



THE SPRING GALA

*Blooming  
with Purpose*

PRESENTED BY  
THE CAZALE COMMUNITY  
AND CULTURAL CENTER

FRIDAY, MARCH 27TH, 2026 | NEW YORK

[WWW.CCCCHAITL.ORG](http://WWW.CCCCHAITL.ORG)

*Tonight,* we gather not only to raise vital funds in support of Haiti, but also to celebrate and honor five distinguished individuals from our community whose leadership, service, and dedication have made a meaningful impact. Each of these honorees embodies the spirit of resilience, compassion, and excellence, and through their work they continue to uplift others and strengthen our community both here and abroad.

**Brown Simon  
Diaspora Unity Award**

Brown Simon's journey from Haiti to Venezuela and ultimately to the United States reflects resilience, service, and advocacy. A U.S. Navy veteran and law student, he works with the U.S. Department of Justice in federal immigration court and is the CEO of Lauria Group Corp., helping immigrants navigate complex legal processes. Through his leadership and advocacy, he continues to uplift immigrant communities across the diaspora.

**Kennia S. Lucien (Chef Kelu)  
Entertainment & Creative  
Excellence Award**

Kennia S. Lucien, professionally known as Chef Kelu, is a Haitian-born culinary visionary and founder of Kwizine Art, Inc., known for creating immersive luxury experiences that blend cuisine, culture, and design. With more than 26 years of experience in hospitality and event production, she has built a brand that celebrates heritage, creativity, and excellence while supporting philanthropic initiatives in the community.

**Renette Ambroise  
Community Partnership &  
Compassion Award**

Renette Ambroise is a dedicated Registered Nurse and healthcare leader with more than 20 years of experience in patient care and

clinical leadership. As a Nursing Supervisor, she is known for her compassionate leadership and commitment to mentoring healthcare professionals. She also remains deeply engaged in community initiatives that promote collaboration and service within the Haitian diaspora.

**Pascale Jean-Noel  
Leadership & Advocacy Award**

Pascale Jean-Noel is a Licensed Master Social Worker, educator, and mentor committed to mental health advocacy and community empowerment. For more than 16 years, she has served as a professor at Columbia University and Fordham University Schools of Social Work, helping prepare future generations of social workers and leaders.

**Betty Aristide-Augustin  
Youth Empowerment Award**

Betty Aristide-Augustin is a nonprofit founder, Global Peace Ambassador, and advocate for youth empowerment and mental health wellness. Through her organization, EdeYouth Inc., she provides mentorship, counseling, financial literacy, and life-skills training to help young people build brighter futures while strengthening families and communities.





# *Program*

COCKTAIL RECEPTION

MUSIC BY DJ HEAVY

OPENING PERFORMANCE

ESOTA AFRICAN DANCE ENSEMBLE

WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

MC - ARLEEN "QUEEN"

DINNER

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

SIDNEE MICHELLE

HONOREE RECOGNITION CEREMONY

VIDEO PRESENTATION

*Dancing, Raffle & Dessert*



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ADVISOR

# *Empowering Minds,* INSPIRING FUTURES

At the Cazale Community and Cultural Center, we believe that opportunity has the power to transform lives. In the heart of Cazale, Haiti, our center provides children and youth, of all ages with a place to learn, create, and grow.

At the core of the Center's work is our afterschool program, which serves as a safe and supportive space for children every day. After school, students come to the Center to study, complete their homework, and receive guidance under the supervision of caring mentors and educators. For many children, the Center is a place of stability and encouragement where learning is supported and where they can focus on their education in a safe, structured environment.

Education is also strengthened through our computer literacy program, where students gain access to technology that many would otherwise never experience. These classes introduce young learners to essential digital skills and provide valuable exposure to the tools that shape today's world. For many students, touching a computer for the first time opens doors to new knowledge, communication, and future opportunities.

