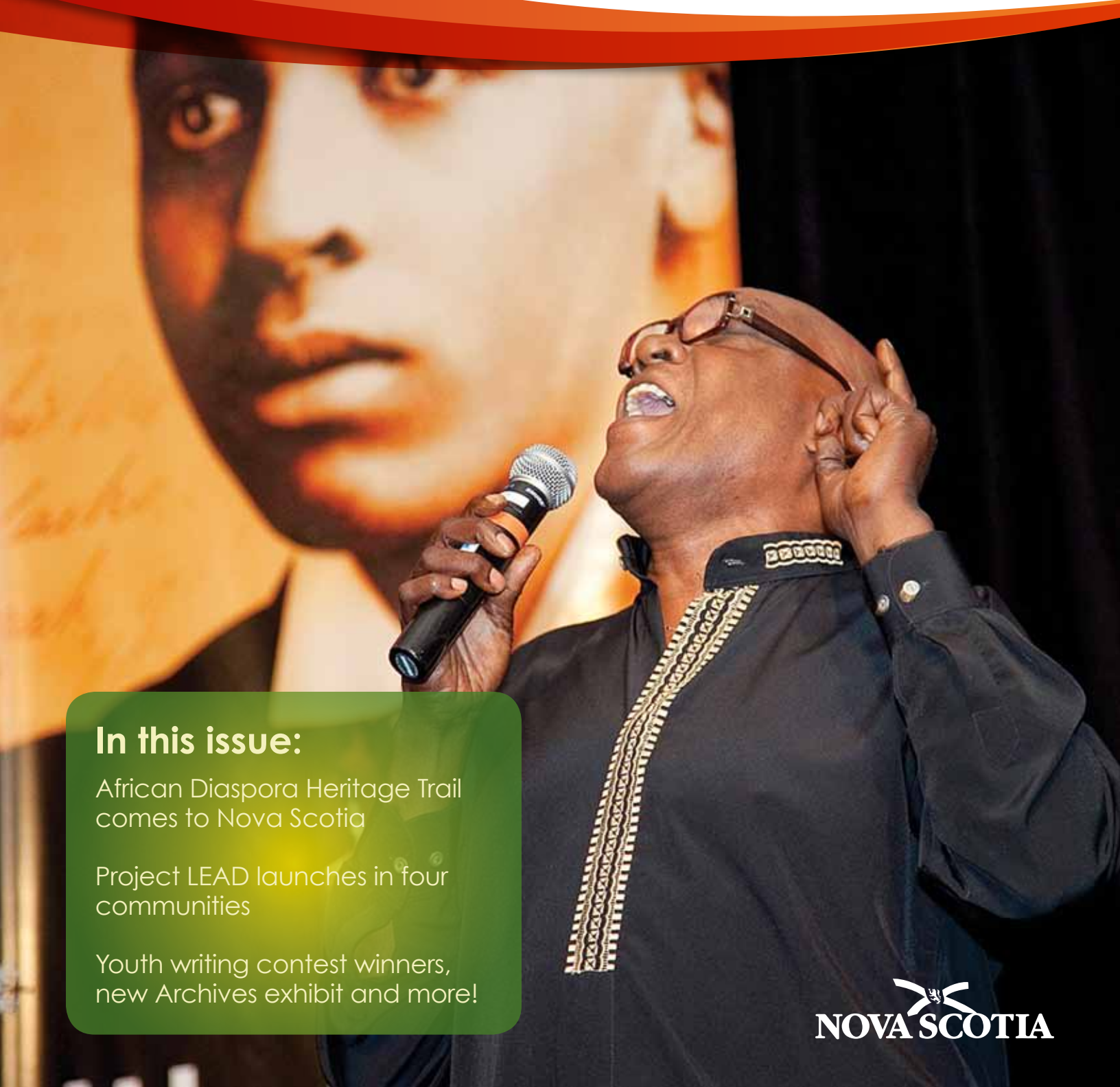




# PASSAGES & PROSPERITY

Fall/Winter 2011



## In this issue:

African Diaspora Heritage Trail  
comes to Nova Scotia

Project LEAD launches in four  
communities

Youth writing contest winners,  
new Archives exhibit and more!

