



# INSIGHT

**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](mailto:svgat@vincytoronto.com)

[www.vincytoronto.com](http://www.vincytoronto.com)

Quarterly Newsletter

SPRING ISSUE

APRIL 2026

## PRESIDENT'S GREETINGS

To the esteemed members of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc., it is my sincere hope and prayer that this message finds you in excellent health, renewed strength, and uplifting spirits. I am deeply honoured and humbled by the trust you have placed in me to serve as your President, and I accept this responsibility with great respect and a steadfast commitment to serve with integrity, dedication, and purpose.

At this time, I am pleased to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to our newest Board members, Kelly-Ann Lewis and Kayann Saunders, whose addition brings fresh perspective, renewed energy, and valuable insight to our Association. We look forward to your contributions as we continue to strengthen and advance our shared mission. The Board also extends sincere appreciation to Kenneth Farrell for graciously stepping down to allow Delcina Jardine-Reckley to continue serving as Treasurer. We thank him for his selfless gesture and ongoing commitment to the stability and effective operation of the Association; his contributions have helped shape this community, and we are deeply grateful for the strong foundation he has built.

While 2025 stands as a remarkable year of achievement, we now set our sights firmly on the opportunities and responsibilities that 2026 presents.

As we progress through the first quarter, we recognize that there is important work ahead, and I encourage all members and friends of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines community to remain actively engaged, offering your support, guidance, and collaboration as we navigate the months before us.



One of my foremost priorities as President is to foster greater unity within our community. This vision cannot be realized in isolation; it requires the collective effort, shared commitment, and active participation of each and every one of us. While I do not claim to have all the answers, I am committed to listening, learning, and leading with openness, and I warmly welcome your ideas, insights, and feedback as we move forward together. With unity as our strength and purpose as our guide, I am confident that we will continue to build a stronger, more vibrant, and more connected community. Thank you once again for the privilege of serving.

With warm regards,

**Terrance Gordon**  
President

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

# CORPORATION NEWS

## SVGAT's ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual general meeting of the Association was held on Sunday, March 29, 2026 @ 4:00 p.m.

At that meeting, there was a review of the activities of the Corporation for 2025, the presentation of the financial report and the election of board members to replace those whose terms have expired. All members of the Association were invited to attend and to make themselves available to serve.

## CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

President: Terrance Gordon  
Vice President: Petraun McIntosh  
[president@vincytoronto.com](mailto:president@vincytoronto.com)

Secretary: Kelly-Ann Lewis  
[secretary@vincytoronto.com](mailto:secretary@vincytoronto.com)

Treasurer: Delcina Jardine-Reckley  
[treasurer@vincytoronto.com](mailto:treasurer@vincytoronto.com)

Public Relations Officer: Cheryl Hazell  
[pro@vincytoronto.com](mailto:pro@vincytoronto.com)

Assistant Secretary: Kayann Saunders  
Assistant Treasurer: Cordel Telfer  
Director: Erline Granderson  
Director: June Ellis

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

## COMMITTEES

### Public Relations Committee

Cheryl Hazell, Gideon Exeter

### Fundraising Committee

Delcina Jardine-Reckley - Chair

### Education/Scholarship Committee

Terrance Gordon

### Council of Caribbean Associations - Canada

June Ellis

Bernadette Petra Ryan-Phillips

Erline Granderson

### Vincy Unity Picnic Committee

Terrance Gordon, Jim Lewis, Cordel Telfer,  
Erline Granderson, Mahalia Spann, Andrew  
McIntosh

### Adopt a Child Coordinator

Erline Granderson

### Independence Planning Committee Chair

Sandra Bobb

### Christmas Hamper Committee

Erline Granderson, Petra Ryan Phillips,  
Kenneth Farrell

## COMMUNITY DISCUSSION MEETING

Last Sunday of April, June, August, October

## NEXT GENERAL MEMBERS MEETING

Sunday, April 26, 2026

*The Board of Directors and Members of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines of Toronto Inc. offers 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.*

# SVG & THE CARIBBEAN

## SVG GOVERNMENT PUSHES TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION

The National Democratic Party (NDP) plans to use its 14–1 parliamentary majority to amend the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Constitution. The move aims to clarify dual citizenship eligibility for Parliament, a status currently held by Prime Minister Dr. Godwin Friday and MP Fitzgerald Bramble.

