



The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. (SVGAT)

P. O. Box 80066 – Don Valley Village P. O., Toronto, ON, M2J 0A1

svgat@vincytoronto.com

www.vincytoronto.com

Quarterly Newsletter

SPRING ISSUE

April 2025

PRESIDENT'S GREETINGS

Dear members and friends,

As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of insight, the newsletter of the St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto, I am filled with immense pride and joy. For a quarter of a century, insight has been a vital platform for sharing our stories, preserving our heritage, and strengthening our community. This milestone is a testament to the dedication of all who have contributed to its success—writers, editors, advertisers, and readers alike. May insight continue to inform, inspire, and unite us for many more years to come!

We honour the contributions of those who have played a pivotal role in shaping insight. Audrey Lewis, as the first editor, embraced the role with optimism and creativity. Elma Gabriel left a lasting legacy and is credited with designing the current logo. Gideon Exeter has been the steadfast force holding everything together over the years. His passion and commitment have been instrumental in ensuring the newsletter's continuity. I am privileged to be counted among these individuals. Additionally, we extend our gratitude to Sandra Sutherland, whose insightful articles on immigration have been a valuable addition.



On behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend heartfelt thanks for your ongoing interest in the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto. Our organisation remains committed to improving the quality of life for families in the Greater Toronto Area and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This mission would not be possible without the dedication of our board members, community partners, event supporters, donors, and volunteers.

As we embark on a new year, we do so with optimism. At our last Annual General Meeting in January, we welcomed three new board members: Terrance Gordon, Cheryl Hazell, and Petraun McIntosh. Their willingness to serve is a testament to the meaningful work our organisation continues to do in the community. Please join me in welcoming them.

As a volunteer-driven organisation without agency funding, we rely heavily on the support of our members and friends. We need you to attend our events, promote them, and help sell tickets. Your participation is essential in raising the funds necessary to sustain our programmes. Together, we can continue making a difference.

Thank you for your unwavering support.

Cordel Telfer, President

CORPORATION NEWS

CHANGES TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Corporation held elections on January 26, 2025 at which time the members voted to increase the number of directors from seven (7) to nine (9). The additional two positions established were that of Assistant Secretary who will support documentation, correspondence, and meeting minutes, and Assistant Treasurer who will assist in financial record-keeping and reporting.

The new board has since held two meetings and elected officers as directed in the Corporation's by-laws as follows:

President: Cordel Telfer
president@vincytoronto.com

Vice President: Terrance Gordon
vice-president@vincytoronto.com

Treasurer: Delcina Jardine-Reckley
treasurer@vincytoronto.com

Public Relations officer: Cheryl Hazell
pro@vincytoronto.com

Assistant Secretary: Petraun McIntosh
Assistant Treasurer: June Ellis
Director: Erline Granderson
Director: Kenneth Farrell

The Corporation continues to hold meetings and other presentations virtually on Zoom unless otherwise indicated.

MEETINGS

Sunday, March 30 – General Members Meeting
Sunday, May 25 - General Members Meeting
Sunday, July 27 - General Members Meeting
Sunday, Sept. 28 - General Members Meeting
Sunday, Nov. 30 - General Members Meeting

COMMITTEES

Public Relations Committee

Cheryl Hazell, Elma Gabriel, Gideon Exeter

Fundraising Committee

Delcina Jardine-Reckley - Chair

Education/Scholarship Committee

Terrance Gordon

Council of Caribbean Associations of Canada

Bernadette Petra Ryan-Phillips,
Erline Granderson

Vincy Unity Picnic Committee

Jim Lewis, Cordel Telfer, Sherma Joe

Adopt a Child Coordinator

Erline Granderson

Independence Gala Chair

Sandra Bobb

Christmas Hamper Committee

Erline Granderson

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION MEETING

Last Sunday of April, June, August, October

St. Vincent and the Grenadines Tourism Office


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COMMUNITY NEWS

Just in Time for Easter!

Community Food Distribution


The Durham Community Action Group, in Partnership with Harvest Hands & Mate/FCC, and in collaboration with St. Vincent & The Grenadines Non-Profit Organizations in Toronto:

The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc.

The Toronto SVG Support Group and Carri-On SVG Disaster Preparedness

Invites you to A Free Food Distribution Event!

