



Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs



ANNUAL REPORT
2012





MISSION

The Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs advises the Governor and state government agencies to expand their outreach and ensure greater access, to serve as a resource to increase the economic, educational, health, political, and social well-being of the Caribbean community of Maryland.

VISION

The Commission envisions an increasingly influential and empowered Caribbean community that proactively engages government and other civic institutions to increase opportunities and open more paths to progress.

Many Cultures. One Community. One Maryland





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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR



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TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

A MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to present to you the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs' first Annual Report. This report will chronicle and highlight the major accomplishments and efforts made by this Commission in 2012. I am incredibly proud of the members of this Commission, who throughout this first year have shown enthusiasm, and undertaken this task with unbridled energy as they represent and help us reach out to the Caribbean community. The Caribbean community in Maryland consists of people from Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti and other major English-speaking islands. In this report you will also find updates on important demographic indicators of a community that continues to flourish and contribute to the progress of our great state.

We maintain that in Maryland diversity is our greatest strength, and our state's Caribbean community is a strong partner in moving Maryland forward. Together we will continue to support the vibrant growth of all of Maryland's ethnic communities.

Sincerely,

Martin O'Malley
Governor



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The Governor's Office of Community Initiatives (GOCI) coordinates community and volunteer activities statewide and advises the Governor on policies to enhance and improve community programs. This office coordinates outreach to ethnic communities across Maryland through the Commissions of GOCI which includes the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs. Aside from our Ethnic Commissions, the other outreach units within GOCI include the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism, Volunteer Maryland and community outreach in cooperation with the Governor's Intergovernmental Affairs Office which all serve the Executive Branch of Maryland government.

In 2008, Governor Martin O'Malley signed into law HB782, which received unanimous support in the Maryland House of Delegates and the Maryland State Senate. This action codified the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, making the Ethnic Commissions an integral part of the Governor's Office. Doing so demonstrates the importance of all of our Commissions, while making the resources and activities of the Governor's Office available to all.

We began the process of expanding representation and leadership within the Administration to other important ethnic communities in our state, after the 2010 Census illustrated a growth within these populations. We are pleased to have made history by signing the Executive Order creating the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs, the first of its kind in the nation, comprised of key leaders from the fields of business, healthcare, education, government and community advocacy groups. Under the leader of Commission Chair Ambassador Curtis Ward of Jamaica, this talented and experienced group of professionals will provide guidance to help better serve this community. We look to them as dependable advisors to the Governor and state agencies.

This report is reflective of this historic moment of creating and forming the Commission on Caribbean Affairs. We welcome their enthusiasm and commitment to serve and we look forward to working with you to ensure the Caribbean community of Maryland continues to prosper in our great state.

Israel C. "Izzy" Patoka
Executive Director
Governor's Office of Community Initiatives



A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSION CHAIR

We are pleased to share with you this Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs 2012 Annual Report which highlights the creation and scope of work for our new Commission. With the support of our Governor, state agencies, and community partners we look to expand opportunity to Maryland's Caribbean population. We are committed in contributing to Governor O'Malley's vision of One Maryland; an increasingly empowered community that is a vibrant part of our state.

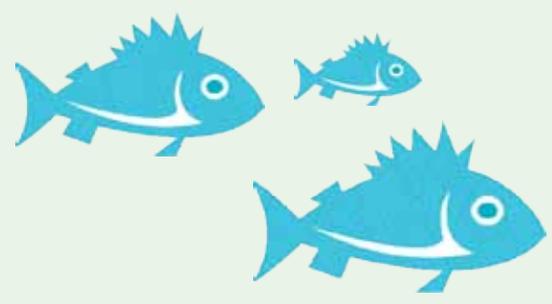
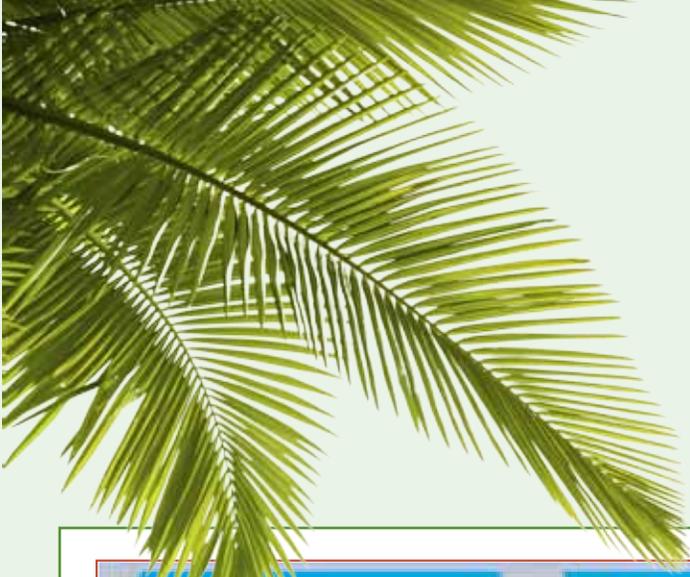
This Commission's objectives are very clear and especially important for many community stakeholders. Maryland state government leaders will look to us for advice on many issues regarding our community and our Governor and Lt. Governor will look to us for representation and outreach into our community. Our community's leadership networks will look to us for closer access to our state leaders, but most importantly—our community will look to us to be both representatives and advocates for its concerns and needs.