  
NOVA SCOTIA

# Message from the Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs



*Our newsletters are an opportunity to inform you of upcoming programs, projects or events, showcase partnerships and share our achievements with you.*

Greetings and welcome to the Fall 2011 edition of *Passages and Prosperity*. ANSA has been extremely busy over the past few months, and we have plenty of exciting news and updates to share in these pages.

The highlight of the summer was the Seventh International African Diaspora Heritage Trail Conference. This landmark event drew about 350 participants from 29 different countries to Halifax. We had many important conversations about preserving, promoting and protecting African heritage around the world, and we gave our guests a taste of African Nova Scotian culture. It was an amazing opportunity to put Nova Scotia on the map—and more than a few of our guests promised they would be back!

Conference guests were also able to see the newly refurbished Black Cultural Centre and witness the official opening of the Africville Seaview Church Museum. These landmarks will have a lasting impact in our communities and throughout the province for years to come.

But that's not all that happened this summer. ANSA launched a new crime-prevention and leadership program for youth called Project LEAD, which is running now in four communities. The Office also held a creative writing contest in celebration of the International Year for People of African Descent, and you can meet the winners and read some of their work inside this issue.

Things are just as busy as we head through fall and into winter. In this issue you will hear more about the next steps in our community consultations toward establishing a lasting form of recognition for African Nova Scotians, learn about a fascinating new resource at the Nova Scotia Archives, and hear about upcoming programs like the Nova Scotia Brotherhood Initiative.

And of course African Heritage Month is coming soon. As a follow-up to the *Leading Ladies, Lasting Legacies* theme of 2010, this year we will be celebrating men who have made a difference in their communities. We asked people to nominate their Unsung Heroes, and responses came in from across the province. Stay tuned in January to find out whose faces will be featured on the poster.

Enjoy the issue, and as always you can keep in touch with us through a variety of ways: visit us on the web ([www.gov.ns.ca/ansa](http://www.gov.ns.ca/ansa)), on Facebook (@AfricanNSAffairs) and Twitter (@OfficeofANSA).

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Percy Paris', written in a cursive style.

Percy Paris, Minister  
Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs

# NOVA SCOTIA BROTHERHOOD INITIATIVE

A new initiative aimed at meeting the health needs of African Nova Scotian men is underway in Nova Scotia.

The Department of Health and Wellness and the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs are working together on the Nova Scotia Brotherhood Initiative, which seeks to address health disparities often faced by men of African descent.

Adapted from the successful Project Brotherhood in Chicago's South Side, the Nova Scotia Brotherhood Initiative is designed to create a culturally specific health clinic for African Nova Scotian men. Research has shown that black men are at higher risk for some chronic conditions, and they often face barriers to accessing health care because of issues like socio-economic status, racism, unemployment and under-employment.

Project Brotherhood in Chicago found creative ways to engage and support African-American men to access health care. These strategies included free haircuts and meals at the weekly clinic, extended clinic hours, personalized care from

doctors, professionals and social workers of African descent, and help with transportation to and from the clinic.

In Nova Scotia, the first step is engaging a community researcher to assess needs and strategies as the project moves toward setting up community clinics for men of African descent. The first clinic will be in the Halifax area, with a goal of adding others throughout the province.

The researcher wants to hear from men on what they'd like to see in a health clinic. To add your voice to the discussion, please contact Crystal Watson at [watson.crystal@gmail.com](mailto:watson.crystal@gmail.com) or 902-817-7448.

For more information on the Brotherhood Initiative, please visit the websites below:

[http://www.gov.ns.ca/health/primaryhealthcare/diversity/project\\_brotherhood.asp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/health/primaryhealthcare/diversity/project_brotherhood.asp)

<http://projectbrotherhood.net>

# AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN STORIES ON FILM

A documentary about Viola Desmond and a short film on African Nova Scotian history by award-winning filmmaker Sylvia Hamilton both made their debuts in September.

Future generations of young Nova Scotians will learn the courageous story of Viola Desmond thanks to the new film *Long Road to Justice: The Viola Desmond Story*. The film will be available in Nova Scotia schools starting in January 2012.

