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JAMAICA ANNOUNCES DIANA WINTERS AS 2023 EDITH BAXTER MEMORIAL AWARD WINNER

*Destination Jamaica and Baxter family celebrate Edith Baxter Memorial Award finalists
at luncheon event in Toronto*



Above: Jamaica's Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett (centre right), is joined on stage by grand prize winner, Diana Winters (centre), at the 2023 Edith Baxter Memorial Award luncheon in Toronto on September 22. Additional esteemed guests included (from left) Donovan White, Director of Tourism, JTB; Ron Fanfair, award nominee; Sandra Whiting, award nominee; Dave McLaughlin, award nominee; Wendy McClung, Executive Vice President, Baxter Media; Simone Smith, award nominee; Maureen Barnes-Smith, Vice President Sales and Marketing, Unique Vacations (Canada); Dina Bertolo, Vice President Product Development, Air Canada Vacations; Angella Bennett, Regional Director, Canada, JTB.

TORONTO, ON – SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 – The [Jamaica Tourist Board](#) (JTB) honoured the life and legacy of one of Canada's greatest publishing icons during the 2023 [Edith](#)

[Baxter Memorial Award](#) luncheon hosted at the Toronto Board of Trade on Friday, September 22.

Long-time travel industry representative Diana Winters was named the grand prize winner of the 2023 Edith Baxter Memorial Award, which celebrates individuals who elevate Jamaica within their communities. Winters was recognized for her outstanding efforts in advocating for the destination throughout her professional career and in her humanitarian efforts.

The Edith Baxter Memorial Award judging panel praised Winters for her unwavering support of Jamaica during her time working in the industry as a travel advisor, and in her roles with tour operators and hoteliers. Winters was also extolled for her numerous independent philanthropic initiatives to encourage support for the people of Jamaica, including philanthropic trips for Canadian travel agents to build homes and schools on the island, fundraising for local medical clinics, and a donation drive she personally organized during the pandemic to collect tablets, laptops and other education supplies.

As the grand prize winner of the Edith Baxter Memorial Award, Winters will receive a five-night all-inclusive vacation in Jamaica courtesy of prize sponsors [Sandals Resorts](#) and [Air Canada Vacations](#).



Above (left to right): Wendy McClung, Executive Vice President, Baxter Media; Diana Winters, Edith Baxter Memorial Award 2023 winner; Hon. Edmund Bartlett, Minister of Tourism.



Above: Hon. Edmund Bartlett, Minister of Tourism (centre right) and Diana Winters, Edith Baxter Memorial Award 2023 winner (centre left), pose on stage with JTB representatives (from left) Donovan White, Director of Tourism; Fiona Fennell, Public Relations and Communications Manager; Judy Nash, Administrative Assistant; Jackie Marshall, Administrative Assistant; Angella Bennett, Regional Director, Canada; and Dan Hamilton, District Sales Manager

Hon. Edmund Bartlett, Jamaica's Minister of Tourism; Donovan White, Director of Tourism, JTB; and Angella Bennett, Regional Director, Canada, JTB, were among the esteemed guests in attendance at the Edith Baxter Memorial Award gala honouring the finalists and winner of the biennial competition. The memorial award was first established by the JTB and the Baxter family in 2021 in honour of the late founder and editor-in-chief of Baxter Publishing.

“The Edith Baxter Memorial Award rewards outstanding community leaders who use their influence to elevate Jamaica’s tourism offerings and our unique cultural identity in Canada,” noted Minister Bartlett. “Our grand prize winner and all of the award finalists honoured here today represent a range of different professional sectors, but each of these unique individuals are bound together by their shared passion for Jamaica.”

Prominent Jamaican-born writer, speaker and podcaster, Arlene Amitirigala, served as the M.C. for the luncheon and award-winning Canadian singer-songwriter July Black gave a special performance for the 120 guests in attendance.



Above: Jamaica's Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett, addresses the audience at the Edith Baxter Memorial Award luncheon in Toronto on September 22.



