



# CARPE DIEM

My Vision for St. John's Rural West

Presented by

**SENATOR GAIL CHRISTIAN**



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[www.gailchristian.com](http://www.gailchristian.com)

**Dear Neighbours & Friends, Constituents All,**

The St. John's Rural West Constituency is home to over 10,000 men, women and children, with over 50% eligible to elect their Representative in the next Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda.

It represents diversity and opportunity like no other constituency, it provides strength and character for what's possible, and it holds within its people, all the key ingredients for wealth creation and upward mobility.

For sure representation matters and electing your First Female Constituency Representative, a Woman of Labour, guarantees every waking day will be in service to you, upholding the great responsibility of being your Champion-in-Chief.

With much humility, I ask for your confidence and with clarity of mind to make the needed difference, I seek your vote.

A vote for me is a vote for opportunity to build upon the foundations carefully laid by the Antigua & Barbuda Labour Party. To transform the vision of a UWI Campus into real benefits for this community. To realise the personal and professional goals of ordinary people, our neighbours and friends, and promote this community to its rightful place.

Constituents I urge you to review some of the plans and programmes within this declaration for the community. Its' focus is you. The benefits are all yours. It is about our growth and our desire to realise a better, safer, brighter day.

It would be my singular honour to be your Representative, as we drive this evolution, that will see our community deservedly transformed.

Ever,

Gail

  
GAIL CHRISTIAN





# PILLARS AND PATHWAYS FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY

As your next Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party Representative, for St John's Rural West, as a Woman born in, nurtured and raised by this very community, a life-long resident and as someone who understands first-hand, its many trials, and enthusiastically celebrate our triumphs, I am deeply honoured and humbled, confident in my God given abilities, competent and wholeheartedly committed, to be your chief advocate and promoter, dedicating my every effort, towards the upliftment and advancement of this constituency.

My community represents the best of Antigua and Barbuda.

Our Women inspire us all, with their ability to overcome, they bear the brunt of our burdens, and still, find the courage and the character, to be a positive influence in our community.

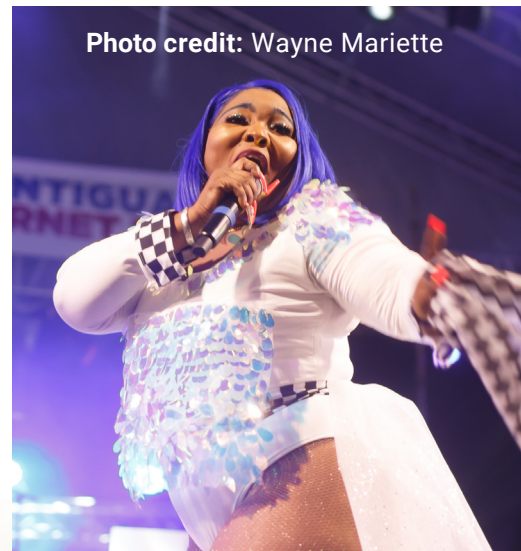
Our youths through raw talent and tenacity, and a vibrancy to excel, at school or in play, make us proud as one big family.

Our Men stand up for our community, they represent examples of hard work and endeavour, striving daily to make our surroundings better.

This rich tapestry of voices and accents, languages and lingo, culture, charm, charisma and character, infused with talent, treasure, and undoubted intellectual capital, is the strong foundation and sturdy pillars, my commitment to you will be built upon, to ignite a bright and buoyant future, so deserving for my community.



Photo credit: Wayne Mariette







## EMPOWERING THE WOMEN **OF ST. JOHN'S RURAL WEST**

Our women are our Community Leaders, they make most things happen, and overwhelmingly, make up the bulk of the community successes.

In this regard, we will create the First Women's Community Cooperative Credit Union, for the upliftment and empowerment of our community, and women in particular.

This is the place for start-ups to grow, for the expansion of small business ventures, for Women to close the opportunity gap, prosper as entrepreneurs, become better home makers, all at the same time, ensuring the enrichment of the Community.

Properly constituted, it will be led by Women who understand the needs of Women, who recognise when women flourish, the entire community benefits.

Initial funding will be secured through private and public partnerships, from individuals, companies and corporations who clearly value Women as enablers, worthy of their investment and confidence.





