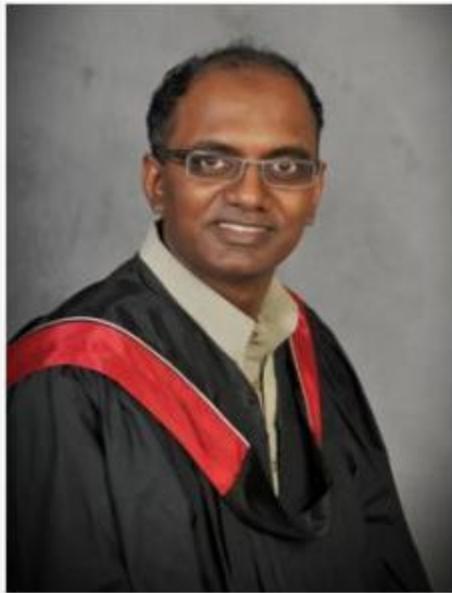


Canadian Dream Concert receives high rating

April 27, 2014 By [GuyanaTimes](#)



Narine Dat Sookram

A Guyanese initiative has been recognised abroad, being named among 10 ideas to change Waterloo, a city in Southern Ontario, Canada. Now in its 12th year, the Caribbean Dreams Concert has built its reputation on bringing a little taste of Caribbean life and culture to the Waterloo region in Canada. The ACTIVE VISION-Caribbean Dreams Concert is a performing arts event where new and young artistes get the opportunity to showcase their artistic talent under one roof and at the same time it gives the opportunity to the people of Waterloo region to network, learn more about a different culture and it provides an opportunity to break the barrier between differences.

Organiser Narine Dat Sookram is still happily surprised by the interest the concert generates from all over the region.

“We have people from Cambridge coming who are actually part of the show,” he said. Their website has also been getting over 4000 hits a month from computers all over the world.

“We realised we have something going on,” Sookram said. The community-focused event was created to help expose people to Caribbean culture while also giving the Caribbean community an opportunity to have what Sookram describes as a sense of home. The concert highlights a number of performing arts disciplines, from belly dancing to singing.

The focus is on developing young or untested talent. Many people come to Sookram who want to perform but may have a touch of stage fright. He helps them along so that by the day of the concert, they are ready to hop on stage.

The result is that some of the earliest stars of Caribbean Dreams have gone on to have professional entertainment careers. Sookram noted that among his alumni are DJs and rappers. “All of that came through this Caribbean Dreams concert,” said Sookram.

“The idea is to empower them so they can bring their best out of themselves with the performing arts.” He is also turned it into a financially sustainable organisation with a number of high profile sponsors.

Impact

The prestigious Caribbean Dreams Concert is creating a venue that draws people together who would otherwise not be engaged in constructive social activity. It also fosters trust between participants and thereby increasing their generalised trust of others. For example, it provides an experience of collective efficacy and civic engagement, which spurs participants to further collective action.

The concert also acts as a source of pride for residents of Waterloo increasing their sense of connection to the community and providing an experience for participants to learn technical and interpersonal skills important for collective organising. In addition, it also increases the scope of individuals’ social networks and providing an experience for the organisations involved to enhance their capacities. Much of this comes when organisations’ establish ties and learn how to work. This year’s concert takes place on May 31 at the Country Hills Community Centre in Kitchener and admission is free.

This in particular is extremely good news for all attendees, because over the years the cost to get in was Cdn\$20.00 but this was gradually cut down to Cdn\$15, Cdn\$10.00 and last years it was Cdn\$5. Sookram said he wanted to break down all of those financial barriers so that people can just come out and celebrate the arts and have fun and not be so isolated at home.

<http://www.guyanatimesgy.com/2014/04/27/canadian-dream-concert-receives-high-rating/>