Governor O'Malley continues to focus on job creation, and protecting our quality of life. In serving as the bridge so that these efforts reach the Caribbean community of Maryland—we will strengthen our relationships with many of our leaders in state agencies and enhance our collaborative efforts with community partners. We have been emboldened by the engagement we continue to see with our Caribbean foreign dignitaries who are increasingly curious to visit and learn about us, our working model, and of our state's achievements in education, entrepreneurship, and innovation.

Our most important work however, will continue to be to serve as strong advocates for our Governor's "policies of dignity," that demonstrate that there is no such thing as a spare Marylander. This Commission knows that they are here not just because they have an impressive body of work within our community, but primarily because we are confident that we will invest our time and effort to help collectively address the needs of Caribbean Americans across Maryland. We are encouraged by the full support of our Governor in serving in this role, but I also want to thank our Commissioners for their willingness and commitment to serve—I look forward to working closely with each and every one of you.

On behalf of our entire Commission on Caribbean Affairs, I want to thank Governor Martin O'Malley, Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown, the entire Administration, and the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives for their constant support and shared vision—one which facilitates our ability to help expand opportunity and help protect Maryland's Caribbean working families.

Ambassador Curtis Ward, Chair
Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs





COMMISSIONERS

Ambassador Curtis Ward, Chair (Jamaica, Montgomery County)

- Former Ambassador of Jamaica to the United Nations (Security Council),
- Adjunct Professorial Lecturer, George Washington University/Elliott School of International Affairs; and Adjunct Professor, University of the District of Columbia
- Chairman, Caribbean Research & Policy Center

Dr. Joseph Baptiste, Vice Chair (Haiti, Howard County)

- Colonel USAR Ret.
- President JB Dental Implant Center
- Chairman/Founder National Organization For the Advancement of Haitians (NOAH)

Donald Bridgeman (Grenada, Prince George's County)

- Former Director, Human Resources Management, Prince George's County Government
- Past Executive Director, Access Housing, Inc., Washington, DC

Gabriel Christian, Esq. (Dominica, Prince George's County)

- Trial Lawyer with Gabriel J. Christian and Associates, LLC
- Founder of Renewable Energy Alliance (now Sustainable Star, LLC)
- President of the Dominica Association of Washington DC, 1992-1998

Dr. Karen Francis (Jamaica, Montgomery County)

- Senior Researcher, American Institutes for Research (AIR)(2005- present)
- Ph.D., Howard University, Sociology, Concentration: Medical Sociology
- American Sociological Association (2006 – present)

Neil Mattei (Trinidad and Tobago, Baltimore County)

- Radio Host, WEAA, Morgan State Radio
- Co-Founder of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Baltimore
- Advisory Board Member of DC Carnival Association and Caribbean Association of Baltimore



Shanta Ramson, Esq. (Guyana, Montgomery County)