The legal motions challenging the eligibility of the NDP candidates were filed by two members of the opposition United Labour Party (ULP) who were defeated by their respective NDP opponents in the November 2025 general elections and are now seeking to have them removed from Parliament based on their dual citizenship status: Luke Browne, who contested the seat against Prime Minister Dr. Godwin Friday; and Carlos Williams, who contested the seat against MP Fitzgerald Bramble.

While a court ruling is expected in July 2026, the government contends that Commonwealth nations sharing a Head of State are not "foreign,". A debate, which was set for April 22, has been delayed to allow for further public consultation following an intense backlash.

### 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 ALA 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](http://www.caribbean-airlines.com) or your travel agent.*

**DCAG**  
Durham Community Action Group  
Together with  
**Harvest Hands & MATE/FCC**  
In Collaboration with St. Vincent & The Grenadines Organizations in Toronto

**FREE COMMUNITY FOOD DISTRIBUTION**

**Date:** Saturday, May 2, 2026  
**Location:** FAITH MINISTRY Unit 20, 4370 Steeles Avenue West Woodbridge (Steeles & Pine Valley)  
**Time:** 12:00pm – 3:00pm  
**Contact:** 416-970-8210 | 647-701-5597 416-889-3293 | 647-926-8195

**PLEASE BRING YOUR SHOPPING BAGS**  
All are welcome—arrive early while supplies last.

Logos for FINTE FCC, FINTE FCC, and HH are visible at the bottom.

The government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is reaffirming its 45-year diplomatic bond with Taiwan, celebrating an "unbreakable" partnership focused on mutual respect and cooperation.

Ambassador Fiona Fan emphasized future collaboration in smart agriculture, healthcare, and infrastructure, following Deputy Prime Minister St. Clair Leacock's recent visit to Taipei to secure further assistance for St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

# SVG & THE CARIBBEAN

## ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) has confirmed it will not accept U.S. deportees or refugees, with Minister of National Security St. Clair Leacock stating the government has no intention of opening its borders to non-national third-country deportees.

The U.S. has provided diplomatic assurances that SVG will not face negative repercussions for this refusal. Read more at [St. Vincent Times](#).

## CAYMAN ISLANDS

### Nominations for New Year Honours:

The [Governor's Office](#) has officially opened nominations for the **2027 New Year Honours**, inviting the public to recognize local volunteers and community leaders who often go unrecognized.

## TURKS & CAICOS

**Tourism Milestone:** Stayover arrivals for early 2026 have surpassed previous records, with [Wymara Resort + Villas](#) being named the #1 hotel in the region by U.S. News & World Report.

## CJM CONSULTING

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## THE BAHAMAS

**Atlantis Expansion:** The iconic [Atlantis Resort](#) is opening a new private club that features daily culinary experiences sourced from local Bahamian producers.

**Inter-Island Connection:** New flight routes from nearby hubs are making it easier for residents to "island hop" across the archipelago, boosting domestic tourism for smaller family islands.

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Scarborough, Ontario, M1V 5B7

# ARTS AND CULTURE

## VINCY MAS 2026



### UPCOMING KEY DATES

**J'ouvert & T-Shirt Mas:** Monday, July 6, 2026.

**Mardi Gras (Pretty Mas):** Tuesday, July 7, 2026

**“EXPRESSION OF OUR NATION” Cultural Mural**  
Cultural Ambassador and Visual Arts Officer Shanique Stewart led the unveiling of a mixed-media sculptural mural at the Peace Memorial Hall on March 31, 2026.

The piece is designed to engage viewers through a sense of motion and energy, depicting various elements of Vincentian heritage. It captures the essence of local life through artistic representations of traditional drumming, masquerade, dance, and storytelling.

**The Main Launch Event** was held at the Tarmac of the decommissioned E.T. Joshua Airport in Arnos Vale. The event, dubbed "**One Way**," featured runway-style settings, masqueraders, and performances by the Miss SVG contestants.

**Media Prelude:** A unique media launch occurred earlier on **Tuesday, April 7**, aboard a catamaran cruising the Leeward coast. It featured traditional elements like the **Monkey Band** masquerading from Barrouallie to Wallilabou, and local foods served in calabashes to emphasize a "rekindling of the past".

