



# 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'S ISSUE      January 2024**



## The President's Greetings

Dear Members,

As we welcome 2024, it's crucial to take a moment to express gratitude for the triumphs we have achieved in the past year. This serves as a fitting time to reflect and establish goals for the upcoming months.

Firstly, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the dedicated members of the Board. Your unwavering commitment and tireless efforts have moved the Association's programs forward. Your passion, intellect, insight, skills, and experience have been invaluable, contributing significantly to our success.

A sincere thank you is also extended to all our members and supporters, as your collective contributions are the lifeblood of our Association. Whether through event attendance, generous donations, or active participation in committees, your selfless efforts have played a pivotal role in making 2023 one of the most prosperous years in recent memory.

Despite all of our achievements, it's important to acknowledge the challenges we've faced. Your comments and feedback have not gone unnoticed, and we are particularly devoted to addressing the concerns raised regarding the Independence Gala.

Looking ahead to the upcoming year, I am enthusiastic about building upon the foundation laid in the previous year. Together, we will continue to advance and enhance our initiatives, fostering growth and success for the Association in 2024.

Sincerely,  
Cordel Telfer  
President

## Corporation News

### SVGAT ASSISTS FAMILIES AT CHRISTMAS

With a generous contribution from Grace Foods Canada Inc., the St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto (SVGAT) was able to continue its tradition of assisting some less fortunate families and individuals over the Christmas holidays.



Since 1988 the SVGAT has been providing holiday meals by way of groceries and cash to some deserving members of the Caribbean community in the Greater Toronto Area. This year, the SVGAT, through the initiative "Christmas Hamper Project", provided packages including Grace Foods Canada food baskets along with cash to eight (8) families and individuals. The packages were delivered by various members of the SVGAT including Cordel Telfer, Kenneth Farrell, Erline Granderson and Gideon Exeter.

Erline Granderson, coordinator of this year's committee said that she was delighted on behalf of the Board of Directors to once again assist with this program as it benefits families and individuals in our community who may have fallen on hard times and this token from the Association goes a long way in helping to ensure that these households who

received these tokens had some groceries this Christmas and Holiday season.

Persons who wish to assist with this project can make contributions throughout the year by e-transfer to [treasurer@vincytoronto.com](mailto:treasurer@vincytoronto.com).

### **BURSARIES PRESENTED AT INDEPENDENCE GALA**

The Corporation presented bursaries of \$1,000.00 each to four students of SVG descent studying at colleges and universities in Ontario.

The recipients were Sydney Telfer, a first-year student at Queen's University who received one of the bursaries sponsored by the Corporation; Davisha Joseph, a first-year student attending the University of Guelph-Humber, also received a bursary sponsored by the Corporation; Kenya James, a second-year student at York University who received the Peter Morton Family Bursary and Taijah Watson, a second-year student at Niagara College who received the KLC/Eastern Caribbean Freight Lines Bursary.

Please visit the website [www.vincytoronto.com](http://www.vincytoronto.com) to read the profiles of the students.

### **SANDRA SUTHERLAND RECOGNIZED**

Ms. Sandra Sutherland who writes a column, Immigration Matters, in the Corporation's quarterly newsletter, Insight, was recognized for her contribution at the 2023 Independence Gala. In addition to articles, Ms. Sutherland has served on several committees and as a board member of the Corporation. She also served on the board of several other organizations within the SVG and the wider Canadian communities.

The Board of Directors takes this opportunity to once again thank all those who contributed to the success of all of the events to celebrate Independence,

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION PROCESS**

#### **1) Introduction**

According to paragraph (22) of the St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto (hereinafter "The Association") By-laws, each year Board seats are opened for elections according to numbers. Elections will take place during the Annual General

Members Meeting that is normally held in the month of January. For 2024, the Annual General Members Meeting will be held on January 28, 2024.

In accordance with the Province of Ontario Corporation Law, a person can be elected as a director without being a member of the Corporation. If a person who is not a member is elected, then that person has up to ten (10) days following the election in which to become a member.

The logistic of the elections and its running will be managed by an Election Supervisor. Firstly, there will be the election of a president, then there will be election for the remaining directors.

