



# ANTHONY N. SABGA AWARDS E-NEWS



THE  
ANTHONY N. SABGA  
CARIBBEAN AWARDS  
FOR EXCELLENCE

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## *The 2018 Ceremony in Jamaica*



*(L) Mr William Andrew Boyle, Mr Noel Joseph, Mrs Chevaughn Joseph, Sir Shridath Ramphal, Dame Cécile La Grenade, Mr A Norman Sabga, Prof Kei Miller, and Dr Adesh Ramsubbhag on stage at our tenth awards ceremony in Jamaica on May 12.*

Our first award ceremony in Jamaica, held on May 12, at the Pegasus Hotel, was an enormous success. An audience of three hundred people from Jamaica's business, political and academic community, including the Grenada Governor General Dame Cécile La Grenade, our Eminent Persons Panel were present to witness the induction of our newest laureates (whose speeches are in these pages).

The ceremony was privileged to be addressed by our 2008 (joint) Laureate in Public & Civic Contributions, Mrs Claudette Richardson-Pious, Sir Shridath Ramphal and our Patron, Mr A

Norman Sabga, Executive Chairman of the ANSA McAL Group and Chairman of the ANSA McAL Foundation.

The ceremony was, for the first time, broadcast throughout the region via Caribbean Media Corporation's Carib Vision, in addition to the live stream. This is part of our new media thrust, which aims to make the Caribbean Awards better known, and help in sharing the work we do throughout the region. We invite our readers to see us on UWITV: <https://www.uwivt.org/schedule>. You can find a list of the Carib Vision stations at this link: <https://www.uwivt.org/caribvision-channel-list>.

## *Acceptance Speeches*

### *Prof Kei Miller, Arts & Letters, Jamaica*



I am a Jamaican writer, born in Trinidad in 1978. The first time I told that particular lie was in Manchester England. I had given a reading and a woman came up to me – a Mancunian judging by her accent, and said, ‘Oh, that was beautiful. Are you from Trinidad?’ And thinking then that of all the accents in the Caribbean, the Trini accent was the best, the most melodic, I felt quite complimented by this remark and answered, ‘Yes. Yes I am.’ Then disaster.

Her accent switched at once. She said, ‘Oh Gosh, you really from Trinidad. My family lives in San Juan.’ And thinking there was no way I could maintain the initial lie, thinking then of the inevitable roll call of local names and places and schools and incidents that I wouldn’t be able to add to, I came up with a new lie. I told her, ‘I was born in Trinidad, but the family moved to Jamaica when I was really young.’

Always, your lies find you out. Or else you discover it wasn’t a lie at all. You see, I was born in Trinidad. But it was 1996, and also it was 1950. I was born on the pages of Earl Lovelace’s novel, *The Wine of Astonishment*. The spiritual Baptist community subdued, broken under a colonial law that made it illegal for them to be themselves, to get into the spirit, to speak in tongues, to shout. Their sermons are suddenly sterile, sanitized, unmoving. The church dwindles. Then Bee, the pastor, decides to break the law. In

the chapter of that name, it is not only the colonial law that is broken, but the birth waters that would deliver me into this most holy vocation of writing. On the pulpit, Bee is repentant.

He says the real problem is that he has neglected his duty. Rather than the sin of colonialism, he confesses his own sin. He tell his congregation that he forgot to tell them who they were. And in eliciting one of the most astonishing sermons to ever appear on the pages of literature, the congregation shouts, ‘Tell us preacher. Tell us who is we!’

Immediately I knew who Bee was. He was the writer. He was the artist. He was the Caribbean maker of things. I was Bee, and the congregation was the Caribbean itself, the Caribbean calling to its artists, to its writer and to its makers – tell us, tell us who is we! I had always wanted to be a writer, but in those pages, my duty changed. My duty now belonged to the Caribbean. My duty was to tell us who we were.

Some of you may know that a recent essay of mine has fallen into the Caribbean sea, something like a stone. It has been causing ripples – wave of anger followed by wave of praise, and so on and so on. One particular critic, not a fan of the essay, counselled me that I should use my position to spread love. I thought about this – this strange suggestion that the job of the writer is to spread love. I’m sorry, but I have to reject such an idea, though the critic wasn’t wrong to centre the writing project around this tricky business of love.

It is only that she got her verbs wrong.

The job of the writer is not to spread love. That is for Santa Clause, or maybe fairies. However, it is the writer’s job to think with love, and to analyse with love, and to write with a complexity as deep as its compassion.

So, Mr Norman Sabga, I recognize and receive this award tonight for what it is - an act of love, a way that the Caribbean has chosen to love me back, me and my fellow laureates, for the work that we do. And I know that love comes with its own responsibility – the responsibility to return it. And that much I will commit to - I will continue to think about this space, about the Caribbean, with as much love as can fit into my own heart. I will continue to rise up on the pulpit of the written word – this craft that I am committed to – and I will continue to tell us who we are.

