



ANNUAL REPORT



HAITIANS OF TORONTO
2025-2026

Prepared By
DJINY SAINT JEAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2025–2026 fiscal year marked an important period of growth for Haitians of Toronto as we celebrated four years of serving the Haitian and Francophone Black community. This year, we focused on strengthening our organization while continuing to create opportunities for community connection, cultural celebration, and support.

A major milestone was receiving funding through the Stronger Black Communities Capacity Building Initiative (SBCCBI) – Strong Foundations Stream, administered by the Black Business Initiative (BBI). This investment allowed us to strengthen our internal operations through new equipment, organizational insurance, professional accounting and legal services, updated bylaws, policies, and other governance improvements.

Throughout the year, we also expanded relationships with community organizations, businesses, educational institutions, and other partners. We continued supporting newcomers and families while creating opportunities that brought the Haitian community together.

Highlights included the 2025 Haitian Excellence Gala, celebrating the achievements and contributions of members of our community, and a Meet & Greet with the Haitian National Soccer Team, which brought together hundreds of community members, youth, and families.

As we move forward, our focus is on expanding programs and services, strengthening partnerships, building sustainable staffing capacity, and working toward our long-term vision of creating a dedicated community hub for Haitian and Francophone Black families.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

250+
annual email
service
inquiries

20+
community &
corporate
partners

30+
volunteers
supporting
our work

150+
Back-to-School
attendees

6+
community
events &
workshops



Together, we are building a stronger, more connected, and more resilient Haitian community across Ontario.

OUR FOUR PILLARS

Our work is organized around four connected priorities that help Haitian and Francophone Black families build stability, access opportunity and remain connected to their culture.

SETTLEMENT & COMMUNITY NAVIGATION

Practical guidance, referrals and culturally responsive support that help newcomers understand services, navigate Canadian systems and connect with the right community resources.

EMPLOYMENT & OPPORTUNITY

Job-readiness support, resume and interview guidance, workshops and connections that help community members move toward meaningful employment and economic stability.

YOUTH & FAMILIES

School-readiness initiatives, youth engagement, family programming and community activities that strengthen belonging and create opportunities for the next generation.

HAITIAN CULTURE, HERITAGE & IDENTITY

Programs and gatherings that celebrate Haitian history, language, arts, food, achievement and traditions while strengthening cultural pride across generations.

SUPPORT • OPPORTUNITY • BELONGING • CULTURAL PRIDE

Four pillars. One connected community.

FOUNDER'S MESSAGE

When I founded Haitians of Toronto, my vision was simple: to create a community where every Haitian feels welcomed, supported, and proud of who they are.

This past year, we made incredible progress in strengthening our organization from the inside out. The investment we received through the Stronger Black Communities Capacity Building Initiative allowed us to build the foundation we have needed for years – updating our governance, securing essential resources, and putting systems in place that will support our growth for generations to come.

We also continued to celebrate our culture, support newcomers, empower youth, and build partnerships that expand our reach and impact. From our Gala to our Meet & Greet with the Haitian National Soccer Team, every moment reminded us of the strength, resilience, and unity of our community.

None of this would be possible without our volunteers, Board of Directors, partners, sponsors, and the many community members who believe in our mission and continue to walk this journey with us.

As we look ahead, our commitment remains unchanged: to build a stronger organization and create more opportunities that empower, educate, and inspire the Haitian community across Ontario.

With gratitude,

Djiny Saint Jean

DJINY SAINT JEAN

FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“

We help Haitians build successful lives in Canada without losing the culture that connects us.

WHO WE ARE

Haitians of Toronto is a Black-led, bilingual (English, French, Haitian Creole) nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering the Haitian and Francophone Black community across the Greater Toronto Area.

We help community members navigate settlement needs, connect to services, build practical skills and find opportunities while celebrating Haitian culture and identity.



MISSION

Haitians of Toronto supports Haitian and Francophone Black newcomers, families and long-time residents as they build their lives in the Greater Toronto Area. We connect community members to settlement services, employment opportunities, education and practical resources while preserving, celebrating and sharing Haitian culture, history and identity. Through culturally responsive programs, community events and partnerships, we strengthen belonging, create opportunity and ensure Haitian culture continues to thrive for future generations.