#### **2) Eligible Candidate**

In order to be nominated for and elected as president and/or director, the person must:

- Be 18 years of age
  - Not be a declared bankrupt
  - Not be prohibited from being a director or promoter of the Association
  - Be of sound mind •
- Agree to be nominated
- Must be present at the meeting
  - State his/her qualifications and why he or she feels they are fit to serve the Corporation in that capacity.

#### **Eligible Voters**

Only persons fulfilling the following criteria are eligible to vote:

- Any financial member of the Association in good standing. Good Standing in this context refers to a member who has paid his/her membership dues for the year 2023. All paid members for the 2023 year continue to be members up to March 31st, 2024.
- Honorary Life Members.

The following voting criteria apply to all members. Members present at the election have both a self-voting right as a candidate if they are board members seeking reelection, and as ordinary members to nominate and elect persons to serve on the board.

#### **4) The Election Process**

##### **4.1) Nominations & Voting**

Nomination: The nominator must state why he or she feels that the nominee is a good candidate for being the president/director of the Corporation. If the nomination is seconded then the nominee must

state his or her qualifications for being a president/director and whether he or she feels that they are fit to serve the Corporation in that capacity. The Election Supervisor shall ask if there are any more nominations. If none is forthcoming, he/she asks for a motion that nominations be closed, seconded and agreed upon.

**4.2) Voting:** Voting takes place when nominations are closed. The following voting criteria apply to all candidates:

A candidate, present at the election, either has a self-voting right as a candidate or as an ordinary member if they are a board member seeking reelection.

## **5.) Election of President & Directors**

**5.1) Election of President:** The president is elected to serve as president for one year. The president will automatically become a director and his/her term of office as a director will be determined when the directors are elected. Nominations and voting will follow the above-noted process.

**5.2) Election of Directors:** For 2024, four directors will have completed their terms. Therefore, there will be four vacancies to be filled as follows:

One director to be elected for a three-year term

Three directors to be elected for a one-year term

The election results are published later on the Association's website.

The Supervisor of Elections will declare the names of all candidates who have been elected.

The elected president may choose to give some remarks at this point.

## **CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS & OFFICERS**

### **Current Board of Directors and Officers include:**

President & Director: Cordel Telfer (647-717-9731)

VP & Director: Dennis Bucchan (416-402-1978)

Secretary & Director: Prudence Morton (416-254-3774)

Treas. & Dir: Delcina Jardine-Reckley (647-464-3355)

P.R.O & Director: Gideon Exeter (416-992-4253)

Director: Erline Granderson (416-788-5163)

Director: Kenneth Farrell (416-822-3601)

Director: Francine Burke (647-772-3683)

Director: Jim Lewis (416-459-2462)

## **SVGAT's ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The annual general meeting of the Association will be held on Sunday, January 28, 2024 @ 4:00 p.m. At that meeting, there will be a review of the activities of the Corporation for 2023, the presentation of the financial report and the election of board members to replace those whose terms have expired. All members of the Association are invited to attend and to make themselves available to serve.

### **VOTING ELIGIBILITY**

In order to cast a vote at the upcoming annual general meeting, a person has to be a financial or honorary life member in 2023. According to the by-laws, a person who is not a financial or honorary life member can be elected to serve on the board. If such a person is elected, the person has up to ten (10) days following the election to pay his or membership fee and become a member. Membership fees are paid annually and are good up to December 31 of the year in which they are paid, however, there is a grace period ending March 31 where those members remain financial.

At the AGM on January 28, four positions will be up for elections, namely, one director for a three-year term and three directors for a one-year term.

### **Committees to Assist the Board of Directors**

In order to effectively provide the services of the Corporation a number of committees have been established and volunteers are required to serve. The following are so far proposed, *Fundraising, Independence Planning, Scholarship, Unity Picnic Reps., Unity Picnic Bus Coordinator, Public Relations, Social Engagement & Outreach*



**St. Vincent and the Grenadines  
Tourism Office**

416-630-9292

svgta.ca@discoversvg.com

403 - 55 Town Centre Court  
Scarborough, ON M1P 4X4

## 2024 TORONTO HARBOUR BOAT CRUISES

The SVGAT will participate in two (2) Toronto Harbour Boat Cruises in 2024 to raise funds for supporting the activities and programs of the Corporation. The annual popular cruise will be held on Friday, August 9, 2024 jointly with the Toronto SVG Support Group (TorSVGSG).



