



**For Immediate Release**

## **CIBC Caribbean kicks off second year search for regional unsung heroes**

*Offers Increased prize money for the regional winner and runners up*

**Bridgetown, Barbados, 20 April 2026** – CIBC Caribbean has kicked off the search for unsung heroes across its 10-member regional footprint for a second year as it also announced the doubling of the prize money for this year’s regional winner and runners up.

Officially relaunched last year after a 10-year hiatus, the regional bank’s community outreach programme – CIBC Caribbean Unsung Heroes, attracted 39 nominees from diverse areas of community outreach and service.

“Last year’s relaunch of our Unsung Heroes Programme was a resounding success, and we anticipate an even more engaging and fulfilling campaign this year as we seek to find and reward those quietly making a difference in their communities,” said Mark St. Hill, the bank’s Chief Executive Officer and Chair of the bank’s charitable arm, the CIBC Caribbean ComTrust Foundation, sponsor of the programme.

“In addition to our Regional Unsung Hero for 2025, Lucinda “Mini” Smith, of the British Virgin Islands, a true gem in her own right, as well as first runner up Venetta Zakers of St. Kitts and Nevis and second runner up, Joshuanette Francis of Antigua and Barbuda, the programme also highlighted national unsung heroes working across many areas ranging from care for the environment, working with at-risk youth and vulnerable women, to feeding the homeless and caring for the elderly and vulnerable,” St.Hill said.

The bank head said the “work and worth of the those striving quietly across their communities to make the lives and living spaces of others better was immeasurable” however, the bank “was keen to offer a tangible reward to our unsung heroes therefore we decided to offer increased prize money this year for our regional award winners”.

The 2026 Regional Unsung Hero will receive USD\$10 000, double last year’s award, the first runner up, USD\$7 000 up from USD\$3 000 last year, and the second runner up, USD\$5 000, up from USD\$1, 500 last year.

CIBC Caribbean Unsung Heroes campaign is open to all persons aged ten and over who have been making a difference in their communities and who have not been highlighted or rewarded in any significant way.

The campaign offers two categories under which persons can be nominated - outstanding work in the community and an act of heroism/bravery/extraordinary act of kindness within the 12 months preceding the start of the year's campaign.

The nomination period runs from April to the end of July, 2026.

Winners will be selected from among those nominated at the local level and will be announced in August. The winners from each country will then be eligible for the regional awards, the winners of which will be announced at the end of August, 2026.

In September the top three regional winners – the regional Unsung Hero and two runners-up - and a guest each will be brought to Barbados for the presentation of prizes at a special awards event.

A special prize of USD\$1 000 will also be awarded to the person nominating the individual who eventually emerges as the Regional Unsung Hero.

For more on CIBC Caribbean Unsung Heroes and how to make a nomination click [here](#) or log on to CIBCCaribbean.com.

**Ends**

## **CIBC Caribbean**

CIBC Caribbean is a relationship bank offering a full range of market leading financial services through our Corporate Banking, Personal and Business Banking and Private Wealth segments. We are located in ten (10) countries around the Caribbean, providing banking services through approximately 2,700 employees in 41 branches and offices. We are one of the largest regionally listed financial services institutions in the English-speaking Caribbean, with US\$13 billion in assets and market capitalization of US\$1.7 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.

Ongoing news releases and more information about CIBC Caribbean can be found at <https://www.cibccaribbean.com/about-us/media-centre>

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For more information about CIBC Caribbean, visit [www.cibccaribbean.com](http://www.cibccaribbean.com), [Facebook](#), [X](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) or [YouTube](#).

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*CIBC Caribbean Regional Unsung Hero 2025 Lucinda "Mini" Smith (centre) flanked by Venetta Zakers (right) first runner up and Joshuanette Francis (left) second runner up along with officials from CIBC Caribbean (left to right) Kemar Polius, Senior Director, Janine Billy, Chief Human Resources Officer, Carl Lewis, Chief Financial Officer, Donna Wellington, Chief Country Management Officer and Debra King, Director, Corporate Communications.*