



Council of Caribbean Associations
C A N A D A

2024 Bursary Presentation



**Uplifting the Next Generation:
Investing in Education**



Supported by:

Seneca
POLYTECHNIC



Arbor
Memorial



*Scholarship and
Bursary Program*

*Sunday,
November 17th, 2024*

When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion!

PROGRAM

Host

Ms. Kadesha James, MSc.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Cassandra Culpepper, Vice President – CCAC

Overview of CCAC Scholarship Program

Gideon Exeter

Feature Address

Ms. Camille Wilson – Cityline Hype Audience Host

Presentation of Seneca Scholarship

Presentation of George Brown Scholarship

Presentation of Bursaries

D. Antoinette Kirwan, Esq. – Committee Member

Entertainment – Spoken Words – Gabrielle Forbes-Cultess

Acknowledgement and Closing Remarks

Ingrid King – Secretary

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GUEST SPEAKER

Ms. Camille Wilson



Everyday Camille Wilson blesses 30 to 40 strangers with her energy, enthusiasm and wit.

Within a couple of hours these strangers are asking her for a photograph. She isn't the host of the show, nor is she a guest. She's the Hype Audience Host of Cityline, Canada's longest running show.

If you're looking for energy, Camille has it in spades. Shyness doesn't live here! She is beloved by her co-workers and audience alike.

Outside of Cityline, Camille is a Traffic Reporter at 680 News Radio and a Producer at Breakfast Television.

Wilson has served as a host, Emcee, Moderator and speaker at multiple charitable and community events, Festivals, Schools, Shows and Sports game. She hosted The BrAIDS for AIDS annual 'BrAIDathon' event, to bring awareness to HIV/AIDS in Black communities in Canada. She opened for, emceed and moderated a Q&A for Shan Boodram – intimacy expert & educator, TV personality, author, dating & relationship coach.

She also emceed The Sickle Cell Awareness Group of Ontario's (SCAGO) Hope Gala and Awards Ceremony and hosted the International Peace Festival's (IPF) Ambassadors Gala and the IPF's Award Ceremony.

Wilson was the guest Raptors 905 female entertainment in-game Emcee/PA Announcer for the International Women's Day game for March 2024.

She is deeply in touch with her roots – the Caribbean community and participates in Toronto's Caribbean Carnival (Caribana) each year.

Beyond media, Camille has worked as an ECA at a Toronto daycare and a teacher / leader of the children's, youth and dramatic arts ministry at her church, Word of Faith.

From age 10, Camille started understanding concepts like discrimination & racism due to incidents of social injustice in school. She quickly leaned into her identity and encouraged the girls behind her to keep pushing for their dreams. To this end Camille has spoken at the Athletic Tech Group's Athletic Women Empowerment Program in the hopes of empowering young BIPOC women athletes to take control of their future. She's been a guest speaker at the Boys & Girls Club Black History Month Celebration and served as a panelist for the Careers Entertainment Empowerment (CEE) Centre For Young Black Professionals, Entertainment Trades program. She's dedicated to community and uplifting the next generation and it's evident in the work she has done.

Camille is a traveller, loves to smile and believes "laughter is the best medicine". She is engaging, fun, spreads positivity and is always the life of the party. On her days off you'll likely find her travelling with her mom, her biggest cheerleader.

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Donalan Doyle

Donalan Doyle is a dedicated student and passionate community leader, whose journey has been marked by resilience and a deep commitment to both academic and personal excellence.

Raised in a low-income household by a single mother, Donalan learned perseverance from an early age which has been the foundation of his academic success. His determination and focus have enabled him to achieve a high GPA of 3.9 and earn a prestigious place on Seneca College's honor roll. His dedication, however, extends far beyond the classroom as a strong advocate for his community. Donalan took an active role in supporting evacuees from St. Vincent and the Grenadines following a volcanic eruption, demonstrating his unwavering commitment to helping others in times of crisis.

Additionally, as a member of the Caribbean Club at Seneca College, he works to create a welcoming and supportive space for Caribbean students, fostering a sense of belonging and community.