Equally powerful is the role of music and cultural expression at the Center. Our music program welcomes participants of all ages and provides

students with musical instruments and the opportunity to play together as a band. Through learning rhythm, instruments, and performance, students develop creativity, confidence, and discipline while celebrating the vibrant cultural traditions of their community. Music brings young people together, strengthens bonds across generations, and allows them to express themselves in meaningful ways.

The Cazale Community and Cultural Center is more than a building; it is a place of hope. It is where curiosity is encouraged, talents are discovered, and futures begin to take shape. Every lesson taught, every note played, and every new skill learned helps strengthen the foundation for a brighter tomorrow.

This work is made possible through the generosity and commitment of supporters who believe in the power of education, culture, and community. Your support helps provide the tools, resources, and opportunities that allow the people of Cazale to learn, create, and thrive.

Together, we are helping to build a future where knowledge empowers, creativity inspires, and every child has the opportunity to succeed.

Thank you for being part of our mission.

TEXT 4CGALA TO 44-321 TO DONATE

*A message* from the president and founder of Cazale Community & Cultural Center Inc.

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Welcome to our Annual Spring Gala and thank you for joining us this evening. Your presence and generosity mean so much to our organization and to the communities we serve in Haiti.

Tonight, our goal is to raise **\$10,000** to continue the important work we are doing and to enhance our **music program**, giving more children the opportunity to learn, grow, and discover their talents through music. With the generosity in this room, I have no doubt that we will reach this goal.

We invite you to give with confidence. **100% of the funds raised go directly into our programs**, and we operate with full transparency so you can see the impact of your support.

Thank you for believing in our mission and for helping us make a difference.

With gratitude,  
Soledad Desruisseaux



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Good evening, and welcome.

Thank you for being part of our 9th Annual Spring Gala, Blooming with Purpose. Whether you have been with us for years or are joining the Cazale Community and Cultural Center family for the first time, we are glad you are here.

Tonight is a celebration, but it is also a continuation. A continuation of what this community has chosen to build together, year after year, with care, conviction, and belief in what is possible.

Because of that belief, over the past 9 years, more than 1,800 children have found education, empowerment, and possibility through our programs. That kind of impact does not happen by chance. It happens because people choose to show up. People choose to believe in a future larger than the circumstances any child may be born into.

CCCC, under the leadership of Soledad Desruisseaux, was built on a spirit I know deeply: the refusal to be diminished. A spirit passed down through our ancestors, through a people who looked at the weight of oppression and decided they would not be defined by it, limited by it, or broken by it. That history is not behind us. It is alive in this room tonight.

It lives in every child we serve. It lives in every family that continues to hope, build, and persevere. And it lives in this community, which understands that supporting children in Haiti is not simply an act of charity. It is an act of belief. A belief that every child deserves access to education, opportunity, and the chance to dream fully.

As a first-generation Haitian American, this mission is deeply personal to me because Haiti is too often spoken about through the language of lack, when in truth it is a place of brilliance, resilience, culture, and profound possibility. Haiti has given the world so much. Its revolution reshaped history. Its people have rebuilt themselves from the ground up more times than anyone should ever be asked to. And yet, we still bloom.



That is what tonight honors.

Your presence here means something. Not only because of what you may give tonight, though I hope you will give generously, but because you chose to show up for a community the world has too often overlooked. Supporting children in Haiti is not responding to need. It is to affirm potential. It is to invest in dignity. It stands for a future where every child has access to the opportunities they deserve.

Tonight, we invest in the next generation of that story: the children of Cazale, who carry that history in their bloodline and that future in their eyes.

Give tonight knowing that every dollar is purposeful, every act of generosity is felt, and every contribution, no matter the size, becomes part of something that will outlast all of us.

Thank you for being here. Thank you for believing in this work. And thank you for helping the Cazale Community and Cultural Center continue to bloom with purpose.

Now let's get to work.



