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AUG

#TRANSWAVEAT5

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...marginalised in...society and face isolation, harassment and abusiv...
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Trans masculine po



EDITOR'S NOTE

This year, on August 27th, TransWave celebrates 5 years of being Jamaica's sole trans-led and trans-focused organization advocating for the rights of trans Jamaicans. Over the past 5 years, we have advanced the rights of trans Jamaicans through visibility, advocacy and community-building activities. Through our activities, we've been able to develop sustainable programming that meets the needs of all trans-identified Jamaicans.

Our fifth year of celebration is about community building and putting community first because we all need to stick together in these unprecedented times.

But what is the next chapter for TransWave Jamaica? Some tingle at the very thought of it, while others still question why our small organization even exists. TransWave Jamaica will never change. We were always who we are - uniquely tailored for all trans Jamaicans. Our very own identities though bound by misconceptions, assumptions and pre-conceived notions do not define us. The road is steep and rocky, but as trans persons living here, we all share a similar reality but at the heart of it, we get to define our existence.

I am grateful for the men, women and non-binary persons who came before me like Neish McLean, who through his activism paved the way and made it a bit easier for a woman like me. This is our fight Team TRANStastic; this is our moment to redefine the consciousness of humanity, to make a better era for the next generation to follow. Happy Anniversary TransWave!

Emani Edwards



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



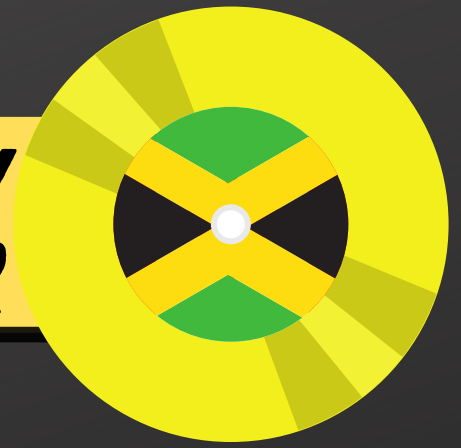
In 2015, two members of the LGBTQ+ community decided to create a blog to celebrate the existence and resilience of the Jamaican transgender community. It was an idea borne out of an advocacy workshop coordinated by WE-Change and Equality for All Foundation Jamaica (J-FLAG). What started as a blog eventually became the sole trans-led and trans-focused non-profit in our country: TransWave Jamaica.

Over the past five years, we have celebrated many milestones such as: conducting our first support group, attending our first TransActive event, registering as a legal entity and obtaining our first grant. We have grown from a team of two volunteers to have six staff members on our payroll, as well as implemented an ambassador programme which currently has seven members. In 2020, we are proud to be funded by ten donor partners and are grateful for their support as well as that of many local and international non-profit organizations.

As we celebrate this joyous occasion in our history, we are remarkably proud of what we have accomplished and look forward to even greater achievements. Special thanks to our Board of Directors and our trans and gender non-conforming family for believing in us. Your support has kept us motivated and resilient in the face of many challenges. We remain committed to advancing the health and well-being of the Jamaican transgender and non-conforming community and hope you will share in our journey for years to come. Congratulations on an exceptional five years TransWave! Happy anniversary!

F.J. Genus

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CORNER



Big up to TransWave on your 5 year anniversary! As a 1st generation Jamaican American living in NYC you don't know how much joy and inspiration your organization and all the beautiful queer people of Jamaica give me - specifically the trans community in Jamaica. You all continue to lead this queer community into liberation there in Jamaica and as I see here in NYC too. You are the pioneers or change and all of us in the community owe our freedoms too.

We, especially gay cis men, need to continue/ do more supportive ally ship with our trans family and show up for them. Not just during Pride, not just during times of social political unrest but all the time. It is our duty as a queer family to stick, show up and support each other. Blessings, big up and thank you to Trans Wave for all your guidance and diligence towards our liberation.

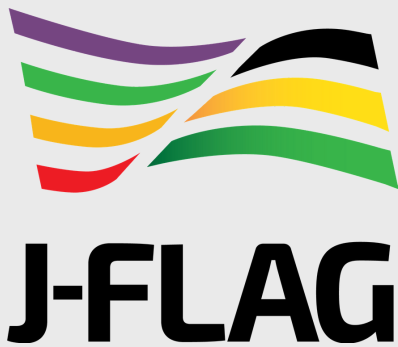
Neon Christina, Connek JA



TransWave! Thank you for all of the work that you do to make Jamaica lovable and livable for Transgender Jamaicans a yaad and abroad. Big up yuhself!