With aspirations of becoming an airline pilot, Donalan sees his education not only as a gateway to personal success but as a means to uplift his community by being an example of what can be achieved through dedicated discipline. His journey is fueled by a vision to make a lasting impact, and this scholarship brings him one step closer to turning that vision into reality.

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Avion Primus

My name is Avion Primus, and I am from the beautiful island of Grenada. I have always been passionate about service, particularly in the culinary and hospitality industries.

I am currently completing a four-year bachelor's degree in Culinary Management at George Brown College.

My goal is to graduate with excellence and to become a Master Chef, making my family proud.

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Pine Ridge
Memorial Gardens
by Arbor Memorial



Gabrielle Williams

Gabrielle Williams is a graduate of Cardinal Ambrozic Catholic Secondary School, where she championed advocacy and helping others. She is driven by her passions and interest in diversity and inclusion, as well as racial health equity. She aims to achieve meaningful change in the communities in which she serves through medicine.

Currently, Gabrielle is a student at Queen's University, where she was a student in the Queen's Accelerated Route to Medical School Program. Presently, Gabrielle is pursuing a medical degree (in her first year at Queen's University School of Medicine), which will allow her to fulfil her aspirations of becoming a physician and generate positive change.

For the marginalized communities, specifically the Black community, she aims to address the persistent disparities in healthcare access, outcomes, and quality by providing culturally competent care, advocating to dismantle systemic biases, and fostering a more inclusive healthcare environment. Further, she aims to serve as a role model for Black students, inspiring future generations to pursue medical careers. After completing medical training, Gabrielle intends to work with Doctors Without Borders, bringing global attention to the plight of marginalized populations in dire need.

With a passion for advocacy, Gabrielle hopes that she will give back to the Black community in a positive and impactful way in furthering her education. She has participated in numerous organizations throughout her university career, including the Queens Black Fashion Association, the Queens Black Academic Society, the Queen's Breakfast Club, and the University of Toronto's Summer Mentorship Program. Such roles have been significant crescendos in her narrative, teaching Gabrielle that advocacy is a key to unlocking systemic challenges.

These experiences have illuminated the path for her to pursue medicine, orchestrate positive change, advocate for marginalized communities, and contribute to the harmonious melody of equality. By remaining grounded in her Christian faith, Gabrielle will continue to be motivated throughout her journey.

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Jaida Ferguson

Jaida Ferguson graduated with Honours from Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School, showcasing a strong dedication to academics and community engagement. As a key member of Notre Dame's B.E.S.T. (Black Excellence Student Team), she actively contributed her time and efforts to meaningful initiatives to support the Black community within the school. Jaida's passion for promoting inclusivity and empowerment led her to assist in the planning and hosting of events that celebrated Black culture and heritage.

As a member of her school's Student Athletic Association, Jaida actively organized and supported many school events, including pep rallies, mental health awareness programs, talent shows, and extracurricular sports activities. Her commitment to these initiatives showed her passion for promoting school spirit and fostering a positive environment.

Beyond her school commitments, Jaida enjoys listening to music and spending time with her family and friends. She has also dedicated her time as a city Camp counsellor and liaison, where she organizes recreational programs for local youth, fostering a sense of community and fun.

In September, Jaida began attending Toronto Metropolitan University to pursue a Business Degree in Hospitality and Tourism. Her ambition is to become a Project Manager in the Hospitality sector, aiming to bring innovation and inclusivity to upper management roles.

Jaida's aspiration is to create more opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds to thrive and excel in the industry.

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Ama Kelsy

Ama Kelsy is a vibrant young writer. Raised by Jamaican immigrants in Toronto, she has always aspired to do great things in literature and tell the stories that matter the most to her.

Currently working on her novel, Ama is a student enrolled at Toronto Metropolitan University pursuing a Master's Degree in English. Coming from a background of volunteering with the city of Toronto, Ama has taken on the role of Teaching Assistant, where she helps first-year students improve their knowledge of poetry, the short story, and the novel.

She has goals of working in publishing as an editor and is excited to kick-start her literary career as a fantastical realism novelist in post-graduate school.