Above: Canadian singer-songwriter Jully Black delivers a special performance for attendees at the Edith Baxter Memorial Award luncheon

Four additional Edith Baxter Memorial Award finalists received trophies of recognition at the event: writer and photographer Ron Fanfair; internationally renowned recording artist Dave McLaughlin; columnist and community mentor Simone Smith; and storyteller, speaker and activist Sandra Whiting.

The short-list and grand prize winner for the 2023 edition of the Edith Baxter Memorial Award were selected by a panel of four judges: Angella Bennett, Regional Director, Canada, JTB; Wendy McClung, Executive Vice President, Baxter Media; Lincoln G. Downer, former Consul General of Jamaica in Toronto; and Kelly Schmitt, President and Co-Founder, Spoiled Agent.

The [Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre](#) (GTRCMC) also gave a special presentation of its inaugural Resilience Awards during the luncheon event on September 22. Citations were awarded to seven individuals and organizations in recognition of their outstanding support of the destination's tourism recovery during the COVID-19 pandemic and their efforts in driving Jamaica's economic growth agenda in Canada.

Based in Jamaica with satellite locations around the world, including George Brown College in Toronto, the GTRCMC is a transformative centre that seeks to safeguard and improve the tourism product in Jamaica and around the world, while also ensuring the

sustainability of tourism globally.

Minister Bartlett was joined on stage by Dr. Gervan Fearon, President of George Brown College, to present the following individuals and organizations with special citations of service on behalf of the GTRCMC: Dr. Pamela Appelt, Mary Bishop, Dr. Mary Ann Chambers, Adoma Patterson, Howard Shearer, Air Canada Vacations and Helping Hands Jamaica Foundation.



Above: Hon. Edmund Bartlett, Minister of Tourism (centre left) and Dr. Gervan Fearon, President, George Brown College (far left) presented Citations for Tourism Resilience on behalf of the GTRCMC to (from left) Harold Shearer; Dr. Pamela Appelt; Adoma Patterson; Dr. Mary Ann Chambers; Dina Bertolo, Air Canada Vacations; Mary Bishop; and Natasha Borota, Helping Hands Jamaica Foundation. Recipients were joined on stage by Donovan White, Director of Tourism, JTB and Angella Bennett, Regional Director, Canada, JTB.

To learn more about the Edith Baxter Memorial Award, please visit www.edithbaxteraward.com.

For more information about Jamaica, visit www.visitjamaica.com.

About The Jamaica Tourist Board

The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB), founded in 1955, is Jamaica's national tourism agency based in the capital city of Kingston. JTB offices are also located in Montego Bay, Miami, Toronto and Germany and London. Representative offices are located in Berlin, Spain, Italy, Mumbai and Tokyo.

In 2022, the JTB was declared 'World's Leading Cruise Destination,' 'World's Leading Family Destination' and 'World's Leading Wedding Destination' by the World Travel Awards, which also named it the 'Caribbean's Leading Tourist Board' for the 15th consecutive year; and the 'Caribbean's Leading Destination' for the 17th consecutive year; as well as the 'Caribbean's Leading Nature Destination' and the 'Caribbean's Best Adventure

Tourism Destination.’ In addition, Jamaica earned seven awards in the prestigious gold and silver categories at the 2022 Travvy Awards, including ‘Best Wedding Destination – Overall’, ‘Best Destination – Caribbean,’ ‘Best Culinary Destination – Caribbean,’ ‘Best Tourism Board – Caribbean,’ ‘Best Travel Agent Academy Program,’ ‘Best Cruise Destination - Caribbean’ and ‘Best Wedding Destination – Caribbean.’ Jamaica is home to some of the world’s best accommodations, attractions and service providers that continue to receive prominent global recognition.

For details on upcoming special events, attractions and accommodations in Jamaica, go to the JTB’s website at www.visitjamaica.com or call the Jamaica Tourist Board at 1-800-JAMAICA (1-800-526-2422). Follow the JTB on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#) and [YouTube](#). View the JTB blog at visitjamaica.com/blog.

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