A second event, a daylight cruise to be held on Fathers' Day, Sunday, June 16, is geared to provide the opportunity for those who prefer not to be on (or are unable to attend) a late-night event. This daylight cruise will be held jointly by the SVGAT, the TorSVGSG and CARI-ON Disaster Preparedness (CARI-ON).

More details on these events will be shared in due course.

## CCAC NEWS

The Council of Caribbean Associations-Canada (CCAC) of which the SVGAT is a founding member held its bursary and scholarship presentations on December 3 during which it presented 9 bursaries of \$1,000.00 each to students of Caribbean descent who are attending colleges and universities. Among the recipients were students of SVG descent, Davisha Joseph and Kenya James. Another student of SVG descent, Lenron Doyle received a full tuition-paid scholarship to attend Seneca Polytechnic for up to four years. As mentioned elsewhere in this publication, Davisha and Kenya also received bursaries from the SVGAT.

Also on December 7, the CCAC wound up the year by hosting a virtual seminar on the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and the Old Age Security Plan.

The CCAC has ten active member associations – Alliance of Guyanese Canadian Organizations, Antigua & Barbuda Association of Toronto, Barbados Canada Association, Commonwealth of Dominica Ontario Association, Grenada Association Toronto, Montserrat Association Toronto, Nevcan Cultural Association, St. Kitts & Nevis Association of Toronto, St. Lucia Association Toronto and St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto.



## SVGAT'S ADOPT-A-CHILD PROGRAM IS ASSISTING MORE STUDENTS

In addition to continuing with the sponsoring of three students for another year because they did not complete their primary school education in 2023, The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto (SVGAT) will be sponsoring twelve (12) new students in primary schools throughout St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The SVGAT was formed in 1968 with one of its aims being to assist causes in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The Canadian registered corporation consists of mainly of SVG nationals who either adopted Canada as their new home or were born in Canada to Vincentian parentage. The Corporation is administered by a board of nine directors.

The first two students in the Adopt-A-Child Program sponsored in 2008 were from the Spring Village Methodist School and Cane End Government School. Coordinator of the program, Gideon Exeter proudly states that the idea for the program came from his involvement with the St. James with St. Mary's Anglican Church Parish of Layou and Buccament in St. Vincent when a family from Rhode Island, USA, sponsored a student from his parish back in the 1973. Mr. Exeter stated that on his arrival in Canada in 1982, he began thinking that he was in a position to do what that family did for his homeland and introduced the concept to the SVGAT.

The duration of the sponsorship is for 5 years and is intended for less fortunate students who are in their second year at school, which means that the funding should see them through to the time when the students leave primary school and go on to secondary school. In 2008 and 2013, two students were adopted, then in 2018, six students were adopted in the program.



Danlee Sutherland

One of the first two students adopted in the program was Danlee Sutherland of the Spring Village Methodist School. We recently contacted Danlee, and here is what he had to say.

*“My journey was greatly influenced by receiving The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc (SVGAT) assistance through its Adopt-A-Child Program from second grade through primary school.*

*The financial assistance not only relieved my family's burden but also gave me access to excellent resources and knowledge. This assistance ignited my curiosity and propelled me toward academic success. It was like a beacon. Upon graduation from the Spring Village Methodist School, I continued my education at the St. Vincent Grammar School.*

*I am incredibly appreciative of the chances it gave me now that I am a teacher. Sharing my love of study with kids makes me happy since I know that the scholarship was a major factor in my success and opened the door for me to use teaching to inspire others.”*

Danlee is now a teacher at the Fitz Hughes Government School where, coincidentally, one of the twelve (12) new students is attending.

