



THE  
ANTHONY N. SABGA  
CARIBBEAN AWARDS  
FOR EXCELLENCE

NEWS RELEASE

December 12, 2017

2018 LAUREATES

## Arts & Letters, Prof Kei Miller, Jamaica



Kei Miller is a Jamaican poet, writer, and scholar. In his career, he has produced three novels, a short story collection, four poetry collections and a book of “essays and prophecies”. He is also a prolific blogger and tweeter, maintaining a running commentary on regional and international current affairs.

He has won many awards for his writing, most significantly the Forward Prize for Poetry (2014) the premier accolade in the UK and Ireland for established and emerging poets, now in its 23rd year. He is the first writer from the Caribbean and person of colour to win the prize. Also an acclaimed short story writer and novelist, his first collection of short fiction, *The Fear of Stones*, was short-listed in 2007 for the Commonwealth Writers First Book Prize. His novel, *Augustown*, won the Bocas Literary prize in 2017 and its French Translation won the *Prix Carbet de la Caraïbe et du Tout-Monde*.

Miller was born in Jamaica in 1978 and read English at the University of the West Indies but did not complete his bachelor’s degree. Instead he wrote and published *Kingdom of Empty Bellies* and *The Fear of*

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*Stones*, a short story collection. In 2005 he pursued an MA at Manchester Metropolitan University. He graduated at the top of his class and later did his PhD at the University of Glasgow. He is now Professor of English and Creative Writing at the University of Exeter.

Miller's work is closely tied to the Caribbean region, and his continued links to institutions like the University of the West Indies and the Bocas Literary Festival support this. He is the editor of Carcanet's *New Caribbean Poetry* collection (2007). *The Cartographer*, his most recent collection, features a mapmaker who speaks "the Queen's English" but sucks his teeth like a Jamaican, and a "Rasta-man" with a PhD. His writing makes use of Jamaican dialect (Patois) and he draws inspiration from sources as varied as Earl Lovelace and Lorna Goodison, Australian writer David Malouf, and street preachers.

Miller's work also engages Caribbean themes of race, identity and immigration. His second collection *There is an Anger that Moves*, begins with "In This Country", which explores the experience of an immigrant to the UK. At first the protagonist experiences alienation: "In this country you have an accent; /in the pub, a woman mocks it." Acclaimed Jamaican writer Olive Senior described the collection as a "radiant utterance that speaks of island experiences and gender politics from a deep well of understanding, with empathy, humour and insight."

With all his success, Miller remains conscious of the politics of his position and field. When asked about comments he made expressing shame for his days as a poetry slam winner, he referred to a perception that "white poets read or give recitals, but black poets are performance poets ... and, yes, I'm glad you think I read well, I'm glad you think my voice is melodic, but if that becomes a reason to dismiss it as not worthy, or as something that is just light entertainment, that is beautiful to listen to, but not something that's being carefully written ... I'm very particular about how I claim my place on the page."

In a 2013 interview with the Jamaica Gleaner he talks about winning the prestigious, Rhodes Trust sponsored Rex Nettleford Fellowship in Cultural Studies. He tells reporter Daviot Kelly: "There's always something special to me about being recognized by your own country," revealing that he grew up in a household where "giving to country" was a constant refrain. He goes on to say: "Especially for the kind of work that I want to do for this fellowship. It's so specific to the Caribbean and Jamaica."

Kei Miller is the 2018 Anthony N Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence Laureate in Arts & Letters

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## Entrepreneurship, Mr William Andrew Boyle, Guyana



Guyanese microbiologist Mr William Andrew Boyle is a medical services entrepreneur. He is the founder of the Eureka Medical Laboratory (EML) in Guyana which provides state-of-the-art services to the country and region. He has also diversified the laboratory, and his general business enterprise in other directions, like green energy and food production. EML is the premier internationally accredited lab in Guyana, one of only five such in the Caribbean. It is also the first and so far the only lab in the country to offer the SchuyNet Lab Information System (LIS) services, whereby test results can be accessed by doctors online, and in real time.