"The act of defiance by Mrs. Desmond set in motion efforts that helped end segregation in Nova Scotia," said Communities, Culture and Heritage Minister David Wilson. "This important film will ensure that the name Viola Desmond and the lessons

of her experience will be passed on to the young people of Nova Scotia for years to come."

Meanwhile, Sylvia Hamilton's film "We Are One" debuted at the African Diaspora Heritage Trail conference in September. Produced with Communications Nova Scotia and the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs, the video offers a poetic overview of African Nova Scotian history. It can be viewed online at [www.adht2011.com](http://www.adht2011.com).



# AFRICAN DIASPORA HERITAGE TRAIL CONFERENCE: Bringing the World to Nova Scotia

A chorus of drummers and a parade of flags representing 29 countries officially opened the 7th International African Diaspora Heritage Trail Conference at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax.

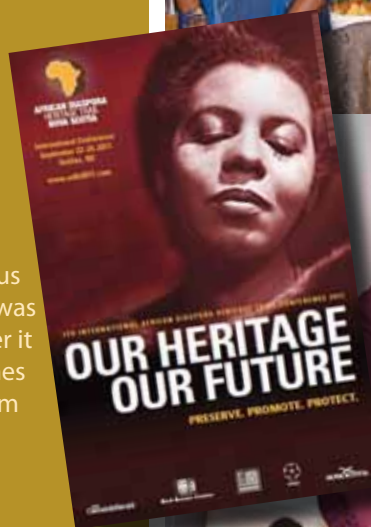
Close to 350 presenters and delegates from North America, Europe, Africa and the Caribbean gathered for the conference from Sept. 22-25, which brought together people interested in preserving, promoting and protecting African heritage and culture throughout the world.

“For hundreds of years, people of African descent have played a vital role in the culture, heritage, and economic well-being of Nova Scotia,” Premier Darrell Dexter said at the opening ceremony. “We look forward to sharing Nova Scotia’s story. We believe great things will come out of this conference that will have a lasting impact far into our future.”

The Nova Scotia conference’s theme was *Our Heritage, Our Future: Preserve. Promote. Protect.*

“Nova Scotia has been in many ways a small but mighty hub of the African Diaspora,” said Percy Paris, Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs. “Our roots run deep, and our culture deserves to be shared with the world. It is our hope that delegates from around the world will leave with a deeper sense of our province’s rich African heritage and important role in the Diaspora.”

The African Diaspora Heritage Trail is an international tourism initiative started by the Bermuda Department of Tourism in 2002. It is designed to promote socially conscious travel and educate visitors on African culture. Nova Scotia was the first conference host in continental North America, after it was previously held in the Bahamas, Tanzania, and four times in Bermuda. The 2012 event will take place in Barbados from Oct. 19-21.









## Conference Highlights:

### International African Bazaar

Throughout the weekend, guests and the public could browse for goods and services offered by people of African descent in a tent at Sackville Landing. The ADHT committee worked with the Black Business Initiative, Waterfront Development Corp. and two other events—Word on the Street and the Francofest culture festival—to create a full cultural experience on the Halifax Waterfront.

### Welcome Reception

The weekend kicked off on Thursday evening with a ribbon-cutting on the Bazaar and a welcome reception at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. Guests heard inspiring words from Minister Paris, ADHT Bermuda executive director Maxine Esdaille and South African High Commissioner Mohau Pheko, along with poems from Nova Scotian students—winners of the creative writing contest held in honour of the International Year for People of African Descent.

### Opening Ceremony

On Friday ADHT opened in earnest with drums, flags and a specially commissioned video by Sylvia Hamilton called “We Are One.” Her Honour, Lieutenant Governor Mayann E. Francis, and Premier Darrell Dexter brought greetings along with Minister Paris, Bermuda Tourism Minister Patrice Minors and honorary conference chairman Senator Donald Oliver. The ceremony also featured an Aboriginal welcome, and a libation ceremony by Dr. Joe Alie of Sierra Leone.