The program which is marketed with the slogan, “A young mind is a terrible thing to waste - By helping to develop a young mind you are investing in the future of your country. Please help someone who is less fortunate and at the same time help your homeland, SVG”, has grown so popular that twelve new students will be sponsored for the period of 2024 to 2028. A number of individuals as well as like-minded organizations have joined as sponsors who commit Cdn\$720.00 per year for the 5 years for each student. Unless a sponsor indicates the school or district that he or she wishes to sponsor a student, there is a random draw from the thirteen districts consisting of 64 primary schools that are not considered a private. When the schools are

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selected, the principals are contacted and requested to form a committee to select a needy student. That committee will maintain liaison between the student, parents and the SVGAT.

The selected schools this period are the Barrouallie Anglican, Belmont Government, Bequia Anglican Primary, Evesham Methodist, Fitz Hughes Government, Georgetown Government, Kingstown Anglican, Lowmans Windward Anglican, Mary Hutchinson Primary, Owia Government, Rose Hall Government and School for Children with Special Needs - Kingstown

The Board of Directors is profoundly grateful to those who have come forward to sponsor a student.

The SVGAT also caters to the needs of students in Canada by providing competitive bursaries annually of \$1,000.00 to students attending college, trade schools or universities. As part of the 2023 Independence Anniversary celebrations, the SVGAT handed out 4 bursaries.

Please visit [www.vincytoronto.com](http://www.vincytoronto.com) to learn more about the Corporation.

## 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

## CORPORATION ADDRESS

The Head Office Address of the Corporation is:

The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of  
Toronto Inc.  
501 – 230 Westney Road South  
Ajax, Ontario, L1S 7J5

## IMMIGRATION MATTERS

### COMING TO CANADA

Contributed: Sandra Sutherland, RCIC-IRB

When a foreign national has a valid electronic travel authorization (eTA) or a visitor visa to visit Canada, s/he may make arrangement to travel to Canada when ready. Does having a valid eTA or visa guarantee entry into Canada? Does it entitle a foreign national to work or get a work permit? How long can s/he stay in Canada? How soon can s/he apply for permanent resident status? These are some of the queries I get frequently from and on behalf of foreign nationals who would like to visit Canada and those who are already in Canada.

Canada Border Service Agency (CBSA) is the body responsible for managing the flow of travelers to and from Canada. Border Services Officers (BSO) make decisions whether or not to permit a foreign national entry into Canada. A foreign national may be denied entry for reasons such as not having proper identification, as being inadmissible, (i.e.: due to criminality, health grounds, misrepresentation, financial reasons, non-compliance with the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, having an inadmissible family member, etc.). If permission is granted, the BSO may specify a date when the foreign national should leave Canada. If no date is specified, (i.e.: via a stamp or a visitor record), then the foreign national may stay up to 6

months or up to the expiration date of his/her passport, whichever occurs first. The expiry date of the eTA or visa has no bearing on how long the foreign national may stay in Canada. It merely provides the deadline when s/he may arrive in Canada.

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ssutherland@suthernimmigration.com

When a foreign national is granted entry into Canada as a visitor, s/he is just that - a visitor. S/he is not entitled to work unless a work permit is obtained or s/he is eligible to work without a work permit. Exceptions are dependent on the job, occupation or situation and circumstances of a foreign national. A list of occupations and persons whose activities do not require a work can be viewed on the government of Canada's website <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/temporary-residents/foreign-workers/work-without-permit.html>. Work permits are not arbitrarily granted upon request. I wrote an article entitled The ABC's of Canadian Work Permits in the previous issue (October 2023) of the SVGAT's Insight newsletter. Kindly refer to that article for some insight into this topic <https://clixtercanada.com/members/content/2347/documents/SVGAT - October 2023 Insight.pdf>

There is no stipulated minimum or adequate period of residency in Canada that would qualify a foreign national for permanent resident (PR) status. PR options are strictly based on a foreign national's ability to meet the eligibility criteria of a particular program, category or PR pathway. Some of these PR options include sponsorship as a member of the family class, (i.e.; spouse, common-law partner, dependent child, parent, grandparent), a provincial nominee program, express entry program, applying based on humanitarian and compassionate considerations, etc. I have also written about some of these PR options in the April 2022 issue of the Insight newsletter which can be viewed at <https://clixtercanada.com/members/content/2347/documents/SVGAT - Insight - April 2022.pdf>.