In the late 1980s, working for the University of Guyana, and at the Georgetown Hospital Tropical Diseases Lab as a medical microbiologist, Mr Boyle noticed the lack of adequate and high-quality medical laboratory services in his country. To meet this need the EML was formed in 1995. From a start with a limited range of tests, performed manually by two staff members, EML today consists of a main laboratory in Georgetown and eight smaller collection/minor test branches within Guyana. He has subsequently introduced a wide range of the latest tests, over 1,000, as well as up-to-date laboratory equipment.

The Eureka lab further introduced DNA testing, through an arrangement with the DNA Diagnostic Centre (DDC) in Ohio at a reduced rate for Guyanese citizens than what would normally obtain for such tests sent to the USA. EML currently serves over 100 walk-in clients per day, (50%-60% of the industry market), an average of over 20,000 per year, as well as sixty major companies. Senior citizens are also offered a 10%

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discount. The lab serves an average of thirty senior citizens per day – around ten thousand annually.

Not satisfied with his achievements, Boyle expanded out of his field and country. A small lab and a collection centre were opened in St Vincent in 2010. In 2017, a Psycho-diagnostics and Family Centre, a first-of-its-kind facility dedicated to psycho-social ills, was added to the Eureka services. His innovative prowess is not merely directed to his core business. In 2016 Boyle converted his Georgetown and Anna Regina laboratories and his home to solar-power. And in March 2017 he founded the Caribbean Wind and Sun Inc. of which he is the sole director, to help provide green energy installations such as solar.

Entirely away from science and technology, Mr Boyle even diversified into an egg production and supply business, Amazonia Farms. His 'Produced in the Berbice River' brand has become a source of pride and employment for persons from the area.

He is the recipient of several awards, including from PAHO/WHO for an outstanding contribution to public health and leadership; from the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce for innovation, in recognition of recorded breakthrough achievements in technology, processes, marketing campaigns and development; and from Scotia Bank (Guyana) for a laboratory with outstanding entrepreneurial achievement.

Mr. Boyle traces the roots of his desire for success from his Alma Mater **New Amsterdam Multilateral Secondary School** where he graduated as class valedictorian. He then proceeded to be one of the State scholars and pursued a BSc in Microbiology at the University of Cienfuegos, Cuba. He then earned his MBA at the Australian Institute of Business, thus fortifying further his entrepreneurial skills.

Behind his success is a loving family: his children, Tony, Andrew, and Keziah, plus, of course, his loving wife, Dr. Karen Boyle, presently the Deputy Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Public Health; the woman who is his source of inspiration and undying motivation to achieve.

Our Anthony N Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence 2018 Laureate in Entrepreneurship is Mr William Andrew Boyle

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### Public & Civic Contributions, Chevaughn and Noel Joseph, Trinidad & Tobago



Chevaughn and Noel Joseph's paediatric cancer support group, the Just Because Foundation (JBF), came out of their experience of losing a child to cancer. When 3½-year-old Jabez "JB" Joseph was diagnosed in 2005 with *alveolar rhabdomyosarcoma*, a rare form of childhood cancer, his parents, Chevaughn and Noel, worked tirelessly to help him defeat the disease. Tragically Jabez passed away two years later and in 2007 they launched the Just Because Foundation (JBF), "an incorporated, non-profit, Paediatric Cancer Support Organization" that "provides emotional, practical, and social support for families of children with cancer."

Ten years on, JBF continues to work miracles in childhood cancer care and advocacy. From their experience, the Josephs realised their son's response to treatment varied depending on the physical and

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emotional atmosphere of the treatment centre and the support services provided. They noted a marked environmental difference between hospitals abroad and those in Trinidad.

JBF resolved to set up facilities for paediatric cancer patients in Trinidad and Tobago to supplement medical treatment with emotional and other necessary family support. They have collaborated with the North Central Regional Health Authority (NCRHA) to establish the JBF Paediatric Specialty Unit (JBFPSU), a 21-bed unit at the Wendy Fitzwilliam Paediatric Hospital, Mt. Hope. The JBFPSU caters for children with cancer as well as children who are affected by other chronic non-communicable diseases. The Specialty Unit has recreation facilities and a family-friendly environment which has markedly improved patient well-being and reduced family stress.

JBF also operates an accommodation facility for paediatric cancer patients and their families who live in remote areas, and other islands. JBF's Respite House offers temporary accommodation for up to three families at a time, as well as transport to Mt. Hope and access to emergency services.

