from the United States.



Entrepreneurship Laureate Mrs Rachel Renie-Gonzales receives her award from Mr Andrew Sabga and His Excellency Ambassador Compton Bourne



Arts & Letters Laureate Etienne Charles and friends



Public & Civic Contributions Laureate, family therapist  
Dr Ayodele Dalgety-Dean accepts her award



Science & Technology Laureate, cancer researcher Dr Simone Badal delivers her acceptance remarks



Rehearsal for the 20th anniversary performance





# I'll take the fish



2021 Joint Science & Technology Laureate Dr Ayanna Carla Phillips-Savage has become the first Afro-Caribbean US Board certified specialist in the veterinary field of Fish Practice.

An aquatic veterinarian, Dr Phillips-Savage was invited by US veterinary colleagues to join the Organising Committee for creation of the new veterinary specialty, and had to pass an 8-hour board exam to be considered a specialist in the field. She is currently Associate Professor of Practice at the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine.



# Guyana rice benefits T&T farmers

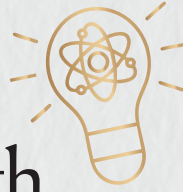
Our 2023 Science & Technology Laureate, plant breeder Dr Mahendra Persaud of Guyana is the man behind the development of high-yielding rice varieties recently purchased from Guyana to increase rice production in Trinidad.

Rice seeds distributed to 37 Trinidad farmers in May were meant to reverse years of production decline. Dr Persaud subsequently confirmed that the rice varieties had been developed under his leadership by the team at the Rice Research Station in Berbice, Guyana.

“I must also inform you that since the Anthony N Sabga Award in 2023, my team released two other rice varieties for farmers,” noted Dr Persaud. “The GRDB IICA 17 is a zinc-enriched variety, and GRDB 18 is a high-yielding variety that tolerates harsh field conditions.”



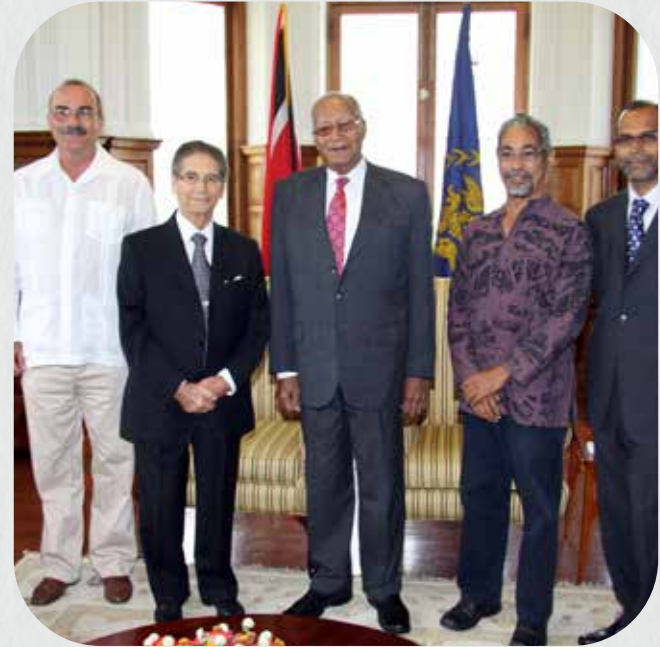
# A scroll for Prof Teelucksingh



Professor Paul Teelucksingh, Science & Technology Laureate in 2011, received yet another accolade this year – the Trinidad and Tobago Medical Association’s Scroll of Honour.

In the citation recounting his accomplishments, Dr Kanterpersad Ramcharan said that Dr Teelucksingh had exemplified “the very essence of what it means to be a physician, mentor, and pioneer, just when the Medical School at the University of the West Indies (UWI), St Augustine and Trinidad and Tobago needed him most.”

The citation also noted that Dr Teelucksingh has made significant advances in the fields of endocrinology, diabetes care, clinical research and medical education.



# Commonwealth shortlist for Joanne C.

2023 Arts & Letters Laureate Ms Joanne C. Hillhouse was shortlisted in April for the Commonwealth Short Story Prize – the first writer from Antigua and Barbuda ever to make the prestigious list. Ms Hillhouse’s shortlisted story ‘Jumbie Pond’ is about unhealed wounds and family relationships. It was selected from a record-breaking 7,920 entries from 54 Commonwealth countries.

The story was one of four shortlisted in the Caribbean region. The eventual regional winner was Subraj Singh of Guyana, for his story ‘Margot’s Run’.



# Marlon James, Professor Emeritus

Author Marlon James, our 2022 Arts & Letters Laureate, was recognised last year as Professor Emeritus of Macalester College in Minneapolis-St Paul. At the gathering celebrating the recognition, Mr James was described as a professor who was as warm as he was rigorous.

Marlon James taught Creative Writing and postcolonial literature at Macalester for 15 years before retiring. His Emeritus status gives him the option to continue periodically teaching classes there.



# Kwame gets a standing ovation



Conductor Kwamé Ryan, the Joint Arts & Letters Laureate for 2017, got a standing ovation along with the cast of “Porgy and Bess” when the acclaimed operatic musical premiered at the Kennedy Center Opera House in May.

Mr Ryan conducted the Washington National Opera as the show’s director attempted to restore its original operatic format, which had been altered for Broadway into a music theatre production.

Mr Ryan is currently Music Director of the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra.



## Anuskha, Advisor to the President

Ms Anuskha Sonai, Joint Public & Civic Contributions Laureate for 2022, has been appointed Presidential Advisor on Local Content Development to the President of Suriname.

Ms Sonai, an ICT Entrepreneur who promotes the Caribbean's potential as a tech hub, started her advisory position in late 2024.