If you are a foreign national and you are planning to visit Canada, you should adhere to the “know before you go” concept. Foreign nationals who are already in Canada, with or without status, should consult with an authorized Canadian immigration representative rather than relying on information or advice that may be inadequate or inaccurate.

**Sandra Sutherland is a competent authorized immigration representative and counsel** who can represent clients at all divisions of the Immigration and Refugee Board. She specializes strictly in immigration, citizenship and refugee matters and is licensed with the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC) as a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant - IRB (RCIC-IRB). She can be reached at (416) 431-2829 or via e-mail at [ssutherland@southernimmigration.com](mailto:ssutherland@southernimmigration.com). View her advertisement under *Southern Immigration & Paralegal Services Inc.* in this publication for more information.

## News From SVG

### MINIMUM WAGES IN SVG INCREASES

Wages and salaries in St. Vincent (SVG) for the second consecutive year will be raised, along with adjustments to the income tax thresholds to benefit all workers.

Civil servants in 2024 will receive a 2 percent salary increase on the heels of the 2.5 percent they received last year. Next year, civil servants will receive a further 2.5 percent hike. The standard deduction on personal income tax will be raised again this year, from \$22,000 to \$25,000.

In presenting Budget 2024, Minister of Finance Camilo Gonsalves said the document ensures that all public servants will be paid more and all workers will keep more of their salary this year.

“In last year’s budget speech, we indicated that the government has enacted a Wages Council to analyze minimum wages and make recommendations.” As such, on the initiative and effort of our Minister of Labour, the Honourable Saboto Caesar, the government has decided to significantly increase minimum wages this year. As a matter of policy, we have determined that no full-time worker in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines should earn less than \$1,000 per month, and no full-time daily-paid worker should make less than \$50 per day.”

Gonsalves said in some extreme cases, the increases will result in increases of up to 75 percent for monthly-paid workers and 56 percent for full-time, daily-paid workers, relative to the previous minimum wages. “In most cases, however, the increase will be around 20 percent. Apprentices, interns, and other similar categories, including YES volunteers, will receive no less than \$40 per day or \$800 per month.”

This is our fourth adjustment to the minimum wage, following increases in 2003, 2008, and 2017. “As part of our unshakable commitment to inclusive development and reduced inequality, the government is using the tools at its disposal to ensure that our current economic growth spurt does not leave low-wage workers behind. Inflationary concerns are receding, the economy is growing, and the minimum wage has not been adjusted in over six years. This is the right time to look out for our watchmen, domestic workers, cashiers, bartenders, cooks, agricultural workers, cleaners, carers, gardeners, and the myriad other hardworking Vincentians who make invaluable contributions to their families’ well-being and to national development.”

According to Gonsalves, the majority of low-wage workers in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines already make more than the previous minimum wage, so the initial pay difference may be less significant than a 20 percent increase in average suggests.

As an employer of many minimum-wage agricultural workers, carers, cooks, cleaners, watchmen, and interns, the government will also have to adjust

its wage bill upwards, he said. The details of the revised minimum wage will be released immediately and will come into effect on March 1, 2024.

(Credit: The St. Vincent Times – Jan 8, 2024)

## ***SVG Police Force To Receive Foreign Help In Tackling Murders***

In 2024, the police in St Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) will obtain assistance from external sources to address the increasing number of murders on the island.

Commissioner of Police Enville Williams announced on Wednesday that the Royal St. Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force (RSVGPF) has collaborated with a seasoned homicide detective from the United Kingdom to provide specialized training to officers in handling murder cases.

“The UK detective will bring the necessary training and knowledge base to our investigators to equip them to deal with complex offences that have started to emerge.”

### ***Highest murder rate recorded in country’s history in 2023***

The revelation of external assistance coincides with the island’s documentation of 55 killings, the highest number ever recorded in the nation’s history within a single year.

There were 52 cases of murder and three incidents of homicide, resulting in a total of 55.

“In 2023, we recorded a record number of homicides and murders. Most of which were committed with the use of firearms. During the year, we have also seen a slight increase in reported crime over the period of 2022”.

### ***St. Vincent Records 4133 Criminal Offences 2023***

“In 2023, we recorded a total of 4133 criminal offences, as opposed to 4070 in 2022. An increase of 1.5%.” The offence of murder continues to be a vexing issue. Unfortunately, during the period, we recorded the highest number of murders in our history.”