*2026*  
HONOREES



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# DIASPORA UNITY AWARD



## BROWN SIMON

Brown Simon was born in Casale, Haiti. His life story is one of resilience, global experience, and an unwavering commitment to justice and service.

He began his early education in Haiti, where he developed a strong academic foundation. At the same time, he pursued his passion for music at the Saint-Trinité School of Music, cultivating creativity and discipline that continue to influence his leadership and public presence. At the age of 16, Brown moved to Venezuela in search of greater opportunities. There, he completed high school and continued his studies at the Universidad Central de Venezuela. His international academic journey

broadened his worldview and strengthened his adaptability.

At 20, he immigrated to the United States, where he enrolled at Broward College and later graduated before continuing his education at the University of Florida, earning a bachelor's degree in criminology. His academic focus reflected his growing passion for justice, law, and public service. Brown went on to serve for eight years in the United States Navy and later continued his service as a reservist. As a veteran, he embodies the values of discipline, leadership, and commitment to his country.

Today, he is attending law school, further advancing his mission to advocate for justice and equity. Professionally, he works as a contractor with the United States Department of Justice in federal immigration court, where he plays a critical role in supporting the administration of justice for individuals navigating complex legal proceedings. He is also the CEO of Lauria Group Corp., a firm dedicated to helping immigrants navigate the immigration process with clarity and confidence. Beyond his formal roles, Brown is a prominent human rights advocate and social media influencer with millions of followers and community participants. Through his platforms, he educates, empowers, and supports individuals facing immigration challenges, using his voice to guide others through their legal journeys. From Haiti to Venezuela, from military service to federal court, and from entrepreneurship to law school, Brown Simon's journey reflects perseverance, leadership, and a lifelong dedication to uplifting immigrant communities and advancing justice.

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# ENTERTAINMENT & CREATIVE EXCELLENCE AWARD



## KENNIA S. LUCIEN

Professionally known as Chef Kelu, Kennia S. Lucien, professionally known as Chef Kelu, is a Haitian born culinary visionary, luxury event architect, cultural curator, and empire builder with more than 26 years of experience in hospitality and large-scale production.

As Founder and CEO of Kwizine Art, Inc., she has built a distinguished brand recognized for transforming venues into immersive, elevated experiences where cuisine, design, music, and culture converge with precision and artistry.

Her productions are not simply events. They are cultural statements that celebrate heritage, excellence, and human connection.

Through bold creative direction and uncompromising standards, Kennia has helped redefine luxury within culturally rooted spaces, leaving a lasting imprint on the Haitian entertainment community and beyond. Her work reflects resilience, innovation, and the power of celebration as a unifying force.

In addition to her entrepreneurial achievements, she serves as Event Director for Stand Up to Poverty, aligning her production expertise with philanthropic impact through community initiatives and mission driven events.

Grounded in discipline instilled from childhood and fueled by an unwavering love for what she does, Kennia approaches every production with intention, excellence, and heart, building experiences that resonate long after the evening ends.

Her philosophy remains clear. If you think it, we will customize it.

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# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP & COMPASSION AWARD



## RENETTE AMBROISE

Renette Ambroise is a dedicated and accomplished Registered Nurse with over 20 years of diverse clinical and leadership experience. She earned her Associate Degree in Nursing from Suffolk Community College, her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) from Chamberlain University, and a degree in Marketing Management. Throughout her career, she has consistently demonstrated excellence in patient care, team leadership, and community service. Her combined clinical expertise and management training have equipped her with strong skills in strategic planning, communication, and organizational leadership; qualities that define her effectiveness as a healthcare leader.

