



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF THE  
WEST INDIES



**The PJ Patterson Institute for  
Africa-Caribbean Advocacy**

**OFFICE OF THE STATESMAN IN RESIDENCE**  
The Most Honourable P.J. Patterson, ON, OCC, OE, KC

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## **TRIBUTE**

### **DR. THE HONOURABLE HARRY BELAFONTE, O.M.**

Born in Harlem, the eight years he lived with his maternal grandmother from Aboukir, St. Ann made Harry Belafonte a JAmerican for life. He repeatedly proclaimed his Jamaican heritage His immense contribution to the promotion of our rich indigenous culture, in a format which became an effective marketing tool in attracting visitors to our shores, deserves our fullest admiration.

This iconic entertainer fashioned in his own unique style, a blend of mento and folk music in a charming calypso presentation which reflected an exquisite mix of melody and rhythm that would command alluring appeal to the widest markets in North America, Europe and eventually Japan. His domination of the Billboard charts opened the floodgate for the Caribbean flavor which has since gone viral.

Among his innumerable awards are The Emmy, Grammy, Tony and the Oscar with a string of other distinguished conferments for exemplary Humanitarian achievements.



Dr the Honourable Harry Belafonte, O.M., was committed to use his superb talents in the fields of music, theatre and television as a springboard for his social activism. He did not hesitate to devote his kinetic energy, his powerful intellect and his hard earned income in the fight for freedom and the entitlement of justice and human dignity for all – regardless of colour, class and creed.

The P.J. Patterson Institute for Africa Caribbean Advocacy (INAFRICARA), joins in proud salute to the memory of Harry Belafonte whose commitment to humanitarian causes and social upliftment made him a stalwart in the Civil Rights Movement which sought to break the chains of racial segregation and inequality in the Southern States. History will never forget how he stood alongside Martin Luther King, Jnr in the March on Washington and later became a fortress of considerable strength for the family after his assassination.

He was bold and fearless in his advocacy of the right to self-determination and agency for the people of Africa subject to colonial rule and their descendants across the Atlantic. In the relentless Liberation struggle, Belafonte loudly and persistently denounced the evils of Apartheid and demanded the full release of Nelson Mandela. That required the fortitude to resist all temptation for professional engagements accruing from the greed of those Corporations who continued to invest and trade in South Africa.

His preparedness to engage on the domestic front or in the African Continent – indeed wherever there was oppression or a calamity of any kind, natural or man-made - was always evident by his immediate and generous response. Who else but this UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Belafonte, could have commandeered, with the enormous proceeds to combat Hunger in Africa, such an aggregation of musical legends to record in 1985 – *We are the World, We are the People* ?

The Board, Distinguished Scholars and Friends of Inafricara Institute, hereby extend our profound sympathy to his widow, children, entire family and colleagues.

**The legacy Harry Belafonte bequeaths must serve as a perpetual source of inspiration to this and future generations: For**

**"There comes a time when we need a certain call.**

**When the world must come together as one."**

**That time is now.**

**P.J. Patterson**

**April 27, 2023**