 **Date: Saturday, April 19, 2025**

 **Location:** Rosewood Church of The Nazarene

657 Milner Avenue, Scarborough

(Between Morningside Ave & Markham Rd)


 **Time: 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM**

Join Us As We Come Together to Support Our Community!

Fresh and Non-Perishable Food Items Will Be Available Free of Charge While Supplies Last.

- ◆ Everyone Is Welcome!
- ◆ Please Bring Your Own Shopping Bags

For more information, contact:

 416-992-4253 or 647-926-8195

Let's Spread The Word and Make A Difference Together!

2025 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday, April 19 - Food Drive

Saturday, June 15 – Joint Fathers' Day Boat Cruise

Saturday, July 19 - Vincy Unity Picnic Crysler Park

Friday, Aug. 8 - Toronto Harbour Boat Cruise

September - Walkathon

October - independence Activities

December - Christmas Hamper, Children's Party, Membership Appreciation!

VINCY TORONTO FATHERS' DAY DAYLIGHT CRUISE

Aboard the Stella Borealis

Sunday, June 15, 2025 @ 12:00 Noon

Admission: Early Bird: \$55.00 Up To May 15; Thereafter \$65.00

Children Under Age 14: \$40.00

Includes Meal, Entertainment, Dancing

Coordinated by The St. Vincent And Grenadines Association of Toronto and the Toronto SVG Sports Club

Tickets Available from: Cordel: 647-717-9731; Gideon: 416-992-4253; Erline: 416-788-5163; Smitty: 416-565-5004; Clem: 416-819-1446



2025 TORONTO HARBOUR BOAT CRUISE

The SVGAT and the Toronto SVG Support Group (TorSVGSG) will again coordinate the summer boat cruise to raise funds for supporting the activities and programs of both organizations. The annual popular cruise will be held on **Friday, August 8, 2025**. More details about this event will be shared in due course.

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



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. We wish you God's blessings during your period of grief.

May the souls of the departed Rest In Eternal Peace.

Passing of Joan Alexander

Our Association and community has lost another Honorary Life Member this year in the person of Mrs. Joan Alexander. Here is an extract from information circulated at the time of her passing. Please check our website, www.vincytoronto.com for the full story.

"The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. mourns the passing of Mrs. Joan McIntosh Alexander, an esteemed member of our community and an Honorary Life Member of our Association. Mrs. Alexander's unwavering dedication, generosity, and service left an indelible mark on our organization and the wider Caribbean-Canadian community.

Her contributions extended far beyond her formal membership—she gave of her time, talents, and resources with selfless devotion, always ready to support initiatives that strengthened our cultural and social bonds. Whether through her culinary expertise, her charitable spirit, or her steadfast involvement, she enriched the lives of many and exemplified the values of community and service.

We honour her legacy with deep gratitude and extend our heartfelt condolences to her family and loved ones. May she rest in eternal peace.

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

ADOPT-A-CHILD PROGRAM

The Adopt-A-Child Program began in 2008 to assist some less fortunate students in primary schools in St. Vincent and the Grenadines financially in their desire for a good foundation in their early years.

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce that students from fifteen (15) primary schools are being sponsored, three (3) for one year and twelve (12) for five years.

The students from the following schools are sponsored for 5 years - Barrouallie Anglican, Belmont Government, Bequia Anglican Primary, Evesham Methodist, Fitz Hughes Government, Georgetown Government, Lowmans Windward Anglican, Mary Hutchinson Primary – Union Island, Owia Government, Rose Hall Government, School for Children with Special Needs – Kingstown.

Buccament Government, Lodge Village Government and Lauders Primary are the three schools which have students from the previous cycle who had another year to complete their primary education.

The assistance is CDN\$720.00 per year for 5 years and begins from their second year in school. to learn more about the program, please visit St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto - Adopt A Child (vincytoronto.com). If you are interested in sponsoring a student, please contact any member of the board of directors.

Our heartfelt thanks to all sponsors – Allan John & Family, Caroline Layne & Family, Cordel Telfer & Family, Delcina Jardine-Reckley & Family, Erline Granderson & The Yellow Hat Ladies, Gideon Exeter & Sons, Jasmine & Gordon Davis, Drs. Sabrina Coombs & Stephanie Sadler, The Toronto SVG Support Group, and the SVGAT.