Renette is deeply community minded and has

made it her mission to foster collaboration across the diverse communities of the Haitian diaspora. She has been a staunch supporter of CCCC since its inception and contributes to numerous community organizations through volunteerism and philanthropy. Her commitment to service led her, along with a few friends, to found FAC 18 years ago. As one of its founders and coordinators, she has helped shape FAC into a vibrant social and cultural organization dedicated to community engagement and empowerment. Through FAC, she promotes cultural awareness, supports local initiatives, and actively contributes to charitable and social causes. Her ongoing support of multiple community groups reflects her passion for service beyond the clinical setting. In her professional life, Renette currently serves as a Nursing Supervisor at a 320 bed healthcare facility. Her clinical background spans a wide range of settings, including Emergency Department services, long term and short term care, hospice, and home health. She also served as a Mental Health Counselor for the State of New York, providing critical support and advocacy for individuals facing mental health challenges. This broad exposure has shaped her holistic, compassionate, and patient centered approach to care. Renette's leadership philosophy is anchored in the belief that every patient deserves to be treated with compassion. She is a committed mentor to emerging healthcare professionals and works tirelessly to create an environment where the twenty nurses and more than thirty five Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) under her supervision feel valued and supported. By uplifting the people who care for patients, she ensures high standards of clinical practice, regulatory compliance, staff development, and operational efficiency.

Renette is married to Eric Michel and is the proud mother of two children, Bianca and Sebastien. In both her professional and personal life, she is guided by the values of compassion, integrity, leadership, and community impact.

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# LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY AWARD



## PASCALE JEAN-NOEL

Pascale Jean-Noel is a Licensed Master Social Worker, educator, mentor, and leader whose work reflects a deep commitment to mental health, community empowerment, and professional excellence. As the proud first-born daughter of Haitian parents, Pascale carries forward the values of resilience, service, and perseverance that continue to shape her personal and professional journey. She is also a devoted wife, a proud mother to her daughter, and a trusted friend and mentor to many.

For more than 16 years, Pascale has served as a professor at both Columbia University and Fordham University Schools of Social Work, where she has helped prepare and inspire future

generations of social workers and mental health professionals. In addition to her academic work, she has served as a Training Director for an evidence-based practice initiative funded by the New York State Office of Mental Health, where she leads the development and implementation of training programs designed to strengthen mental health services and improve outcomes for diverse communities.

A respected voice in the field, Pascale is a sought-after speaker who has served as a keynote presenter, panelist, moderator, and workshop facilitator at conferences across the United States and the Caribbean. Her work focuses on mental health and the intersections of diversity, equity, and inclusion—areas she approaches with both professional expertise and lived experience.

Through her consulting and coaching practice, Pascale provides guidance, training, and mentorship to professionals navigating the complexities of leadership and career growth, with a particular focus on supporting Black professionals in the workplace. Her passion lies in helping individuals embrace their authentic selves, lead with purpose, and serve their communities with intention. Whether in the classroom, on stage, or through one-on-one mentorship, Pascale Jean-Noel remains deeply committed to advocating, educating, and inspiring others to thrive personally and professionally.

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# YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AWARD



## BETTY ARISTIDE-AUGUSTIN

Betty Aristide-Augustin is a faith-driven leader, nonprofit founder, Global Peace Ambassador, and community advocate dedicated to youth empowerment, mental health wellness, and generational transformation. Born in Haiti and raised in Brooklyn, New York, she serves as a Kingdom ambassador guided by faith, purpose, and service.

She holds a Master's degree in Urban Affairs from Queens College, a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Finance and Mortgages from York College, and an Associate degree in Business Management from Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC). During her academic journey, she

demonstrated strong leadership, including serving as President of the Haitian Club at BMCC, and received recognition for her academic and community engagement.

Betty has been featured on News Channel 11, Spectrum News NY1, Medium, and CanvasRebel Magazine for her impactful work in youth development and mental health advocacy.

Her commitment to service is rooted in lived experience. As a teenager, she experienced foster care and homelessness—challenges that shaped her resilience and purpose. Through mentorship, therapy, and spiritual counseling, she transformed adversity into action.