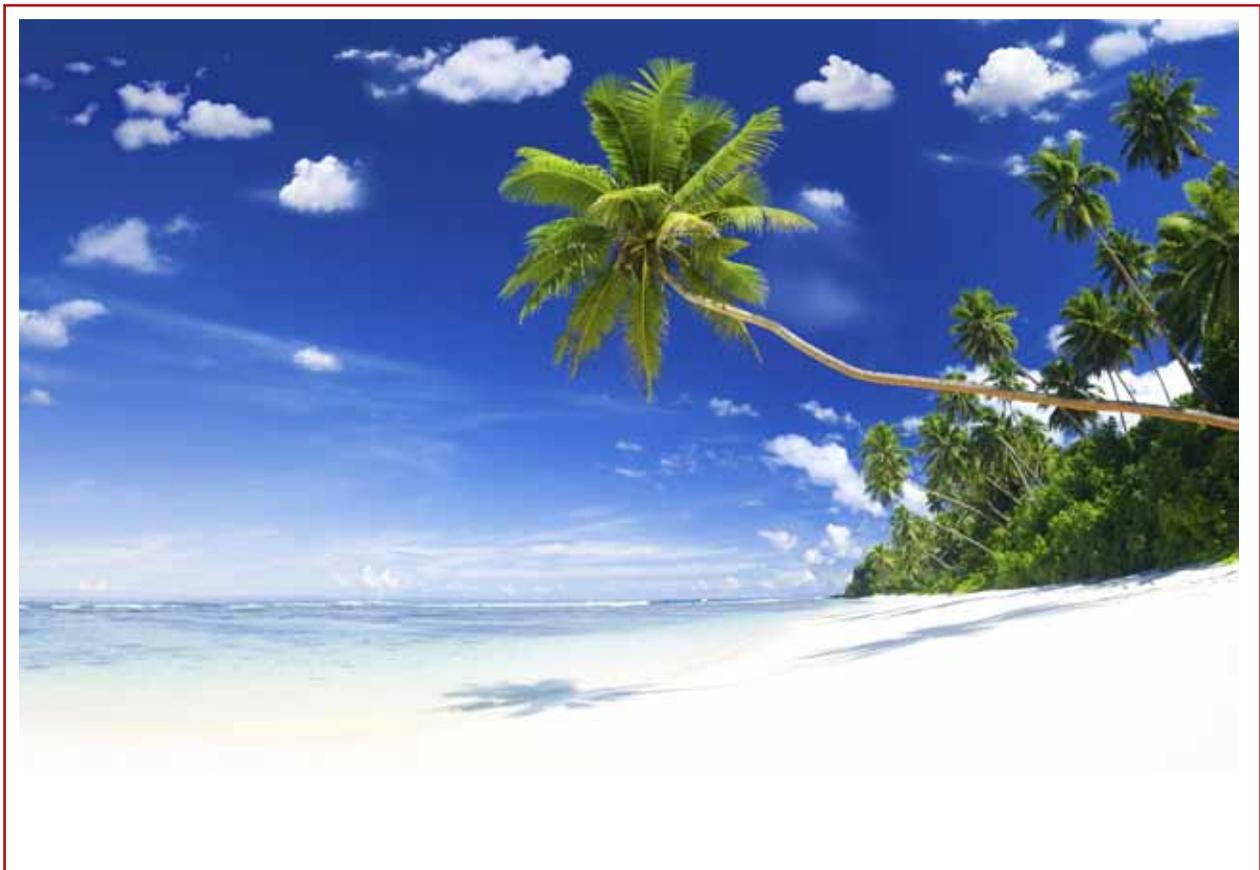
- Partner, Law Offices of Ramson & Associates/Ramson & Asher, LLC
- Board Member, Caribbean Research and Policy Center

Dr. Ludmilla Wikkeling – Scott (Suriname, Montgomery County)

- President, Public Health Alumni Chapter, Morgan State University
- CEO, The Bryant Group, LLC
- Project Coordinator, Suriname Telehealth Exchange Platform

Suzanne Matthews Williams (Guyana , Prince George’s County)

- Program Manager, Recreational Therapist with United Medical Center
- Board Member-2010-2013: Caribbean American Intercultural Organization
- Artist Director- 1997-present:, La Musicale DanceWorks





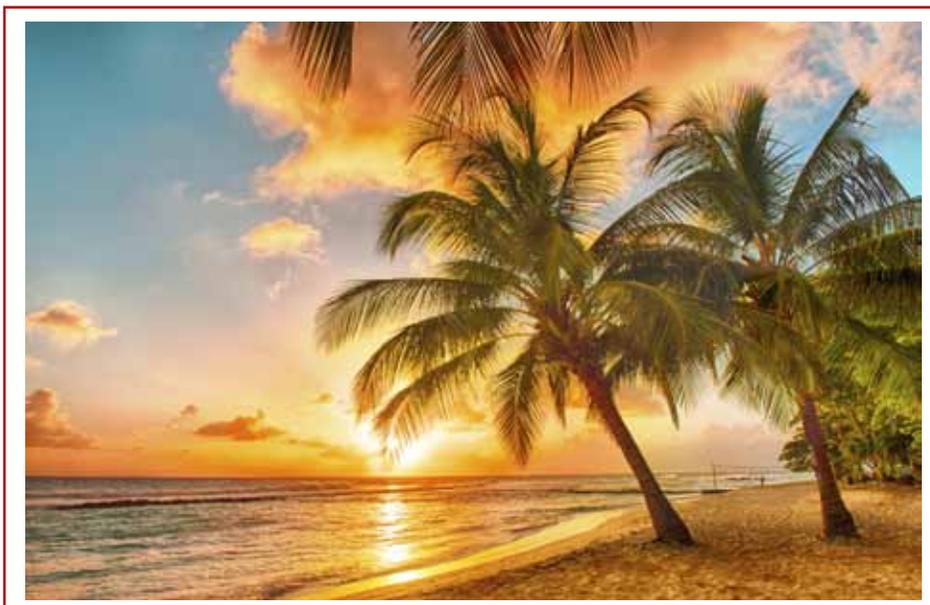
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This year was the inaugural year for the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs. For the first time in Maryland, Caribbean community leaders were appointed by the Governor to represent the growing Caribbean community in Maryland. In the past, the potential of this community was not fully engaged. The 2010 Census provided a better understanding of the Caribbean community's growing needs and capacity. For some time, leaders of the Caribbean community had been seeking greater community recognition and access to state government and the services it provided. Governor O'Malley's interest in engaging growing communities spurred the effort to expand outreach to the Caribbean community. This convergence of interest of the state and the community created the catalyst for what would become the first Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs, created by Executive Order on June 6, 2012, the first of its kind in the United States.

