

December
2021

Volume 3



the **Connection**

Caribbean-American Family Network



Letter from The President

**INSIDE
Winter events**

CAFN- NEWSLETTER

In 2021, Covid continued to present organizations with challenges — when will we return to 'normal'? We are no different. We have missed our signature events such as our summer 'Stay Connected' Picnic and, at this time of year, our 'It's the Birthday of the King party.

Back in January, we hosted a Zoom Townhall meeting, and we heard from YOU!

Our agile Board of Directors pivoted from the 'normal' and planned a series of smaller group events - and while maintaining required protocols - our CAFN family did not miss a beat and Stay Connected!

Stay Connected

- January -Caribbean-American Brunch
 - June -Jewelry Making Party & Fundraiser
 - August - CAFN NexGen Beach Party
 - September -Old-Time Game Night
 - September - Apple Picking/Corn Maze Run
 - December - Chicago Stage Play evening
- Amid all of us - YOUR love for our Caribbean homelands, YOUR generosity, and YOUR Faith were on display. When a volcano erupted in St Vincent, you rose to the call, joined in and 6 barrels were shipped to St Vincent to support over 250 people at a shelter along with 200 masks to Barbados to address volcanic ash. Again, YOUR heartfelt donations purchased 6 laptops to address the digital divide, which caused children to struggle with e-learning due to the impact of Covid. Four (4) laptops were delivered to Jamaica and 2 will be delivered to Barbados. Our 2 Drives for the Islands was a great success due to YOU!

Throughout all of this, I was reminded that we are far more elastic than we think- especially when we are serving others! This elasticity - the extra space we find in our lives that I witnessed among YOUR faces and teams as we worked and served together, was filled with a spirit of joy and servanthood - lots of laughter, smiles and now new stories to share. That is what Faith, Family, Community, Culture & Outreach is all about. It starts with YOU.... And YOU are CAFN!

Hasana Sisco (CAFN President)

During this special Christmas Season in lieu of our signature party, we embarked upon a "Season of Service" to our local community.

- Northern Illinois Food Bank - 11/11 (14 participants)
- Samaritan's Purse- 12/7 (9 participants)
- Care Bags for the Homeless 12/11- 100 - these went to Elgin One Collective & Pacific Garden Mission

Finally, our Executive decided that we wanted to show some extra TLC to a special segment of our CAFN Community - our elders, those who have suffered loss, those who have not been able to participate fully due to illness- approx 14 families.

We were able to take Poinsettias and cards to the homes of our CAFN family.

Despite all the challenges, whether Covid or otherwise, this amazing CAFN Board continued to see opportunities. Further, I remain impressed by our emerging CAFN NexGen leaders. Nuff Respect!

Coming Events

In January, we will host a CAFN town hall meeting. We want to hear from you and would love to update you on what you can continue to expect from CAFN in 2022!

Barbados Independence

On Nov 30, 2021, Barbados celebrated its 55th year of independence, officially became a republic and swore in its first president, Dame Sandra Maso. While the Queen has been officially removed as the head of state, the island will remain a part of the commonwealth, a voluntary association of 54 countries with roots in the British Empire. To celebrate this historic occasion, a group of Bajans living here in the Chicagoland area gathered for an evening of food, fellowship and festivities. Our group was small, but the excitement was large as we celebrated the independence of our little island in the sun.

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(630) 701-4817



cafnevents@gmail.com



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