



# INSIGHT

**THE ST. VINCENT AND GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO INC. (SVGAT)**

*P. O. Box 80066 – Don Valley Village P. O., Toronto, ON, M2J 0A1* Email: [svgat@vincytoronto.com](mailto:svgat@vincytoronto.com)

**KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY INFORMED THROUGH COMMUNICATION**

**Quarterly Newsletter**

**NEW YEAR ISSUE**

*January 2019*

## HAPPY NEW YEAR GREETINGS

The Board of Directors hope that all members, their relatives and friends as well as all readers of the Insight Newsletter had a blessed and joyous Christmas and wish for all the best in the New Year.

### Change of Mailing Address

Please be reminded that the Association has a new mailing address with a new location at Fairview Mall at Don Mills & Sheppard that makes it much easier to retrieve mails away from the downtown location. The new address is *P. O. Box 80066 – Don Valley Village P. O., Toronto, ON, M2J 0A1*.

### Handing Over of Blood Pressure Monitors



The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. and the Toronto SVG Support Group on December 21, 2018 handed over 100 Blood Pressure Monitors to officials of the Ministry of Health for use in the district clinics and hospitals throughout St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Funds for the purchase of the medical equipment were part proceeds from the 2018 Toronto Harbour Boat Cruise coordinated by the two Toronto based organizations. Former presidents – Monty Providence, Ewan Lewis and Silma Millington represented the SVGAT while E. Bernard John represented the Toronto SVG Support Group. CG Fitz Huggins was also present at the handing over.

### 2018 Children's Christmas Party

The SVGAT continued with the tradition of hosting an annual Children's Christmas Party for children of SVG decent on December 15 at Northwood Community Centre. Many thanks to Cheyenne Samuel and her team of volunteers who gave of their time to coordinate the event and make the children happy. Over 60 children attended the event and were given presents by Santa Claus. Many thanks to all those who contributed to the success of the event.



Coordinator Cheyenne with Santa's Helpers

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Association is being held on Sunday, January 27, 2019 from 4:00 p.m. at St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, 1080 Finch Avenue at Leslie. Reports of activities from the previous year will be presented and there will be elections for a new president and five members of the board of directors whose terms have come to an end. Current members of the Association as well as those who are interested in the welfare of the Association are invited to attend and offer themselves to serve either on the board or on the several committees that are responsible to assist with the programs and activities of the Association.

### Current Board of Directors and officers

The Board of Directors and officers of the SVGAT:  
President & Director: Gideon L. Exeter (416-992-4253)  
Secretary & Director: Prudence Morton (647-529-3774)  
Dennis Bucchan: Treasurer & Director (905-477-6628)  
Director: Erline Granderson (416-788-5163)  
Director: Winston Woodley (416-824-7126)  
Director: Daffodil Davis (647-704-8625)  
Director: Petra Ryan Phillips (416-840-7346)  
Director: Jim Lewis (416-459-2462)

### SVGAT & CCAC PRESENT BURSARIES

The SVGAT presented two bursaries of \$1,000.00 each to Kerifa Thompson and Lavon Johnson at the Independence Gala on October 27. The bursaries are part of the Association's goal of assisting and encouraging our youngsters in their pursuit of a higher level of education. Kerifa and Lavon were two of the five students that applied. Please visit the Association's website, [www.vincytoronto.com/independencebrochure](http://www.vincytoronto.com/independencebrochure) to read the profiles of Kerifa and Lavon. Lavon was also a recipient of another bursary. Her and Andre Mullings received bursaries from the Council of Caribbean Associations – Canada (CCAC).



Andre Mullings



Lavon Johnson



Kerifa Thompson

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ANDRE, LAVON & KERIFA. BEST WISHES FOR YOUR FUTURE**

### INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

In conjunction with the SVG Consulate General in Toronto, the Bequia Social Organization, the Toronto SVG Support Group and the Union Island Cultural Association, the Association coordinated a number of events to mark SVG's 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Independence. A Thanksgiving Church Service was held at Wesley Chapel Free Methodist Church in Scarborough on October 21, the Raising of the SVG Flag at Toronto City Hall was held on October 26, the Independence Celebratory Gala was held on October 27 and a Town Hall Meeting held on October 28.