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2024 Loved Ones Bursary

Recipient of the Lionel Bedessee Bursary



Jhalaina Stephenson

My name is Jhalaina Stephenson, and I am 22 years old. I am currently a student at Seneca Polytechnic in the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program. After completing my ECE studies, I plan to pursue further education. My goal is to become a teacher so I can support families and children. It brings me joy to know that I can make a difference in the lives of those around me.

I am registered with the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario (AECEO), which allows me to participate in online meetings, communicate with various representatives, and meet new people. In 2020, I received a Merit Award from the Alumni Program, and I was one of the recipients in this bursary program.

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2024 Loved Ones Bursary

Recipient of the Gideon L. Exeter Bursary



Jovanni McDonald

Jovanni McDonald is a dedicated College freshman at Centennial College.

He is currently pursuing a diploma in Mechanical Engineering. Jovanni is a graduate of St. Mary Catholic Secondary School, class of 2024 in Pickering.

He has consistently done well in STEM courses and has always loved community service.

From a young age, he was a hands-on learner and enjoyed different practical tasks. After completing his studies in College and University, Jovanni hopes to achieve his Canadian Red Seal in Industrial Mechanical Engineering.

Jovanni's career goal is to become an Entrepreneur and build his own business.

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PAST BURSARY RECIPIENTS

2012

Faustina Grant
University of Toronto

Kenya Pinnock
York University

2013

Alexander Bahadur
McMaster University

Ciera James
Carlton University

2014

Dayna Adams
University of Guelph-Humber

Jesse Hector
York University

2015

Mary Guiste
Ryerson University

Tatania Neil
University of Toronto

2016

Adaijah Wilson
University of Waterloo

Kadesha James
University of Toronto

2017

John Gobin
Brock University

Victoria Young
University of Waterloo

2018

Andre Mullings
University of Waterloo

Lavon Johnson
University of Ontario Institute of Technology

2019

Angelica Blake
University of Toronto

Megan Edwards
University of Toronto

2020

Danielle Davy
York University

Kendra Austin
University of Waterloo

Tysome Hernandez-Montague
University of Guelph-Humber

2021

Damor McQueen
York University

Jaya Scott
University of Ottawa

Julene Exeter
Ryerson University

Nalia Mohamed
University of Ottawa

Natejah Alincy-Andrew
Centennial College

Olivia Holness
University of Waterloo

Onesha Wilks
Seneca College

Romari Smith
Queen's University

2022

Ashara Adams
University of Toronto

Bryce Golding
University of Toronto

Calyse Nevias Fairclough
Carlton University

Christian Yohance Paris
University of Waterloo

Dream Tuitt-Barnes
Queen's University

Ethan Jaelon Anthony
University of Windsor

Rashana Blair
University of Toronto

Zabryc Popo
York University

Zaevian Dawson
Toronto Metropolitan University

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PAST BURSARY RECIPIENTS - Continued

2023

Amanda Sullivan
McMaster University

Azalee Lambert
Queen's University

Davisha Joseph
Guelph-Humber University

Gabrielle Forbes-Cultess
McMaster University

Kenya James
York University

Kezia Harley
Seneca Polytechnic

Lenron Doyle
Seneca Polytechnic

Noah Ferguson
York University

Savannah Green
Metropolitan Toronto University

Sydney Telfer
Queen's University

About CCAC

The Council of Caribbean Association - Canada (CCAC) is a registered non-profit umbrella organization comprising of registered Caribbean national Associations operating in the GTA.

The participating member organizations are: Antigua & Barbuda Association of Toronto (ABAT), Alliance of Guyanese Canadian Organizations (AGCO), Barbados Canada Association (BCA), Commonwealth of Dominica Ontario Association (CDOA), Grenada Association Toronto (GAT), Montserrat Association Toronto (MAT), NevCan Cultural Association (NEVCAN), St. Kitts & Nevis Association of Toronto (SKNAT), St. Lucia Toronto Association (SLTA) and St. Vincent & Grenadines Association of Toronto (SVGAT).

