



**CARIBBEAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING 2021-2022
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 2021
12:30 PM – 2:20 PM**

1. Welcome and review of past two years (5 minutes)

President – Tavis Jules

A brief introduction of the Executive Council and the support team who have assisted in the planning and execution of the conference over the past two (2) year.

- Initially, CSA had to be an in-person conference but due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions, the decision was taken at an Executive level to have a virtual conference.
- The President encouraged others to come to take the conference physically to Guyana.
- The CSA conference had to be postponed for 2020 and the conference took place in 2021.
- Moving to a full virtual conference was a challenge and a learning process. We have managed to work around the technical issues involved with working in a virtual environment.
- CSA now has a vibrant journal and it has become a valuable area and we made sure that both, the representation of the editorial board and the way that it will be published will be reflective of the Association, meaning to say that it will be published in four (4) languages.
- In relation of CSA's finances, we have created a CSA Endowment Fund and through successive and progressive planning, we have decided that this fund would help us to create a financial reserve.
- CSA Membership and registration fees continue to be one of the lowest in comparison to other academic associations.
- Constitutional reform – four (4) areas were revisited and the amended version is available via the website.
- The Executive Committee met bimonthly over the past year to get the journal going, to make the constitutional changes and thanks for allowing us to work in making a brighter Association.

2. Local Organising Committee (LOC) Report (5 minutes)

- Introduction of the team at University of Guyana (UG) who worked on site to help put the technical command centre in place.
- Hybrid versus fully virtual conference - considering the pandemic and the resources to manage a hybrid conference, the decision was taken to keep the conference as a virtual one.
- The Zoom platform was decided as being suitable to stage the virtual conference.
- The tech team came from the UG and although it was a virtual conference; there was a central command centre where all the tech persons were based for overseeing the operations of the virtual platform.
- A virtual conference meant that new costs were emerging but we kept cost at bay through use of the UG team to help with the backend of the technical administration of the conference
- Student volunteers have been doing an excellent job behind the scenes to manage the zoom sessions.
- The LOC was very happy to be part of the CSA's 1st virtual conference and hopes that CSA can be brought physically to Guyana in the future.

3. Program Chair Report (5 minutes) – Kristina Hinds and the Program Committee

- Presented a report and requested that it be made available to the membership
- The work started in 2019 and a Program Committee (PC) was set up; the call for papers was open on November 2019 and it closed in January 2020.
- The PC reviewed all the abstracts and the CSA tried to be very inclusive as possible.
- Acceptances were sent out in February 2020
- In March 2020 we had to postpone the conference due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In early Dec 2020 we reopened the call for submissions.
- In late Jan 2021 the call was closed and we added a new sub theme which was the Next Normal to speak to the COVID-19 context and then acceptance letter went out in early February.
- We then started building the platform that we used to acquire the submitted abstracts on the Eventsforce System.
- One of main issues of the online platform was putting a great deal of energy in getting the conference website up. Although the integration was useful; a lot of the work had to be done manually and time cost.
- As of May 2021, there were 174 sessions (including were scheduled for the full conference week – 295 abstracts - 288 were open abstract submissions in response to the call, 7 were invited (2 plenary speakers, 3 plenary panels, 2 panels from the UG)
- 38 were cancellations, 4 were rejections, in addition to the duplicates
- Author celebration and film screening
- 1 poster presentation
- Literary salon
- 22 round tables
- 6 workshops and some were cancelled before the start of the conference
- The individual papers were placed into panels

- There were 561 registered participants on May 28; on May 27, the site became available and 1,871 people were invited via the virtual conference display (VCD) and 20 were sponsored and 1014 teachers and students from Guyana.
- By June 1 there were 930 people who had actively attended the conference; engaging and participating in the virtual space.
- Moving to online required that we review and redesign the layout and delivery of the program.
- There were some technical difficulties in the case of concurrent sessions but these were resolved.
- Minor glitch with the plenary with the previous link being available and the revised link had to be shared.
- People whose panels were incomplete or had password reset issues had to be resolved and their presentations were rescheduled later to later in the week.
- UG organized all the plenary session, cultural aspect of showcasing Guyana virtually and helped in sourcing all the volunteers; it was a huge help. Immense thanks to the UG, LOC team.

4. Feedback on the virtual conference (10 minutes) – Tavis Jules

The members attending the meeting were invited to enable their audio to share their views via the virtual platform about challenges that they might have encountered or general comments about the conference.

- Jaqueline - Thanked the team for the effort in making the conference possible; one that initially had to be of physical modality. All issues were resolved quickly. We are using Zoom and it has become very convenient. However, Zoom is a technology that cannot be used in Cuba and it makes it very difficult to connect from Cuba.

A suggestion is for a platform to be chosen that all members can easily join regardless of their location.

- Tavis - We had realized the issue and apologize for the problem but it would have been difficult to resolve the issue due to the politics between the US and Cuba.
- Kristina read from the online chat - having a smaller, intimate conference and a smaller conference will work better for an online platform. CSA members do not communicate in a timely manner and this caused some last minute cancellations.

CSA tries to be accommodating and flexible and allow persons to register up to the day of the conference.