(CG Huggins, Justice Saunders, GL Exeter)

Hon. Justice Mr. Adrian Saunders, President of the Caribbean Court of Justice was the keynote speaker at the Gala and was recognized by the Government and People of SVG and the Association in Recognition of his election to the Presidency of the Caribbean Court of Justice and his contribution to jurisprudence in the Caribbean. The Hon. Mr. Frederick Stephenson, Minister of National Mobilisation, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Persons with Disability and Youth of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Parliament.

### ANNUAL TOWN HALL DISCUSSIONS ON SVG UNITY PICNIC

COME AND SHARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE FUTURE  
OF THE THIS EVENT

SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 2019

ST. CYPRIAN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

1080 FINCH AVENUE EAST @ LESLIE



## SPECIAL THANKS TO THE NEW ADOPT-A-CHILD SPONSORS

The Board of Directors is especially grateful to The Toronto SVG Support Group – 2 children, Mr. & Mrs. Allan John and Mr. & Mrs. Hassan Perreira – 1 child each for being sponsors of children in the Association's **Adopt-A-Child Program** for primary school children in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. These sponsorships are for five (5) years beginning in January 2019.



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Mutual funds are distributed through Desjardins Financial Security Investments Inc.

## Christmas Hamper Project

The Association continued its tradition of reaching out to the less fortunate by providing a Christmas Hamper to seven families in our community. This year's organizing committee included Petra Phillips, Erline Granderson, Gideon Exeter and Ken Farrell. Mrs. Joan Alexander provided a Caribbean Black Cake to each recipient.

SINCERE THANKS TO ALL ADVERTISERS AND SPONSORS WHOSE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ALLOW FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE PUBLICATION OF INSIGHT, THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE SVGAT

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## ST. VINCENT AND GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO INC. TENTATIVE CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2019

Sunday, January 27	Annual General Meeting
Sunday, February 24	Monthly General Meeting
Sunday, March 31	Unity Picnic Town Hall Meeting
Sunday, April 28	Monthly General Meeting
Sunday, May 13	Mothers' Day Event
Sunday, May 27	Monthly General Meeting
Sunday, June 24	Monthly General Meeting
Saturday, July 20	Vincy Unity Picnic
Sunday, July 28	Monthly General Meeting
Friday, August 9	Toronto Harbour Boat Cruise
Sunday, August 25	Monthly General Meeting
Sunday, September 29	Monthly General Meeting
Friday, October 25	Flag Raising Ceremony
Sunday, October 27	Independence Church Service
Saturday, November 2	Independence Gala
Sunday, November 24	Monthly General Meeting

St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, 1080 Finch Ave. E. @ Leslie  
 St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, 1080 Finch Ave. E. @ Leslie  
 St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, 1080 Finch Ave. E. @ Leslie  
 St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, 1080 Finch Ave. E. @ Leslie  
 To be Determined  
 St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, 1080 Finch Ave. E. @ Leslie  
 St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, 1080 Finch Ave. E. @ Leslie  
 Brown's Bay Provincial Park, 1000 Islands, Ontario  
 St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, 1080 Finch Ave. E. @ Leslie  
 Toronto Harbour  
 St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, 1080 Finch Ave. E. @ Leslie  
 St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, 1080 Finch Ave. E. @ Leslie  
 Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen Street West, Toronto  
 Wesley Chapel Free Methodist Church, 2385 Warden Ave.  
 To Be Determined  
 St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, 1080 Finch Ave. E. @ Leslie



### SVGAT Celebrates 50 Years in 2018

The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto will this year celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of existence and service to the SVG community in Toronto. The Association was established on December 1, 1968 at a meeting of nationals of St. Vincent residing in Toronto.

The Association is looking for someone to coordinate a committee to arrange a series of events to mark the occasion and is looking for suggestions on how best to celebrate the occasion. Please make your suggestions as to how you feel the Association should commemorate the occasion.

### DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

The Council of Caribbean Associations – Canada, in conjunction with the Caribbean Consular Corps, is holding meetings with Toronto Caribbean communities to develop a Caribbean Disaster Preparedness organization. This organization will respond to the Caribbean Region when disaster strikes and will also serve as a focal point for Caribbean nationals living in Canada who wish to offer assistance. Several communities have begun meeting and formed their local committees with the intent that a central committee will be established from among them. The St. Vincent and the Grenadines community committee is named Cari-On and persons who are interested in assisting on this committee are asked to contact Mr. Hayden Jones at 416-889-3293.

#### SVG TORONTO CONSULATE OFFICE

Consulate of St. Vincent and the Grenadines  
55 Town Centre Court, Suite 403  
Toronto, Ontario, M1P 4X4

**Mr. Fitzgerald Huggins**  
Consul General

**Tel: (416) 398-4277 Fax (416) 398-4199**  
Email: [consulategeneral@rogers.com](mailto:consulategeneral@rogers.com)

#### Melisizwe Brothers At CARIFESTA

The Canadian-based brothers, musicians, Marc, Seth and Zacary James will be one of the groups representing St. Vincent and the Grenadines at this year's Carifesta Festival in Trinidad during August 16 to 25.

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# IMMIGRATION MATTERS

## THE VALUE OF A CONSULTATION

Contributed by: Sandra Sutherland, RCIC

A consultation is usually the first and very important meeting between a client and an authorized immigration representative. I cannot speak for other representatives but for me the value of a consultation lies in making it a two-way valuation process where the prospective client assesses whether they have a viable case and if s/he sees me as a competent and experienced immigration representative to handle his/her case and where I, being a competent and experienced authorized immigration representative, assess the prospective client and the nature of the case to decide whether or not to take on the case. However, before either the prospective client or I make a decision there are some preliminary matters that should be addressed in order to add value to the consultation.

During the consultation, prospective clients should be forthright in presenting the facts about their situation and circumstances clearly and openly. It may be necessary for me to review documents - especially if there is previous immigration history or a questionable past of any nature, so relevant documents should be available for perusal. There may be times when the nature of some issues may be personal or embarrassing but if they are relevant, they should be disclosed because I can only assess a case based on the facts and concerns disclosed to me. Everything discussed is assured to be privileged and confidential.

Once the required information is gleaned, I can render an objective, realistic and honest evaluation of the case and express an opinion as to possible options and likely outcomes of pursuing a case. Thoughts on if and how the prospective client may proceed with a case and suggestions about improving chances of meeting applicable eligibility criteria, alternate options of proceeding, and opportunities for success may also be discussed.

Consultations offers prospective clients the opportunity to assess if the representative is, first and foremost, authorized to represent clients for a

fee and if s/he is competent and experienced enough in handling the case at hand and any other matters or concerns that may arise as a consequence of pursuing the case.

After a consultation with me, both the prospective client and I should be equipped with valuable information that should answer the questions as to whether or not a case is viable, when it should be pursued, and if a working relationship with each other (or an alternate client) should ensue. If you or someone you know has any immigration queries, the first step should be to book a consultation with an authorized immigration representative to receive honest and objective information and evaluation.

Talk to an expert who is competent and specializes in immigration, it may very well be the major aspect between a person obtaining or maintaining status in Canada.

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Sandra Sutherland is an authorized immigration representative and counsel. She is licensed with the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council (ICCRC) as a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC). She can be reached at (416) 431-2829 or via e-mail at [ssutherland@suthernimmigration.com](mailto:ssutherland@suthernimmigration.com).

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## SVGTA Turns Ten (10)

The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Tourism Authority (SVGTA) celebrated its tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) year of operations on January 2. The Authority, which commenced operations on January 2nd 2009, is the agency entrusted with direct responsibility for promoting the country as a tourist destination. In addition to its primary role of destination marketing and promotion, the Tourism Authority is also responsible for developing standards and regulating the quality of tourism services provided by local industry operators.