The Foundation also runs a Siblings Club which "addresses the emotional needs of the brothers and sisters of children with cancer, and is a major facet of the foundation's mission to provide holistic support for the families affected by this disease." Support groups for the fathers of children with cancer as well as bereaved parents have also been established.

All these services are provided at no cost to affected families.

Apart from its direct patient interventions, JBF hopes to increase awareness of childhood cancers in the developing world, where cancer is often inaccurately thought to be a disease of the elderly. Along with medical doctors, social workers, psychologists, nutritionists, and non-medical family support workers, the foundation guides and educates parents.

To mark their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in August 2017, JBF collaborated with the Toronto-based Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) on another ground-breaking project. With significant support via the SickKids Caribbean Initiative (SCI), they hosted a two-day advocacy workshop that included participants from the several Caribbean countries, Canada and the USA, with the immediate goal of establishing a Caribbean Advocacy Network for Childhood Cancer and Inherited Blood Disorders.

Chevaughn and Noel Joseph are President and Vice-President, respectively, of the Foundation. Their work is applauded by doctors, as well as government agencies and non-governmental organisations. Their interventions have the potential to change the way Caribbean societies approach illness and medical care, with a focus on children.

JBF's work has been recognized by several awards, including the *Trinidad Express* Individual(s) of the Year award in 2008. In 2013, they were awarded the Ministry of Sport's Spirit of Sport Award (SOSA) in the category Sport for a Social Cause. And in 2015, the Eric Williams Memorial Committee's Father of the Nation Medal of Honor (Gold) for Child Care and Community Service was conferred on JBF.

Chevaughn and Noel Joseph are our 2018 Laureates in Public & Civic Contributions for 2018.

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## Science & Technology, Dr Adesh Ramsubhag, Trinidad & Tobago



Dr Adesh Ramsubhag is a Trinidadian scientist whose career is in the areas of Microbiology and Biotechnology. He has contributed significantly to science and technology in Trinidad and Tobago and the region, specifically with respect to the development of microbiology as a distinct sub-discipline of biology, and in research aimed at addressing problems impacting humans and the environment.

He is a senior lecturer in Microbiology and Plant Pathology and Head of the Life Sciences Department at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. Since joining that department in December 2001, he has produced research which has affected the commercial meat industry, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, animal husbandry, environmental pollution (including oil spill clean ups) and the potential production of novel medical antibiotics. He has also contributed to establishing microbiology as a discipline in its own right at the Faculty of Science and Technology, UWI, St Augustine.

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His work on microorganisms is producing exciting results that, if supported by further research, can lead to the development of pharmaceuticals, an export-driven industry estimated at a current value of US\$ 1 trillion. The research findings so far include that the chemical compounds produced by many indigenous organisms from Trinidad have unique antibiotic and other valuable qualities for the pharmaceuticals. The diversity of these organisms is great, making it even more likely that home-grown research here can lead to more astounding results.

Dr. Ramsubhag is credited with establishing a viable research programme in Microbiology at UWI, St Augustine, where he had earned (1992) a BSc in Agriculture and (1998) a PhD in Microbiology. He has shared his expertise across several departments of the University, including Civil & Environmental Engineering, Food Production, Medical Sciences, Chemistry and Veterinary Sciences, among others. He initially worked at the Caribbean Industrial Research Institute (CARIRI) for two- and-a-half years where he applied conventional microbiological skills to assist industries and state agencies with a range of food, water, air quality testing services, as well as with product development, optimization of processes for reduced contamination and training of staff.

In his present position as an academic, in addition to research, he is a dedicated teacher. So far, in his nearly 20-year career as a research scientist and lecturer, five candidates he has supervised have graduated with PhDs and eight more are working towards completion. Nine students have completed MPhil degrees and six are in the process of doing so. Also, 17 students have completed their Master of Science degrees in Management of Tropical Environments, Crop Protection or Environmental Engineering. More importantly he has stimulated and motivated many generations of undergraduate students who would have passed through him to follow his path in microbiology.

To date, his publication list includes 40 articles in peer-reviewed international journals in addition to 12 peer-reviewed book chapters, conference proceedings and abstracts. Several articles are under review or in preparation for submission to journals, in addition to one for which a patent application is being prepared.

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