

TRANSGENDER DAY  
OF  
VISIBILITY

TRANSWAVE JAMAICA



31  
MAR

20  
20

#TEAM  
TRANSTASTIC





# EDITOR'S NOTE

On March 17, 2020, we launched our first visibility campaign for the year ahead of Transgender Day of Visibility. For the past four years, Transwave Jamaica has pioneered trans-focused advocacy in Jamaica building on the foundation of an advocacy project devised by Neish McLean and Akilah White. From a lifestyle and health blog to creating safe spaces for trans folk to advocating and lobbying with major stakeholders that pioneer equality and social justice, our team of one has grown to seven persons with skills, talents and passion for a community with a myriad of intersections.

Ahead of our five year anniversary, I thought about the work that had been done in past years and how the organization's small team has contributed to the general advocacy landscape. As an organization, we're committed to advancing equality for all transgender Jamaicans, with a broad impact of making Jamaica a place for all gender variant Jamaicans. It would be remiss of me to not highlight the persons behind the hard work, the frustration, the happy moments and the tears. Our team is diverse with a range of identities and this is a reflection of the need for intersectionality and inclusion in every sphere.

This edition of our newsletter, and by extension this campaign, celebrates the contributions of the Transwave team to trans liberation and advocacy. This issue of our newsletter is centred around our team and strategic priorities for the next 4 years. I am grateful to be a part of #TeamTranstastic!

# #TEAM TRANSTASTIC

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# MESSAGE FROM THE ED

Every year, on March 31st, we take a moment to celebrate our resilience, our strides and reflect on our journey and hopes for a future where trans and gender non-conforming Jamaicans are affirmed and protected. TransWave Jamaica recognizes Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV) as a day of celebration of our diversity, our identities and collective community.

As an organization, we believe in the uniqueness, talents and resourcefulness of our community. Every year, on TDOV, we proclaim our right to our identities, to self-determination and to freedom of expression without the fear of violence and exclusion. Despite the challenges of living in a country that fails to recognize our existence and humanity, we celebrate because no matter what, we get to define ourselves.

Today, and every day, we see the value in ourselves and we form bonds with others like us, weaving an unbreakable connection, forged through pain and loss, but always kindled by solidarity and hope. We see each other, trans-feminine, non-binary, trans-masculine, genderqueer, gender non-conforming and all other identities under the spectrum of transgender, as valid, valuable and vibrant.

Our vision is to see a Jamaica where transgender and gender non-conforming persons are included, affirmed and enjoy all of the universally recognized human rights. As an organization, while we work towards that vision, we take a moment to celebrate, to have joy, to remind ourselves that we matter. Our healing is paramount to our success and to heal is to love ourselves, to claim our space and to celebrate our community.



# COMMUNITY

## CORNER



### KAT C.H.R.

To me, trans day of visibility is for all the times you may have felt unseen. Trans day of visibility means acknowledging the existence of people who questioned whether or not there would ever be space held for them.



### MICKY B

Trans Day of Visibility is a day to celebrate trans joy and fight for trans justice. It is also a day to give visibility to some of the most marginalized within trans communities: Black women & Black non-binary femmes, Black Migrants, and Black sex workers. Let's uplift Black Trans stories this TDOV.



### KHADIEME COHEN

TDOV is the constant reminder that our trans community has always existed, and it's also a reminder of several jurisdictions' concerted effort to erase said existence.

To me, TransWave shows the resilience many of us searched for in our youth. A reality we can actualize with the understanding that although visibility is not liberation, it is a step towards such.



### SEAN-CLAUDE NEUFVILLE

[TDOV is] an unapologetic, radical display of self love deliberately giving permission to others do the same.

Thank you TransWaveJA for making visible Trans and Gender Non-comforting Jamaicans and for your a contribution towards a make safer Jamaica for us to live, work, and do business.

### DIDI WINSTON

[TDOV] means I am not alone. I am special, I am important, I can move mountains. Last but not least I am proud to be me, diva, queen, icon, legend. [TransWave] inspires me to continue to be a force to be reckoned with, making it better for my sisters and brothers to just be, to live and be amazing and faaaaaaabolous.





# Making Beauty A LIVING

Ahead of TDOV 2020, we decided to have interviews with persons from our community who are doing meaningful work with little recognition. This is the first feature of many with one of our favourite make-up artists, Paris Lewinsky.

**Q: Tell us about yourself and where you're from.**

A: I'm Paris Lewinsky. Paris is a people person. I enjoy sleeping when I have nothing to do, I enjoy soca music, going to carnival. I'm from Kingston.

**Q: How do you identify?**

A: I identify as a trans woman.