## WOMEN'S HEALTH AND **WELLNESS IN THE COMMUNITY**

The Health and wellness of our Women is inextricably linked to how we survive and thrive as a community. In this regard, our community clinic will receive the necessary upgrades in equipment and personnel, to face the increased challenges of the community.

We will enhance and establish relations with health providers, and other well-meaning partners, at home and abroad, to host periodic screenings in the community, evaluating and addressing concerns peculiar to our women.

We understand and appreciate, the early detection of disease may lead to cures or longer survival, and these public health initiatives will only compliment, the tremendous work already being done, by our hard-working community clinicians.



Women and girls do understand the need for period products, and we've heard your voices in this regard. As your first female representative, I will pursue bold initiatives that benefit our women, fully aware of the impact targeted initiatives have on them and the community. In this regard, I will seek to secure FREE period products to all school-aged girls.

This concern of single mothers, and women in particular, must be addressed, our school-aged girls should be free to concentrate on excellence in the classroom to make their families and our community proud.



# A GRAYS FARM **POLY CLINIC**

The constituency is large and diverse and demands on the current clinic in providing effective health care, require urgent and immediate action, to upgrade and expand the facility to a Poly-Clinic.

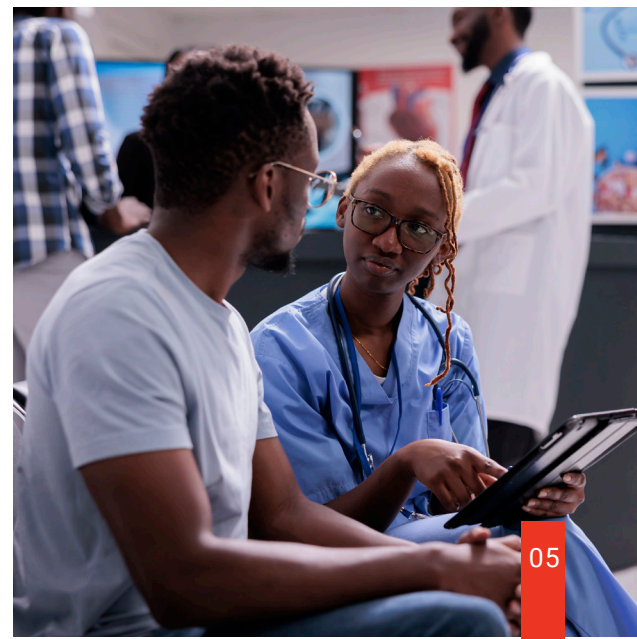
This upgrade will seek to provide primary care and treatment, promote preventive healthcare, advance health education while reducing the overall burden on SLBMSJMC, and delivering improved health care in the community.

This is a priority for me and we will consult and work with officials of health, finance and foreign ministries, as well as health providers and purveyors, to secure the necessary benefit for the community.



**Following community consultation, the Poly-Clinic will be renamed in honour of a Clinician with outstanding service in the community.**

Expanding further the medical services footprint in the constituency is equally important and considerations are well advanced in developing architectural renderings for this new structure, within proximity of the UWI Campus, to meet the expected expansion and the Five Islands Community. A further enhancement for the area will be a Fire Station Outpost, equipped with great regard, for safety and speed, as the community builds out.





# BUSINESS AND **COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR SUCCESS**

There is no doubt that My Community is ripe and ready for growth and development. To propel this desperate need, we will deliver, our vision for a community incubator to fuel and forge pathways to success, encourage and enhance opportunities for progress, provide mentorship, legal assistance and advice.

Predominantly a place where ventures are born, a home for creative thinking where skills are taught, providing supplementary learning for primary school students in reading, writing and math, social studies, science and Spanish, as well as secondary school students with their CXC ambitions as a priority.

A modern Computer Science Centre, equipped with broadband and a up to date operating suite will serve as a meaningful space for learning and research. We will teach coding to school aged children, a bet on their future in an increasing digital world, and a tool to assist their problem solving and critical thinking skills.

In this place of empowerment, young adults will focus on areas of study to include accounting, management, law, IT and entrepreneurship, resume writing, interview skills and business etiquette, all in preparation for the world of work, and further education.

