

# NEWSPAPER ARTICLE



Mr. Marc Smith



Ms. Kavya Mirwani



Ms. Paris Bassett



## VOICES FOR RIGHTS 2025 AMPLIFIES HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS ACROSS THE TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23RD, 2026



Turks and Caicos Islands Human Rights Commission



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Friday, January 23rd, 2026

## **Voices for Rights 2025 Amplifies Human Rights Awareness Across the Turks and Caicos Islands**

The Turks and Caicos Islands Human Rights Commission marked International Human Rights Day 2025 with the successful hosting of its second annual Voices for Rights: A Community Dialogue, an impactful initiative dedicated to advancing awareness, education, and understanding of human rights throughout the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The event was held on Wednesday, December 10, at Beaches Resort under the theme “Justice Over Violence, Freedom Over Fear.” It brought together government agencies, educators, youth, creatives, civil society organizations, and community partners for robust discussion on Building Safer Communities: Human Rights, Justice Reform, and the Fight Against Gun Violence in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

A central feature of the observance was a dynamic panel discussion moderated by Communications and Media Consultant Cheryl Ann Forman and guided by Master of Ceremony Vershina Forbes. Panellists representing youth affairs, rehabilitation and community supervision, law enforcement, the legal profession, and social development shared expert insight that encouraged meaningful dialogue on justice reform, accountability, and community safety.

In recognition of International Human Rights Day, the Commission also celebrated creativity and youth engagement through poetry, essay, and graphic design and theme competitions. Grand prize winners included Marc Smith (Poetry), Paris Bassett of Thelma Lightbourne Primary School (Essay), and Kavya Mirwani of British West Indies Collegiate (Graphic Design & Theme), whose work demonstrated powerful human rights advocacy through artistic expression.



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The success of Voices for Rights 2025 was made possible through the generous support of the Commission's sponsors. Longstanding and new partners, including Island Bargains, Business Solutions, Tropical Shipping, Do It Center, BAL4 Cigar Bar & Lounge, Air & Sea Agency, Beyond Limitless Creativity, Bring Your Own Creativity (BYOC), Ports of Call Resort Turks and Caicos, and Sounds of Sol Entertainment, played a critical role in supporting educational outreach and community engagement.

The Commission also expressed sincere appreciation to participating government agencies, schools, media partners, volunteers, judges, and healthcare professionals whose collaboration strengthened the event's impact and reinforced a shared commitment to dignity, equality, and justice across the islands.

Readers seeking more information on Voices for Rights 2025, including features on the grand prize winners, acknowledgements of volunteers, and updates on upcoming human rights initiatives, are encouraged to follow the Turks and Caicos Islands Human Rights Commission on Facebook and Instagram at TCI Human Rights Commission, or visit the Commission's official website at [www.humanrightscommission.tc](http://www.humanrightscommission.tc) for additional resources and updates.

As the observance concluded, the Commission reaffirmed its commitment to amplifying voices, strengthening awareness, and fostering a culture rooted in justice, freedom, and respect for human rights for all in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Samuel Lightbourn  
Education and Outreach Officer  
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