



**CARIBBEAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING 2024-2025  
ST. MAARTEN, THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2025  
1:00PM - 2PM**

1. Welcome and pleasantries: President – Rhoda Arrindell

Approval of the agenda

Membership was allowed to peruse the Membership Meeting Minutes from the 2024 conference, St. Lucia, and the members voted in favor. There were no abstentions. The 2024 Membership Meeting Minutes were approved and would be made available via the CSA Website.

Dr Chenzira Kahina voted in favour, Professor Tavis Jules seconded the vote, there were no abstentions.

2. Program Chair Report - Meagan Sylvester

- The Program Chair informed the membership that a full report will be submitted via email and the newsletter to reflect the number of plenaries, panel sessions, the number of no-shows, etc.
- EC Member, Maggie Shrimpton spoke about using Eventsforce at the conference, for payments and the abstract submission. The challenges of using Eventsforce to navigate the abstract submission process was mentioned.
- The Program Chair informed that electronic versions were sent out, try to also cater for people who do not have phones or data on their phones.
- Nicholas Watts suggested the use of a noticeboard where daily program updates can be printed and posted for the benefit of those who are not too familiar with how to source it online or for those without mobile smartphones.
- VP Pat Saunders spoke in favour of thinking about programming differently through having multiple Chairs. A motion was called for the incoming President, to review the use of Eventsforce and consider different approaches before making a decision to continue using the software application.

- An appeal was made to have printed programs available for all fully registered conference participants.
- Discussion about having a special reduced fee for secondary school teachers was entertained and the membership voted unanimously for it to be considered; along with exploring software other than Eventsforce.

### 3. Secretary Report - Mala Jokhan

- Online Registration - In total, there were about 380 conference participants, local participants (20 local participants), 400 persons
- About 30 people were assisted to register online using Eventsforce at the conference, thereby eliminating the need to collect cash payments
- There were a few logistics to be resolved on site but overall, it was a smooth registration process and also processing online payments on site. Monday was a bit chaotic. Feedback was given from the LOC that we can consider for only presenters who are fully paid should be on the program.
- To improve efficiency, a very good idea was shared. Along with WhatsApp, we can use Google Docs to digitize the process in real time.
- CSA Gala Tickets were on sale at the Secretariat Office – US50
- It was disclosed that about 87 more tickets were available for sale. A special appeal was made to participants to purchase these online and then pick them up in the boardroom (Simpson’s Bay Resort).
- Onsite voting was facilitated using a physical ballot and the VP, Election Committee Chair, presented the results later in the meeting proceedings. The Election Committee met before the Membership Meeting to review the election result.
- CSA through the Book Drive Donation was able to gather 24 donated books and these were later handed over to the University of St. Maarten.
- Conference attendees were encouraged to only use [secretariat@caribbeanstudiesassociation.org](mailto:secretariat@caribbeanstudiesassociation.org) to reach the CSA Secretariat for matters concerning the payment of fees.
- A special appeal was made to the Membership to participate in the online survey set up by the VP and incoming President so that their feedback and suggestions could be considered in planning the next conference.
- During the Q and A session, a member spoke about the responsiveness of the secretariat to emails particularly as it relates to registration and abstract submission problems. It was explained to the member that emails and questions are fielded depending on the issue raised and if a matter involving payment is sent to the Program Chair, the Secretariat will not be privy to it and therefore will not be able to assist. A special appeal was made to the membership to reach the secretariat at [secretariat@caribbeanstudiesassociation.org](mailto:secretariat@caribbeanstudiesassociation.org) as the emails to the program chair will not be seen by secretariat.

#### 4. Financial Report – Dwaine Plaza (Treasurer)

The Treasurer presented the 2023 Conference (St. Croix) financials and explained that the receipts and invoices were not received in a timely manner after the conference which led to some delay in the reporting of the fiscal health of the Association after the 2023 conference.

Dwaine explained that the 2 main sources of income were from the collection of registration and membership fees.

A call was made for sponsorship and donations from the membership as recurring expenditure includes the payment of salaries/honoraria for the following:

- CSA Journal
- CSA Secretary
- CSA Webmaster
- Onsite Visit
- The conference hotel downpayment
- Travel Grant Awardees (US10, 000)

The Treasurer advised that unless the Association could harness revenues then there could be sustainability of the Association to continue its existence year after year and be in a position to increase the funding for travel grants, etc.