FILM

Join in an inspiring virtual event hosted by the SVG Associations of Ottawa, Montreal, Massachusetts, and the National Council of SVG Associations UK.

This screening marks the first event in our Garifuna Film Series

Traditional Bush Tea and Its Holistic Approach to Health & Wellness

Garifuna Talks: in-depth discussions on history, identity, and the importance of preserving traditions

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Screening of the Garifuna Film by Akley Olton

Q&A Session

Date: Sunday, April 27, 2025

Time: 2 PM – 5 PM EST and 7 PM – 10 PM UK

Platform: Zoom

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<https://www.zeffy.com/ticketing/going-back-to-our-roots-screening-of-garifuna-film>

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AMERICAN TARIFFS AFFECT SHIPPING TO THE CARIBBEAN

Tropical Shipping President and CEO Tim Martin recently testified before the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) that the proposed tariffs would severely affect American-owned shipping companies as well as U.S. exporters and Caribbean businesses that ship with Tropical. The proposed tariffs include a flat \$1 million port fee on Chinese-built vessels entering U.S. ports. “The U.S. shipping industry serving the Caribbean cannot absorb the additional costs of the proposed port fees, which would have significant economic consequences,” Martin testified. “instead of strengthening American competitiveness, these port fees would push American-owned carriers like Tropical out of business.”

Tropical Shipping operates out of the Port of Palm Beach, Fla., and nine of its 19 vessels were built in China up to 25 years ago. Martin asked the USTR to exempt American-owned and headquartered vessel operators from proposed fees and to apply the tariffs on future ships built in China, but not on fleets that are already in service.

Tropical transports about half of all goods imported to the Caribbean, and Central and South America – poultry, agriculture products, groceries, building materials, medicine, and hurricane relief supplies. The proposed fees would force Tropical Shipping to double its freight rates, causing its Caribbean customers to buy from outside the U.S. at a higher cost.

VINCENTIANS ARE GEARING UP FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS

The election fever is ramping up among the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines as both major parties, the ruling United Labour Party (ULP) and the main opposition party, the New Democratic Party (NDP) are completing their slate of candidates for the polls which are constitutionally due by February 2026, but many folks feel that the bell will be rung months before that time.

In the current parliament, the ULP holds 9 of the 15 constituencies while the NDP has 6. The next election, when ever it is called, will see a number of new candidates as some former contestants from the two major parties have indicated that they will not be offering themselves again. The ULP is currently celebrating its 24 years anniversary in government and is looking to hit a “Six”, meaning, “Six-In-A-Row”.

SVG GOVERNMENT ACQUIRES BALLICEAUX

On March 4, 2025, the quiet publication of a second declaration in the Government Gazette heralded a revolutionary act of nationalism, historical reclamation and justice: The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines had acquired the island of Balliceaux, and returned that sacred site of tragedy and triumph to the Vincentian people.

This is no small feat. From the date of the exile and imprisonment of Garifuna warriors and their families on Balliceaux almost 230 years ago, the island has been a possession of foreigners. In the four and a half decades since Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reclaimed our independence from the British, Balliceaux has been a stubbornly visceral reminder of the powerful lingering legacies of colonial exploitation and injustice. Our persistent calls for reparatory justice for the genocide committed against our indigenous people are anchored in the colonial killing of almost 2,500 Garifuna people on Balliceaux.



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VINCY UNITY PICNIC COMMITTEE DONATES CAD\$4,000 TO UNION ISLAND ENVIRONMENTAL ALLIANCE

The Vincy Unity Picnic Committee in Canada (UPC) has delivered a post-Hurricane Beryl relief donation of CD\$4,000 to the Union Island Environmental Alliance (UIEA).

The UPC Committee is comprised of members from the SVG Associations of Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto Inc. The contribution was presented by Suzette Small-Weekes, president of the SVG Association of Ottawa Inc., and Jim Lewis, former president of the SVG Association of Toronto Inc. to Melissa Gellizeau a forest warden and member of UIEA and a forest Warden.

The funds were raised through a draw for a return Air Canada ticket to St. Vincent and the Grenadines, donated by Air Canada. The draw took place during the 2024 Vincy Unity Picnic on July 20 at Cyrslar Park Marina in Morrisburg, Canada.