### Sessions and Workshops

Senator Oliver hosted the opening plenary session with Dr. Leslie Oliver of the Black Cultural Society and American scholar Molefi Asante that set delegates buzzing. Dr. Asante, often credited as the founder of the theory of Afrocentricity, was a popular draw throughout the conference. Other workshops throughout the weekend included sessions on developing cultural tourism destinations, a youth panel, and a screening of the new film *Long Road to Justice: the Viola Desmond Story*, which will be available in Nova Scotia schools in January.

### We Are Here: Telling African Canadian Stories

Delegates got a literary treat on Friday evening as award-winning authors Lawrence Hill, George Elliott Clarke and Shauntay Grant took the stage for readings and a conversation with host Anthony Sherwood, the Halifax-born actor, director and producer.

### Closing Gala

On Saturday night, homegrown entertainers stole the spotlight. From spoken word performers El Jones and Afua Cooper to the hip-hop of J-Bru, from up-and-comers Marko Simmonds and Reeny Smith to soul veteran Dutch Robinson, from the intricate jazz of the Gary Steed Trio to the rousing gospel of the Sanctified Brothers, delegates were frequently lifted from their seats by a spectacular tour of what the African Nova Scotian music scene has to offer.

# AFRICAN DIASPORA HERITAGE TRAIL

## *Flag display*



Bahamas



Barbados



Belgium



Benin



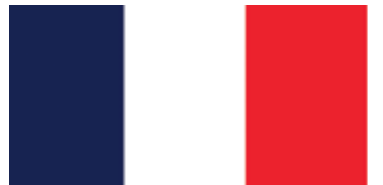
Bermuda



Cameroon



Canada



France



Gambia



Ghana



Guinea



Haiti



Jamaica



Liberia



Mauritius



Nigeria



Republic of the Congo



Saint Kitts and Nevis



Senegal



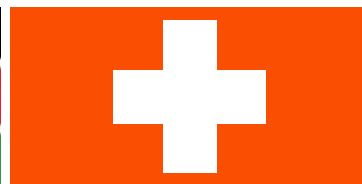
Sierra Leone



South Africa



South Sudan



Switzerland



Tanzania



Trinidad and Tobago



Uganda



United States



Zimbabwe

# Community Spotlight

## PROJECT LEAD: Teaching Youth about the Law

A new program for youth in Grades 5-8 called Project LEAD is underway in Whitney Pier, New Glasgow and Digby and launching soon in Glace Bay.

Project LEAD is a law-related education program that teaches youth about the consequences of poor choices and encourages them to strive for excellence. It's adapted from a successful U.S. model, and in Nova Scotia it's being offered in an Afrocentric context.

Since the program launched in September, the groups have had weekly activities including discussions focused on youth issues and how making choices—negative or positive—can impact your life. The LEAD program focuses on hands-on activities that keep youth engaged in learning.

The group takes part in skits and role-play activities. In one session, the participants split into two groups to develop skits: one group had a situation with a positive outcome with the law and the other group had to compose a skit with a negative outcome. They presented their skits to the group and a community volunteer played the role of the judge. This activity laid the foundation for a lesson called "African Nova Scotians and the Law: Using the Law to Better the Lives of African Nova Scotians."

Over the past few weeks several guest speakers have visited the program, including a member of the Cape Breton Regional Police Service, a youth residential worker, and a community advocate who has worked in the Restorative Justice process.

At the end of November, the Sydney group also toured a courtroom where they viewed part of a case and spoke with Judge Jean Whalen following the proceedings.

Project LEAD is a partnership between the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs, Public Safety Canada's National Crime Prevention Strategy and the Cape Breton County Economic Development Authority (CBCEDA). It's currently offered at the Whitney Pier Youth Club, Ward 1 Recreational Centre (New Glasgow) and Digby Regional High School, with the Glace Bay UNIA Hall to be added soon.

It's a great positive project to have in our communities and we look forward to providing you with another update in our next newsletter. For more information, visit [www.projectleadns.com](http://www.projectleadns.com).



# BLACK CULTURAL CENTRE OPENS BRAND-NEW EXHIBITS

The Black Cultural Centre of Nova Scotia celebrated the grand opening of its new first-floor exhibits on September 22, in time for the start of the African Diaspora Heritage Trail Conference. The centre recently refreshed its gallery space to better provide visitors with experiences that will highlight the history and accomplishments of African Nova Scotians.