Despite the preceding, Williams stated that personnel of the SVG Police Force continue to work

tirelessly to protect the peace and security to which Vincentians are accustomed.

“The police continue to work behind the scenes to bring offenders to justice, and this is evident from the arrest made last week for an offence of murder that was committed in August of 2022.”

“We want to give the assurance to the members of the public and to the victims’ families that we take every offence seriously. And although you might not hear us, sometimes we are working hard behind the scenes to bring offenders to justice.”

Williams said the RSVGPF will continue to make efforts to rid the streets of the influx of illicit firearms and ammunition.

“We are embarking on, as of May 1st of this year, a 90-day period of firearm amnesty where we are asking persons in possession of illicit firearms and ammunition to turn them into the police without being prosecuted for them.”

The commissioner stated that the RSVGPF aims to begin a period of consultation throughout Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to inform the people about how the amnesty initiative would be implemented.

(Credit: The St. Vincent Times)

## **FIVE T20 WORLD CUP 2024 GAMES IN SVG.**

St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) has been selected as the venue for five (5) matches in the International Cricket Council’s (ICC) Men’s T20 Cricket World Cup.

As to the announcement made on its official Facebook page on (January 5), SVG will be the venue for three matches in Group D. These matches include Bangladesh versus the Netherlands on Thursday, June 13, South Africa versus Nepal on Friday, June 14, and Bangladesh versus Nepal on Sunday, June 16.

The remaining two matches will consist of second-round (quarterfinal) group matchups.

A team that progresses from Group C (C1) will compete against a team that progresses from Group B (B2) in St. Vincent and the Grenadines on Saturday, June 22, 2024.



The last planned ICC Men's T20 World Cup game in St. Vincent will include a side that has progressed from Group C (C1) and Group D (D2) on Monday, June 24, 2024. Group D, which will host the majority of the group-stage matches in St. Vincent, consists of teams from South Africa, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, the Netherlands, and Nepal. The ICC Men's T20 World Cup is scheduled to take place from June 1 to June 29, 2024, in the Caribbean and the USA.

#### **LIAT CEASES OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 24**

According to Barbados Today, LIAT, a regional carrier that has been owned by Caribbean governments for almost 50 years, will end its current phase as LIAT (1974) Ltd on January 24.

Regrettably, this decision will lead to the regrettable layoff of more than 90 employees, who will not receive their rightful salaries. However, guarantees have been given regarding the company's commitment to fulfilling its responsibilities.

Barbados TODAY acquired a letter signed by the administrator, Cleveland Seaforth, dated Thursday, which transmitted this information.

Despite the closure resulting in staff layoffs, a few personnel are anticipated to remain in order to supervise the final duties necessary for concluding



the company's affairs. According to one of the few remaining employees, this action is a part of the process to form its replacement, the projected LIAT (2020) Limited.

The court-appointed Administrator, Seaforth, has made the decision to permanently halt all commercial flying operations of the scaled-down LIAT, effective from the end of business on January

24, 2024. This decision comes after careful consideration and evaluation of the current operations. LIAT had collapsed in 2020, resulting in numerous job losses throughout the region.

“Due to the reasons mentioned above, we hereby inform you that your employment with LIAT (1974) Limited (in administration) will be terminated on February 4, 2024.”

Seaforth informed the employees that the company is now unable to provide any severance payments. However, it assured them that it will fulfil its responsibilities regarding severance, vacation compensation, retroactive pay, and any unpaid salaries.



The letter stated that the corporation acknowledges its responsibility regarding the listed entitlements, which will be given to you separately within 45 days of receiving this letter, after the necessary calculations have been finalized.

#### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting of the Corporation is on Sunday, January 28 @ 4:00 p.m. virtually.

## BEQUIA GETS NEW POWER PLANT



St Vincent Electricity Services Limited (VINLEC) is excited to announce its plans for the construction of a new power plant and supporting infrastructure on the Northern Grenadines island of Bequia.