**Q: At what age did you affirm your identity and what was that like?**

A: I've always been femme from a tender age. My transition started last year, 2019. It was a bit rough at first cause it's my first time taking the hormones. I had mixed feelings, anxiety and stuff but my body get used to it by now.

**Q: What role does make-up and beauty play in your life?**

A: Well, make-up and beauty, that's a part of me because I love make-up and I think it's everything for me. If mi a guh pon the road, mi haffi have on make-up - if a even mi eyebrow fi draw and look good and everything.

**Q: When did you start doing make-up?**

A: Well... from ever since, mi always a practice in the mirror, drawing my eyebrows and stuff. Then I went to HEART College of Beauty Service in 2016 and I finished in 2017 and from there mi she mi aguh do it for a living.

**Q: Do you have a favourite product that you use or do you just love everything?**

A: I use various make-up products. Most times, it's just the technique when you're using the products. So I have Milani, Black Opal (everyone uses this because it more affordable), Mac, Revlon, Superstay and it goes on.

**Q: Who inspires you when you're thinking about doing your makeup?**

A: Internationally, I'm a fan of Nicki Minaj, and locally, there are so many makeup artists like Ken Doll.

**Q: What advice do you have for younger girls like you who are learning about their identity, and are on their own personal journeys?**

A: For the younger ones coming out, just focus, have a mentor that can help you during the process because it's not good alone going through the process. Just have mentor - someone you can reach out to, call, talk to and get yourself active with Transwave.

**Q: What does visibility mean to you?**

A: Visibility means a lot to me. To be existing in my own country as a trans woman. We're not fully accepted in society and persons who are not aware of trans persons have a lot of things to say like 'I saw you as a man, not woman', but I am a trans woman.

**Q: How can persons reach out to you for a face beat?**

A: They can reach out to me via my number 8763567850 or email [parislewinsky@yahoo.com](mailto:parislewinsky@yahoo.com) or my social media platform, [@paris\\_beautyplanet](https://www.instagram.com/paris_beautyplanet) or my personal social media [@i\\_am\\_paris\\_lewinsky](https://www.instagram.com/i_am_paris_lewinsky).



# #TEAM TRANSTASTIC



**NEISH MCLEAN** HE/HIM  
THEY/THEM  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Neish is a trans masculine activist with local, regional and international experience in trans advocacy. As the Executive Director and Co-Founder of TransWave Jamaica, he is responsible for the organization's overall strategy and development.



**STEPHON DUNCAN** ANY  
PRONOUNS  
**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Stephon is a gender fluid Jamaican who has a passion for advocacy and activism. In their role at TransWave, Stephon is responsible for engaging the community, planning, coordinating and executing the many events that TransWave Jamaica hosts. They are an avid foodie and enjoy cooking in their spare time.



**SHE/HER RENAE GREEN**  
**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF POLICY & ADVOCACY**

Renae is an LGBTQ, youth and women's rights advocate who is committed and passionate about her work with the community. Renae currently serves as the Associate Director of Policy and Advocacy for the organization.





ANY PRONOUNS

## ALEXANDER CLENNON

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

Alexander Clennon is a transgender man and an activist. He envisions a Jamaica where citizens belonging to the LGBTQ+ community have all the rights and respect bestowed upon the average Jamaican citizen.

## DONIQUE GIVANS

ANY PRONOUNS

COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER

As the Community Liaison Officer at TransWave, Donique is responsible for engaging the local trans community and works to counter the different challenges that affect the community. Donique recently served as a trans ambassador for TransWave and has been involved in advocacy within different spheres.

## THEY/THEM MX WILLIAMS

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

MX is a multidisciplinary artist and media and communications practitioner who is zealous about human rights, development and LGBT issues, specifically related to youth and trans persons. They currently serve as the Media and Communications Officer at TransWave Jamaica, where they are responsible for the organization's online and offline presence.

## TERRYKAY WALKER

SHE/HER

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Terrykay Walker is a Jamaican trans woman living in Kingston. Terrykay recently joined the team as our office assistant and is committed to working within the trans community. At Transwave, her primary duties include filing and other administrative duties, while providing general support to the team.





# COACH LANDO

*Ahead of TDOV 2020, we decided to have interviews with persons from our community who are doing meaningful work with little recognition. This is the first feature of many with one of our trans ambassadors, Lando Constant.*

**TransWave:** Tell me about yourself and where you're from.

**Lando Constant:** I'm Lando Constant. I'm from Greater Portmore and certified in coaching.

**TW:** How do you identify and when did you first affirm your identity?

**LC:** I identify as transmasculine for the past 2 years.

**TW:** What was it like growing up? Did you face any challenges as a LGBT person?

**LC:** It was a bit of a revelation for me. It was something that I knew and observed, but I didn't understand the meaning [of transmasculine] till about 2 years now after getting the understanding of it and then I realized that's who I am.