The initial staff complement of the Authority was sixteen (16). All former staff of the Ministry of Tourism who were formally transferred to the Authority- five (5) in the overseas offices and eleven (11) in the Head Office. The staff complement has expanded over the last ten (10) years to ensure the charge of the Authority is adequately and efficiently executed. Currently, the SVGTA has a total complement of thirty- three (33) persons in its employ.

At a luncheon in St. Vincent to celebrate the anniversary, Chief Executive Officer of the Authority, Mr. Glen Beache thanked the initial team based in the Head Office for their hard work and dedication. These eleven (11) members of staff, Kimisha Bailey-Browne, Niquette Ballantyne, Juliet Baptiste, Vel Bushay, Jacqueline English, Kathique Haynes, Karen Weekes-Lewis, Cameille May, Annie Nedd-Peters, Lindra Ollivierre and Chief Operating Officer - Faylene King were presented with plaques and bouquets for their sterling service to the Authority since its inception. The five (5) overseas-based staff are Barbara Mercury, Gracita Wilson-Allert, Eleen Ackie, Celia Ross-Latham and Shelley John who are based in the SVGTA's London, New York and Toronto Offices respectively.

The accomplishments of the Authority include the implementation and monitoring of tourism service standards and securing chartered and scheduled flights from international carriers to the Argyle International Airport.

Several activities will be held during 2019 to commemorate this milestone of the SVGTA, including a

Strategic Planning Meeting that will bring together staff from the Head Office and the Authority's Overseas Offices, as well as key tourism stakeholders.

The Canadian office is headed by Director of Sales, Shelley John who has been with the SVGTA from inception and Assistant Director of sales Andrew Phillips who joined the Canada office in March 2018. The past ten years have seen steady growth from the Canadian market and the opening of the Argyle International Airport in St. Vincent and subsequent nonstop year-round flights with Air Canada Rouge has helped to catapult SVG into a new realm of the industry. Our arrival figures for 2018 will surpass all previous years!

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a destination that offers an authentic experience to those looking for that next adventure. Our numerous festivals, nine inhabited islands and tranquil uninhabited ones, black and white sand beaches, superb sailing, unsurpassed diving, incomparable eco-tourism, award winning island resorts and a verdant and varied topography makes SVG a destination that can satisfy every need.

We at the Canadian office are at your service to supply information and promotional material to help in the marketing of our beloved homeland. Please contact us!



## Melisizwe Brothers Concerts

***The Melisizwe Brothers - Marc, Seth and Zacary James from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada are a multitalented trio who has captivated the hearts and admiration of people around the world.***

***Their Toronto Concert is rescheduled to May 24 at the Lyric Theatre. Contact Ticket Master to reserve your tickets.***

***The Brothers will be in SVG at the Russell's Auditorium, Saturday, February 2.***



## SCENES FROM INDEPENDENCE GALA AND

## THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY



Young Entertainers at Independence Gala



Gift Basket Winner



The Hutchinson Sisters at Independence Gala



Compton Receiving Plaque for Garraway



Children at Christmas Party



Little Princess Picture Ready at Christmas Party

### Direct Flights to St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Fly year-round on weekly non-stop flights with Air Canada Rouge and twice weekly until April 28, 2019. [www.aircanada.com](http://www.aircanada.com) or your travel agent.