This Caribbean Commission consists of nine members appointed by the Governor to advise him and state agencies on issues facing the Caribbean community in Maryland such as education, health, safety, youth engagement, business development and entrepreneurship, and overall welfare and policy. In 2012, the Commission began to establish a strong infrastructure and embarked on the process of establishing goals and objectives as set by the charter stated in the Governor's Executive Order.

In 2012, the Caribbean Commission reviewed the achievements of its sister Commissions in order to find similar pathways for it to best serve the Caribbean families of Maryland. In the upcoming year, the Commission is looking to replicate some of the work of its Sister Commissions while creating new pathways for engagement and progress for the Caribbean community in the state of Maryland.

The addition of the Caribbean Affairs Commission to the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives is another important step in bringing Governor O' Malley's vision of One Maryland to reality. The creation of this Commission provides an important avenue for the Caribbean community to work together with the state of Maryland in order to move the state and the Caribbean community forward.
middleeastern.maryland.gov.



2012 HIGHLIGHTS

January - May



Research and interviews to create the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs

June



Historic Signing by Governor O'Malley of the Executive Order creating the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs



Reception Commemorating Caribbean Heritage Month in Annapolis, celebration of creation of the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs

July



Inaugural Meeting and First Strategic Planning Session to build Commission infrastructure and objectives in Rockville

December



Joint Commissions Assembly – First Report of the Commission to Governor O'Malley





HISTORIC SIGNING

Historic Signing by Governor O'Malley of the Executive Order creating the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs

Governor O' Malley signed an Executive Order on June 6, 2012 creating the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs. Working with the Lieutenant Governor's Office, the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives conducted research using Census data and community interviews with legislative leaders to determine the need for a Commission for the Caribbean community. Ambassador Curtis Ward was selected as Chair along with eight other Commission members. The Commission will represent member states of CARICOM and islands/countries in the Caribbean that are not covered by any other Governor's ethnic commissions.

The creation of this commission is historic not only because it is the first in Maryland's history, but also the first of its kind in the entire nation. The creation of the Caribbean Commission in Maryland has spurred the study and the creation of similar efforts in other states. The Caribbean Commission received congratulatory notes from several community stakeholders from around the country including New York and Florida, stressing the need for similar networks for their state leaders. The creation of the Caribbean Commission recognizes the numerous contributions of the growing Caribbean community in Maryland and the importance of further developing a relationship with the state.





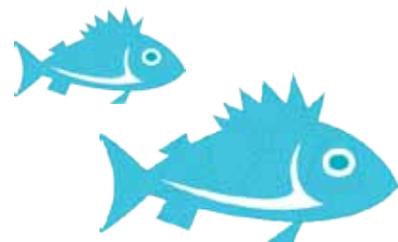
HISTORIC SIGNING





Reception Commemorating Caribbean Heritage Month in Annapolis and the creation of the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs

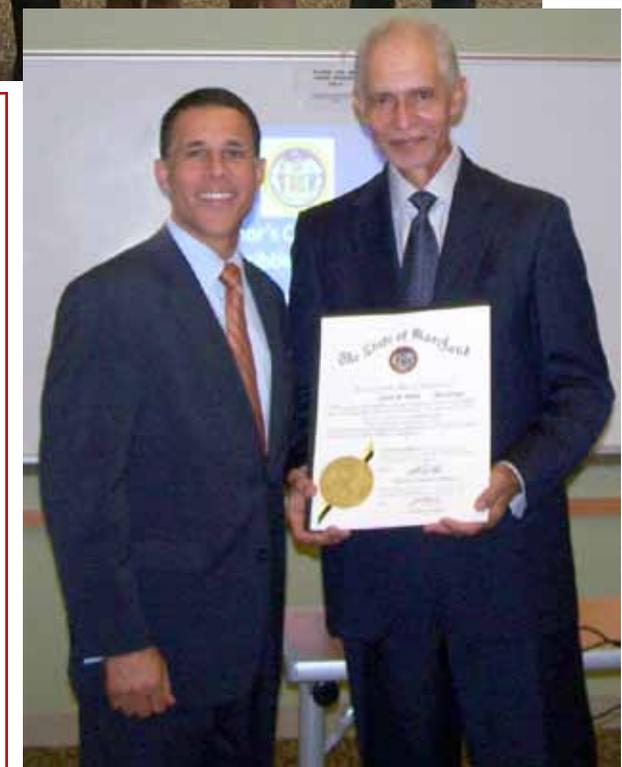
After Governor O'Malley and Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown signed the historic Executive Order creating the Caribbean Commission, a reception followed at the Banneker – Douglass Museum for African American History and Culture. The reception was attended by close to 100 leaders and guests of the Caribbean community of Maryland. Caribbean food and Caribbean music accompanied the celebration where Commission Chair Curtis Ward, Governor's Office of Community Initiatives' Executive Director Izzy Patoka, and a few other special guests had the opportunity to address those in attendance.





