



The Frank Collymore Literary Endowment: Building a Legacy

Remarks by **Deputy Governor Alwyn Jordan**
at the 25th Frank Collymore Literary Endowment Awards Ceremony

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Good evening ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the Bank, I welcome you to the 25th Frank Collymore Literary Endowment Competition Awards Ceremony.

Twenty-five years is a remarkable achievement! I recall that early in my first tenure at the Bank, this competition was very much in its infancy, so I was quite impressed when I returned, after being away for over a decade, to discover how much it has grown and developed over its teenage and now young adult years.

On that note, I want to congratulate, in advance, the winners of tonight's competition and to offer encouragement to those of you who, on this occasion, are not among the awardees. I promise that if you keep writing, keep honing and developing your craft, you will reap the rewards.

When I delivered remarks at last year's ceremony, the Central Bank of Barbados was beginning a year of celebrations to mark its golden anniversary, which was held under the theme "***Living the Legacy: Continuing the Journey***". I said then that the Frank Collymore Literary Endowment has contributed greatly to that legacy. It forms part of the Bank's commitment to contribute in a meaningful way to Barbados' overall national development, which includes fostering a strong cultural identity. That's because it has always been, and continues to be, our belief that we must be a part of, and not apart from the society we serve.

Indeed, it is fair and accurate to point out, that over the past quarter century, the Frank Collymore Literary Endowment has developed a legacy all of its own. It was born out of the Bank's silver jubilee celebrations, and conceived as a way that we could help to nurture our island's literary tradition. We are therefore very proud to see that as it marks its own milestone anniversary, it has become a symbol of excellence in this area, and that this awards ceremony is seen, to quote two-time winner Linda Deane, as Barbados' "literary Grammys or Oscars."

Similar to those awards, the Frank Collymore Literary Endowment recognises and rewards the best of our local literary voices and elevates their status on the local, regional, and dare I say international stage. Over the years, awardees have included emerging talent, and it has also provided a platform for other established artists to showcase their work, including Winston Farrell, the late Honourable Edward Kamau Brathwaite, and Esther Phillips, Barbados' first poet laureate.

The value of this competition is also apparent through the number of repeat entrants it has received over the years, as well as by the fact that it continues to attract numerous first-time participants as evidenced by the submissions to last year's competition.

For this we must thank the many Frank Collymore Literary Endowment committees over the past two and a half decades. To the current committee, ably led by Mr. Andy Taitt, and to those who have sat on it in the past, on behalf of the Central Bank of Barbados, let me say how much we appreciate your hard work and dedication, and we offer you our deepest gratitude.

This competition is well placed for future growth and development. Indeed, the recent change that allows for submission of applications electronically means that we can now receive entries from across the diaspora. We've already seen that taking place, and it is worth noting that last year's top entrant is based overseas.

This year, we again received several foreign-based entries. This broadened talent pool underscores the quality of the competition and suggests that everyone entering it must "up their game" if they want to be successful. Each of you finalists, regardless of what happens here tonight, has helped to foster the Frank Collymore Literary Endowment's legacy and in the end, it is Barbadian literature which is the ultimate winner.

In closing, I'd like to again thank all of the artists who submitted their pieces to the awards committee, and I congratulate all of the finalists and awardees on their achievement.

And finally, to you, our audience, both here in person and online, I thank you for supporting these artists, this competition and the arts in Barbados in general.

Cheers to 25 years! I look forward confidently to another quarter century of outstanding literary work.

I thank you.