Launched in 2009, the organization aims at among other things, to work with other organizations in our community that represent and cater primarily to people of Caribbean descent who have made Canada their home. CCAC focuses on the following areas: (1) to assist young persons in their pursuit of higher learning and sustainable employment; (2) to work with our seniors to better provide them vital information to enhance their productivity in the golden years.

The general Council of the CCAC is made up of three (3) representatives of each functioning member association but is administered by a Board of Directors comprising of one representative from each member association.

CCAC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Purpose:

To encourage and assist youth of Caribbean descent currently residing in Ontario to pursue their educational goals at university or college level.

To recognize academic efforts; community involvement and contribution in the Caribbean community in Ontario.

Number and Value of Bursaries:

CCAC will annually determine the number of bursaries it will make available for open competition. The value of each bursary is currently up to \$3,000.00 to successful applicants paid in installments of \$1,000.00 per year depending on the duration of study. The bursary is non-renewable, non-transferable and is to be used towards full course study, leading to a first diploma or degree. A student can only receive the bursary once.

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Seneca Polytechnic and George Brown College offer full-tuition-paid scholarships for up to 4 years and are valued at up to \$6,000.00 per year for successful applicants through the CCAC Scholarship Program.

Council of Caribbean Associations - Canada

P.O. Box 62518, 85 Ellesmere Road, Toronto; ON M1R 5G8

Email: admin@caribbeancouncilcanada.org ✧ Website: www.caribbeancouncilcanada.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our sincere gratitude to all those who made this event possible. Without the help of the wider community, this would not have materialized. As such, we take this opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of the following:



Arbor Alliance
By Arbor Memorial



Pine Ridge Memorial Gardens
By Arbor Memorial

**Ms. Camille Wilson ✧ Mr. Allan Penning ✧ Ms. Akeisha Lari
Ms. Gabrielle Forbes-Cultess**



CCAC Board of Directors

President: Vacant

Secretary: Ingrid King

Treasurer: Sherma Daniel

Assistant P.R.O.: Donna Edwards

Committee Member: Tornelle Griffith

Vice President: Cassandra Culpepper

Assistant Secretary: D. Antoinette Kirwan

P.R.O.: Eric Delfish

Committee Member: Dan Felix

Committee Member: Andria Lewis-Alexander



Planning Committee Members

Kadesha James ✧ D. Antoinette Kirwan ✧ Cassandra Culpepper

Damor McQueen ✧ Ingrid King ✧ Gideon Exeter ✧ Gabrielle Forbes-Cultess

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Seneca

POLYTECHNIC

Seneca Polytechnic provides a great education to prepare our students for great careers.

Combining academic rigour with practical, professional and career-focused learning, we offer our students a seamless transition from education to employment.

Expert faculty, excellent staff, outstanding campuses, awesome technology, deep connections with industry: that's Seneca Polytechnic.

Learn more: senecapolytechnic.ca



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About us

About George Brown College.

The best way to learn is to do. At George Brown you'll gain real-world experience through our deep connections to industry, innovation and the city. As a leading, publicly accredited college located in the heart of Canada's economic hub – Toronto, we pride ourselves on providing industry-informed programs. Vibrant, diverse and growing; the city is our classroom. It's core to the George Brown College experience, and we wouldn't have it any other way. With 225 full and part-time programs, we've got something for everyone. Visit <https://georgebrown.ca/city> to learn more.

Locations

Primary

George Brown College
200 King Street East
Toronto, Ontario M5A 3W8

George Brown College
51 Dockside Drive
Toronto, Ontario, M5 0B6

George Brown College
Sally Horsfall Eaton Centre for Studies in Community Health
99 Gerrard Street East
Toronto, Ontario M5B 2K8, CA

George Brown College
50 Tankhouse Lane
Toronto, Ontario M5A 3C4, CA

George Brown College
160 Kendal Ave
Toronto, Ontario M5R, CA

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LOVED ONES BURSARY PROGRAM SPONSORS

MR. LIONEL BEDESSEE



Mr. Lionel M. Bedessee was a respected businessman who founded the venerable Bedessee Imports businesses and brings us all of our Caribbean and Guyanese foods and cricket gears and more.