### **2019 Upcoming Events In SVG**

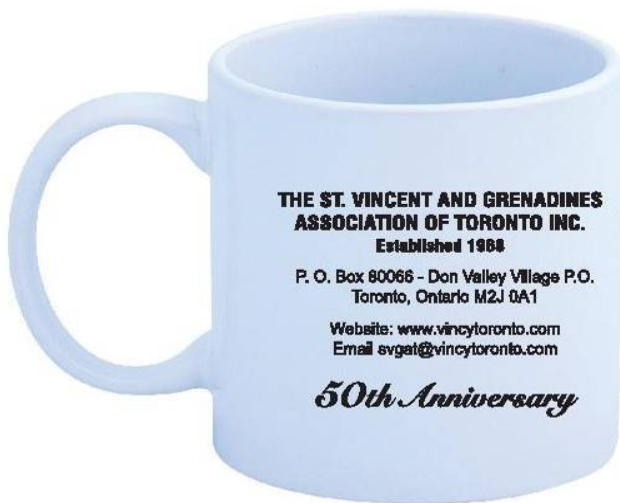
Mustique Blues Festival, Jan 23- Feb 6  
 Bequia Mount Gay Music Fest, Jan 30 – Feb 3  
 Roots & Rhythm Festival, Feb 9 -10  
 National Heroes Day (Mar 14) & Heritage Month, March  
 Union Island Easterval, April 14 – 22  
 Bequia Easter Regatta, Apr 18 & 22  
 Mayreau Regatta, Apr 25 – 28  
 Gospel Fest Apr 28  
 Maroon Festival Union Island, May 8 to 11  
 Canouan Regatta, Jun 6 – 10  
 Vincy Mas, Jun 28 – Jul 9  
 Breadfruit Festival, August  
 Independence Month celebrations – October  
 Theatre Arts Festival, Nov 30  
 National Nine Mornings Festival, Dec 16 - 24

### ADOPT-A-CHILD PROGRAM GETS BOOST

The SVGAT's Adopt-A-Child Program which started in 2008 to assist children in primary schools in St. Vincent and the Grenadines got a boost at the Independence Gala when sponsors for five new children came forward. The gesture of sponsorship was followed by a lottery styled selection process where the Buccament Government School, Calliaqua Anglican School, Dickson Methodist School, Lauders Government School and the Marriqua Government School were drawn for each school to choose a student in Grade 1 who is in need of the financial assistance. The sponsorships are to begin in January 2019 and to last for 5 years. In October, another individual sponsored a child from Lower Bay Public School in Bequia. That sponsorship has already begun.

### COMMEMORATIVE COFFEE MUGS

With co-sponsorship from Metelsky Professional Law, the Association produced a number of coffee mugs to coincide with the 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independence of St. Vincent and the founding of the St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto. Attendees at the Independence Gala received a complimentary mug and a number are available for purchase from the Association for \$5.00 each. Please contact any member of the board of directors if you would like to get one of these mugs.



**GET YOUR COMMEMORATIVE MUG TO  
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ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO –  
FOUNDED DEC. 1, 1968.  
MUGS ARE \$5.00 EACH**

### SVGAT'S SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The St. Vincent and Grenadines Scholarship Program that began in 2008 is geared towards assisting students of SVG descent who are attending full-time university or college by providing bursaries. Since its inception, over 25 students have benefitted.

Information on the scholarship program can be found on the Association's website, [www.vincytoronto.com](http://www.vincytoronto.com). The closing date for receiving applications is August 31 and must be sent to the Secretary of the Association.

### SAVE THE DATE

**2019 ANNUAL VINCY TORONTO  
HARBOUR BOAT CRUISE  
FRIDAY, AUGUST 9  
ABOARD MV. ENTERPRISE 2000**

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2019 @ 4:00 P.M.**

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ATTEND AND CONTRIBUTE TO ITS DEVELOPMENT**



*The Board of Directors and Members of the St. Vincent and Grenadines of Toronto Inc. herewith offer sincere condolences to all those members of our community who have lost their loved ones during 2018 and 2019. We wish you God's blessings during your period of grief.*

*May the souls of the departed Rest In Peace.*



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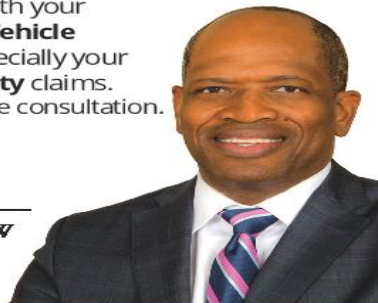
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that choose to use the services of Arbor Memorial are entitled to special membership discounts at any of Arbor's cemeteries or funeral homes in Ontario.

Through the **Arbor Foundation** the Association also receives funds for its special activities/programs.

For further information, please visit any of the websites listed below, or contact Gideon Exeter (416) 992-4253 or by email [gexeter@arbormemorial.com](mailto:gexeter@arbormemorial.com) for more details.