This initiative forms part of our commitment to providing reliable and sustainable energy to meet the island's needs and contribute to its long-term development. The proposed project aims to construct a new, modern power plant in Bequia with the inclusion of a 1300 kW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to enhance grid stability and improve the integration of supplementary renewable energy sources.

The new plant, which will replace the existing power station that was first established in 1968, will occupy an area of approximately 600 square meters at the same location. The project is being executed under the management of local consulting firms; the Reputable Consultancy Services Limited (RCSL) and Island Engineering Consulting (IEC) in a joint venture.

To ensure compliance with environmental regulations and sustainability objectives, an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) will commence this month and is expected to span approximately 10 weeks. This process will involve a comprehensive study of potential environmental effects, as well as strategies to mitigate and manage any impacts.

VINLEC is committed to open and transparent communication throughout this project and will actively engage with stakeholders to gather feedback and insights. The Company looks forward to working collaboratively with the community throughout the development process.



## Contributed Opinion

### CHANGE – Notes from The Ground


Contributed by William Nedd

OUR SVGAT Organization has been in existence for over 50 years and what have we achieved? Those who have been with the group for a long time will say "A Helluva Lot". Observers from outside may say "Not enough". And yet, another group from within and outside will say "Not a damn thing but confusion and Bacchanal". We may not agree with them all. But if we look closer, we may agree that there is an element of truth in each one of these comments.

Those of us who have been in the organization for years will tell you that the organization has done a lot, e.g. The SVGAT has initiated since 2008 an effective Adopt A Child program in SVG. Today we have expanded the program. They have been offering scholarship funding for qualified college students here in Ontario. We have provided Christmas baskets to needy families here in Toronto. We have responded promptly and efficiently to the calls for assistance whenever our Homeland calls or whenever Disaster strikes.






**MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS REWARDS**  
**Arbor Memorial Inc.**  
is a proud sponsor of the  
**Council of Caribbean Associations-Canada**  
(CCAC) and its member affiliates including  
**St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of**  
**Toronto Inc. (SVGAT)**



Through **Alliances By Arbor Memorial**, members of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines community in Ontario who are members of the St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. who choose to use the services of Arbor Memorial at any of its cemeteries or funeral homes are entitled to special discounts off products and services.

Through **Arbor Foundation**, the CCAC and its affiliates receive special funding for its programs and activities.  
For further information, please visit any of the websites listed below or contact Gideon Exeter at 416-992-4253 or by email at [gexeter@arbormemorial.com](mailto:gexeter@arbormemorial.com)



Our founding folks were people of unblemished character, integrity and trustworthiness. It was these traits that formed the cornerstone of the Organization. So, times have changed. And Times will continue to change. But Integrity, Politeness and Trust will never change. They MUST remain intact and be cemented into our core values.

The Global madness, accompanied by anger, confusion, disrespect and divisiveness must not be allowed to seep into the walls of our value system - the very thing that makes us who we are - Family-One People with a basic common goal: to help, to support, to encourage, to praise and elevate each other individually and collectively.