Inaugural Meeting with Lt. Governor Brown and First Strategic Planning Session to build Commission infrastructure

The Governor's Caribbean Affairs Commission's first commission meeting was on July 23, 2012. Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown congratulated and presented appointment citations to the nine new commissioners. At the meeting, commissioners were informed by GOCI staff on activities and internal infrastructure of the other ethnic commissions in order to help the Caribbean Commission plan for the upcoming year. Topics included the importance of subcommittees and successful events hosted by sister commissions.





Inaugural Meeting with Lt. Governor Brown and First Strategic Planning Session to build Commission infrastructure





Caribbean Commission - Subcommittees

1. Each committee shall be chaired or co-chaired by a member or members of the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs.
2. Each committee will work closely and in collaboration with the Governor's
3. In addition to the chairs and co-chairs (commission members), each committee shall include members of the Caribbean community who are not members of the commission.
4. Each committee will engage the development and use of technology as appropriate in furthering its programs and activities.
5. In all circumstances, each committee will work closely and in collaboration with already established Caribbean organizations and groups in the state of Maryland, as appropriate, and where applicable with non-Maryland state Caribbean organizations and groups.

Health, Human Security, and Community Development Committee ***Chair: Dr. Karen Francis; Vice-Chair: Dr. Ludmilla Wikkeling-Scott***

The Committee will address issues related to health, well-being, and human security impacting the Caribbean community in the state of Maryland, including:

- Identifying strategies to affect wellness through access to preventative and follow-up health care
- Developing strategies to effectively address health and behavioral health care disparities
- Ensuring awareness of issues affecting human security and access to resources accordingly
- Addressing issues affecting the quality of life, including issues related to the housing crisis
- Working to highlight opportunities to affect positively on community development, civic responsibility, advocacy, and engagement
- Working closely and in collaboration with Caribbean and other organizations in the state of Maryland in developing and effecting policies and programs relevant to the community
- Promoting collaboration between healthcare providers and institutions in, and of the state of Maryland with their counterparts in the Caribbean, and developing programs of mutual benefit to the state and the Caribbean



Education, Youth, & Workforce Development Committee

Chair: Gabriel Christian, Esq.; Vice-Chair: Suzanne Williams Matthews

The Committee will focus on issues that address the educational needs of the Caribbean community in Maryland (K-12 and post-high school education), including:

- Developing programs to inform and assist members of the Caribbean Community, ensuring their access to educational opportunities at state and private institutions at all levels;
- Addressing special needs of new immigrants, in particular K-12 immigrant students, including: developing awareness programs, addressing cultural adjustment issues, and facilitating their access to appropriate educational resources and institutions
- Developing awareness and assistance programs as appropriate to assist Caribbean international students in understanding the intricacies of U.S. immigration laws and their effect on student life in Maryland, including engaging Caribbean student bodies on the campuses of institutions of higher learning in the state of Maryland
- Promoting and facilitating positive educational outcomes for members of the Caribbean community
- Addressing issues specific to the development of the Caribbean youth cohort in collaboration with state and local governments
- Workforce development, including access to training and other resources at the post-high school level
- Working closely with Caribbean and other organizations in the state of Maryland in developing and effecting policies and programs relevant to the community



International Outreach, Scientific Exchange, & Trade Development Committee Chair: Dr. Joseph Baptiste; Vice-Chair: Donald Bridgeman

The Committee, in collaboration with the relevant Maryland state and Caribbean officials, will focus on developing and effecting programs which:

- Promote international outreach by the state of Maryland and local governments in the state of Maryland with Caribbean countries to develop programs of mutual benefit to the state of Maryland and the countries of the Caribbean
- Promote two-way trading relationships between the state of Maryland and the countries of the Caribbean
- Promote tourism travel between the state of Maryland and countries of the Caribbean, including promoting Maryland as a destination for Caribbean visitors to the United States, and vice versa
- Promote scientific exchanges and research between relevant Maryland state government, educational institutions, public and private institutions, and programs and their counterparts in the Caribbean
- Encourage members of the Caribbean business and professional communities in the state of Maryland to share their knowledge and expertise with the countries of the Caribbean

Business and Entrepreneurial Development Committee Chair: Donald Bridgeman; Vice-Chair: Shanta Ramson, Esq.