With UWI Five Islands Campus based in our community, we will leave no stone unturned to collaborate and offer complimentary avenues for advancement in learning and personal development, through this facility, for those who seek that trajectory. We understand that some amongst us may feel the need to challenge themselves in further education, the Centre for success is that stepping stone to better days.





**Cerene Prince**

practice is inclusive of all persons no matter gender identity, religion, political affiliation

## MENTAL HEALTH **AND COUNSELLING**

Many of us face challenges in the exercise of our daily lives and from time to time, require a reset to navigate sometimes turbulent waters.

Our Community Centre for Success recognises this need and will provide a Qualified Clinician to offer practical and professional advice, to assist individuals in achieving their pressing and life-long ambitions.

This Centre for Success will be created for the purpose of equipping, a new generation of business owners and leaders of and for the Community.

We anticipate a hive of activity, accessible to all, with progress and success at the heart of its mandate, in a safe and secure environment, purpose driven, and results oriented.







## POLICE IN **THE COMMUNITY**

Our law enforcement officials are hard-working and dedicated women and men, pivotal to the safety and security of our community.

As good neighbours we must all work together, to achieve the goals we desire, safer streets and homes for the community.

As your next ABLP Representative, I will engage government, concerned citizens and corporations, to institute a street lighting programme, complimented with surveillance cameras, to assist the Police in the exercise of their duties. We will also seek through the Police High Command, additional personnel to man and monitor our community and through partnership, provide critical support of additional tools and capabilities allowing for careful pre-emptive actions and rapid responses by the Police.

Support for the Police is support for our Community.



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# SPORTS IN THE COMMUNITY

There is no doubt that some of the most talented sportswomen and men, as well as sporting institutions, rightly claim this community as their home.

Through the years they've made us proud. When they represent the Nation, they represent us. When they wear international colours, even captain the West Indies, we know the good grounding they received from the community, underpins their success. Those outstanding achievements in performance and perseverance is the legacy on which we will build the next generation of stars.

To develop our young ones, we must organise, and strategize. We must recognise the talent in the community, develop our home-grown coaches to teach technical as well as life skills, encourage our youths and reward their efforts.

Our clubs must be centres for development, harnessing talent from the community, for the community.

My commitment is steadfast, I will work with ALL sporting disciplines and clubs for the benefit of my community. Nothing pleases us more, than to witness young women and men attract outside interest for scholarships and professional opportunities, we must return to vigorously preparing our youths for the future, with colleges and universities as part of our agenda for upliftment and empowerment.

The sporting infrastructure in the community will be addressed. The responsible lighting, fencing and improvement of playing and spectator areas, are all critical to the development of the sport, and I will work tirelessly with community organisations to realise these goals.

I am fully committed to the renaming of King George v Grounds, in honour of a deserving individual who has impacted the community.





As your next ABLP representative, I will always consult with you and advocate for you. Your voice matters, your views matter, you matter.

We have seen the growth of baseball in the community, and we welcome the positive role it continues to play.

The raw enthusiasm of players and supporters is evident in every play, matched only by the potential for further growth to include, economic benefits, if supported with a carefully detailed and structured development plan, for the sport.

My immediate vision for the sport includes, a Home For Baseball in the community, and working and consulting with community leaders and others in the sport, we will take concrete steps to realise our ambitions.







## ARTS AND CULTURE IN THE COMMUNITY

Music and art in the community awaken spirits of joy and jubilation, conjoin young and old, friend and foe like nothing else, and we are blessed to have numbered amongst us, the quality and depth of talent that is Halcyon Steel Orchestra, West Side Symphony and other excellent performing arts groups and artists.

They remind us, especially at carnival time, how special they are, with performances that make us proud. Their musical interpretations are often rewarded with multiple podium finishes awards, to the delight of the whole community. Institutions like Halcyon Steel and other performing artists are to be celebrated and wherever opportunities can be generated to add value to their longevity, we must not hesitate in so doing.

In this regard, I propose working with community steel bands, dance companies, and other performing artists, to bring to life a festival of the arts, for the community, in our community. West Side Festival will showcase the strength and character of our people, the joy their artistry brings, the unity of purpose we live every day, the diversity we enjoy and the rhythm and rhyme that make our people move.

Equipping our community in self-sufficiency through proactive and creative ideas and events that create wealth in and of the community, is the driving force behind this and other ventures, and will directly facilitate infrastructural development for the arts in the community.