Joie Lou Shakur, House of Pentacles

MESSAGE FROM OUR PARTNER'S



TransWave Jamaica has shown exemplar leadership in Jamaica's human rights space since it was established in 2015. Now, with this achievement of 5 years of advocacy, you add another gem in your crown. The improvement of the conditions of trans Jamaicans is testament to the work the organisation has done in a relatively short period of time. We expect bigger and better things from TransWave in the years to come and look forward to celebrating 10 years, 20 years, 100 years and beyond with you. Happy Anniversary TransWave Jamaica from #TeamJFLAG.



On behalf of the WE-Change team, WE extend our heartiest congratulations on achieving this amazing milestone! This year has been a rough one but the past 5 years have been a wave of a journey for the trans community in Jamaica. Your presence in the advocacy landscape is extremely important as only you can teach society about the experiences and needs of this community. Watching you blossom from a project into an organization focused on advocating with and for trans people has been a joy and WE are delighted to continue working with and supporting your work in the years to come. Congratulations!



To the team at TransWave, congrats on five years of excellency. Time and time again we have witnessed an organization that gives new meaning to the words "like but tallawah." Time and time we have had the pleasure of witnessing an organization that is passionate about advancing the rights of trans, gender-nonconforming and non-binary Jamaicans and ensuring that their voices are amplified.

Time and time again we have seen you create safe spaces for individuals whether through your support groups or fashion shows - in plain Jamaican terms you have created safe spaces for individuals to "live dem best life." You go above and beyond for the community you serve. Happy 5th and we can't wait to see what you will do in 5 more years, how many more lives you will impact. Much love, from Equality Youth Jamaica to the Transtastic team at TransWave.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PARTNER'S

TransWave has been doing such phenomenal work in building awareness and support for the transgender community in Jamaica. Astraea is proud to be a partner in their journey and look forward to seeing them move from strength to strength on the way to their 10th anniversary!



Transwave remains the single most powerful voice for the transgender community in Jamaica. The organization at its core continues to lobby for the inclusion of those who identify as trans, gender non-conforming and non-binary.



Jamaica AIDS Support For Life
Love. Action. Support.

Having identified the vulnerabilities faced by the trans community, Transwave has used its platform and resources to assist those it serves through the provision of comprehensive health and social inclusion services.

As the organization celebrates its 5th anniversary, we applaud the groundbreaking work it has done for trans and gender-nonconforming people and remain hopeful that it will continue to push the boundaries until we are able to achieve a more equal and just society. Happy 5th anniversary from the board and staff of Jamaica AIDS Support for Life.

All of us at GiveOut are immensely proud to have partnered with TransWave since 2018 to support the organisation's work with trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming communities at the intersections of advocacy and sensitisation, outreach and community engagement, and media and communications. Under the Antonia & Andrea Belcher Trans Fund with GiveOut, we are especially proud to have supported TransWave to establish the Trans Emergency Fund, which plays a vital role in supporting community members with emergency needs ranging from relocation assistance to medical fees. The need for this Fund has been especially highlighted during the COVID-19 crisis, which continues to disproportionately affect LGBTQI+ people, and especially the trans community. During this crisis, TransWave's work to provide emergency care packages and document the impact of COVID-19 on trans communities has been inspiring and invaluable. Congratulations for reaching such an important milestone and we are looking forward to our continued partnership in the years to come."



UNAIDS congratulates Transwave Jamaica for their fifth anniversary, and reaffirms our strong commitment to its vision and mandate in advocating for the respect, protection and promotion of transgender people in Jamaica and beyond. We are proud to have partnered with Transwave in different fronts to tackle stigma and discrimination, and advocate for the realization of the right to health for the trans community. Great work Transwave! Wishing you all the best and many more years of collaboration



TransWave In the News

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TEAM TRANSTASTIC!