The annual picnic is one of the largest gatherings of Vincentians in Canada and serves as a key event for the diaspora.

Katrina Coy, director of UIEA, expressed gratitude on behalf of the Union Island community. "We are incredibly thankful to the Vincy Unity Picnic Committee for this generous donation. The funds will be used to provide much-needed windows for families affected by Hurricane Beryl's devastation. Your support brings hope to those in need," she said.

UPC said it looks forward to another successful event, with the 2025 Vincy Unity Picnic scheduled for July 19.

"It promises to be another unforgettable summer celebration of Vincentian culture and fellowship – mark your calendars!"



Members of the Vincy Unity Picnic Committee in Canada, Jim Lewis, left, and Suzette Small-Weekes, right, handing over the cheque to Melissa Gellizeau of Union Island Environmental Alliance

DR. KISHORE SHALLOW RE-ELECTED AS PRESIDENT OF CWI



Vincenian, Dr. Kishore Shallow has recently been elected unopposed as president of Cricket West Indies, the governing body for cricket in the West Indies. This is his second consecutive term and he is also a director of the International Cricket Council (ICC), the governing body for world cricket. He has served as president since February 2023. Under his leadership, Cricket West Indies cohosted the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 with the United States.

Dr Shallow urged Caribbean leaders to take heed of what he described as a blueprint for economic revitalization through sport. "Our economies have been overly reliant on traditional industries for far too long. This World Cup has proven that sport—cricket in particular—is a powerful and underutilized economic engine," he said.

As the region prepares to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the West Indies' first Cricket World Cup triumph in 1975, Shallow believes the legacy of the 2024 tournament will inspire a new generation—not just of players, but of sports administrators, marketers, and entrepreneurs.

CARIBBEAN AIRLINES FLIGHTS TO AIA

Caribbean Airlines



The only direct flights that Caribbean Airlines provides from North America to Argyle International Airport, SVG are from New York on Wednesdays and Saturdays. All other flights to AIA go through the airline's hub in Port of Spain.

For information on Caribbean Airlines flights to SVG, please check the airline's website, www.caribbean-airlines.com or your travel agent.



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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



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IMMIGRATION MATTERS

Is Canadian Citizenship for Sale? Understanding Investment-Based Immigration

Contributed by: Sandra Sutherland, RCIC-IRB

Canada may not be for sale, but is Canadian citizenship for sale? You may have heard the term “Citizenship by Investment”. This implies that foreign nationals can obtain citizenship of a country by making a significant investment into that country’s economy. While Canada does not offer a “Citizenship by Investment” program, wealthy individuals can leverage their resources to apply for **permanent residence (PR)** status through business class immigration programs such as the **Start-up Visa Program** or various **Provincial Nominee Programs (PNPs)**.

Provided that a foreign national is not eligible to obtain Canadian citizenship by descent, s/he must first apply for and be granted permanent resident (PR) status. This requirement also applies to an investor or entrepreneur. Acquiring PR status is only the first step - **Canadian citizenship must still be earned**, requiring an adult applicant to demonstrate that s/he has at least 3 years (1095 days) of physical presence in Canada within the 5-year period preceding the date of their application, among other requirements. Wealthy investors and entrepreneurs are thus treated like “regular” foreign nationals when it comes to acquiring citizenship and thus cannot jump the queue.

Investors and entrepreneurs with substantial financial resources do have an advantage over “regular” foreign nationals to potentially apply for and obtain permanent resident status under business immigration streams/programs.

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The Start-up Visa program and the Provincial Nominee Programs (PNPs) usually require an investor or entrepreneur (as the principal applicant) to have a substantial net worth and funds to either start-up, purchase or invest in a business venture.

The Start-up Visa Program is geared towards innovative entrepreneurs who have a minimum investment of Cdn\$75,000.00 and possess the skills and potential to build a business in Canada (excluding Quebec) which could compete on a global scale and also create jobs for Canadians. Quebec runs its own Business Immigration Program for Investors and Entrepreneurs seeking to contribute towards Quebec's economy. With the exception of Quebec and Nunavut, Provincial Nominee Programs (PNPs) permit Canada's provinces and territories to formulate their own streams or pathways with rigorous eligibility criteria and timelines. Pathways allow investors and entrepreneurs to immigrate to a province or territory as temporary residents with the potential of later applying for permanent resident status once they have successfully started their business venture.