An approx. breakdown per account the following balances (USD) were disclosed to the membership:

- 50000 Oregon Account
- 20000 Fixed Account
- 20000 Trinidad Account

Mention was made that secondary school teachers and students in St Maarten were able to attend the conference for free.

Past President Robert Millette suggested the establishment of a Fund-raising Committee (5 persons) to work with the President and EC to help generate funds and also in-kind sponsorship. Tavis Jules expressed his support to this suggestion.

President Rhoda explained that a call for Committee Members was sent out, but no one responded in favor to the call.

In-kind service was suggested as a line item in the financials. A motion was called and the membership voted in favor (no abstentions) for Dr. Chenzira Kahina to provide a listing of all in-kind contributions to further enhance 2023 financials.

## 5. Update on CSA Journal – President, Rhoda Arrindell

VP Pat Saunders spoke about the CSA encouraging open access to its journal, to ensure equity and accessibility and made the point that no one should be paid for work on the Journal.

The Membership shared some concerns that the Program Chair was paid in the past. President Rhoda Arrindell explained that she inherited some chaos and the person who was the Program Chair was also the Newsletter Editor. The Journal Committee was in transition after the resignation of Raymond, and the decision was taken to bring on Jewel and Meagan to pick up where Raymond left.

Opal as the Editor in Chief was compensated and copy editing was done by Rhoda Arrindell voluntarily.

## 6. Election Committee – Donna Hope, Godfrey St. Bernard, Mala Jokhan

- Voting Results - The Committee Chair (VP Donna Hope) thanked all the candidates and Executive Committee for its support before officially announcing the results as follows:
- 1 VP Executive Member – Patricia Saunders
- 2 EC Members – Angeliq Nixon and Janelle Rodrigues
- 1 Graduate Student Representative – Semone Armorgan

## 7. President's Report – Rhoda Arrindell

- The President spoke of the challenges with hosting the conference and also personal matters that arose during the period of her Presidency.
- Mention was made that the CSA Journal was published and available. There were no hard copies and that it was for purchase in order to gain access. The journal needs a permanent home.
- President Arrindell supported the call for the Committee for fundraising and spoke about having sourced sponsorship locally for the opening night and cultural night at no cost to the CSA in order to navigate the Association forward from a healthy financial position. She also printed limited copies of the program to avoid overprinting at the expense of CSA.
- The President also spoke about her strides to support healthy inter-Caribbean travel, expand membership and foster growth.
- She spoke about working as an Association that goes beyond the focus of hosting a conference but to tackle issues in Caribbean spaces to propose solutions and remedies to facilitate Caribbean integration.
- She pledged to work with the incoming President to help keep the CSA growing and to work on achieving a successful conference and for the overall growth of the Association.
- Past President Tavis Jules raised questions and made a special appeal to the current President to inform the incoming President of the state of the Association that she will be inheriting.

- Special mention was made of the ongoing political debacles of our fellow Haitians and Cubans who encounter major immigration issues to attend the conference.
- Caribbean Voices and Dialogue was maintained for the 2025 conference year to help the CSA have a voice on inter-Caribbean matters.

A special and sincere thank you was made to President Arrindell for putting the conference together and being transparent in her reporting. An Official Report will also be made available to the membership.

7. VP Report (CSA 2026 Conference) – Donna Hope

- Elections Committee Chair
- Invited the membership to submit their feedback through a survey which will be received and used to help improve the conference experience
- Identified the Mona Campus as the location of the 2026 conference but indicated that it will involve a lot of logistic work.
- The proposed dates of the conference were given as June 1-6, 2026
- An emphasis was made to bolster the membership drive and to encourage people through various networks to sign up as members
- Digitizing the various platforms will need to be sorted out to build a robust program and raise funds for printing.
- In the case of students' funding (accommodation, transportation, food), all grantees will be expected to serve as volunteers in return for the assistance they receive.
- Tentative theme – “Gender, Culture, Identity and Diaspora”
- Major focus would be branding of the Association through printing programs, banners, having an area to take photos with the banners, etc. A Committee will be established to help with funding to help cover the cost of some of these strategies.
- An attempt will also be made to negotiate with airlines to foster cheaper (discounted) rates with respect to Inter-Caribbean airfare.

8. Adjournment of the meeting – 4PM

**Prepared by: Dr Mala Jokhan**

**Reviewed by: Dr. Rhoda Arrindell (CSA President 2025)**