**TW:** What type of business/services do you offer?

**LC:** I do few services, including the pick up and drop off of persons or items; I offer singing lessons and another classes that requires someone to keep them moving.

**TW:** And you love Sports as well?

**LC:** Ooo yes. I'm a fanatic for sports. Anything you give me, I enjoy playing it.

**TW:** Why are you interested in sports?

**LC:** I grew up around a man that devoted his life to sports but he didn't get the opportunity that he wanted out of it so I decided that for my father, I would become that coach, that athlete he did not get to cross the line to be. I have been playing sports from about two years old.

I would get up every morning and see my brother and my dad, and we'd be at the football field touching up on our games, learning the game.

**TW:** What advice do you have for young trans men like yourself who are navigating space and on their own personal journeys?

**LC:** What I've realized for the past year, more persons are understanding what the word transgender, or non-binary means so it's more easiee for them to be themselves. So I just think they should continue to learn about themselves, step out and be who they are.

**TW:** What does visibility mean to you?

**LC:** For me, visibility means standing out, being my true self without looking over my shoulder because somebody is judging me because I identify as a trans person. I am transmasculine.

# THE FUTURE OF TRANS ADVOCACY IN JAMAICA

WRITTEN BY STEPHON DUNCAN & RENAE GREEN

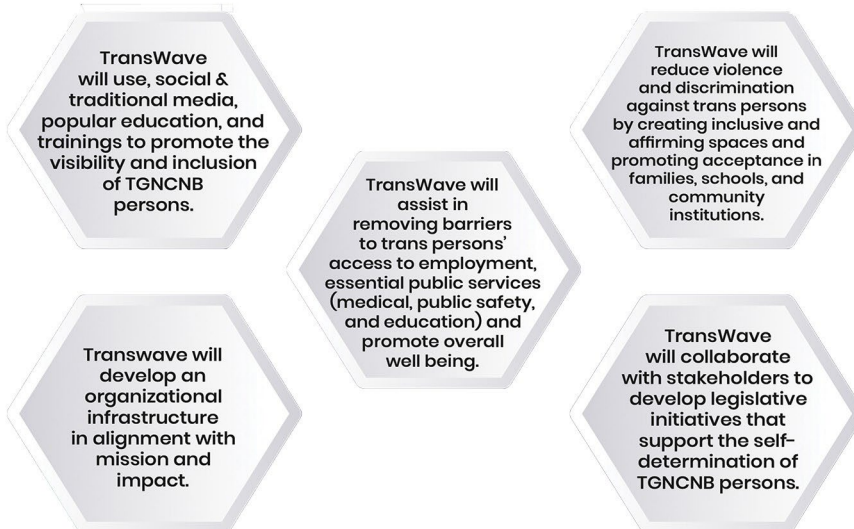


## INTRODUCTION

The fight for the rights of trans people in Jamaica continues to be a difficult one. The community still suffers from homelessness, unemployment, limited access to holistic healthcare, gender-based violence and stigma. Despite these many challenges we continue to strive and pave the way for real change to happen and while these changes are small they are significant to creating and shaping a future for the trans community living in Jamaica. The impact statement for TransWave Jamaica's Strategic Plan for the next five years is for trans and gender non conforming people to be, and feel included, affirmed and protected in Jamaica.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Using this as the driving force behind our work we have developed five(5) objectives to help guide our work and activities so that we can achieve the vision of inclusion and equality for the community. These 5 key objectives that we will be framing our work around for the next 5 years are:



If we can achieve these five (5) objectives through our work then we will be one step closer to getting Jamaica to become a place for the trans community to live and thrive. We hope that through our work and with the support of the community our allies and partners that Jamaica can be the ideal place for the trans community to live, raise their families and do business.

EXISTENCE THAT REQUIRES BRAVERY IS NOT FREEDOM. A LIFE THAT REQUIRES BRAVERY IS NOT FREEDOM.

- INDYA MOORE



REST IN POWER

SHENELLE FASHION

WRITTEN BY EMANI EDWARDS

My name is Emani Edwards. I'm an activist, creative director, fashion-stylist, photographer and an ambassador for TransWaveJa. TransWave's mission is to promote change which results in the social inclusivity, recognition of rights, and legal protection of the Transgender and gender non-conforming community.

My life in Jamaica as a transgender woman is very difficult and a constant struggle to survive. Trans and non-binary people aren't recognized legally and we really have no protection from the state.

Trans people and trans rights aren't respected. It is very difficult for a trans woman to get a job, because of who we are and how we present. Many girls like us don't have enough qualifications when we leave school or when our parents put us out on the street, because of who we are. Girls like me end up living on the street, doing sex work and try to make ends meet.