The Committee in collaboration with the relevant Maryland state officials will focus on developing and effecting programs which:

- Promote opportunities for Caribbean businesses in the state of Maryland, including access to and opportunities for state and local procurement



- Promote awareness of and access to state, county, and municipal business development programs and resources
- Promote organization of the Caribbean business and professional communities as an entity for promoting business and professional development and linkages, and for networking with other Caribbean and non-Caribbean businesses in the state of Maryland
- Promote Caribbean entrepreneurship and access to business start-up and support programs, including access to public and private financing
- Work closely and in collaboration with Maryland state and local business development departments and entities in raising awareness of their programs in the Caribbean business community
- Promote linkages between Caribbean businesses in Maryland with businesses in the Caribbean, including trade linkages and sharing of technology

Culture, Sports, & Human Development Committee

Chair: Suzanne Williams Matthews; Vice-Chair: Neil Mattei*

The Committee will focus on issues that address areas of culture, sports and recreation, and other areas which promote human development and ensure propagation of Caribbean heritage in the state of Maryland, including support for programs which:

- Promote Caribbean culture as a part of the cultural mosaic within the state of Maryland, through collaboration with Caribbean national, ethnic, and cultural groups
- Promote development of sporting activities among Caribbean youth and adult communities
- Promote cultural and sporting exchanges between the sporting and cultural communities of the Caribbean and the state of Maryland
- Promote development of sporting and cultural talent within the Caribbean community in the state
- Provide support for showcasing Caribbean culture in the state of Maryland





*Neil Mattei serves as Communication Director for the Committees.

2012 Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs Public Meetings

Public meetings are free and open to the public

Inaugural Meeting and First Strategic Planning Session

Monday, July 23, 2012
Rockville Memorial Library
21 Maryland Ave
Rockville, Maryland

Strategic Planning Session Wrap-up and Health Committee Briefing

Thursday, September 20, 2012
Laurel-Beltsville Senior Activity Center
7120 Contee Rd
Laurel, MD

Joint Commissions and Community Partners Assembly and First Commission Report to Governor O'Malley

