



WATERLOO AWARD PRESENTATIONS

November 26, 2012

Waterloo Award, Recipient Profile:

Narine Sookram

Narine Sookram was highly praised by his nominator and supporters for many years of assistance to newcomers to Canada and for his long-standing cultural leadership within the Canadian Caribbean community. For ten years, Narine has organized and hosted an annual concert, “Caribbean Dreams,” to showcase new and upcoming talent and to promote pride in youth growing up within the Canadian Caribbean community. Some of these new talents have since gone on to perform professionally; all have gained from Narine’s efforts to celebrate diversity and to break down barriers between people from all walks of life. These annual concerts have also attracted participants from elsewhere in Canada and the U.S.

In addition to his very hands-on efforts in organizing every aspect of “Caribbean Dreams” concerts, Narine Sookram has showcased many young, local talents through his weekly radio show, “Caribbean Spice” on 100.3 Sound FM Radio, Radio Waterloo. He has hosted this community radio show for many years, to share West Indian and local Caribbean music and culture with listeners, and he has also promoted many grassroots community initiatives or events on-air. Performers, listeners and even local businesses have gained from Narine’s personal efforts to bring everyone together in supporting each other.

Narine Sookram also volunteers his time to coach international trained professionals. TESL certified, he has devoted countless hours of his time to teaching English as a Second language to newcomers, helping them with homework or with having their certifications evaluated by Canadian standards. His generous voluntary efforts have assisted others to obtain or to keep employment in a challenging economy, in turn allowing those individuals to support themselves and their families and to feel welcome within their new community.

Narine’s volunteer work stretches back to his youth in Guyana, where he created a youth group at just age 14, to enable Guyanese youth to learn and grow in supporting their community. He continues his volunteer involvement with Guyana today, as the founder of Active Vision Charity Association, which provides books and school supplies to Guyanese youth.

Narine Sookram has been an outstanding role model to newcomers to Canada and our local community. He is a very deserving recipient of the Waterloo Award.