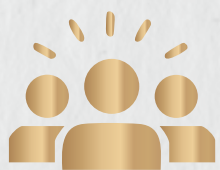
## *Sweet Li Jie* and the *Kalinagos*

Laureates, Professor David Dabydeen and Dr Lennox Honychurch were both shortlisted in March for the 2025 OCM Bocas Prize for Caribbean Literature.

Prof Dabydeen, our 2008 Arts & Letters Laureate, was nominated in the Fiction category for his novel *Sweet Li Jie* as the Bocas literary festival celebrated its 15th anniversary.

Dr Lennox Honychurch, who has built up a bank of knowledge about his native Dominica by documenting national heritage and histories of the indigenous people, was nominated for his nonfiction title *Resistance Refuge Revival: The Indigenous Kalinagos of Dominica*.





## My honour, Monsignor

2006 Public & Civic Contributions Laureate Monsignor Gregory Ramkissoon, Founder of Mustard Seed Communities, was awarded an honorary doctorate in May by Regis College in Massachusetts. The Doctor of Humane Letters was awarded “in recognition of his remarkable commitment to social transformation and compassionate service to society’s most vulnerable.”

Regis College sends two teams of students on annual mission trips to Mustard Seed Communities’ homes in Jamaica and the Dominican Republic, where they interact with the community’s orphaned, homeless, and disabled residents.



**And in news of the infrastructure that supports the Awards...**

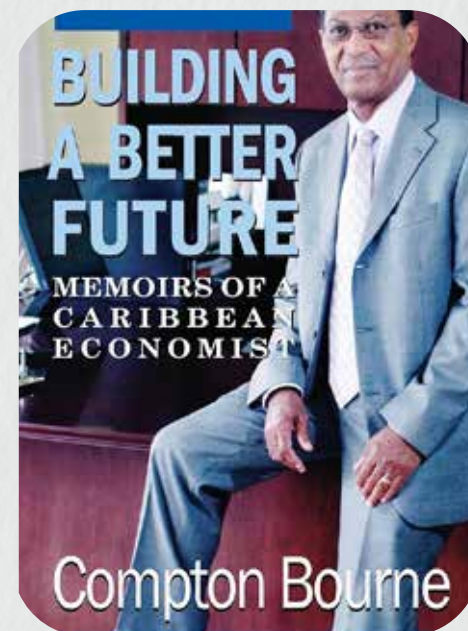
## *Building a Better Future*



Professor Compton Bourne, Chairman of the Regional Eminent Persons Panel that selects our laureates annually, has published a memoir detailing his unique perspective on the social and economic challenges facing developing countries.

*Building a Better Future: Memoirs of a Caribbean Economist* places Bourne at the forefront of efforts to address the economic disadvantages of small states, from his early days at the University of the West Indies to his pivotal roles at the Caribbean Development Bank and the Caribbean Community. “Through vivid anecdotes and in-depth analysis,” states the Amazon.com blurb of the memoir, “he explores the historical context of these developments and the lessons learned along the way.”

Professor Bourne is currently serving as Guyana’s ambassador to Brazil.



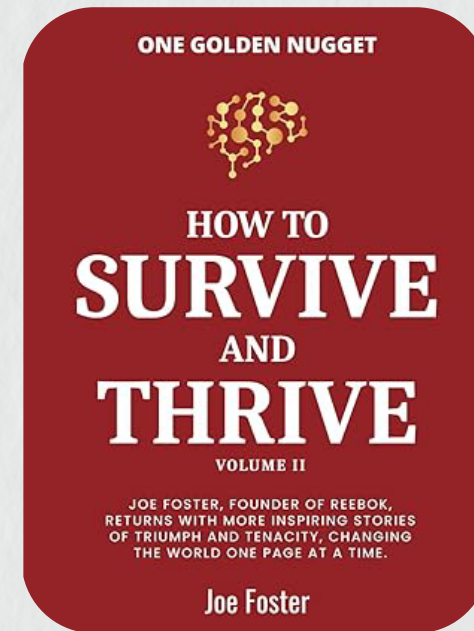
# Survive and Thrive



Professor Wendy Grenade of St George's University has been welcomed to the OECS Country Nominating Committee, which nominates and researches exceptional talent from the 9 member states of the Eastern Caribbean. Dr Grenade has been Chair of the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at St George's since July 2024.

Dr Indira Couch, Director of the ANSA McAL Foundation which administers the Awards, has written a chapter in *How to Survive and Thrive*, volume 2, co-authored by Reebok founder Joe Foster. The book is a collection of 20 stories of “triumph and tenacity” by entrepreneurs and innovators.

In a podcast episode promoting the book and distilling her life experience, Dr Couch noted that she had to find the courage to challenge the status quo. “When we begin to really explore and question things,” she said, “we find that actually there is always another way.”



*Dr Indira Couch.*



*Prof Wendy Grenade*

# Our condolences

The ANSA McAL Foundation would like to extend our sincere condolences to the families of two respected contributors to the Awards programme.

Professor Hazel Simmons-McDonald – a valued member of the OECS Country Nominating Committee (CNC) that nominates candidates from the Eastern Caribbean – passed away suddenly in June. She was sitting Chair of the OECS CNC, a position she held for three years.

“She will be remembered as someone who could present her case with great oratory,” remarked Programme Director Maria Superville-Neilson. “We will miss her.”

We’ve also been thinking of a longtime member of our Eminent Persons Panel, Major General (Ret’d) Joseph G Singh and his family, following the death of Mr Singh’s brother, James, in June.

Mr James Singh was Guyana’s Commissioner of Forests, lauded posthumously as having an “exemplary passion” for safeguarding Guyana’s natural resources. President Irfaan Ali noted in a statement that Guyana had achieved low deforestation rates under his stewardship, enabling the nation to reap the rewards of the sale of carbon credits.