VISION

A united and thriving Haitian community in Ontario where people can access opportunity, build stability and contribute to a stronger, more inclusive society.

VALUES

- Unity** – We come together as one community.
- Respect** – We value every individual and culture.
- Integrity** – We act with honesty and transparency.
- Empowerment** – We invest in our people and their potential.
- Solidarity** – We support, uplift, and stand together.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Haitians of Toronto is guided by a volunteer Board of Directors committed to responsible governance, community accountability and the long-term growth of the organization.

Our Board provides oversight and leadership as we continue strengthening our organizational foundation and expanding our impact within the Haitian and Francophone Black community.

DJINY SAINT JEAN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FARAH DOMINIQUE

DIRECTOR

JASMENTA ST JEAN

CHAIR

MAX FRANCOIS

DIRECTOR

KARINE ST JEAN

VICE-CHAIR

DOMINIQUE CHARLES

DIRECTOR

EUNICE SAMEDI

DIRECTOR



YEAR IN REVIEW

A year of growth, collaboration, and meaningful impact. This timeline highlights key moments that advanced our mission and strengthened our community.

APRIL – JUNE 2025	JULY – SEPTEMBER 2025	OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2025	JANUARY – MARCH 2026
			
Celebration & Recognition	Summer Impact & Back-to-School Festival	Planning & Foundation	Community Pride & Connection
<p>Hosted the 2025 Haitian Excellence Gala, recognizing outstanding leaders and strengthening relationships across sectors.</p> <p>Honored excellence across multiple industries</p> <p>Brought together community leaders, businesses, and elected officials</p> <p>Strengthened partnerships and visibility</p> <p>Raised awareness and support for our mission</p>	<p>Delivered one of our largest annual initiatives, supporting students and families as they prepared for a successful school year.</p> <p>Distributed backpacks and school supplies</p> <p>Connected families with valuable community resources</p> <p>Engaged volunteers and local partners</p> <p>Created a fun, supportive environment for children and families</p>	<p>Focused on organizational planning, governance, and strengthening our foundation for long-term sustainability.</p> <p>Continued community outreach across the GTA</p> <p>Strengthened partnerships with community organizations</p> <p>Advanced organizational restructuring and capacity building</p> <p>Prepared for new opportunities and growth</p>	<p>Closed the fiscal year with an exciting Meet & Greet with the Haitian National Soccer Team, uniting the community and celebrating Haiti on the international stage.</p> <p>Hosted hundreds of community members</p> <p>Inspired youth and families</p> <p>Strengthened national pride and identity</p> <p>Built lasting memories and connections</p>

IMPACT AT GLANCE

A year of growth, collaboration, and meaningful impact. A snapshot of our reach, community engagement and organizational impact throughout 2025–2026.

250+

estimated
annual email
inquiries from
newcomers and
community
members

150+

people attended the
Back-to-School
community
initiative

20+

community
and
corporate
partners

30+

volunteers supporting
programs and events

10

individuals
recognized
through the
Haitian
Excellence
Gala

4

event sponsors
supporting community
initiatives

3

service
languages:
English,
French and
Haitian
Creole

4 YEARS

of building trust and
presence in the
community

“

More than a settlement organization.

Haitians of Toronto is a community institution built around support, opportunity and cultural pride. We help newcomers navigate life in Canada while creating spaces where Haitian families can remain connected to their language, heritage and identity.

Measurement note: During this reporting period, many requests received through telephone, social media and in-person interactions were not formally tracked. The organization is implementing stronger data collection moving forward so future reports can distinguish unique clients, repeat inquiries, referrals and outcomes

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

NEWCOMER NAVIGATION

Information, referrals and practical guidance to help newcomers understand services and connect with appropriate community resources.

EMPLOYMENT & OPPORTUNITY

Job-readiness information, resume and employment support, workshops and connections to opportunities and partner organizations.

