



# Association of Caribbean Mediaworkers

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## RESIDENT'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE

January 1, 2006 - On behalf of the executive of the ACM, I wish every media worker in the region a happy 2006. It is our wish as well that this profession is strengthened in the New Year by improved quality and standards. Our commitment to bettering the profession must be even greater in the coming year, as we move towards initiatives aimed at real integration.

The ACM will continue to play a critical role in ensuring that the free movement of media workers is achieved. A recent meeting with the Deputy Secretary General of CARICOM has shown just how important our organisation is to the process of regional integration and the free movement of media workers.

Your ACM executive has continued to build alliances, which, among other things, would help create opportunities for training. The first for the New Year will be a collaboration with UNESCO and will target media workers in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and Barbados.

May I take this opportunity to remind journalists and media workers that full sponsorship is available for delegates attending the February 14-15 Education for All workshop in St. Lucia. So far we have received several applications but none from the following countries: Barbados, the British Virgin Islands, St Kitts-Nevis and Montserrat.

We are also still entertaining further applications from: Dominica and St Vincent and the Grenadines. Please remember to send a brief bio with full contact details to [acmmail@gmail.com](mailto:acmmail@gmail.com) The deadline is January 3, 2006.

Another training workshop is being planned for the Bahamas in March, you will hear more about this in time.

Since assuming office, I have been spending time understanding the needs and challenges of national associations wherever they exist in the region. Most of the challenges appear common in many of these associations. These bodies can only be as strong as their memberships. Therefore, it is imperative that they be given the support needed, not only for themselves, but also as important members of the ACM family.

I do not have to reiterate that weak media associations give way to many problems within the media industry, including strong-arm tactics, which erode press freedoms. We are aware and continue to monitor attempts in some territories to introduce legislation, which could have far reaching effects on the way we, as media workers, do our work. These attempts must be closely monitored and acted on when applicable.



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Court rulings are also posing a challenge to this profession, and they too must be dealt with. Suriname is the latest example. I applaud the Suriname Journalists Association for its position and vigilance in the issue involving the 'De West' newspaper and the country's Currency Board.

We continue to express our concern about the situation and in particular, the court ruling, which we believe contravenes conventional judicial parameters with respect to court-ordered retractions of erroneous publications.

In our view, the requirement that De West rectify inaccurate remarks about the Suriname Currency Board in media other than the original publication exceeds typical international remedies in matters of this kind.

This executive appreciates the work many have been doing and I hope continue to do in your respective countries and we thank you for your continued support.

As president, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the entire executive of the ACM for its guidance since I assumed office in November. I know you would not fault me for personally thanking Wesley Gibbings, the former president and now General Secretary, Vice Presidents Bert Wilkinson and Peter Richards, who have been with the ACM since its inception, for their invaluable help and guidance.

We have been given a strong foundation to make the ACM even stronger in the coming years. To executive member Michael Bascombe in Grenada, let me extend congratulations again on your election as President of the MediaWorkers Association of Grenada and as usual we look forward to your association's continued input in the ACM.

To another executive member, Nita Ramcharan and her team in Suriname, as well as Canute James in Jamaica, let us keep the ACM flag flying high in 2006.

Sincerely

Dale Enoch  
President