There were some inefficiency as everything cannot be done in the last minute and up until May 29, we were still assisting persons

- Patrick Brown - Congratulation to the organizers; Caribbean people are resilient and it is a bit different in planning during a pandemic and having the virtual platform with smaller number of people would help. Let's also revisit the timing of the conference and you

might get a larger attendance, if it is later in June as opposed to early June which coincides with graduation, examinations, closing off the semester.

- Holger - 3 comments ; congratulations to the Board for launching the CSA Journal, to see that CSA has a Journal coming on stream is very good news; regarding the change in the constitution, it is great to see that multilingualism is being embraced, the constitution states that a 50% is needed to have quorum (1. We move this meeting from Friday afternoon to Wednesday and rename the meeting as the Membership Meeting and this is to encourage the membership to attend and to take care of business at the meeting. Let's revert to using the Membership Meeting.
- Tavis - We do have quorum at the moment as there are 72 members online at the moment and yes, the Membership Meeting will be used in the future.
- Michael Barnet - Congratulations to the EC and the support team on forging ahead. The recording of the sessions; for those panelists of the plenaries, and other presenters would they be able to access the recording of the session that they presented on? The archiving - we need to get on par with this this and some of the plenaries should be recorded and archived.
- Tavis - If members want access to all the session, we would have to make it accessible to the membership. The technical people can assist.
- Kristina - this will require a significant amount of video editing.
- Laura Adderley - Special needs in the case of Cuba, video editing and other issues maybe CSA can subcontract technical people to resolve these issues quickly.
- Sponsorships and endorsement - As an Association, we should be careful about whom we accept sponsorship from and now we communicate with neocolonial bodies amid the need to source funding.
- Nicholas Watts – Requested a meeting to have further discussions on the working group (Environment Sustainability) and to have access to the recordings of sessions, especially to sessions that we could not go to due to concurrent sessions.
- Tavis – CSA is still working to try and improve the role of the Working Groups; as these need to be functional during the conference and beyond to help raise awareness and address certain issues and be continuously active.

5. Constitution reform and votes on constitution items (10 minutes) – Eris Schoburgh

- Amendments were unanimously expected by the membership. The amended version is posted on the website.

6. Journal announcement and brief update (5 minutes) – Raymond Laureano (Managing Editor)

- The official name of the journal is Caribbean Junctures - The Caribbean Studies Association Journal
- Opal Adisa is the Editor-in-Chief
- It has a 35 member Editorial Board
- It is a multilingual journal - Spanish, French, English, Papiamentu and Dutch

- Published call for papers; currently have 39 papers and going through the desk editing process and close to start the peer review process. Diversity in the geographical location of the authors who have submitted.
- We already have a journal cover and CSA Journal Fund and the first donor is the Virgin Islands Caribbean Cultural Centre (\$2,500) and \$1000 per year for the next 4 years
- The aim is to ensure that we have a stellar journal for years to come that is reflective of the Association
- Ensure that Art has a prominent place in the Journal

7. Finances and Audit Report (Dwaine) (20 minutes)

- Presentation of the 2019 Financial Report which is the Colombia conference report.
- CSA is a 501C registered NGO in NY and Trinidad.
- The Treasurer gave special thanks to people who have assisted with the planning and management of the conference over the 2020-2021 period.
- CSA is using Eventsforce which is practically new to us and putting forth a virtual conference.
- CSA now has an Endowment Fund - \$20,000
- Special kudos and mention to the Presidency for allowing teachers and students from Guyana to be sponsored to participate virtually.
- Conference cost is usually around \$80,000
- The Accountant is based in NY and the report is also on the chat and will be made available via the website.
- The larger amounts are the ones being explained in the presentation - conference location rental and facilities, other conference cost (cultural night (\$6000), receptions, coffee breaks), onsite visit in meeting with the LOC and planning on the ground, transportation, information technology (projectors and computers, speakers)
- The President has to seek consensus from the EC if he/she has to spend more than \$5,000
- CSA has assets in Trinidad (2 accounts), assets in Bank of America, assets in PayPal (for the convenience of making and receiving payments and to have a secure place to keep CSA funds).
- We also have other means of money transfer – check and wire transfer.
- Out of the Colombia conference and into the Guyana, Tavis knew that he had about \$107,000 in assets.
- Total revenue adds up to about \$150, 000
- Total expenses was approximately \$179,000
- In 2020, we maintained our structure with the idea that we were going to have an in-person conference but we made the decision to not charge people for the 2021 year and just carry over the registration, we are going to see a slight drop in our revenue.
- It is not going to be a huge drop because we did not have to pay for a conference venue or transportation fees.
- We are going to find that going into the Jamaica conference; we would have about \$120,000.

8. Results of the Election (Eris) (15 minutes)

VP – Dr. Chenzira Davis Kahina

EC Members – Dr. Kristina Hinds, Dr. Patricia Saunders

Graduate Student Rep – Regan Reid

Their profiles are available via the website

9. Announcement of CSA2022 and teaser video (5 minutes) – Eris Schoburgh

There was a brief presentation of Jamaica as the 2022 conference location which is scheduled to take place from May 30 to June 3. The theme of the conference is, ***Reframing Caribbean Influences on Global Spaces: Critically Engaging Perspectives on Human Geography and Risks, Political Economy and Technology***. The UWI, Mona will be playing a major role in this conference

10. Any other Business (15 minutes) – No issues raised

Meeting ended at 2:20 PM