"I am thrilled to see the completion of this project, which will ensure that the stories and experiences of African Nova Scotians are shared with visitors and preserved for future generations," said Percy Paris, Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, and the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs. "We want visitors to our province to have meaningful experiences that showcase our rich and diverse culture to continue to build Nova Scotia as a premier destination for travellers from around the world."

The province contributed \$240,000 in funding to the centre through the tourism niche marketing program, and an additional \$20,000 in tourism development funding.

The refresh project was managed by the Black Business Initiative in collaboration with staff and board representatives from the Black Cultural Society of Nova Scotia and staff from the departments of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, Communities, Culture and Heritage, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs. The project is part of a cultural tourism strategy to enhance Nova Scotia as a destination for visitors interested in African culture and heritage.

"Through the Black Cultural Centre, we have the ability to tell the stories of survival and community spirit that mark so much of African Nova Scotian history in our province," said David Wilson, Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage. The department provides ongoing operational funding to the Black Cultural Centre on an annual basis.

"The Black Cultural Society of Nova Scotia is pleased to have partnered with the Black Business Initiative and the province of Nova Scotia to enhance interpretation at the centre," said Leslie Oliver, president of the Black Cultural Society. "We are proud of how the centre interprets the accomplishments of our people and reflects our communities throughout Nova Scotia. We invite all Nova Scotians and visitors to our province to visit us and learn more about our African Nova Scotian heritage and culture."



Photos: Adams Photography



# AFRICVILLE SEAVIEW CHURCH MUSEUM OPENING

Tears, laughter, singing and celebration marked the official opening of the Africville Seaview Church Museum, held on September 25 in connection with the African Diaspora Heritage Trail Conference.

The church reconstruction was part of a settlement and apology announced in February 2010. All three levels of government contributed to the project, including \$1.5 million toward capital costs from the Province of Nova Scotia.

"I hope that in some small way, the opening of this new centre will help strengthen the community and bring a measure of healing," said Percy Paris, Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs, at the opening ceremony. "I believe that all who walk through these doors will be touched by your stories. The Sprit of Africville will live on."

Construction work continues on the church, which won't open its doors to visitors for a few more weeks. But the ribbon-cutting ceremony was a symbolic moment for the community.

"This means the world to us," said Irvine Carvery, president of the Africville Genealogy Society. "It means that Africville is back in the physical sense. The church is the solid identification to the community that we're back on that solid ground."



Photos: Adams Photography

# CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST FOR YOUTH



Photos: Adams Photography

This summer ANSA held a Creative Writing Contest for Youth in celebration of the United Nations International Year for People of African Descent. Students submitted poems and short stories that highlight the culture, heritage and experiences of people of African descent.

Honourary judge Lawrence Hill—author of the award-winning bestseller *The Book of Negroes*—selected first, second and third-place winners in two age categories, 13-17 and 18-22. The winners had lunch with Mr. Hill and received their awards at the welcome reception of the ADHT conference in September. They also read from their work at the Word on the Street literary festival on Sept. 25 and fielded questions from Jeff Douglas, host of CBC's *As It Happens*. Meet our winners and read some of their work:

## AGE 13-17

**First Place: Sarah Frame, Fall River**  
*"The Early Years" and "Teenage Philosophies"*

Sarah, 16, is in Grade 11 at Lockview High School. She is interested in music, writing and social justice issues. Her favourite poets include e.e. cummings and Dennis Lee. Lawrence Hill was impressed with her work: "These poems are written with uncommon wisdom and creativity," he said. "Some sections have the phrasing and maturity of a fully adult writer. It blows my mind to think that someone so young is capable of writing with such depth, and I hope Sarah continues to grind out new and wonderful creative writing. Congratulations!"

**Second Place: Chantel Arbuckle, Halifax**

*"Confessions of a Dead Girl"*

Chantel is a 15-year-old student who lives in Halifax and has a passion for writing.

**Third Place: Izra Fitch, Canning, Kings Co.**

*"Turn to Music"*

Izra, 14, lives in the Annapolis Valley with her family. Izra loves to draw, write, travel and play music. She likes novels about foreign characters, and would one day like to travel to the places she hears about.