She holds mental health certifications from NAMI and Youth Mental Health First Aid and is a certified and licensed NAMI facilitator of Sharing Hope, supporting mental health wellness in Black and African American communities. She is also a New York State licensed Life Insurance Agent, advancing financial literacy and long-term security for families.

In 2010, inspired by a mission trip to Haiti, Betty founded EdeYouth Inc., a nonprofit providing mentorship, counseling, financial literacy, entrepreneurship training, and life-skills development for youth. She is also the founder of Ebi Accents, a mission-driven business fostering meaningful family and community connections.

A devoted wife and mother, Betty lives by her guiding principle.

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# Keynote SPEAKER



## SIDNEE MICHELLE

With roots in Brooklyn, NY by way of New Jersey Sidnee Michelle Douyon started her career interning at The Source Magazine where she was quickly promoted to an on-camera personality.

From there, she moved to Forbes Magazine where she became the **FIRST BLACK WOMAN** of color there to report on camera **EVER**. She truly broke barriers as she integrated Forbes Magazine producing editorials and content focused on the achievements of people of color, especially telling Haitian stories that Forbes did not produce at the time.

After over a year and a half at Forbes she was offered a lead anchoring position at Complex Media where she started as the lead anchor for Complex's new finance, culture and business channel; becoming only the second Black on-air anchor for Complex.

Diving into her love of travel and culture, Sidnee went on to become the Deputy Editor for Travel Noire, the largest Black travel outlet in the world.

Currently, Sidnee now lives in Los Angeles and serves proudly as the Senior Digital Editor for Black Enterprise. She also is a host for Black Enterprise, as her A-list interview show "Lights Camera, Business" has become one of BE's highest viewed podcast shows with views surpassing 4 million & counting.

Sidnee has sat down with iconic and historic figures, entertainers & history makers, and always produces engaging, viral, and honest interviews with the likes of Eddie Murphy, Oprah, Tracy Ellis Ross, Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson, Samuel L. Jackson, Michelle Obama, Ice Cube, Kerry Washington, Erykah Badu, Tyra Banks, Taraji P. Henson, Ava Duvernay Cardi B, Lupita, Jill Scott, the late Chadwick Boseman, Halle Berry & more!

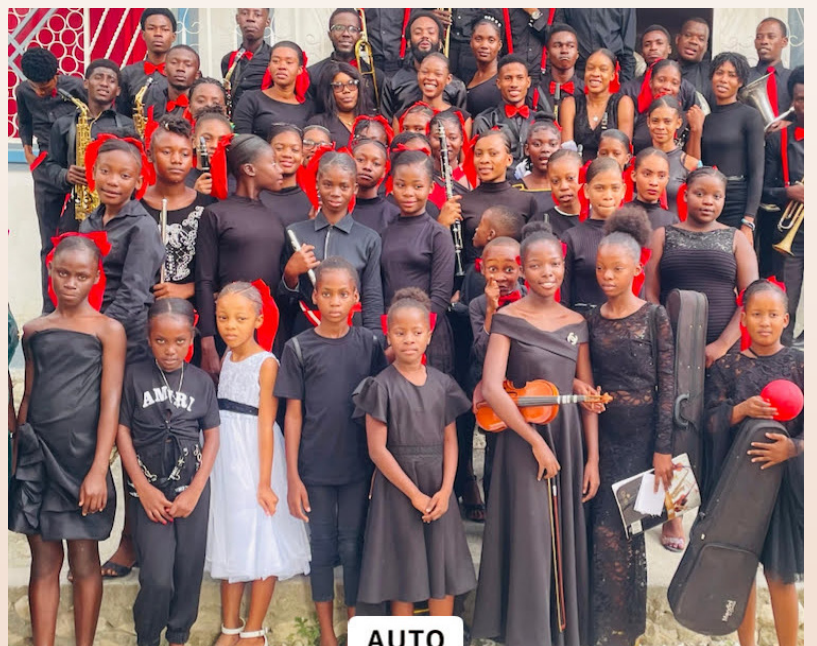
She continues her passion of mentorship & giving back as one of the youngest Howard University's Entertainment Group's Industry Mentors, an initiative backed & funded by Amazon Studios.