The company was founded in 1977 in Toronto Canada, with little to no West Indian store in sight at that time, and because of the love and passion of Lionel that he contributed to the company, today the operation has grown to housing over 7,000 products, adhering to quality and commitment has grown to become one of the best-known, most-loved brands throughout the world, with distribution centers in six U.S. states -- New York, Chicago, Maryland, Boston, Connecticut, Orlando & Miami, and three more centers in Toronto(Main office), Montreal and Vancouver, Canada.

Lionel M. Bedessee started his business in Guyana his homeland back in the early 1950's selling products such as, rubber balls, twine, balloons, and cricket balls on his bicycle throughout Corentyne, Guyana. The business grew rapidly to wholesale and a full sports department to include products such as: kitchen chair, Singer sewing machines, Linoleum carpets, florescent tubes, enamel kitchenware, lead sheets, rope and twin. He then took a bold move and immigrated to Canada with his family in 1971. While there, he noticed a lack of Caribbean & West Indian products in the market. He was a brilliant innovator, entrepreneur and with this spirit became the pioneers of the Caribbean / West Indian Food business in Canada and USA. He traveled the world seeking authentic products and brands that was once exported to the Caribbean.

Contact Us:

2 Golden Gate Ct., Scarborough, ON, M1P 3A5

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<https://www.bedesseesports.ca/>

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MR. GIDEON L. EXETER

Gideon Lamont Exeter has been involved in community organizations from his early years in his native St. Vincent and the Grenadines and has always had a passion for encouraging young people to get a good education.

He migrated to Canada in 1982 and became a member of the St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto (SVGAT) shortly thereafter. Gideon was elected as president of the SVGAT on five (5) occasions. As a representative of the SVGAT in 2004, he was one of the founding members of the Council of Caribbean Associations – Canada (CCAC).

Over the years Gideon was able to solicit funding from his employers and various businesses and individuals to encourage the initiation and/or expansion of scholarship programs in a number of Caribbean community organizations for students in Canada and the Caribbean.

In recognition of his community contributions and passion, an annual bursary named ***The Gideon Exeter Bursary*** has been established to launch the **Loved Ones Bursary Program** of the CCAC. Persons or businesses who are interested in recognizing the contributions of others to the community are encouraged to support this program.

Each bursary, worth \$1,000.00, will be available to Canadian students of Caribbean descent and in accordance with the eligibility guidelines of the program administered by the CCAC. The emphasis is on the student being involved in volunteering with Caribbean community organizations and the wider Canadian community for their post-secondary studies.

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Arbor Memorial Inc.



Arbor
Memorial



Arbor Memorial Inc. is a family-owned Canadian leader in helping remember and celebrate lives lived. With deep roots in diverse communities across the country, Arbor has the expertise to help families do it their way – the way that is unique and meaningful to them.

Arbor Memorial's commitment to people and their local communities has earned the trust of thousands of families who have come to rely on us for professional guidance and heartfelt compassion in a time of crisis or when planning ahead.

Pine Ridge Memorial Gardens (PRMG) is a member of Arbor Memorial Inc., and is located in Ajax, Ontario that proudly shares heritage, experience and free transfer privileges with over 40 cemeteries across Canada. PRMG started serving families in 1990 and consists of 50 acres of vital greenspace and has become a treasured landmark in the Pickering and Ajax area. Pine Ridge is the ideal setting for a lasting tribute to loved ones, and visitors throughout the year will find comfort in its timeless beauty and tranquility.

Arbor and PRMG support the work of the Council of Caribbean Associations-Canada. Through Arbor Alliance, Arbor Memorial Inc. offers a special opportunity to provide extra benefits for employees or members of your group or association **at no cost to you.**

For more information, call: **905-427-4549**

 **Pine Ridge Memorial Gardens**
by Arbor Memorial

541 Taunton Road West, Ajax, ON • pineridgecemetery.ca

Arbor Memorial Inc.

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