

FEATURE

Presidents through the YEARS

For five decades, the Barbados Council for the Disabled has been guided by visionary leaders whose dedication, advocacy and service have shaped the organisation into the national voice for persons with disabilities. Each president has built on the work of those before them, championing greater accessibility, inclusion and equal opportunities while steering the council through important milestones. Together, their leadership has helped transform the lives of thousands of Barbadians and laid the foundation for the council's enduring legacy.

1976 - 1983

Sir William Douglas



1983 - 1984

Rev. Ivan Harewood



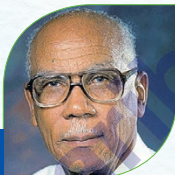
1984 - 1986

Philip Goddard



1986 - 1988

Dr Leonard Shorey



1988 - 1993

Jacqueline Banfield



1993 - 1999

Peter Serieux BCH



1999 - 2003

Clevedon Mayers SCM



Boneta Phillips

2003 - 2007



David "Joey" Harper

2007 - 2011



Senator Kerryann Ifill FB

2011 - 2015

and 2019 - 2024



Maria Holder-Small

2015 - 2019



Patricia Padmore-Blackman

2024 - Present

Roslyn Hurley
Special Envoy
for Persons with
Disabilities. (FP)

Did You Know?

BCD represents **26** Affiliate organisations

Thousands of people with disabilities have been supported since 1976

Distributed over **2 500** disability parking Permits to date

Pioneer of Facility Accessibility assessments in Barbados

National census identified more than

11 000

Barbadians living with disabilities

Congratulations to the Barbados Council for the Disabled on its 50th Anniversary

From **The Honourable Colin E. Jordan, M.P.**
Minister of Labour, Social Security and the Third Sector



On behalf of the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and the Third Sector, I extend warmest congratulations to the Barbados Council for the Disabled on the occasion of its Golden Anniversary. This remarkable milestone marks not only longevity, but fifty years of dedicated service, advocacy, and leadership in advancing the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities in Barbados.

Since its establishment in 1976, the Council has been a leading advocate for social justice for people with disabilities, consistently championing fairness, dignity, equality, and accessibility. It has served as a steadfast voice, promoting and advancing the full participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of life in Barbados, and helping to shape a society where inclusion is recognized as essential, not optional.

Through this sustained advocacy, meaningful progress has been made in strengthening both the legislative and social framework for inclusion. This includes key milestones such as the Employment (Prevention of Discrimination) Act, 2020, and the passage of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2025. Together, these landmark measures represent critical steps toward enhancing protections and advancing equality, non-discrimination, and full inclusion.

At the international level, important developments continue to reinforce this progress. At the 114th International Labour Conference in June 2026, I had the opportunity to join colleagues from across the world in shaping the future of work. I am particularly encouraged with the adoption, by the committee that I chaired, of a new ILO Convention on Decent Work in the Platform Economy, which extends fundamental rights, fair pay, social protection, occupational safety and health, and protections against discrimination to workers in emerging and non-traditional forms of employment. This is especially significant for persons with disabilities, who often benefit from more flexible work arrangements. The Conference also reaffirmed global commitments to fairness, inclusion, and social dialogue—principles that are closely aligned with our national agenda of sustainable development, social cohesion, worker empowerment and enfranchisement.

Over the decades, the Barbados Council for the Disabled has also demonstrated the transformative power of the Third Sector. Through advocacy, public education, disability sensitivity training, accessible transportation initiatives, braille translation, sign language interpretation and the Fully Accessible Barbados initiative, the Council has contributed meaningfully to improving lives and strengthening communities. Its extensive partnerships with government, civil society and international organizations underscore the vital role that non-governmental organizations play in addressing social challenges, amplifying marginalized voices and advancing equality.

The Ministry is proud to count the Barbados Council for the Disabled among its valued partners in pursuing a shared vision: making Barbados the best place to work, contribute and retire. This partnership reflects a common commitment to ensuring that every individual, regardless of ability, has the opportunity to realize their full potential and participate meaningfully in economic, social and civic life.

The Council's work aligns closely with the Ministry's mission to promote decent, productive and sustainable work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. The Barbados Council for the Disabled has long advanced the principles of social justice and inclusion by challenging barriers, encouraging universal design and access and supporting environments where persons with disabilities can thrive as workers, entrepreneurs, and employers.

While we celebrate how far we have come, this occasion also calls us to look ahead. Building a truly inclusive Barbados is a shared responsibility — one that requires continued collaboration among government, employers, worker representatives, the Third Sector, and our communities. It demands a sustained commitment to removing the physical, social, economic, and attitudinal barriers that limit opportunity and participation.

Under the theme "Honouring the Struggle, Igniting the Future," we pay tribute to the pioneers who established the Council, the leaders who sustained its vision, and the many advocates, volunteers, and persons with disabilities whose resilience continues to inspire our nation. As the Barbados Council for the Disabled enters its next chapter, my Ministry stands ready to deepen this partnership and to continue building a society where inclusion is fully realized, diversity is celebrated, accessibility is standard, and every individual can live and contribute with dignity and purpose.

Congratulations on fifty years of outstanding service, and best wishes for continued success in the years ahead.