**Festival Dates:** The national Vincy Mas program is scheduled to run from **June 26 to July 7, 2026**.



**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)



# COMMUNITY NEWS



## 2026 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 7, 2026.**

More details about this event will be shared in due course.

**THE RISE UP PROGRAM 2026** has been officially launched and applications open on April 29 and close on May 8

Rise Up, a program run by the Black Business Professional Association, is designed to support Black entrepreneurs and aspiring business owners with the tools, guidance, and community needed to take their ideas and ventures to the next level.

Through a series of live virtual workshops, mentorship, and dedicated office hours, participants will gain practical knowledge and real-time support as they build and refine their businesses.

The program culminates in the opportunity to compete for a share of **\$50,000 in non-dilutive funding.**

Whether you're in the early stages of an idea or already building momentum, this program is here to meet you where you are and help you move forward with clarity and confidence. What you can expect:

- Interactive virtual workshops led by experienced facilitators
- Office hours for personalized support after each session
- A supportive community of like-minded entrepreneurs

[Learn More](#)

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## INVEST SVG IS RETURNING TO TORONTO!

This initiative once again aligns with the theme “Home is Where the Heart is 2026,” and supports continued engagement between the diaspora and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

We encourage members who are interested to **register early using the QR code on the flyer** or **by clicking this link**.

HOME IS WHERE THE heart is 2026

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ST VINCENT & THE GRENADINES  
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SATURDAY, MAY 16, 2026  
3:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.

Holiday Inn Toronto Downtown Centre,  
30 Carleton St., Toronto,  
ON M5B 2E9, Canada

INVEST SVG  
BOARDING FIRST CLASS  
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DATE: MAY 16, 2026  
SCAN ME TO REGISTER  
FIRST CLASS  
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BUILDING BLOANS

Council of Caribbean Associations

CCAC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The CCAC is offering scholarships and bursaries to students of Caribbean heritage attending post-secondary institutions in Ontario.

WHAT YOU NEED:  
Transcript  
Proof of Enrollment  
2 Letters of Reference  
Short Essay (250 words)  
Financial Need  
Community Involvement

APPLY BY JUNE 30TH

Visit [caribbeancouncilcanada.org/current-scholarship](https://caribbeancouncilcanada.org/current-scholarship) to apply or email [admin@caribbeancouncilcanada.org](mailto:admin@caribbeancouncilcanada.org) with inquiries

The Council of Caribbean Associations-Canada (CCAC) has opened its website to accept online applications for this year’s scholarships and bursaries, running from April 8 to June 30. Please visit the website, <https://caribbeancouncilcanada.org/current-scholarship> for full details.


This year, qualifying students can choose from two 4-years scholarships at Seneca Polytechnic and George Brown College for up to \$24,000.00 each, one scholarship for up to \$8,000.00 sponsored by Malvern Oynx Lions Club, and five bursaries of up to \$3,000.00 named in honour of Mr. Lionel Bedessee of Bedessee Imports & Exports, Council of Caribbean Associations-Canada, Gideon Exeter, Ingrid King and Pine Ridge Memorial Gardens.


The CCAC is an umbrella organization of Caribbean organizations in Ontario, of which the SVGAT is a founding member. Its scholarship program started in 2012 and it has so far provided financing to 60 students

[The application link.](https://caribbeancouncilcanada.org/current-scholarship)

# FROM TRAUMA TO TRIUMPH — STEP BY STEP

Community Walkathon for Mental Health Awareness

 **Location:** Ashbridges Bay Park, Toronto

 **Date:** Sunday, May 24, 2026

 **Time:** 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

## In Partnership With:



CARI-ON SVG Disaster Preparedness



BMHC Black Mental Health Canada



## Why We Walk

Join us as we **raise awareness** about **mental health** and support individuals and families impacted by **trauma**—both locally and in **St. Vincent & the Grenadines**.



## Special Feature:

**Walk in Solidarity Across Canada and St. Vincent & the Grenadines**

On the same day, Vincentians are encouraged to participate—let's **walk together** across borders!