### MISS GRAYS GREEN PAGEANT

There has been a great desire to reintroduce the Miss Grays Green Pageant. Once a staple on the community calendar, this will return under my watch.



# COMMUNITY LAND **AND HOME OWNERSHIP**

The expansion of affordable housing and land ownership is a government policy that I fully endorse, and residents of the community can be assured, they will benefit to the fullest extent possible.

The Booby Alley Project, a low-income development for families, will be studied for implementation in the area, while expansion of Denfields is ongoing. The purchase of private lands will first be made available for residents, upon which new homes can also be built.

This mixed-use development approach will cater for the diverse make-up of our community, providing opportunity and empowerment for all.





## OUR COMMUNITY **ENVIRONMENT**

Every effort must be made to keep our surroundings clean and tidy. As a community we must never hesitate to play the primary role in making our environment better.

We will build and secure stronger relationships with CBH and NSWMA to partner our efforts towards a better environment.

We will also work with the Department of the Environment to craft and deliver programmes and policies for recycling and reuse.

Our efforts at beautification must never cease and to this end, we will engage our community, street by street, to create front and backyard initiatives that improve our surrounding. Our collaboration with agricultural officials will seek and search out flowers and fruit trees that enhance our front and back yards.

To further underpin our renewed programme of beautification, we will support our residents with public service announcements, school visits by environmental experts and community leaders, as well as clean up campaigns, specifically for our community, to provide timely information on important programmes and schedules for collection in the area.

We anticipate through our schools in conjunction with local environmental agencies, to recruit a community group of Grays Green E-Warriors, to awaken their consciousness towards the green evolution, to fully appreciate their surroundings, to understand its coastal areas and wetlands, and moreover educate, enlighten and inspire, the future keepers of our community.





# JOB CREATION AND **EMPLOYMENT IN THE COMMUNITY**

Creating wealth for the community is at the forefront of my representation and every able adult, must be willing to compete and seize, employment opportunities, initialize start-ups and expand businesses to improve their daily existence.

We possess the finest and best workmen and women on the island, which positions us well to capture and cultivate to our advantage, work in construction, tourism, agriculture and other meaningful enterprise, for the benefit of the community.

All work is dignified, labourers and plumbers, Masons and Carpenters, our Beauticians, Restaurant & Bar Owners, our Farmers and Fishermen, our Sanitation Workers, Teachers, Lawyers, Nurses and Doctors, all play an equal and pivotal part in building our community.

It is my commitment to negotiate and secure, more investments in tourism, creative arts, sports development, seeding funds and improved infrastructure for the benefit of ALL.







UWI Five Islands Campus is poised for major expansion, with plans well advanced to launch a construction blitz that will require skilled men and women of the community.

Through the ingenuity and foresight of the ABLP Gaston Browne administration, the campus will forever be a fixture in our community. Our goal of wealth creation envisions the transformation of our community into a burgeoning and bustling university town.

Enrolment will reach over 700 students this academic year but is expected to significantly multiply over the next five years to approximately 2500 to 3000 students.

This will ultimately drive demand for housing, transportation, food and beverage, laundry services, beauticians and barbers, mobile and computer services, boutiques, gyms, entertainment and other attractions, presenting increased possibilities for financial autonomy for residents in the community.



My community plan fully compliments the growth and expansion of the university, and I will engage university officials to maximise benefits for a Community Outreach Programme.

We anticipate this will involve scholarship opportunities, additional creative ideas for community prosperity, collaboration in adult education, as well as, research and development, to earn our way, better ourselves, and transform our lives.

Tourism products in the community, offer fantastic offerings and provide employment for many. We will continue to produce outstanding employees and build stronger relationships with hotel operators.

Our Business and Community Hub for Success will be a pillar and a pathway to creative thinkers and problem solvers, managers and owners who provide tangible support to their business and industry, offering land and sea-based services and agriproducts, locally produced niche products for market.