Needless to say, Sidnee Michelle has been breaking barriers and pushing the culture forward her entire life; not only producing content & integrating world.



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# 2025 SUPPORTERS

## SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Become a sustaining member by contributing a minimum of \$10 per month or \$100 per year. Donations can be made online or through Zelle or our website with automatic payments from your bank account or credit card. Sustaining members provide the steady support that helps us continue our mission throughout the year.

## LEGACY CONTRIBUTORS

Our Legacy Contributors are donors who give \$1,000 or more annually. Their generosity helps sustain our programs, expand our initiatives, and provide scholarships to those who need them most.

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## SPONTANEOUS DONORS

We extend our heartfelt thanks to those who give spontaneously, respond at a moment's notice, or step forward whenever a crisis arises. Your generosity makes an immediate difference when it is needed most.

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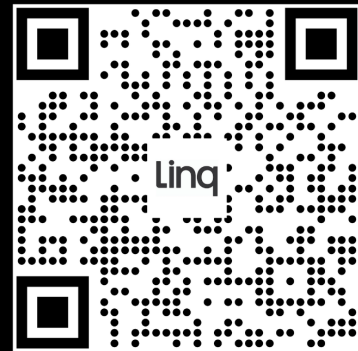
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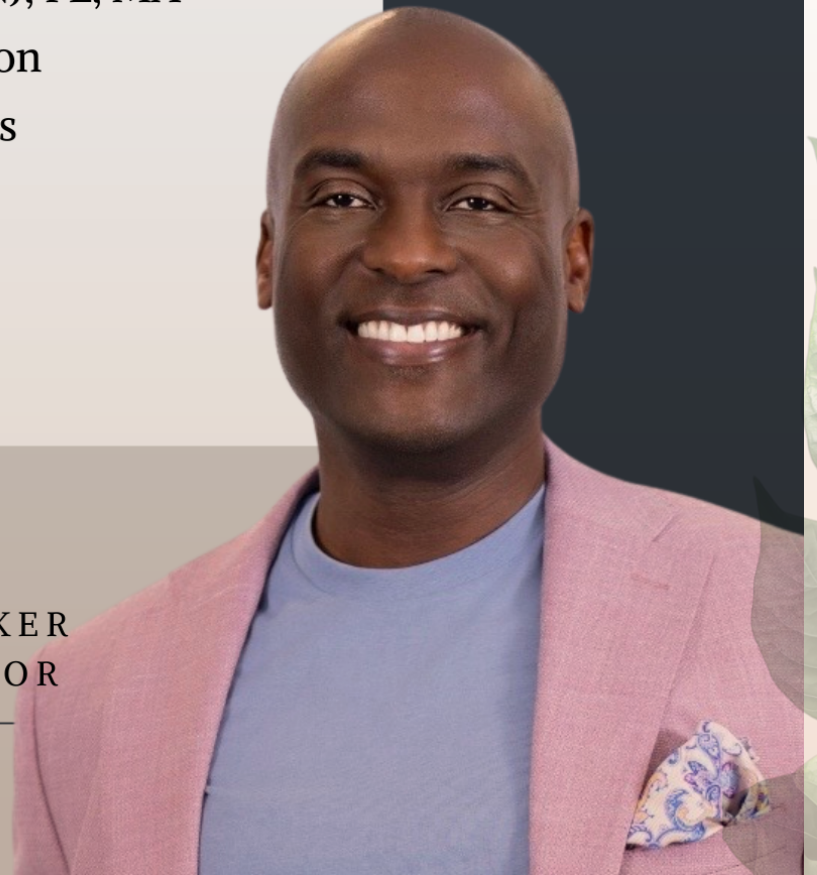
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# Blooming with Purpose

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