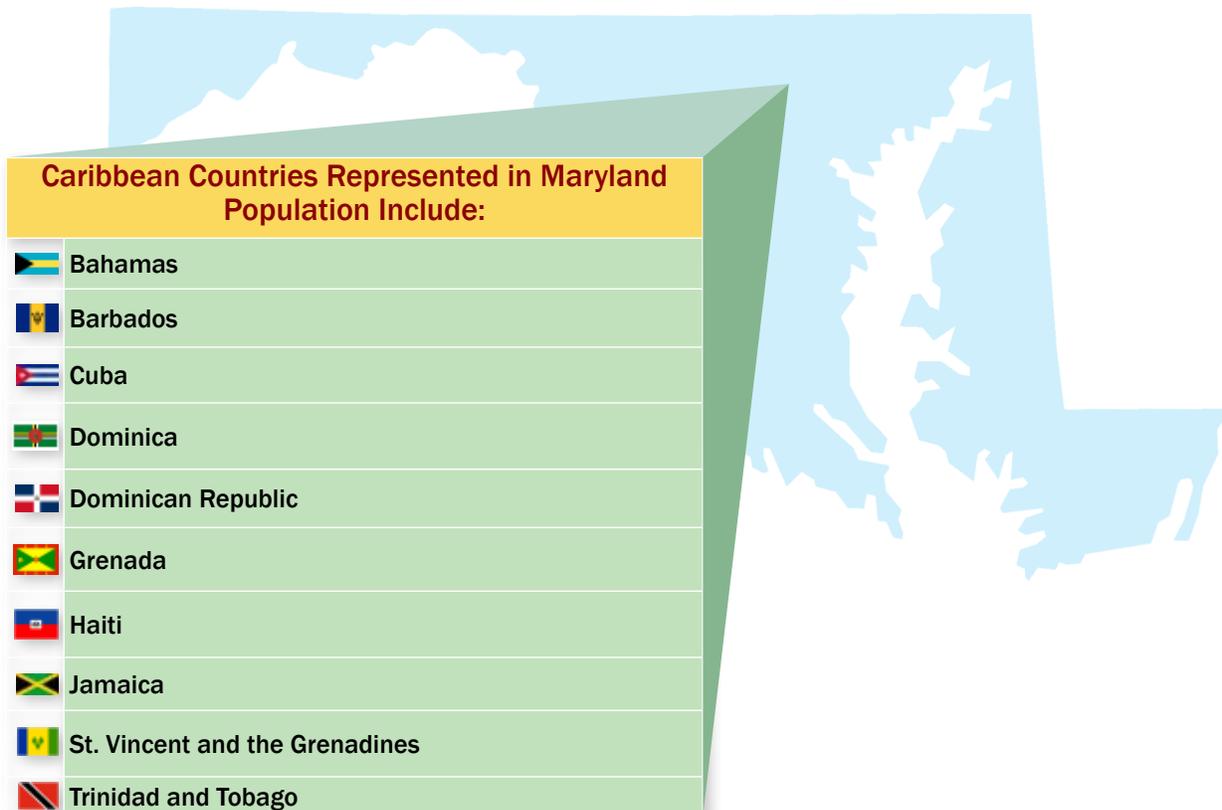
M&T Bank Stadium
Baltimore, Maryland





Demographic Snapshot of the Caribbean Population of Maryland

Total Caribbean Population in Maryland (56,820)	
Largest Group with the Caribbean Community	Jamacians (21,813)
Largest concentration of Jamacians	Prince George's County (8,500)
	Baltimore County (4,164)
	Montgomery County (3,700)
2nd Largest Group with the Caribbean Community	Trinidad and Tobago (10,985)
Largest concentration of Trinidadians and Tobagonians	Prince George's County (3,751)
	Baltimore City (2,038)
	Baltimore County (1,949)
3rd Largest Group with the Caribbean Community	Barbados (1,394)
Largest concentration of Barbadians	Prince George's County (334)
	Montgomery County (250)
	Baltimore County (222)



Source: 2008-2010 American Community Survey (3-year)

Executive Order Creating the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs

EXECUTIVE ORDER

01.01.2012.____

Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs

- WHEREAS,** The State of Maryland has a growing Caribbean population, and the State has an interest in helping to maximize the potential of its constituent citizenry;
- WHEREAS,** There is a need to continue to expand outreach that will engage individuals and organizations in the Caribbean community in partnerships with State government in promoting their social, cultural, and business interests, with a particular focus on community development;
- WHEREAS,** Issues affecting the Caribbean community, including economic, workforce, and business development, require the attention of multiple agencies across State government;
- WHEREAS,** The contributions of the growing Caribbean community to the State of Maryland have been numerous, and the Caribbean community has been a valuable asset to the State;
- WHEREAS,** Education, civic participation, and leadership opportunities continue to be highly important issues to the growing Caribbean community in the State of Maryland;
- WHEREAS,** There is a need for increased public awareness and public education on issues that are important to the Caribbean community in the State of Maryland;
- WHEREAS,** This Administration has determined that issues related to the Caribbean community are best addressed at the highest level of the Executive Branch; and
- WHEREAS,** The Administration wants to emphasize its commitment to the Caribbean people of Maryland by creating the Commission, housing the Commission in the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, and focusing the Commission on issues related to community development.
- NOW, THEREFORE,** I, MARTIN O'MALLEY, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF MARYLAND, PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:
- A.** There is a Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs in the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives as described in Executive Order 01.01.2007.25.
- B.** The Commission shall consist of the following members:
- (1)** Nine members appointed by the Governor. The members appointed by the Governor shall reflect the diverse ancestry and national origins of the Caribbean community of Maryland, shall provide representation from different geographic regions in the State, and may also include experts on issues important to the State's Caribbean population.
 - (2)** Appointed members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor for up to two consecutive four-year terms.
 - (3)** The Governor shall designate a Chairperson from among the members of the Commission. The Chairperson shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Chairperson shall be responsible for creating subcommittees to carry out the functions of the Commission.

- (4) In the event of a vacancy on the Commission, the Governor shall appoint a successor.

C. Procedures.

- (1) The Commission shall meet at the call of the Chairperson at least four times each year. Notice of meetings shall be published to encourage public attendance.
- (2) A majority of Commission members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business.
- (3) The Commission may adopt such other procedures and by-laws as may be necessary to ensure the orderly transaction of business.
- (4) By June 30 of each year, the Commission shall submit an annual report to the Governor detailing its activities in the preceding calendar year, along with any appropriate recommendations.

D. Expenses.

Members of the Commission may not receive any compensation for their services but may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their duties in accordance with the Standard State Travel Regulations and as provided in the State budget.

E. Operational Support.

The Governor's Office of Community Initiatives shall provide support as needed to the Commission.

F. Duties.

The Commission shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- (1) Serve as an advisory body to the Governor and agencies within the Executive Department on matters relating to the Caribbean population of Maryland, including matters relating to economic, workforce, and business development;
- (2) Identify needs or problems affecting the Caribbean population and develop appropriate responses and strategies;
- (3) Conduct outreach to Caribbean groups and communities in the State and communicate information to them concerning public and private programs that are beneficial to their interests;
- (4) Review and comment on any proposed federal, State, or local legislation, regulations, policies, or programs that affect the Caribbean population of Maryland;
- (5) Generally comment and make appropriate recommendations on matters affecting the health, safety, and welfare of the Caribbean population of Maryland; and
- (6) Perform any other duties that may be requested by the Governor.