## AGE 18-22 CATEGORY

### First Place: Jennifer Deyarmond, Truro

*"sunrise, sunset"*

Jennifer, 19, was born and raised in Truro. The recent graduate of Cobequid Educational Centre counts Charles Bukowski and e.e. cummings among her favourite writers. Here's what Lawrence Hill had to say about Jennifer's poem: "Sunrise, sunset is a pithy, richly detailed and wonderfully complete poem about the theft of men. The painful fate of the stolen men is scattered beautifully over the page. Congratulations!"

### Second Place: Elijah Masek-Kelly, Halifax

*"I War Alone" (three poems)*

Elijah is a student from Dalhousie, completing an International Development Studies and Creative Writing double major. As he tries to figure out what is going on, he hopes one day, he is able to write something exactly as he means it.

### Third Place: Karl Fritze, Bible Hill

*"Gold"*

Karl Fritze is a first-year Dalhousie University student working toward a Bachelor of Arts. An aspiring novelist, he also writes for the Colchester Weekly News. In his spare time he enjoys mountain bike racing and playing chess.

## SUNRISE, SUNSET

By Jennifer Deyarmond  
Truro, NS

Sadness and sorrow  
is thick  
(in what is left)  
on the breaths  
of our noble men

S

c

a

t

t

e

red bodies

crowded compacted and compressed—

thieved of our glory

and stripped of our pride

forced to survive beneath

the feet of wandering eyes

sleeping among a silence that seems too violent

to compromise

from sunset to sunr

i

e

s

harro-

wing whispers and

tender cries

# Creative Writing Contest for Youth *Cont.*

## TEENAGE PHILOSOPHIES

**By Sarah Frame**  
**Fall River, NS**

You're like a pretty book filled with pretty words,  
that don't mean anything  
and don't change anything  
in the great grand scheme of things  
but the leaves shift shades, the stars shrink smaller, and it's just enough  
to keep me from going insane in this saturated snowstorm  
Feels heavy sometimes, like my skin's made out of asphalt, not cells  
There's carnage in my past and uncontrollable depths I could sink to  
And some expect it  
It's a bad time for living,  
a bad place for freedom  
I wanted to look like them for a long time  
and it got to a point where  
I was making myself sick with fumes from hair relaxers and makeup

And I am like a pretty picture lit with pretty colours,  
but none of them are my own  
I trudge through, struggle up from the dirt that I blend into, we talk about  
our reams of secrets, our  
pages and pages of wildest dreams  
but yours aren't bound by a past you didn't decide,  
a continent you've never been to  
What do you say to your best friend when there's nothing he can do?  
And sometimes you hate him for it?  
I feel better in the dark, you know, because it makes us equals  
And we can be old souls or vandals, depending on our mood  
And I am no longer the opaque girl with the  
coal-painted face, the midnight eyes, the  
Savannah-burned skin  
And you are no longer the transparent boy with the clear gaze and yellow hair  
We are just each other together, spinning stories and theories

("Bodies are like planets, see, and the surface is the shallowest layer  
and all its heat comes from within")

# OUR GOVERNMENT YOUR GOVERNMENT

## Nova Scotia Archives

A significant new online exhibit by the Nova Scotia Archives draws upon unique resources to tell the story of courage and survival of African Nova Scotians, as the world marks the United Nations International Year for People of African Descent.

African Nova Scotian Diaspora: Selected Government Records of Black Settlement, 1791-1839, was launched on September 23 to coincide with the International African Diaspora Heritage Trail Conference in Halifax.

The exhibit contains more than 500 digitized and fully searchable government documents relating to early African Nova Scotian immigration and emigration. It adds to the Archives' existing 70+ online resources, including 'African Nova Scotians in the Age of Slavery and Abolition' and a photographic portrait of Africville, 'Gone but Never Forgotten.'

African Nova Scotia Diaspora focuses mainly on the settlement of Black Refugees in Nova Scotia between 1813 and 1816. They came as the result of a proclamation by British military authorities during the War of 1812, giving Americans who deserted to the British side the opportunity of going as free settlers to one of the British colonies.

