

President's Message

It is with deep pride and heartfelt gratitude that I welcome you to join us in the **Rochester Jamaican Organization's** 20th Anniversary celebration. This milestone is more than a marker of time — it is a testament to the strength of our community, the endurance of our culture, and the power of shared purpose under the theme **Honoring our Roots, Inspiring our Future.**

Honoring Our Roots: For two decades we have stood together to preserve and celebrate Jamaican heritage — our music, language, food, faith, and the stories passed down through generations. Those roots have grounded us through challenges and guided our decisions as we built programs, events, and partnerships that reflect the best of Jamaica's spirit: resilience, creativity, and warmth. We remember the founders, volunteers, elders, and families whose sacrifices and vision planted the seeds we now nurture.

Celebrating Achievements: Over the past twenty years we have grown from a small gathering of neighbors into a vibrant organization that supports cultural education, youth development, and community service across Rochester and Jamaica. We have hosted events that brought our culture to the wider community, created scholarships that opened doors for young leaders, and partnered with local organizations to address needs in health, poverty reduction, and education. Each success is a shared success — earned by countless hands and generous hearts.

Inspiring Our Future: As we look forward, our commitment is to translate heritage into opportunity. We will expand mentorship for youth, deepen cultural programming that connects younger generations to Jamaican identity, and strengthen economic and civic initiatives that empower members to thrive. By blending tradition with innovation, we will ensure our culture remains a living, evolving force that inspires leadership, creativity, and service.

Gratitude and Call to Action: To our members, volunteers, sponsors, and friends: **THANK YOU!** Your time, talent, and trust have made these twenty years possible. I invite everyone here and beyond to recommit — volunteer, mentor, donate, and bring new voices into our work. Together we will honor where we came from and build the future our children deserve.

Closing: On behalf of the Executive Board, Advisory Council, and our entire membership, I celebrate this milestone with you and look forward to the next chapter of our journey. May we continue to **honor our roots** with humility and to **inspire our future** with boldness.

Sincerely,

Joel Frater
President