I'm Finally A Man ...LGBT Activist Says Sex Reassignment Surgery Saved His Life

Share this Story: [G](#) [T](#) [F](#) [Recommend 371](#)

Published: Sunday | August 25, 2019 | 12:00 AM



Transgender candidate for 2021

Former PNP activist starts campaign to run as independent in St Andrew North Eastern

BY KIMONE FRANCIS
Senior staff reporter
francis.k@jamaicaobserver.com

Wednesday, July 03, 2019 [231 Comments](#)

[Like 139](#) [Share](#) [Tweet](#) [Print](#) [Email](#)



'Research, data collection must account for trans gender people'

Monday, July 01, 2019 [8 Comments](#)

[Like 13](#) [Share](#) [Tweet](#) [Print](#) [Email](#)



THE EDITOR, Sir:

Housing is a major challenge for the LGBT community, with many persons having issues finding living spaces. This challenge is due to a lack of protection from discrimination in the legislation on housing. The Rent Restriction Act, which was passed in 1944, was crafted to protect tenants from landlords acting unreasonably and oppressively. However, based on the legislation, this is not afforded to members of the LGBT community.

Currently, under the Rent Restriction Act, landlords have the capacity to evict tenants, where the tenant or persons residing with them is guilty of conduct that is deemed to be a nuisance or annoyance to adjoining occupiers, or the tenant is using the premises for an immoral purpose. The landlord may seek protection under the act by stating that LGBT tenants are conducting themselves in ways that annoy other tenants, or that homosexuality is immoral, and the tenants are using the house to

Trans-Inclusive Women Shelters Needed

Share this Story: [G](#) [T](#) [F](#) [Recommend 29](#)

Published: Tuesday | April 3, 2018 | 12:00 AM

THE EDITOR, Sir:

A few weeks ago, it was announced that the Government will be prioritising the opening of three new women's centres throughout the island. While we applaud this effort, the real question to ask is will these shelters be transgender inclusive. Transwomen are one of the most vulnerable groups that exist in our society, with several transwomen being made homeless.

Editorial

Transgender conference a sign of the times

Tuesday, June 18, 2019 [62 Comments](#)

[Like 51](#) [Share](#) [Tweet](#) [Print](#) [Email](#)



Affirm Identity Of Trans Gender People

Share this Story: [G](#) [T](#) [F](#) [Recommend 1](#)

Published: Thursday | September 13, 2018 | 12:00 AM

THE EDITOR, Sir:

Trans diverse community recognition is key to the development of their well-being as the legal recognition of their gender would advance self-representation and inclusion.

Legal gender recognition for trans people means the State giving official recognition to a trans person's gender identity. This would afford the community the ability to legally change their gender markers on public documents such as their passports, driver's

Treat Trans Jamaicans With Humanity

Share this Story: [G](#) [T](#) [F](#) [Recommend 20](#)

Published: Tuesday | November 13, 2018 | 12:00 AM

THE EDITOR, Sir:

Globally, this week, we celebrate Trans Awareness Week, which recognises transgender individuals and helps persons on the outside to foster an understanding of the issues faced by the community.

To put it simply, transgender, shortened to trans in some instances, refers to persons

Transgender Day Of Visibility

Share this Story: [G](#) [T](#) [F](#) [Recommend 23](#)

Published: Wednesday | March 27, 2019 | 12:00 AM

THE EDITOR, Sir:

Trans people are just like everyone else. We have families and we have jobs, we go to school and are as good at doing anything an average human being can. We're dads, moms, sisters and brothers, neighbours and law-abiding citizens who traverse this country just like everyone else. Unlike the average Jamaican, transgender people are marginalised in Jamaican society and face isolation, harassment and abusive treatment – including physical and sexual violence.

BREAKING NEWS: NEISH MCLEAN TAKING A STEP BACK FROM TRANSWAVE



Over two months ago, Neish sat down with the team in our work meeting and announced his plans for resignation from TransWave. As expected, we were all shocked by the news. After five years of being at the helm of the organization, it was time to say goodbye.

Neish is the epitome of trans excellence and resilience. Over the past 2 and a half years, I have watched him keenly and observed how committed and dedicated he has been to trans activism and keeping his eyes and ears on the ground. He has truly transformed my life personally and here's how.