Many of the documents are rich in the names of individual Black Refugees, including lists of those who settled in

Preston, Hammonds Plains, Beechville and elsewhere in Nova Scotia. Others reflect the struggles of the Black Refugees, and remind us of the obstacles and challenges they had to overcome.



The Nova Scotia Archives plays a leading role in preserving the province's documentary heritage. It is mandated to acquire, preserve and make available Government and private-sector records of provincial significance, and is committed to ensuring the broadest possible public access to its resources and services.

The Archives has expanded its Internet/Social Media presence from a single web page in 1998 to 2 websites, a Facebook page, Twitter and Flickr sites, and a YouTube channel – attracting a total of 1.9 million research visits and 69 million page views annually.

The Archives welcomes visitors six days a week at its premises at the corner of Robie Street and University Avenue in Halifax, by e-mail at

nsarm@gov.ns.ca, by telephone at (902) 424-6060, and on its websites at [www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm) and [www.novascotiagenealogy.com](http://www.novascotiagenealogy.com). It also hosts a C@P site for the benefit of the broader community.

African Nova Scotian Diaspora is available online at [www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/virtual/diaspora/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/virtual/diaspora/).

# SUMMER IN NOVA SCOTIA



Summertime in Nova Scotia offers plenty of opportunities to get out and enjoy community events, from family reunions to spiritual celebrations. Here's a sampling of some of the events from throughout the province.

Friends and family gather from across Canada and beyond for the annual Africville Reunion, while performers and audience members light up the Halifax Commons during Natal Day Weekend Celebrations hosted by the African Nova Scotian Music Association.



Above: Bodies and spirits were moved at the 158th annual AUBA Sessions at Emmanuel Baptist Church in Hammonds Plains.

*AUBA photos: Communications Nova Scotia*



Minister Percy Paris takes in festivities at the annual Marcus Garvey Days in Glace Bay.



# ASCENDING THE LADDER



Close to 90 women of African descent from throughout the Public Service gathered on October 18 for a special workshop called *Ascending the Ladder: Tapping into the Potential of African Canadian Women in the Nova Scotia Public Service*.

The session was held to acknowledge the contributions of women of African descent in government, start a dialogue to identify existing barriers and opportunities, and to explore ways to support future success.

The half-day event was a partnership between the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs, the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, the Public Service Commission and the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, held in celebration of Women's History Month and the International Year for People of African Descent.

Sylvia Parris started the morning by sharing her experiences of working in government for more than 15 years. Her Honour, the Honourable Mayann E. Francis, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, was the keynote speaker and her positively reinforcing words resonated with all the women in attendance. Words of commitment and support were offered by Marilyn More, Minister of Labour and Advanced Education; Laura Lee Langley, Deputy Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage; Public Service Commissioner Kelliann Dean; and Stephanie MacInnis-Langley, Executive Director for the Woman. ANSA Minister Percy Paris sent a message of encouragement and support which was read to the audience.

ANSA will remain on the planning committee, which is compiling the results from the session evaluation to determine next steps. If you are a woman of African descent working in the Nova Scotia Public Service and would like to be included on our email list, please contact [ACWPS@gov.ns.ca](mailto:ACWPS@gov.ns.ca).

## Community Consultations Report Released

In spring 2011, ANSA held a series of consultation sessions around the province. We asked for your ideas on how to establish a lasting form of recognition for African Nova Scotians. Thank you to the many people who took the time to share their suggestions with us, either in person or via email. A summary report of the suggestions the Office received is available now on our website at [www.gov.ns.ca/ansa](http://www.gov.ns.ca/ansa). Some of the most popular ideas centered around three themes:

- Holding a province-wide day of community celebrations;
- Creating a resource, such as a website, that would link and promote all the various communities throughout the province;
- Identifying, constructing and/or upgrading landmarks and monuments at sites of significance across Nova Scotia.

From here, the Office will work with community organizations around the province to develop a proposal for the coming year.

# AFRICAN HERITAGE MONTH TO HONOUR UNSUNG HEROES

African Heritage Month is approaching, and this year's theme will honour Unsung Heroes throughout the province.