## *Acceptance Speeches*

### *William Andrew Boyle, Entrepreneurship, Guyana*



Keziah, thank you. It is my wish, which is similar to every parent's that your lives will be classier than mine, that your dreams be deep and meaningful. Karen, you were very supportive in allowing me to live my dreams while we raised our three fabulous kids. Thank you. My extremely dedicated dream teams of Amazonia Farms, Caribbean Wind and Sun and Eureka Labs, I owe you a world of gratitude. You are the ones who deserve all of the praises. Colonel Gordon, aka Pops, thank you for your never ending support and guidance. To all who contributed in whatever small way, my deep and sincere gratitude.

My referees, you have painted beautiful pictures of me, makes me wonder if you were really writing about me. Roxanna, you were relentless and thorough as you compiled my data, hope I did not give you too much of a hard time. To Programme Director of the ANSA Caribbean Awards, Maria, I surely do remember the sweet sound of your heart-stopping announcement that made me speechless for a few seconds. I was truly blown away. A world of thanks to Mr. Norman Sabga and the ANSA McAL team! Today can easily rank as one of my better days ever! I am so, so grateful to you.

And now, a little business: I have two innovative projects in the pipeline. One will be launched in a few days. It's called "Fast Track!" and will provide an avenue for the busy entrepreneurs and similar people to access our laboratory services quickly, confidentially and discretely.

Another has to do with my goal to supply my neighbours up the Berbice River with affordable solar power. With this timely injection of funds, this is now possible. And as part of our Corporate Social Responsibility, I have commenced the construction of a computer lab at my primary school. This facility will be fully powered by solar energy and will also be satellite-internet ready. I need to give those young people a bit of exposure so that they, too, can dream. Please also remember to read my book, *Andy's Story*, which will be in the book stores by early next year. The proceeds will all go towards my alma mater in the Berbice River.

Martin Carter, that very famous Guyanese poet, wrote: "I do not sleep to dream but dream to change the world." I encourage you all, especially the youngsters, to not only dream big but to work diligently towards making those dreams become realities. I challenge my fellow laureates to make this fancy and truly glorious ceremony of this evening, pale in comparison to what we will achieve in the future.

Who said that a child should not dream? Growing up in one of the jungles of lovely Guyana was not a walk in the park. While living there I never knew that life offered many other options and possibilities. It wasn't until I became a teenager that I was exposed to the "bright lights" of a rural town, some 79 miles away from my humble home. I was laughed at and ridiculed for being a "bush boy", but I dreamt.

Allow me to share a little anecdote. The first movie I ever saw was a James Bond film, and in one scene, when Bond came out of the water and aimed his gun at the screen, I thought it was my end, and I immediately dropped to the floor exclaiming, "Oh God, help me!" Could you imagine how those kids laughed at me afterwards? In retrospect, I grew up relatively underprivileged, but I did not have the slightest clue that I was, but I dreamt.

Lupita Nyong'o, that young actress, said that "no matter where you are from, your dreams are valid." My almost fairytale like journey could not have been possible had it not been for the extreme favour of the Almighty God. He continues to deliver in no ordinary way. My awesome Super-Mom and my late Papa deserve kudos beyond measure. They have instilled tremendous values that have stayed with their ten children and continue to guide us through life's journeys. Thank you Mom, for all that you have done and continue to do.

My awesome siblings, you are always supportive through thick and thin. You portray the true meaning of sisters and brothers. Thank you so much. My children, Tony, Andrew Junior and



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## *Acceptance Speeches*

*Chevaughn & Noel Joseph, Public & Civic Contributions, Trinidad & Tobago*



may God continue to bless them with good health, success and happiness and may their experience be an inspiration to everyone they meet.

At this time we would like to thank the country nominating committee of Trinidad and Tobago for considering us and doing so much research and background work that led to us being here tonight. We thank the Regional Eminent Persons Selection Panel - we know that your deliberations must

When we initially got the call that we had won, we were in disbelief. Actually I think we still are, even though we are here tonight. For the past 10 years serving children with cancer and their families via the work of the Just Because Foundation has been a very humbling and worthwhile experience. Our expectations were simple, as the old people say: "when you die God will have a special place in heaven for you." That's certainly something great to look forward to.

So to be recognized in such a magnificent manner for the work we have done is awesome, and we would like to extend our congratulations to our fellow laureates of 2018 because it's such an honour to share this moment in time with you.

Tonight I stand here to proudly receive this award on behalf of our son Jabez "JB" Joseph, the boy behind this cause who, because of the way he lived and the courage and faith he showed throughout his battle with childhood cancer motivated us to accomplish all that has been realised thus far. He has been such an inspiration to me and has changed my life significantly for the better.

We receive this award for all our other little angels who lost their battle to this dreaded disease. May their parents continue to receive grace from God and the ability to transform their sadness into memories of happy times.

We receive this award for our current patients and their parents. May God give them the strength and the understanding needed as they go through this journey.

We receive this award for our survivors,

have been quite challenging and we sincerely thank you for giving us the nod.

Thanks to the ANSA McAL Foundation for their outstanding work in managing this franchise. Many, many thanks to the directors and management team of the Just Because Foundation. To our family and friends, thanks for your patience and for putting up with us. Thanks for your love.