## Register Now:

Scan to Register or Visit:



[www.zeffy.com/en-CA/  
ticketing/walk-a-thon-3](http://www.zeffy.com/en-CA/ticketing/walk-a-thon-3)

**Contact:**



416-889-3293



[carion.org@gmail.com](mailto:carion.org@gmail.com)



## What to Expect:



Community Walk



Mental Health Resources



Guest Speakers



[carion.org@gmail.com](mailto:carion.org@gmail.com)

*Together, we move from awareness to action.*

# COMMUNITY NEWS



Over the years, **GlobalMedic** has been a frontline friend to St. Vincent and the Grenadines—from the 2021 volcanic eruption to the recovery efforts after Hurricane Beryl in 2024. Now, it's our turn to give back right here in Toronto.

Volunteering with GlobalMedic is a hands-on way to support disaster relief, whether locally in Canada or internationally.

Volunteers are involved in a mix of practical and medical support roles, such as:

- Packing and preparing emergency aid (like hygiene kits or water purification supplies)
- Organizing and managing warehouse logistics
- Supporting fundraising or public awareness events

**Where:** 35 Coronet Road, Etobicoke, ON M8Z 2L8

**Why:** To ensure GlobalMedic is always "Rapid Response" ready for the next time our islands—or any community—needs them.

**\*\*Professional Deployment:** If you are a trained professional (paramedic, nurse, or firefighter), you can apply for their **Rapid Response Team (RRT)** to deploy directly to disaster zones.

**Contact:**

35 Coronet Road  
Etobicoke, Ontario, M8Z 2L8  
Tel: 416-916-0522  
Email: [info@globalmedic.ca](mailto:info@globalmedic.ca)

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH PRESENTATION

The SVGAT held a history and genealogy Zoom presentation during Black History Month on February 22 which was hosted and moderated by Terrance Gordon and Ulpia Stephens. Wendell Cole spoke on the Garifuna heritage of the island, Cheryl Hazell presented on the migrations of Vincentians to the United States in the early 1900s, and the keynote speaker and renowned historian Dr. Adrian Fraser spoke on a range of topics related to the history of the island. Dr. Fraser has co-authored a book with Dr. Garry Dennie and Dr. Cleve Scott called *St. Vincent and the Grenadines: A General History to the Year 2025 - Native Peoples, Genocide, and African Enslavement in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Circa BP 5000 to 1838, Volume 1*. The successful book launch was held at the UWI Global Campus in Frenches on Friday, March 20.

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**Council of Caribbean  
Associations**  
C A N A D A

## **Seniors Wellness Symposium**

*Empowering Mind, Body & Lifestyle Balance*



**Date:** Saturday May 30th 2026



**Time:** 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm



**Address:** Art Burke Co-op  
311 Washburn Way, Room 309,  
Scarborough, ON M1B 3V5

### **Seminar Topics:**



**Creating a Personalized Wellness Plan:**  
Special Guest - Ms. Alethia Cadore  
(*Mindsilike Consulting*)



**Natural Remedies and Herbal Practices:**  
Special Guest - Dr. Patzi  
(*Naturalist Clinic*)



**Downsizing and Decluttering  
for Better Living:**  
Special Guest - Ms. Keisha Telfer  
(*Transitions Realty Inc.*)

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**To register call or email us**

**Website:** [www.caribbeancouncilcanada.org](http://www.caribbeancouncilcanada.org)

**Email:** [admin@caribbeancouncilcanada.org](mailto:admin@caribbeancouncilcanada.org)



**President:** Tomelle Griffith (647) 450 3287

**Secretary:** Ingrid King (416) 993-9266



# COMMUNITY NEWS



## Vincy Unity Picnic: The Drive is Long, the Memories are Better!

Calling all Vincentians and friends! We're heading to **Crysler Park (Morrisburg, ON)** for a day of pure Vincy vibes, music, food, and community along the St. Lawrence River.


### LOCK IN EARLY BIRD PARKING (GTA ONLY)


- **Price:** \$35 per vehicle (Up to 8 passengers)
- **Dates:** April 24 – May 24
- **Regular Price:** \$55 after May 24
- **Gate:** \$65

### WHY YOU CAN'T MISS IT:

- **Vincy Culture:** Music, games, and delicious food.
- **Family Fun:** A beautiful riverside setting perfect for all ages.
- **The Adventure:** Pack the cooler, carpool with friends, and enjoy the road trip!