After celebrating our Leading Ladies, Lasting Legacies in 2010 and recognizing the International Year for People of African Descent in 2011, the African Heritage Month Information Network has opted to honour six African Nova Scotian men who have quietly and consistently made a big difference in their communities in 2012.

In September and October we asked you to nominate your Unsung Hero, and names poured in from all over the province. The Network had a tough task in narrowing it down to six—there are a lot of Unsung Heroes out there worth celebrating!

Whose faces will grace the 2012 poster? Find out on January 20 at the official Provincial Launch of African

Heritage Month, taking place at Province House at 11 a.m.

Here are some other dates to mark on your calendar:

**Jan. 26** – HRM Launch: Black Cultural Centre, 7 p.m.

**Jan. 27** – Cape Breton Regional Municipality Launch, 12 p.m.

**Jan. 28** – Fifth Annual Gala Celebration, Membertou Trade and Convention Centre, 7 p.m.

(Tickets: 902-563-3735 or 902-842-5389)

**Jan. 30** – New Glasgow Town Hall Launch, 11:45 a.m.

**Feb. 1** – Cumberland County Municipal Launch (Upper Nappan), 11 a.m.

**Feb. 3** – Annapolis Valley Launch, Fountain Common Hall, Acadia University, 6:30 p.m.

Visit [www.gov.ns.ca/ansa/AHM2012.asp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/ansa/AHM2012.asp) to send us your events, and stay tuned for more updates and a community calendar as African Heritage Month approaches.

## STAFF NEWS: Meet Mona Yakimchuk

Mona Yakimchuk recently joined the ANSA team as Secretary/Receptionist in the Cape Breton Office. Prior to joining ANSA, Mona was an Employment Counsellor for more than 17 years with the African Nova Scotian Employment Centre in Sydney. As an Employment Counsellor, she worked with all three levels of government, private sector employers, trade unions and learning institutions, advocating for more African Nova Scotian representation. She was a facilitator for job-readiness workshops, job finding clubs and portfolio development. She worked with clients as they developed action plans toward obtaining employment or entering training programs to become self-reliant.

Mona has lived in Whitney Pier most of her life and has been actively involved in community development. She was a member of Community United for Black Education and sat on the Affirmative Action Committee with the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

Mona enjoys spending time with family and friends and looks forward to being a part of the ANSA team.



# About ANSA

The Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs assists, supports, and enhances the provincial government's delivery of services to African Nova Scotians and is a partner in developing innovative solutions that lead to self reliance and sustainable development for African Nova Scotians and their communities.



**The ANSA logo** incorporates several concepts that relate to the mission of the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs (ANSA), including:

**Flower** – The Mayflower is the official flower of Nova Scotia.

**Star** – This stylized star is symbolic in several different ways. A few include:

- The Black Star of Africa has come to symbolize hope and honour.
- A Black star to represent the people.
- Points of the star resemble spokes moving forward as are our people.

**Birds** – Represent freedom and fertility. Birds are said to carry the souls of our ancestors.

For inquiries, comments, submissions, or to be included on our mailing list, please contact:

**MAIN OFFICE**

5670 Spring Garden Road, Suite #604  
PO Box 2691 Halifax, NS B3J 1H6  
General Number: 902-424-5555  
Facsimile: 902-424-7189

**CAPE BRETON REGIONAL OFFICE**

Commerce Tower  
15 Dorchester Street, Suite 501  
Sydney, NS B1P 5Y9  
General Number: 902-563-3735  
Facsimile: 902-563-2700

**GENERAL**

E-mail: ANSA\_Newsletter@gov.ns.ca  
Toll Free Number: 1-866-580-ANSA (2672)  
Website: [www.gov.ns.ca/ansa](http://www.gov.ns.ca/ansa)  
Facebook: @AfricanNSAffairs  
Twitter: @OfficeofANSA

*This issue of the ANSA newsletter contains contributions by the following staff members:  
Chad Lucas, Chantel Reid-Demeter, Colin Campbell, Mona Yakimchuk and Tracey Thomas. The newsletter is co-ordinated and edited by ANSA Communications.*