



For Immediate Release

CIBC Caribbean Executives Share Life Experiences with Students

Bridgetown, Barbados, November 20, 2024: Over 1100 boys at four (4) secondary schools across Barbados recently got a lesson in what it is to be a positive male role model as they celebrated International Men's Day 2024.

The occasion was when five executives from CIBC Caribbean bank visited their alma maters to share some of their life experiences with mainly third and fourth formers of St. Leonard's Boys' Secondary, St. Michael, Coleridge and Parry and Combermere Schools.

At Combermere, Chief Executive Officer of CIBC, Mark St. Hill, addressed first to sixth form boys at his old school, where he shared memories of his days at the Waterford campus, and gave them insight into the path he travelled to reach the position he now holds with the bank. "Yes, I am the CEO, but I started as a cashier and worked my way up," St. Hill said as he encouraged the young men to seize the opportunities placed before them. "You have opportunities to succeed in this world, but you have to decide in your mind what success is," he added.

He told the students it was okay if they were unsure what career paths they wanted to pursue since he left school unsure of what he wanted to do, started out on one path then switched to banking after a telephone call from Barclays Bank. He said his time at Combermere was instrumental in him learning the value of building relationships, appreciating diversity and the importance of being respectful to everyone.

Over at St. Leonard's, the third and fourth form boys listened intently to Esan Peters, Chief Information Officer and Managing Director, Technology, Infrastructure & Innovation, as he defined what a role model is and encouraged them to be good role models for others, and to make good choices. He spoke of his days at the school, when he played in the Cadet Band, which he said helped him in his approach to life. He credited teacher Pernel Farley for taking him under his wing and seeing in him what he did not see in himself at that time. He also challenged the boys to think of the type of role model they would want to be.

Accompanying Esan at St. Leonard's was Motivational Speaker and Training Coach, Troy Holder, who encouraged the boys to dream big about what they wanted to do and to be. He shared some of his life challenges and spoke to them about choices and how the ones they make now may direct the path they will take later in life. He urged them to "...choose today what you want for yourself, because every decision you make will determine who you are."

St. Michael School Alumnus, Quinn Weekes, now a Senior Manager, Client & Product Profitability, Strategy Implementation, Data Analytics, Products and Pricing, at CIBC Caribbean gave the students there an insight into his life from a senior student to his current position. So enthused were the students that they engaged Weekes in conversation even after the event was officially over.

The senior banker started by drawing attention to what it meant to be a man and encouraged them to embrace their uniqueness, recognising that no one was like them, as an individual. He said that traditionally men were discouraged from showing their true feelings as society saw this as not being strong, but he added that being strong did not mean you had to hide your true feelings when you were overwhelmed, under pressure or sad and instead tell people you are okay. As an alternative, he suggested that they reach out for help. He added that one of the things which he wished someone had told him at their age was about taking care of his mental health.

Adrian Green, the Motivational Speaker who accompanied Weekes to the school, noted Weekes' career success while still only 29, and pointed out to the students that 29 was also coming for them. He told them that technology brought good news and bad news in this respect.

The bad news, he said, was that due to technology, 29 would come faster for them than it did for Weekes when he was at that school, and that meant they had less time to prepare. But, he added, the good news was that you can go further with the right mindset, and they could make Weekes' accomplishments look like baby's milk. But he pointed out that they had to believe in themselves.

Over at Coleridge and Parry in St. Peter, Martin Grimes, Senior Manager, International & Corporate Banking, visited his old school and took along Chief Financial Officer Carl Lewis, who first spoke to the students about, among other things, social media. He warned them not to let it dominate their lives because... "it can make you feel as if you have to measure up and can distort reality, that doesn't capture the real aspects of life". He warned them to be aware of the time they spend online.

Grimes, dressed in a jacket, explained to the boys that when his wife asked why he was wearing a jacket, he told her that he was coming to speak to the future CEOs and future executives, and he had to dress the part! He warned them that life is not a smooth highway, and they need to prepare for some bumps along the way. However, he suggested that they should embrace what makes them unique and should respect and uplift each other as they strive to achieve success. "Each one of you has a chance to be a positive role model!" he told the students.

Managing Director Barbados, Donna Wellington stated that every year for the past three to four years the bank has invited one male student from a number of schools to visit and spend a day with the executives to see how the bank works. "This year, by having our executives take time out to visit these four schools, we were able to reach so many more boys with a positive message, and the feedback has been very encouraging," she added.

Ends



CEO Mark St. Hill shares a light moment after his address to the students



Chief Financial Officer Carl Lewis speaking to the male students at the Coleridge and Parry School.



Up Close – Quinn Weekes Senior Manager, Client & Product Profitability, Strategy Implementation having a chat and laugh with some of the St Michael School boys after his session.



Chief Information Officer and Managing Director, Technology, Infrastructure & Innovation, Esan Peters speaking to the students of the St Leonards' Boys' School

CIBC Caribbean

CIBC Caribbean is a relationship bank offering a full range of market leading financial services through our Corporate and Investment Banking, Personal and Business Banking and Wealth Management segments. We are located in eleven (11) countries around the Caribbean, providing the banking services through approximately 2,700 employees in 45 branches and offices. We are one of the largest regionally listed financial services institutions in the English and Dutch speaking Caribbean, with US\$13 billion in assets and market capitalization of US\$1 billion. We also have a representative office in Hong Kong that provides business development and relationship management for our fund administration. The face of banking is changing throughout the world and CIBC Caribbean intends to lead these changes with the expertise, integrity and knowledge gained from banking in the Caribbean since 1836.

CIBC Caribbean is a member of the CIBC Group. CIBC is a leading Canadian-based global financial institution with 11 million personal banking and business clients. Through our three major business units - Retail and Business Banking, Wealth Management and Capital Markets - CIBC offers a full range of products and services through its comprehensive electronic banking network, branches and offices across Canada with offices in the United States and around the world.

For more information about CIBC Caribbean, visit [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) or [YouTube](#).

Media contact:

Debra King, Director of Corporate Communications, CIBC Caribbean, Barbados Head Office, Email: debra.king@cibcfib.com