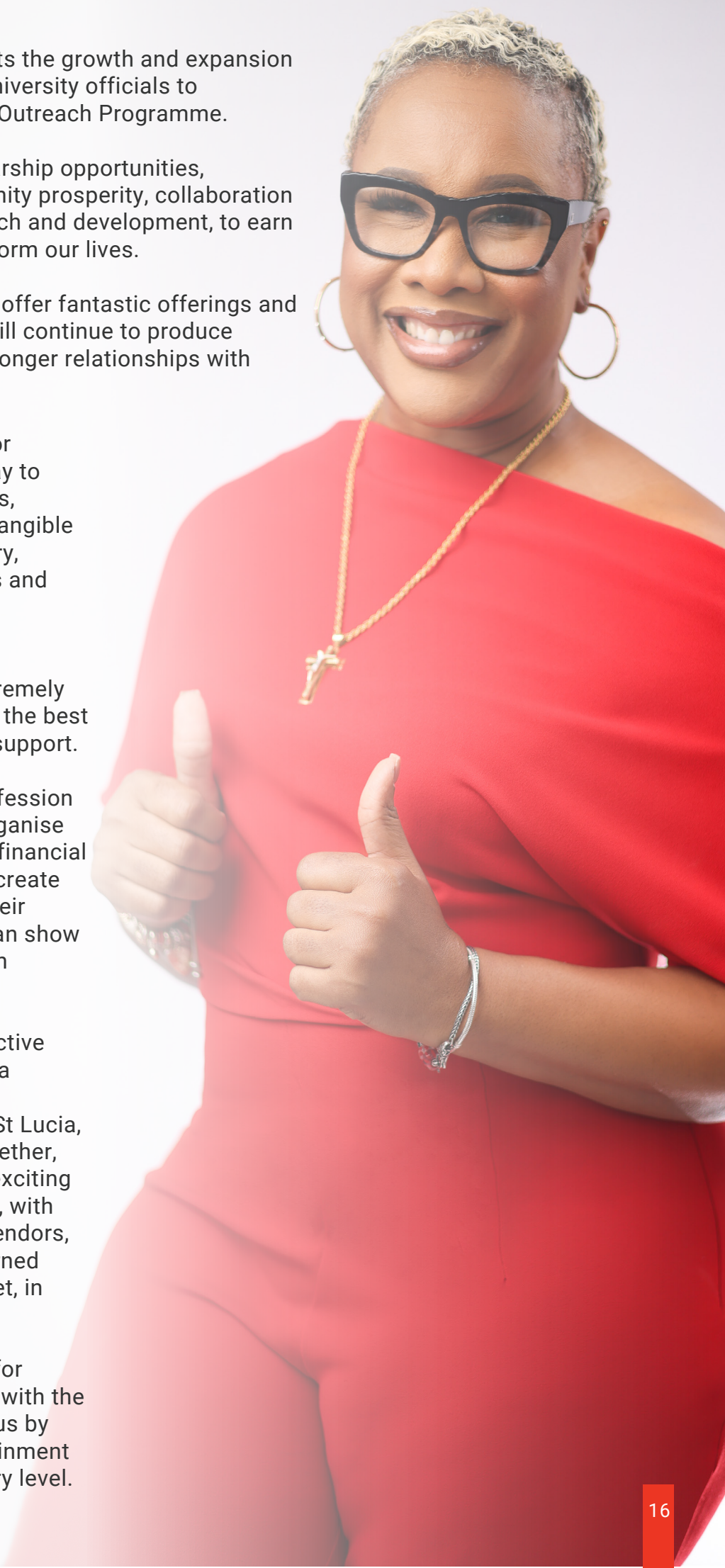
Our farmers and fishermen work extremely hard to produce and source some of the best products on island and deserve our support.

Ensuring they can carry out their profession in safety and security, encourage, organise and strategize for greater access to financial support, promote sustainability and create new markets to sell and distribute their produce, are some of the ways we can show tangible support towards their wealth creation.

Our community is blessed with attractive waterfront areas capable of hosting a market to sell prepared products.

Much like the heralded Gros Islet in St Lucia, where community vendors come together, attracting locals and visitors for an exciting culinary experience, we will organise, with the support of farmers, fishermen, vendors, community leaders and other concerned parties, a Waterfront Weekend Market, in support of our stated goal of wealth creation.

This initiative creates opportunities for purveyors of food products, it aligns with the anticipated growth of the UWI campus by providing safe and attractive entertainment and supports our community on every level.





# TIME TO GET TO WORK, FOR THE PEOPLE OF MY COMMUNITY









# LET'S GET TO WORK, BUILDING A BETTER ST. JOHN'S RURAL WEST



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