GIVEN Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland, in the City of Annapolis this 6th Day of June, 2012.

- 

Martin O'Malley
Governor



Anthony Brown
Lieutenant Governor

ATTEST:

John McDonough
Secretary of State



<http://www.caribbean.maryland.gov>

Maryland.gov Phone Directory State Agencies Online Services

 THE GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON
CARIBBEAN AFFAIRS



Find services, agencies and more 

HOME CALENDAR RESOURCES CONTACT US

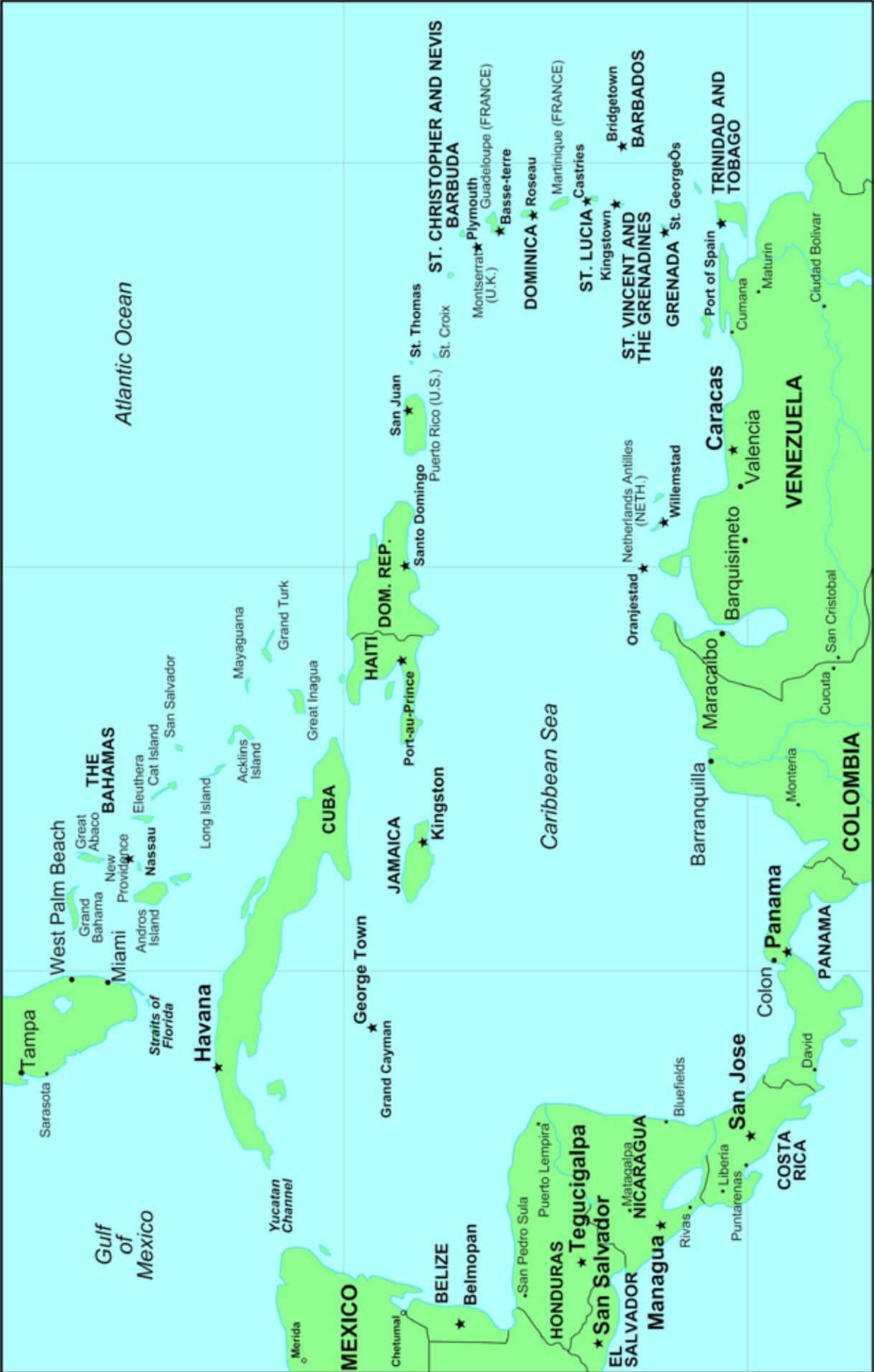
About Us

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Ethnic Commissions

- > African
- > African American
- > American Indian
- > Asian American
- > Caribbean
- > Hispanic
- > Middle Eastern American
- > South Asian American





Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs

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<http://caribbean.maryland.gov>(Website)

Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
Israel C. "Izzy" Patoka, Executive Director,
Governor's Office of Community Initiatives
Jonathan Jayes-Green, Administrative Director