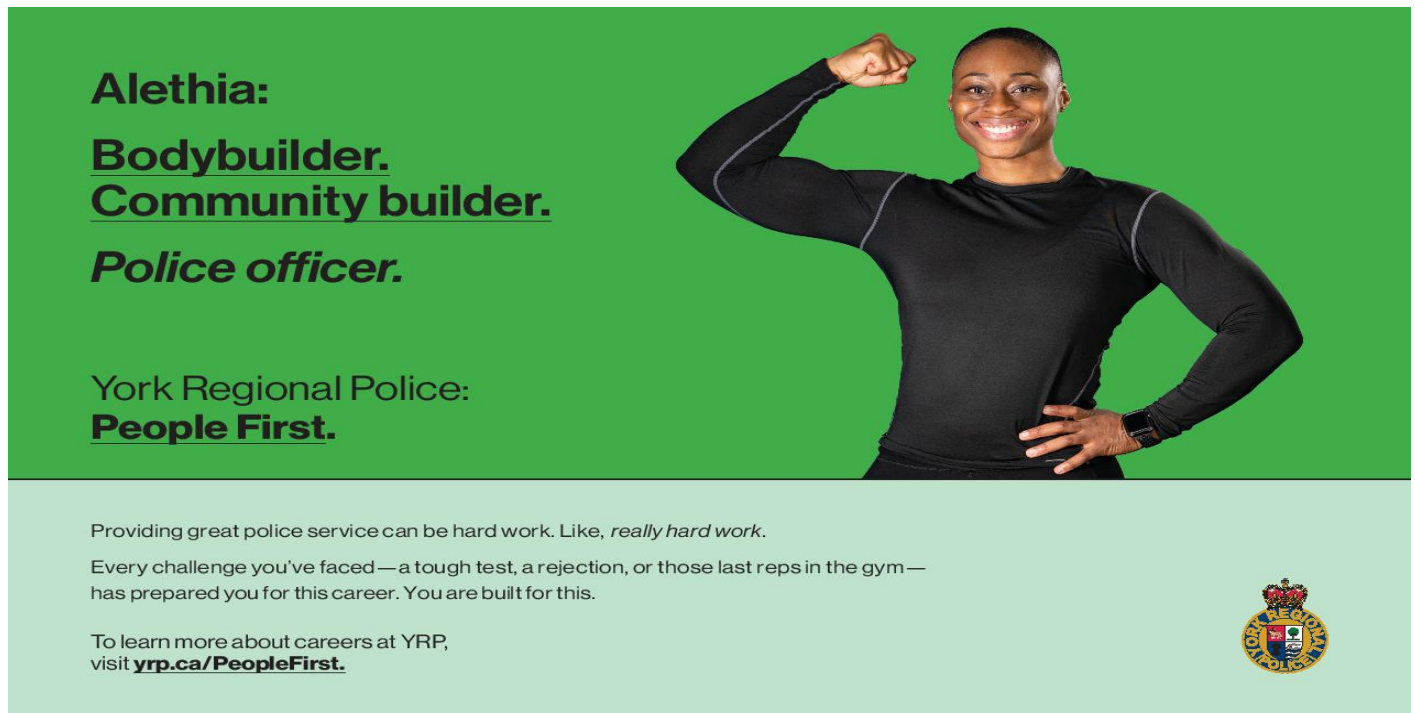
If we all hold these values to be sacred as a cohesive and united force, there is NOTHING we cannot achieve. To change we must take a step back and first take a serious look at ourselves, then we must move forward with a well thought out system of recruiting. If we do not recruit into our

collective, the organization will perish as we pass on. Some think Youth is our Hope. We must embrace Youth. But we must be prepared to Change.

To change is to Live. Not to change is to wither and die. And We are withering.

Youth on the other hand are fast becoming the new enemy. They are impatient. They are arrogant. They are intolerant of our frailties, our weaknesses and our lack of aggressive techno-savvy. They ignore our experience, our wisdom and our achievements. We need to close the gap. We need to be the adult in the room, we need to reach out, stop the bleeding and begin the healing. We need to demonstrate patience and tolerance. We need to respect the brilliance of youth. It must begin with a learning process for both. We need to begin with a necessary conversation.

The stream of life is constantly moving. Build a boat and learn to row.




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### **MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS.**

The Board of Directors meet monthly to plan the activities of the Corporation.

Members Meetings are held on the last Sunday of alternate months in January, March, May, July, September and November from 4:00 p.m.

Community presentations are held on the last Sunday of the months that members meetings are not held from 4:00 p.m.

All meetings and presentations are conducted virtually.

PHOTOS FROM 2023 INDEPENDENCE GALA



Friends at one of the tables



Guest Speaker, Dr. Robertson, MPP Andrea Hazel & others



Dr. Robertson & his host, Agnes Lampkin



Kenya James receiving Peter Morton Family Bursary from R. Metelsky



Bursary Recipient Taijah Watson and Mom, Natallie Watson



Bursary Recipient Davisha Joseph



Nolan Telfer accepting bursary on her of his daughter, Sydney Telfer.



President of SVGAT, Cordel Telfer



Nazi Mohammed of Caribbean Airlines

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**The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc.**

**Membership Registration Form**



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: (Street) \_\_\_\_\_

(City/Town): \_\_\_\_\_ (Province): \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

CURRENT MEMBER FOR RENEWAL, OR NEW MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

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