### GET YOUR TICKETS TODAY:

 **West End:** Terry Gordon | 416-970-8210

 **East End:** Cordel Telfer | 647-717-9731

*One People, One Love, One SVG!*

## MAKE IT A WEEKEND: LOCAL GEMS

[Upper Canada Village](#) (Morrisburg) – A massive 1860s living-history site with wagon rides and fresh artisan bread and accommodations

**Prehistoric World** (Morrisburg) – Walk a forest trail with 50+ life-sized dinosaurs. *Note: Cash only!*

**NEARBY STAYS (AIRBNB)** – In Prescott, Iroquois, and Morrisburg

# ADOPT-A-CHILD PROGRAM

The SVGAT's **Adopt-A-Child Program** has a total number of 13 sponsored students in the 2025 – 2029 cycle across primary schools in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The program selects recipients based on need, not academic performance. A key expectation for each student is punctual and regular attendance, giving them the best opportunity to benefit from the education and guidance offered.

Current participating schools and students in the program are:

- **Barrouallie Anglican** – Alexis Solomon
- **Belmont Government** – Kaylee Baptiste
- **Bequia Anglican** – Markel Harris
- **Evesham Methodist** – Akira Browne
- **Fitz Hughes Government** – Koice Castello
- **Georgetown Government** – Keranique Ryan
- **Kingstown Anglican** – Imaga Toney
- **Layou Government** – Micah Charters
- **Lowmans Windward Anglican** – Olivia Phillips
- **Mary Hutchinson Primary** - Kaidon Laborde
- **Owia Government** – Deron Medica
- **Rose Hall Government** – Zanner Williams
- **School for Children with Special Needs - Kingstown** – Glendeen Douglas

Since its inception in 2008, schools have been selected in five-year sponsorship cycles. The current cycle, 2025–2029, has the highest number of sponsored students to date. Unless a sponsor specifies a particular student or school, primary schools are chosen via a lottery system

All publicly funded primary schools are entered into the draw according to their district. Once selected, a school is not eligible for the next cycle until all 66 public primary schools have had an opportunity. Please note that private schools are excluded from the draw.

When a school is selected, its principal is contacted and asked to form a school/community-based committee. This committee identifies a suitable student based on need, oversees the administration of monthly support, and reports back to the SVGAT on the student's progress throughout the sponsorship period.

The cost to sponsor a student for five years is CAD \$720.00 annually, totaling CAD \$3,600.00. Those interested in sponsoring a student are encouraged to contact the Association's executive by email at **secretary@vincytoronto.com**.

The board of directors and members of the Association herewith takes the opportunity to once again sincerely thank all sponsors for helping the selected students to prepare for their future.



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## SVG TORONTO CONSULATE OFFICE

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55 Town Centre Court, Suite 403  
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**Ms. Lasana Andrews**

Consul General

Tel: (416) 398-4277

Fax (416) 398-4199

Email: consulategeneral@rogers.com

# IMMIGRATION MATTERS

## IMMIGRATION MATTERS: *IMMIGRATION UPDATES FOR 2026*

Contributed by: Sandra Sutherland, RCIC-IRB

### **TR TO PR PATHWAY**

As I mentioned in my previous article (January 2026 of *Insight*), the Government of Canada was considering starting a **new** Temporary Resident to Permanent Resident (TR to PR) pathway pilot program geared towards attracting innovative entrepreneurs and keeping specialized temporary foreign skilled workers in Canada who are working in high-demand sectors such as skilled trades and healthcare. Over 2026 and 2027, Canada plans to help to accelerate the transition of up to 33,000 select in-demand temporary workers towards permanent residency. This new TR to PR Pathway pilot program is rumoured to be launched sometime this month (April 2026). At this time of writing (April 4, 2026), no date has been revealed by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Prospective applicants would need to have their documents (i.e, valid passport, proof of valid temporary resident status, proof of Canadian employment, police clearance certificates, Educational Credential Assessment (ECA) report, results of English and/or French language testing) prepared and ready for submission when the program launches as it is expected that it could close shortly after its launch.

### **ASYLUM CLAIMS**

On March 26, 2026 Bill C-12 became law, thus changing the eligibility requirements for asylum claims. This new measure applies to all claims made on or after June 3, 2025 and will result in the reduction of claims already in progress at the Refugee Protection Division (RPD) of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) as well those to be referred to the RPD.

