



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Social Development and Family Services



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Priority: HIGH

Minister Cox presents instruments of Appointment to TTBWA Government Representatives

Minister of Social Development and Family Services, Senator, The Honourable Donna Cox today appointed four members who are Government Representatives to the Board of the Trinidad and Tobago Blind Welfare Association (TTBWA). The presentations were made earlier today at the Ministry's Head Office on St Vincent Street. In attendance were Permanent Secretaries at the Ministry, Jacinta Bailey Sobers and Sheila Secharan, as well as government representatives from the Ministries of Health, Attorney General and Legal Affairs as well as Housing and Urban Development. Also in attendance were TTBWA's President Felix Cazoe, Executive Officer, Kenneth Surratt and Director of the Ministry's NGO Unit Cindy Heeralal.

The appointment of these members to the Board came following a meeting held between the Minister and the Association in November 2020, where it was identified that the Board has been functioning without Government Representation. During her brief address to those in attendance, the Minister highlighted that Council of the TTBWA is to provide effective governance and strategic oversight to advance the work and mandate of the TTBWA in serving the blind and visually impaired community. Government representation forms an essential part of this governance mechanism and serves to strengthen collaboration between the TTBWA, the blind and visually impaired community and the Government.

Appointees to the Board who received instruments are as follows:

1. Ms. Sheila Secharan, Appointee, MSDFS
2. Ms. Delisier Blackman, Appointee, Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs
3. Dr. Desiree Murray, Appointee, Ministry of Health
4. Mr. Ramon Alexis, Appointee, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development

According to Minister Cox, "Trinidad and Tobago Blind Welfare Association is dear to our hearts. Therefore, maintaining relationships with this association is a top priority at the Ministry." She further highlighted the importance of having representatives from Government serve in the Board. Mr. Kenneth Suratt, Executive Director of TTWBA was quite pleased that Minister Cox made it a priority to provide the skills set required to assist in the functioning of the Board.





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President of TTBWA said “The presence on the board brings immense value to the community, and a level of legitimacy to the work they do on the Council. On behalf of the board, we are happy that the full complement of Government representatives is now in place. The timing is great, as the new Board will be appointed following the elections this weekend.”

In closing, Minister Cox thanked the Association for the commendable work it has been doing for the community of blind and visual impaired persons, and urged the newly appointed representatives to: “Not only to serve with passion, but also serve with the requisite diligence which will ensure that this community of persons with disabilities are able to enjoy the utmost respect, dignity of self and equality.

Both Kenneth Suratt and Feliz Cazoe of the TTBWA expressed their heartfelt appreciation to Minister and members of her Executive.



Minister Cox and the newly appointed board members of the TTBWA





(From l-r) Kenneth Suratt, Executive Director of TTBWA, Sheila Seecharan, Permanent Secretary of the MSDFS and Appointee of MSDFS, Minister Cox, Dr. Desiree Murray, appointee from Ministry of Health, Mr. Felix Cazoe, President of TTBWA, Ms. Delisier Blackman, appointee from the Ministry of Attorney General and Legal Affairs, Mr. Ramon Alexis, Appointee from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and Mrs. Jacinta Bailey Sobers, Permanent Secretary of the MSDFS





Mr. Felix Cazoe, President of the TTBWA expresses his gratitude to the MSDFS.

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