In November 2018, I started out as TransWave's social media ambassador. At that time, I had over a year of experience in the field with barely any skills around developing content or even conceptualising a publication like this from start to finish. But he placed his trust in me and believe that I could do the work and since then he has nurtured my talent by giving me space to grow and develop, giving me space to be me and put myself first, even when the work becomes too much. As a big believer in self-care and affirmation, Neish is always there to remind me that I need to take care of myself and not push myself above what I can mentally handle.

I We're sad to see you go, but we know that you'll constantly be here for us always. We celebrate your wit; sheer brilliance and I am proud to not just call you my boss, but a true friend. If I could say thank you a million times, I would but one last one will do for now. It's time for you to take a step back but we know you'll be cheering on the side lines. So, on behalf of Team TRANStastic, thank you for love and dedication to trans liberation. Thank you Neish McLean!

– *MX Leo Williams*



MESSAGES FROM THE AMBASSADORS

My journey started with TransWaveJA in 2019 as an Ambassador while challenging the narrative of what it means to be visibly trans in a place like Jamaica. I am so honoured to be working with TransWaveJA in 2020 as an Ambassador in Media and Communications. The ambassador programme is geared towards providing trans people with the tools to access global spaces and develop their skills as trans activists and advocates.

I currently use my work as a protest, with a focus on advocacy and activism, which includes models and clients of marginalized and vulnerable groups - the majority from the trans and non-binary community. My work heavily includes creative directions and styling of person within the LGB(T)Q+ community who have often been pushed aside or further marginalized. Let us stand up unapologetic and unafraid - no need to go unnoticed. We can lead with pride. No more playing along. Let us find our voices so they can read all about it. I am forever grateful to be working with TransWaveJA.



EMANI EDWARDS

I have come a far way and I have been a member since 2015. I have learned to define who I am as an individual by living my truth and being visible. I have encountered some very nice persons within the organization, learnt useful information such as pronouns and how to respect each other within the community. I have attended support groups, meetings and even took part in panel discussions which allowed me to step out of my comfort zone. I have been able to express myself by sharing my story and appreciate what makes me unique while learning about the experiences of others. I have learnt new ideas which drives me to be braver when communicating with others. Everything I do in life is a learning process for me. The aim of our advocacy is to empower trans people and encourage you to find ways of speaking up for yourself. Happy Anniversary TransWave!



PARIS LEWINSKY



MESSAGES FROM THE AMBASSADORS

As a Trans Ambassador, I get to assist with the overall planning and execution of the advocacy strategy for transgender people living in Jamaica. Each year, the organization undertakes a Strategic Planning Retreat, which allows us to carefully monitor & evaluate our 5-year strategic plan, annually. With such a program that opens the doors to opportunities and involvement with community-based work, I am pleased to say that TransWave has provided a huge platform to develop and showcase my crafts & talents while I aim to increase visibility and representation of the organization. I believe that our plan is solid, and the team is prepared to serve the Transgender population to their utmost best.

The future for TransWave is here! The organization has undertaken drastic changes, increasing involvement & events, opportunities for growth and development, support to emergencies and personal development, empowerment of the transgender community...and the list goes on. I believe the team has what it takes to keep this momentum going. We can continue to believe in the existing population of our Jamaican transgender community and provide opportunities where possible.



KYYM SAVAGE

Firstly, I would like to say congratulations to all members of the TransWave group in the celebration of five years of success as an organization. Working with the TransWave group as an ambassador has truly been a great journey and a wonderful experience. I work in the area of community outreach where I am well known and my aim is to reach out and help transgender individuals to let them know that as a team, TransWave is here to help and support. Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much. While working with other ambassadors and the general staff of the TransWave team during the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, together we were able to successfully deliver care packages to persons in the trans community who were facing some difficulties during the crisis.



LANDO CONSTANT





LOVE IN A TIME OF CORONA: HOW HAVE WE BEEN SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?



Corona - 2020. This is not it! When I heard about the virus, I never knew what to do. I was scared to see how quarantine was affecting our access to safe spaces. As a member of the LGBTQI community, I understand and know the struggles we face. Since the start of COVID-19, there has been a spike in unemployment, which causes community members' to be vulnerable and open to the virus; most do not have the resources to finance themselves during the pandemic. Some depend on their family to pay rent, send money for groceries, or traverse their daily lives; for many, it is not possible because they do not have family support. Furthermore, for our chosen family, they are living the same experience of being isolated because of who they are.



