



The Jamaican community in Atlanta, Georgia in the United States, brought the curtains down on Jamaica's 50<sup>th</sup> independence anniversary celebrations on January 19, honouring more than 30 persons who have given stellar service in education, health, law, media, social services, business and religion.

Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Stephen Vasciannie, lauded the awardees for their "sterling contributions" and for exemplifying "the hard work for which Jamaicans in the Diaspora are renowned".

Just over 300 guests attended the Jamaica 50 Planning Committee Awards Ceremony at the Atlanta City Hall Atrium in downtown Atlanta, where the owner of Vibes Nightclub, Howard Shirley, was honoured for his contribution to business. Past President of the Kingston College Old Boys Association's Atlanta Chapter, Glen Laman, was also honoured for his contribution to community.

The other awardees included:

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Dr. Chris Parker (Culture)

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Dr. Karen Russell-Randall (Education)

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Monty Montgomery (Entertainment)

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Dr. Noel Erskine (Religion)

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Mrs. Marjorie Wilson (Healthcare)

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Allan Alberga (Law and Justice)

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Dr. Paul Abrahams (Media)

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Mr. Copeland Comrie (Social Services)

-

Mr. Frank Watson (Sports)

The Ambassador said they had made outstanding contributions in continuing to keep the Jamaican flag flying high. He described them as “distinguished women and men who have, in many instances, placed community and collective spirit at the forefront of their thoughts and actions.”



He also had high praises for the Jamaica 50 Atlanta Planning Committee and Jamaica’s Honorary Consul to Atlanta, Vin Martin, for planning a wide range of yearlong activities to celebrate Jamaica’s 50<sup>th</sup> year of independence from Britain.

Renowned Jamaican songbird, Karen Smith, had the audience spellbound as she took them down memory lane with her various renditions.