Some PNP's target investors, entrepreneurs and also skilled workers. Manitoba has a Business Investor Stream with two pathways (Entrepreneur and Farm Investor). Entrepreneur Immigration (EI) is a way for international entrepreneurs wishing to immigrate to British Columbia (BC.), via BC's Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP), to set up a business that support innovation and economic growth in BC. Interested candidates seeking to immigrate as an investor or entrepreneur should assess the various PNPs requirements to their own qualifications and financial means.

The following links to the government of Canada's website shall provide more detailed information about the above noted programs.

Start-up Visa Program:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/start-visa.html>

***Provincial Nominee Programs:**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/provincial-nominees.html>

Quebec Selected Business Class Applicants: Investors or Entrepreneurs:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/application-forms-guides/guide-4000-applying-permanent-residence-quebec-selected-business-class-applicants-investors-entrepreneurs.html>

Although it may appear that wealthy investors and entrepreneurs have the privilege of using their capital towards securing permanent resident status in Canada, they still have to transition towards Canadian citizenship like other immigrants. Money talks but it does not shout, citizenship.

Sandra Sutherland is a competent authorized immigration representative and counsel who can represent clients at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and at all divisions of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB).

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/Counsel at the IRB (RCIC-IRB).

She can be reached at **(416) 431-2829** or via e-mail at ssutherland@suthernimmigration.com

View her advertisement under ***Suthern Immigration & Paralegal Services Inc.*** in this publication for more information.

APPEAL FOR NEW MEMBERS

The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. welcomes new members for its survival. An appeal is being made to younger persons who have an interest in its survival to become members and use your talent to make your contribution.



Rhonda Metelsky
B.A (Hons) LL.B

Metelsky Law is a boutique law firm serving the Greater Toronto Area and specializes in criminal law, family law, wills and estate administration. We continue to provide community service by providing legal services to various community organizations and mentor high school, college and university students interested in pursuing a career in law. We understand that corporate involvement isn't just an activity: we are genuinely committed to improving our communities, investing our time and expertise to facilitate those improvements throughout the year.

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HAIROUNA ROOTS

New Feature: Exploring Vincentian History & Genealogy

This is a new section dedicated to uncovering the stories of our ancestors and the rich, complex history that shaped St. Vincent and the Grenadines. From family trees to hidden stories preserved in old wills, church records, and migration routes — this space is where memory meets discovery.

Each issue, we'll spotlight pieces of our collective past, share resources for tracing family roots, and feature stories submitted by our community. Your history matters, and we want to help you preserve it.



Have a story, photo, or document to share? We'd love to hear from you.

DID YOU KNOW....hundreds of people from St. Vincent and the Grenadines visited or migrated to the United States in the early 1900s? Many of our families can be found on passenger manifests! Try searching your ancestors at <https://heritage.statueofliberty.org/passenger>

CORPORATION BY-LAWS

On February 2, 2013, The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. enacted the Ontario Non-Profit Corporation By-Law 1 which replaced the constitution by which the Association was governed. Please visit the Corporation's website www.vincytoronto.com and click on the About Us page or click on the link [St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto - By-Laws \(vincytoronto.com\)](http://www.vincytoronto.com) to take you directly to read the by-law and acquaint yourself.

The Public Relations Committee that is responsible for producing Insight on behalf of the Corporation is inviting interested persons to submit articles and stories that they feel would be of interest to our readers. Please send by email to "pro@vincytoronto.com"



CARI-ON SVG DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

JOIN OUR MISSION TO HELP COMMUNITIES IN SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

WHO IS CARI-ON?

Established in 2018, CARI-ON is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing resources and timely relief efforts to help families and communities carry on during and after disasters in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

To achieve this, we are establishing several committees with representatives from each Caribbean country, operating under the umbrella of the Canadian Caribbean Disaster Relief Action (CCaDiRA) committee. This initiative aims to strengthen ties and cooperation between the Caribbean diaspora and their home countries in times of need.


OUR VISION

To provide preventative measures and mobilization support to meet the human needs of those impacted by natural disasters in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

WHY JOIN US?

- Be part of a dedicated team making a real difference
- Support disaster preparedness and relief efforts
- Help build resilient communities

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The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. Membership Registration Form



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TELEPHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

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