Trans women face higher levels of violence and discrimination because of the misconception that they are 'soft' men and also because of normalized misogyny.

**“Trans and non-binary people aren't recognized legally and we really have no protection from the state.”**

Shenell Fashion Baddie - a beautiful quiet and loving fashion queen was killed on December 18, 2019 in New Kingston for a robbery that she was not a part of. Trans women are being killed in the streets of Kingston, Jamaica, while nothing comes out of it.

We are trans women struggling to make a living and survive, while the government and the police do nothing about it. Trans rights are human rights. We're only alright when we can be seen for who we are.

# NAVIGATING COVID-19

## A RESOURCE FOR TGNCNB JAMAICANS



### KEEP IN TOUCH

1. Facetime or video call your loved ones.
2. Listen to news and updates about COVID-19



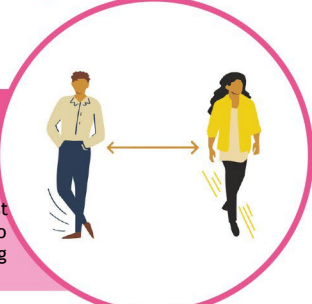
### WASH YOUR HANDS

Wet your hands with clean water, apply soap and lather. Get between fingers and behind hands for at least 20 seconds. Rinse and towel/air dry.



### PRIORITIZE MENTAL HEALTH

1. Try daily meditation.
2. Appreciate the tiny things everyday.
3. Try a new project. Get creative!
4. Exercise boosts your mood. Get into it!



### KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

1. Visit loved ones via text/call.
2. Avoid large meetings.
3. Maintain a distance of at least three to six feet with others to lessen the chance of contracting the virus.



### TREAT & STAY

1. People living with HIV who know their status and are not yet on antiretroviral treatment should start treatment without delay and follow guidance on social distancing.
2. People who do not know their HIV status who were or continue to be vulnerable to HIV acquisition should get tested without delay.



### BIND SAFELY

1. Avoid binding if you are sick.
2. Once you take your binder off, be sure to cough. This helps to loosen your upper body.



### CONTACT US

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### INFORMATION FOR SEX WORKERS

1. Reduce or completely avoid body/sex contact for a while, if possible. Consider alternative options within the industry
2. Doing sex work is currently strongly advised against, if:
  - a. you have a fever, cough, cold or other cold symptoms
  - b. you have been in a country or region where many people have contracted the corona virus in the last 14 days.
3. Do not accept customers with a cold, cough and other cold symptoms.



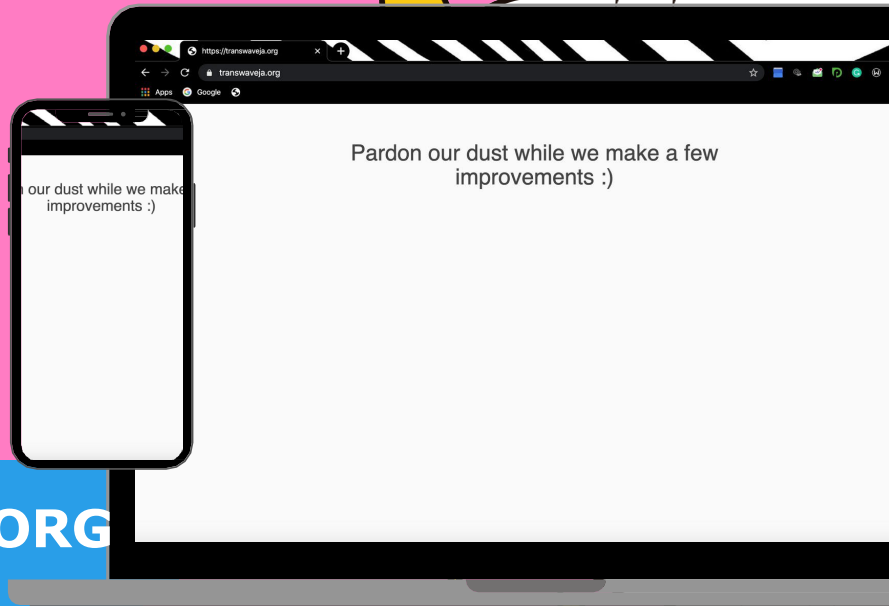
# **SPECIAL THANKS TO...**

**Photographer: Yanique Gayle (Saku)**

**Photo Studio: Xtreme Arts Studios**

**Contributors: Emani Edwards, Stephon Duncan, Renae Green**

CHECK OUT  
OUR NEW  
WEBSITE



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

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APRIL 7, 2020



# TransWave

JAMAICA



ooe  
@TRANSWAVEJA

