



# 2008 Caribbean Population Awards

Friday, November 28, 2008  
Paramaribo, Suriname

*"Population & Development"*

## HIGHLIGHTS

### United Nations Population Fund

The much anticipated and newly rebranded UNFPA Caribbean Population Awards was held at the Torrarica Hotel, Paramaribo, Suriname on Friday, November 28, 2008.

The Organization of Indigenous People of Suriname copped the top prize in the inaugural non-media category of the ninth staging of the United Nation's Population Awards, for its efforts in monitoring the treatment of the Suriname indigenous community. The group emerged first place winner from among two other competitors and for their efforts received a grant of US \$10,000 to continue their work.

In addition to the three non-media entrants, a total of fifty media practitioners working in the field of population and development submitted compelling radio, television and print entries, all vying for Platinum, Gold or Silver Awards in each category. As Chief Judge, Tony Best noted, many journalists worked the freedom to submit limitless entries to their advantage. "Many Journalists submitted multiple entries which reflected an interest in sexual and reproductive health, a desire to reach the largest possible audience and an understanding of population dynamics that included migration, family planning, gender, poverty and safe motherhood," he stated.

While praising the overall efforts of all the entrants, Mr. Best bemoaned the minimal entries received from the electronic media, particularly radio, where only two entries were received. He however had high commendations for the impressive number of print entries.

In each category, Awardees received a cash awards and a certificate. Andrea Downer of Panos Caribbean, Jamaica topped the Print Category; receiving

Platinum for her body of work on HIV/AIDS, which comprised the articles *"Lack of Food Worsens AIDS Epidemic in Jamaica"*, *"No Sex or Condoms Here—HIV Prevention, Treatment and Care in Jamaican Prisons"*, *"Grandmothers to the Rescue"*, *"Women Living With HIV Are Positive They Want Kids"* and *"We will not be silenced!-Youths infected and affected by HIV and AIDS"*.

Silver was awarded to Hazra C. Medica of the Antigua Sun Newspaper for her entries *"Youth at Risk"*, *"Endangering Our Daughters"* and the *"King and We"*, which the Judges thought indicated considerable investigative work and critical thinking. Cedriann Martin of the Trinidad Express received Silver for her body of work comprising the articles: *"The Abortion Issues"*, *"I am a Sex Worker"*, *"Introducing FC2: The Second Generation Female Condom"*.

In the radio category, Natalee Campbell and Sheryl Johnson of Irie FM in Jamaica won Platinum for their entry *"Spell Your Name"* and Nationwide Radio, also of Jamaica received Gold for its entry *"Emancipated – the Onika Grant Story"*.

In the Television category, NADA Productions, according to Tony Best, just stopped short of receiving a perfect score of 20 from three of the six Judges. *"Touching Nikon a Jamaica AIDS Story"*, the joint entry of Leslie Chin and David Graham of Nada Production was awarded Platinum, while the Gold Award went to Susan Simes, Jamaica, for her entry, *"Ice Creame Parts One and Two"*. 6.5

UNFPA Director of the Sub-Regional Office for the Caribbean, Harold Robinson expressed hope that "many people will become excited about working in population and development issues". This, he noted, is critical for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's).



Hazra C. Medica, Features Writer with the Antigua Sun receives her second place prize from HIV Advisor of UNFPA, Suriname, Judith Brielle



Susan Simes, who conceptualized the Susan Show, receives the second prize in the television category from Deputy Director, UNFPA Sub-Regional Office for the Caribbean, Jaime Nadal.



First Lady of the Republic of Suriname, H.E Lisbeth Venetiaan is surrounded by the UNFPA staff and winners of the 2008 Caribbean Population Awards, held at the Torarica Hotel in Paramaribo, Suriname.



David Graham and Leslie Chin of NADA Production jointly won the Platinum Award in the Television Category of the 2008 Caribbean Population Awards. David proudly displays the certificates awarded.



First Lady of the Republic of Suriname, H.E Lisbeth Venetiaan is greeted on arrival at the Torarica Hotel, in Paramaribo, Suriname for the 2008 Caribbean Population Awards by Harold Robinson, Director, Sub-Regional Office for the Caribbean



Freelance Features Journalist with the Express Woman, Trinidad, Cedriann Martin, receives her third place award from Carmeta Douglin, HIV Advisor, UNFPA, Barbados



Sheryl Johnson, News Presenter and Reporter of IRIE FM, receives the first place prize in the radio category from Mr. E. Nordzee of the Ministry of Health, Suriname



Members of Ala Kondre Dron Ensemble perform at the 2008 UNFPA Caribbean Population Awards at the Torarica Hotel in Paramaribo, Suriname on November 28.



Marilyn Facey, Producer of Nationwide Radio, receives the second place prize in the radio category from UNFPA Suriname-based Programme Manager Jewel Quallo-Rosberg



Andrea Downer, writer for the Gleaner Company and Panos Caribbean graciously receives her prize for placing first in the print category, for her body of work covering issues affecting Persons Living with HIV



First Lady of the Republic of Suriname, H.E Lisbeth Venetiaan looks on as Leon Wijnngaarde receives the winning prize in the inaugural non-media category on behalf of the Organization of Indigenous People in Suriname from Harold Robinson, Director, Sub-Regional Office for the Caribbean

Formerly the UNFPA Annual Caribbean Media Awards, the competition has been rebranded "to be more representative of its broadened scope", and has been renamed the UNFPA Caribbean Population Awards.

Under the theme, *"Population and Development"*, the 2008 competition attracted numerous entries from qualified journalists in the English and Dutch-Speaking Caribbean. A total of fifty three entries were submitted - fifty from media and three from the non-media category.

Addressing the 2008 Award Ceremony, UNFPA Director of the Sub-Regional Office for the Caribbean, Harold Robinson explained, "This year, efforts were made to broaden the scope of the competition to include non-media initiatives and institutions that work to improve the quality of life for the people of the region."

This category, he noted, recognizes the achievements of either an individual, non-governmental organization or a group working in the fields of population and development in the region, to improve the health and welfare of the population served.

It also reflects the commitment of the UNFPA to tackle major issues that are impacting people's lives and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals set by 189 United Nations member states. Efforts of the organization to achieve these goals include promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender equality and equity and integration of population related factors into development strategies and plans. The themes for the 2008

Caribbean Population Awards were also drawn from these areas of concentration.

Mr. Robinson encouraged media practitioners and people and organizations that work at the community level to continue to lead the way in bringing the issues to the forefront. He also committed to continue to advance the UNFPA mission "to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect."

First Lady of Suriname, Lisbeth Venetiaan-Vanenburg, who gave the main address, also expressed Suriname's dedication to realizing sustainable development for the people. In reference to sexual and reproductive health, Mrs. Venetiaan-Vanenburg extended an appeal to journalists and other stakeholders to focus on youth, particularly since so many are affected by the HIV pandemic. "Young people require our special attention, for adolescence is marked by uncertainty, risk taking and experimenting.

"Human Dignity," she noted, "is not only freedom from torture and hunger, but also the freedom to vote and the freedom of expression. It also means the right to health and education and the possibility to enjoy all rights without discrimination."

