



The FCLE is Part of the Central Bank of Barbados' Legacy

Remarks by **Deputy Governor Alwyn Jordan** at the 24th Frank Collymore Literary
Endowment Competition Awards Ceremony
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Let me start by saying that it is wonderful to be able to welcome you back to this venue for the 24th annual Frank Collymore Literary Endowment Competition awards ceremony.

While the pandemic has prevented us from having a full audience to celebrate with the winners, there is still something special about recognising excellence in Barbadian writing, in a venue named in honour of one of this nation's most noted and loved authors. And as I look out at our finalists, I'm sure that Mr. Collymore would be very proud of the aspiring writers and poets here, who are seeking to uphold his legacy.

I will say more about this later in my remarks, but let me commend all of the writers here tonight, both those who have entered the competition and those of you who strive through your hard work and dedication to educate all of us on the unique features and aspects of Barbadian life.

We are especially pleased to host this event in January, as this year marks the Bank's golden anniversary, which we celebrate under the theme ***"Living the Legacy; Continuing the Journey."***

Our theme represents both a reflection of the Bank's accomplished – and some may add distinguished – history, as well as the understanding that we cannot rest on our laurels, but rather we must always strive to build on our past achievements.

One of the things that makes the Central Bank of Barbados unique, is that from the outset, we recognised the need to be more than the traditional definition of a central bank. We understood that while fostering an economic and financial environment that leads to sustainable economic growth is our goal, we could and should be more for our community as this would invariably help us achieve our mission.

At the official opening of our headquarters in 1986, our founding Governor, the late Sir Courtney Blackman, acknowledged this fact, noting that *"no economy can be effectively managed unless the members of that society want it to be so."*

He went on to explain that it was important that the Bank be a part of and not apart from the society it was created to serve. Indeed, in his speech he stated, and I quote:

"We feel it important then, that the Central Bank be perceived as serving the community and not as being against the community. We feel it important to share our facilities with the public and use them for the cultural and general upliftment of all Barbadians."

It is no surprise then, that the Frank Collymore Literary Endowment, including this competition, has been a part of the Bank's identity for the last 24 years. It was our fourth Governor, Mr. Winston Cox, who endorsed the idea of having this type of competition in 1997, as part of the Bank's 25th anniversary celebrations. And all of the Governors since that time, have also seen the need to continue to build on Sir Courtney's vision of the Bank, by maintaining their support for this competition.

In the almost quarter century that has followed, the FCLE, through its programmes, has helped to develop Barbados' literary tradition, and via its annual competition, has celebrated and rewarded the talents of both established and emerging Barbadian writers.

We are proud to say that over the years, winning this competition has become a gauge of whether a work is of high enough calibre to merit being published – which is quite a legacy!

In this regard, we must therefore commend the FCLE committee, for the rigour with which you carry out your duties as adjudicators of this competition, as well as the assistance and the advice you extend to the writers to improve their craft. Because of your efforts we are confident that the literary arts in Barbados will continue to thrive.

Let me take a moment to, on behalf of the Bank, express our heartfelt thanks to our outgoing Chair, Ms. Esther Philips, for her yeoman service over the years, and I extend a warm welcome to our new Chair, Mr. Andy Taitt.

At the beginning of my remarks, I lamented that the ongoing pandemic has prevented us from celebrating our finalists as we would like. At the same time, however, it has provided us with the opportunity to accept applications from further afield in a digital format, which has opened up the competition to submissions from Barbadians across the diaspora.

This augurs well for the future of the FCLE awards, as it will potentially offer greater competition and more diverse perspectives from our entrants, both of which are important, as we continue on our journey of elevating the literary arts in Barbados.

Let me conclude by extending congratulations in advance to tonight's winners. And to those entrants who were not successful on this occasion, I encourage you to continue to develop and hone your craft, as you will ultimately reap the rewards of your efforts.

To our audience, both in-person and online, thank you for supporting Barbadian literature, and we encourage you to stay tuned to our social media channels to learn how you can become a part of our golden anniversary celebrations.

Thank you, and on behalf of the Central Bank family, I wish you all the best for 2022.