We must also express our thanks to the board of directors and administration of the North Central Regional Health Authority and the Ministry of Health, Trinidad & Tobago, for having faith in us and tangibly supporting our efforts over the years. Thanks to the staff of the JBF Unit at the Children's Hospital, Mount Hope, Trinidad - doctors, nurses, volunteers and everyone who gave of their time, monetary donations, prayers and words of encouragement.

We are honoured to be one of the many players in the region focusing on the health and well-being of the children of the Caribbean. We could not have done this alone and together we will continue to make a positive difference. We are grateful for the vision of the late Dr. Anthony N. Sabga, for whom excellence became a watchword.

Receiving this prestigious award will allow us to continue the work we have started and to implement projects currently on hold. It will open many more doors for us and certainly amplify our message of creating awareness and promoting wellness for the children of the region. We see this opportunity to serve others as a direct assignment from God, so tonight we thank Him for allowing us to understand the journey and for giving us the grace to accept destiny.

## *Acceptance Speeches*

### *Adesh Ramsubhag, Science & Technology, Trinidad & Tobago*



system and nurtured my deep interest in culture, religion, sports and music, all of which were pivotal in enhancing my stability, focus and discipline. Despite my lack of interest in formal schooling, my caring, considerate teachers made great efforts to provide encouragement in academic pursuits.

Thirdly, it was only by fate and chance that I enrolled at the University of the West Indies for my undergraduate degree. There I met an inspiring group of friends who prodded me to become a conscientious student. I was exposed to brilliant minds at the UWI and their intellectual quests inspired an even deeper interest in gaining knowledge. I was particularly drawn to microbiology and genetics and eventually undertook post-graduate studies under the supervision of the late Dr Alfred Donawa and Prof Pathmanathan Umaharan. These individuals were instrumental in stimulating and developing my mind and creating the passion for research.

I thank my colleagues from the Departments of Life Sciences, Chemistry, and my entire UWI family for their unending support and encouragement. I am only here today because of the persistence of my colleagues, Prof. John Agard and Prof. Jayaraj Jayaraman who, despite my hesitation, insisted on my nomination for this award. I would also like to recognize the efforts of my hardworking students without whose efforts and team work, many of my projects would not have reached fruition. My father-in-law, Mr. Ragooraj Bahadursingh (who we refer to as “the walking encyclopedia”) has kept my brain intellectually sharp with his intense academic discussions in all manner of subjects.

Lastly, I would like to recognize my wife Satyavati, and children, Deepak, Vani and Srishti, for their understanding and support. The life of an academic is demanding and the persons closest to you make the greatest sacrifices.

I would like to re-emphasize the critical role of science and technology in any modern, society. There is a critical need for locally relevant research and innovation. I applaud the ANSA McAL foundation for its efforts, and it is my greatest hope that this awards ceremony would encourage regional governments and other businesses to further invest in the development of Science and Technology in the Caribbean.

In closing, a word of encouragement to our younger generation: You can achieve success, irrespective of your background or circumstances through hard work, dedication and commitment. I encourage you to have faith in yourselves.

I am greatly humbled and honoured to receive this award, and pay special tribute also to the vision of the late Dr. Anthony Sabga, for recognizing the needs of the Caribbean and supporting the advancement of science and technology in the region. I strongly believe that science and technology can be significant drivers of economic and social development in the Caribbean, but there is critical need for more funding of science-based programmes.

Having grown up in a simple farming community, an award like this would have seemed unimaginable. But I would not be standing here today were it not for the efforts and contributions of others.

Firstly, I would like to thank my family for their unwavering support and encouragement over the years. From my father (the late Bridgelal Ramsubhag) I learnt resilience, hard work, determination, problem-solving skills and a positive attitude, irrespective of the circumstances. My dearest mother, Rajdaye Ramsubhag, who worked tirelessly from sunup to sundown ensuring that her nine children were educated. Just to name a few of her professions, she was a housewife, seamstress, gardener and cattle-herder.

My eight older siblings, five of whom are here today, planted the seeds of curiosity in my mind through their constant intellectual discussions and debates at home while growing up.

Secondly, we have all heard the saying that it takes a village to raise a child. The community in Rochard Road, Penal provided a core value



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## *Photos from our 2018 Awards*



*Our 2018 Laureate (joint) in Public & Civic Contributions, Mrs Claudette Richardson-Pious delivers remarks at our 2018 ceremony*



*(above) Jamaican songstress, Tessanne Chin  
(below) Adesh Ramsubbag and Deepak and Vani*

*(below, left) E Ann Henry, Dr Marcia Burrowes, and Dr Charmaine Gardner*



*(left) Gloria Nelson, Pamela Bourne, E Ann Henry, Verona Harris Blackman, and (standing) Carolyn Singh*



## Photos from our 2018 Awards



*Former Jamaica Governor General, Sir  
Kenneth Hall and Lady Hall*

*Janine Sale and Sharon Balroop*



*For more pictures, see [www.ansacaribbeanawards.com](http://www.ansacaribbeanawards.com).*



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