Therefore, I applaud TransWave Jamaica, J-Flag, WE-Change, UNAIDS, CVC, and other donors for helping to provide support in the year 2020, through medical support, groceries, shelter, and other essential things needed to help the community get through a hard time. With help, we have reached over 500 persons across the island through the care package initiative and our emergency fund has also helped to sustain the well-being of our community. 2020 has taught us to value our bodies, minds, hearts, and the value of sharing with others. We are reminded of our resiliency.

- Donique Givans

LOVE. SHARE. DONATE.

SUPPORT OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

Cash Donations

Email us at hello@transwaveja.org
for banking info.

In-Kind Donations

Call us at +1876-669-4671

PAYPAL

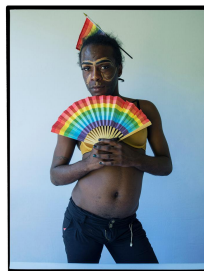
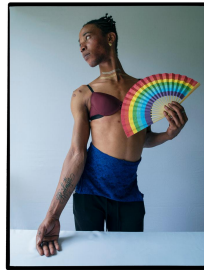
paypal.me/transwaveja

A man in the foreground is wrapped in a large transgender pride flag (light blue, pink, white, light blue, pink, light blue). He is wearing glasses and holding a smartphone. In the background, other people are visible, some wearing t-shirts with 'LOVE IS JAMAICA' and holding smaller pride flags. The setting appears to be an outdoor community event with a building and hills in the background.

#TRANSWAVEAT5

TRANSWAVE X MQBMBQ

CREATING SAFE SPACES ONLINE FOR BLACK QUEER FOLK



In early June, we were approached by a young Jamaican journalist based in Italy, through a connection set up by our media and communications ambassador, Emani Edwards. He had the prospect of creating a space for black queer folk to share their most authentic selves through their own stories and beautiful images shot remotely by Damien Frost. The name of the young journalist was Jordan Anderson.

Through My Queer Blackness, My Black Queerness (MQBMBQ), Jordan revolutionized the way we think about the many layers of our identity as black queer folk. As a black non-binary person, I was excited about the possibilities of a project like this that combines art, film and literature that includes people like us and a space that is dedicated to us.

MQBMBQ is self-described as “a protest, a celebration that frames blackness as a polyphony, a genre or melody with a vast variety of notes & textures, denouncing both white queer racism and black queer antagonism”. We’re proud to have a project that celebrates the lives of trans brothers and sisters of colour. We continue to live and persist in a world that may not respect all of us because of how we present, live and show up but we are resilient in the face of any adversity and the fact that a person like me can exist and thrive is a living testament to that.

Nevertheless, MQBMBQ raised over £12,000 for TransWave Jamaica and For the Gwols, through their first print sale fundraiser. We are forever grateful to Jordan and his team for their contribution to black trans liberation in the global south. Thank yo

THE POWER OF CREATIVITY DURING COVID-19



01


Senna Celestino
She/her

 @CelestinoSenna



02


Sadé Mica
They/Them

 @sademica



03


Shea Coulee
They/Them

 @sheacoulee



04

Emani Edwards
She/Her

 @emanithegend-erlessstylist





TRANSWAVEAT

QUARTER 4 ACTIVITIES UPDATE

SEPTEMBER

***SUPPORT GROUPS
LEGAL LITERACY SESSION***

OCTOBER

***SUPPORT GROUPS
EMPOWERMENT SESSION***

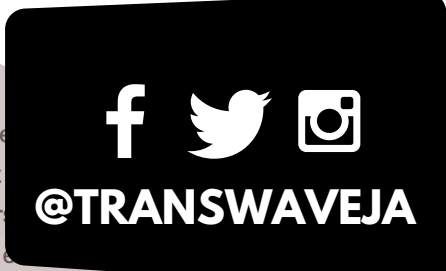
NOVEMBER

***TRANS AWARENESS MONTH
TDOR
SUPPORT GROUPS
EMPOWERMENT SESSION***



TransWave

JAMAICA



Trans masculine po