Claims made more than one year after a person's first entry into Canada after June 24, 2020 will be declared as ineligible. Persons who enter Canada at a port of entry anywhere along the Canada-US land border and makes or made a refugee claim 14 days after their entry are also not eligible to make a claim.

### **PARENTS & GRANDPARENTS**

Due to the indefinite pause of the Parent and Grandparent (PGP) sponsorship, many citizens and permanent residents of Canada are looking to bring their parents or grandparents to Canada on an extended visit via a Super Visa, which allows PGP's to visit their biological or adopted children or grandchildren for up to 5 years at a time. On March 31, 2026, IRCC made changes that should make it easier for children and grandchildren (the host) to meet the minimum necessary income (MNI) eligibility criteria. Normally, family income was based strictly on the income of the host and his/her co-signer's income, as reported by CRA. IRCC would now allow the parent/grandparent's income to be taken into consideration when computing the MNI. IRCC is also making an allowance for the host's income to be assessed based on either one of the two taxation years preceding the time of application. This is a significant change as it opens the door for hosts who previously didn't meet the income threshold to finally unite with their loved ones. Check the following link for more info about the super visa

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/visit-canada/parent-grandparent-super-visa.html>

# IMMIGRATION MATTERS

## IMMIGRATION MATTERS: IMMIGRATION UPDATES FOR 2026

Contributed by: Sandra Sutherland, RCIC-IRB

### IRCC FEES

Effective March 31, 2026, the right of citizenship fee increased by \$3.25, and passport application fees also increased slightly. Starting April 1, 2026, IRCC implemented a 30-day guarantee for passport processing. If the passport is not processed within 30 business days, applicants will receive a refund of their fees. On April 30, 2026, permanent residence fees are slated to increase by \$25.00 for most PR applications.

As noted, the Government of Canada has been quite busy putting its efforts towards fine-tuning its immigration system. Its mandate is to strengthen the immigration systems in key areas as changes evolve.

**Sandra Sutherland is a competent authorized immigration representative and counsel** who can represent clients at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), CBSA, 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](mailto:ssutherland@suthernimmigration.com).

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

#### CORPORATION ADDRESS

The Head Office Address of the Corporation is:

The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of  
Toronto Inc.  
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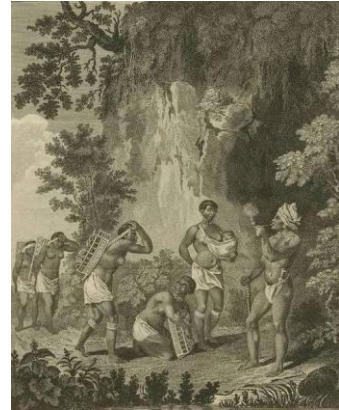
# HAIROUNA HERITAGE

## Exploring Vincentian History & Genealogy

Ever wonder when we stopped being called "British subjects" and started being "Vincentians"? The journey of our identity is as vibrant and resilient as the island itself.

### BEFORE THE NAME

For centuries, our home was Hairouna meaning Land of the Blessed. The people living there were identified by their roots—Kalinago, Garifuna, or early European settlers who were French or British subjects.



**Garifuna People**

### THE "WEST INDIAN" ERA

Throughout the 1800s, after the island formally became a British colony, residents were broadly grouped as "British West Indians." Wealthier colonists often looked toward London for their identity, while the local population began blending African, European, and East Indian traditions into something uniquely ours.



**Sir Sidney Gun-Munro**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Governor General**

### A NATIONAL AWAKENING

The term "Vincentian" truly took hold in the mid-20th century. With the rise of universal suffrage in 1951 and the push for self-governance, a shared sense of pride emerged. We were no longer just living in a colony; we were building a nation.



**Dr. Rosalind E. Ambrose**  
**Radiologist & Scientist**

### 1979 TO TODAY

The identity was officially sealed on October 27, 1979, with Independence. Since then, "Vincentian" (and the affectionate "Vincy") has become a global badge of honor, representing a people of deep history and unstoppable spirit.



**Rhonda Metelsky**  
B.A (Hons) LL.B

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**METELSKY LAW PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION**

Tel: 905-686-1243; Fax: 905-426-6107

230 Westney Rd. South, Suite 501

Ajax, ON L1S 7J5

[www.metelskylaw.com](http://www.metelskylaw.com); Email: [rhonda@metelskylaw.com](mailto:rhonda@metelskylaw.com)

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**REPRESENTATIVES OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES  
OVERSEAS DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS AND CONSULATES**

**SVG HIGH COMMISSION LONDON**

HIGH COMMISSIONER: H.E. Brereton Horne

MINISTER COUNSELLOR: Ms. Jinelle Adams

COUNSELLOR: Ms. Caroline De Freitas

Address: High Commission of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Kingdom

10 Kensington Court, London W8 5DL, ENGLAND

Telephone: 0 44 207 565 2874/2884/2885

Fax: 0 44 207 937 6040/207 937 7397

Email: office@svghighcom.co.uk

**SVG CONSULATE GENERAL - NEW YORK/USA**

CONSUL GENERAL: Mr. Roland Matthews

Address: Consulate General of St. Vincent & the Grenadines

801 Second Avenue, 4th Floor, Suite 401

New York, N.Y. 10017, U.S.A.

Telephone: 1 212 687 4490/4491/4494

Fax: 1 212 949 5946

Email: vinsof@svgconsulateny.org; mail784@svgconsulateny.org

**SVG EMBASSY AND PERMANENT MISSION WASHINGTON D.C. /USA**

AMBASSADOR: H.E. Ms. Lou-Anne Gilchrist

MINISTER CONSELLOR: Mr. Omari Williams

COUNSELLOR: Ms. Akeila Samuel

Address: Permanent Mission of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the Organization of

American States and Embassy to the United States of America

1629 K Street NW., Suite 704, Washington, DC, 20006, U.S.A.

Telephone: 01 202 364 6730

Fax: 01 202 364 6736

Email: mail@embsvg.com

**SVG PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS - NEW YORK**

AMBASSADOR: H.E. Ms. Vynnette Fredericks

DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE: H.E. Nedra Miguel

MINISTER COUNSELLOR: Ms. Janeel Drayton

Address: Permanent Mission of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations

685 Third Avenue, Suite 1108, New York, N.Y. 10017, U.S.A.

Telephone: 01 212 599 0950/0955

Fax: 01-212 599 1020

Email: svgunmission@gmail.com

**REPRESENTATIVES OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES  
OVERSEAS DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS AND CONSULATES**

**SVG EMBASSY – CUBA**

Embajada de San Vicente y las Granadinas

AMBASSADOR: H.E. Ms. Angella Ideisha Jackson

Address: Centro de Negocios Miramar, Edificio Jerusalem, Oficina 403, 4to Piso

Ave. 3ra.y calle 80. Miramar, Playa, Ciudad de la Habana, CUBA

Telephone: 011 537 206 9783

Fax: 011 537 206 9782

Email: embsvghav@gmail.com

**SVG EMBASSY –VENEZUELA**

REPÚBLICA BOLIVARIANA DE VENEZUELA

AMBASSADOR: H.E. Mr. Gareth Bynoe

COUNSELLOR: Maala Theobalds

Address: Embajada de San Vicente y las Granadinas,

Quinta Granadinas,

8va Transversal, entre 2da y 3ra Av.,

Altamira, Municipio Chacao, Caracas

Telephone: 011 58 212 263 8223 (Office)/ 2636025;

Fax: 011 58 212 263 0857

Email: embasvgen@gmail.com

**SVG EMBASSY – REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN)**

Embassy of St. Vincent and the Grenadines

AMBASSADOR: H.E. Mr. Kenton Chance

MINISTER COUNSELLOR: Mr. Elroy Wilson

COUNSELLOR: Ms. Shebby-Ann Dennie

Address: 6th Floor, No. 9, Lane 62

Tien Mu, Shilin District, West Road

Taipei 11157

Telephone: 886 228 771 609

Residence: 886 228 771 619

Fax: 886 228 771 611

Email: svgebassy.tw@gmail.com

**SVG CONSULATE GENERAL - NORTHERN IRELAND**

CONSUL GENERAL: Dr. Christopher G. Stange

Address: Consulate General of St. Vincent and the Grenadines

16 Glen Road, Comber, Co. Down, BT23 5EL, Northern Ireland, UNITED KINGDOM

Telephone: 0 44 28 9187 4697

Fax: 0 44 28 9187 0792

Email: Office: cg@svgconsulate.vc

Direct: stangevc@svgconsulate.vc

Website: www.svgconsulate.vc



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