YOUTH & FAMILY SUPPORT

Family-centred initiatives, school-readiness support, youth engagement and community activities that create belonging and connection.

LANGUAGE ACCESS

Culturally responsive communication in English, French and Haitian Creole, helping community members access information in a familiar and trusted environment.

COMMUNITY REFERRALS

Connections to settlement, education, health, government and other community services when specialized support is needed.

CULTURE, HERITAGE & IDENTITY

Events and initiatives that celebrate Haitian identity, recognize achievement and strengthen intergenerational community ties.



BUILDING CAPACITY FOR GROWTH



The Stronger Black Communities Capacity Building Initiative supported the internal foundation Haitians of Toronto needs to grow responsibly. The organization was awarded \$30,000 in capacity-building support, with \$24,000 reflected as grant revenue in this fiscal year overview.

EQUIPMENT & TECHNOLOGY

Improved tools and technology to improve efficiency, communication, and service delivery.

INSURANCE COVERAGE

Secured comprehensive insurance coverage to protect our staff, volunteers, and assets.

LEGAL SUPPORT & BYLAW REVIEW

Engaged legal expertise to update our by-laws and ensure governance compliance and best practices.

ACCOUNTING SERVICES

Implemented professional accounting services to enhance financial transparency and accountability.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Developed and strengthened organizational policies to support effective operations and risk management.

“ Capacity building is not just about what we build today—it’s about creating the strength and stability to serve our community tomorrow and for generations to come. ”

COMMUNITY NETWORK



Local relationships and institutional partnerships extend our reach.

Haitians of Toronto works with more than 20 community and corporate partners. Our network ranges from Haitian-owned businesses and grassroots organizations to larger institutions and enterprises such as MLSE.

These relationships help us share information, reach families, secure resources, deliver events and connect community members to opportunities that no single organization could provide alone.

PARTNERS & SPONSORS

COMMUNITY DEMAND

Community members contact Haitians of Toronto looking for services, programs, information, referrals and opportunities. Many are newcomers navigating unfamiliar systems; others are established community members looking for culturally relevant support or a trusted connection to available services.



21

average email inquiries each month

400

inquiries in a full year across all social media platforms.

+

additional phone, social & in-person requests

Historically, much of this support has been delivered informally and was not captured in a formal client-management system. That limits our ability to report unique clients and outcomes accurately - and it is a gap we are now addressing.

2026-2027 DATA PRIORITY

Track every inquiry by date, service category, language, general location, newcomer status, referral made and outcome. This will allow us to report verified reach and demonstrate where additional staffing and program investment are needed.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Your investment in our mission allows us to create meaningful programs, support individuals and families, and strengthen our community. We are committed to transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship of all resources.



REVENUE

\$40,840.05

Grants, donations, partnerships, and community support.



EXPENSES

\$41,531.99

Program delivery, community initiatives, operations, and administration.

Revenue	Amount (\$)
Government Grant – SBCCBI Strong Foundations	24,000.00
Event Revenue & Registration Fees	8,965.05
Donations & Community Contributions	5,875.00
Sponsorships & Partnership Support	2,000.00
Total Revenue	40,840.05



DEFICIT

\$691.94

Excess	Amount (\$)
Total Revenue	40,840.05
Total Expenses	(41,531.99)
Net Deficiency	(691.94)

Expenses	Amount (\$)
Community Programs & Events	11,850.00
Equipment & Technology	4,850.00
Professional Services (Legal & Accounting)	1,500.00
Insurance	1,250.00
Facility & Venue Rentals	2,000.00
Office Supplies & Printing	1,450.00
Marketing & Communications	1,100.00
Website & Payment Processing	1,350.00
Food & Hospitality	2,250.00
Travel & Transportation	2,400.00
Bank Charges & Administrative Costs	531.99
Administration & Governance	7,000.00
Total Expenses	41,531.99

HAITIAN EXCELLENCE GALA



10

COMMUNITY MEMBERS
RECOGNIZED IN 2025

CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENT, LEADERSHIP & REPRESENTATION

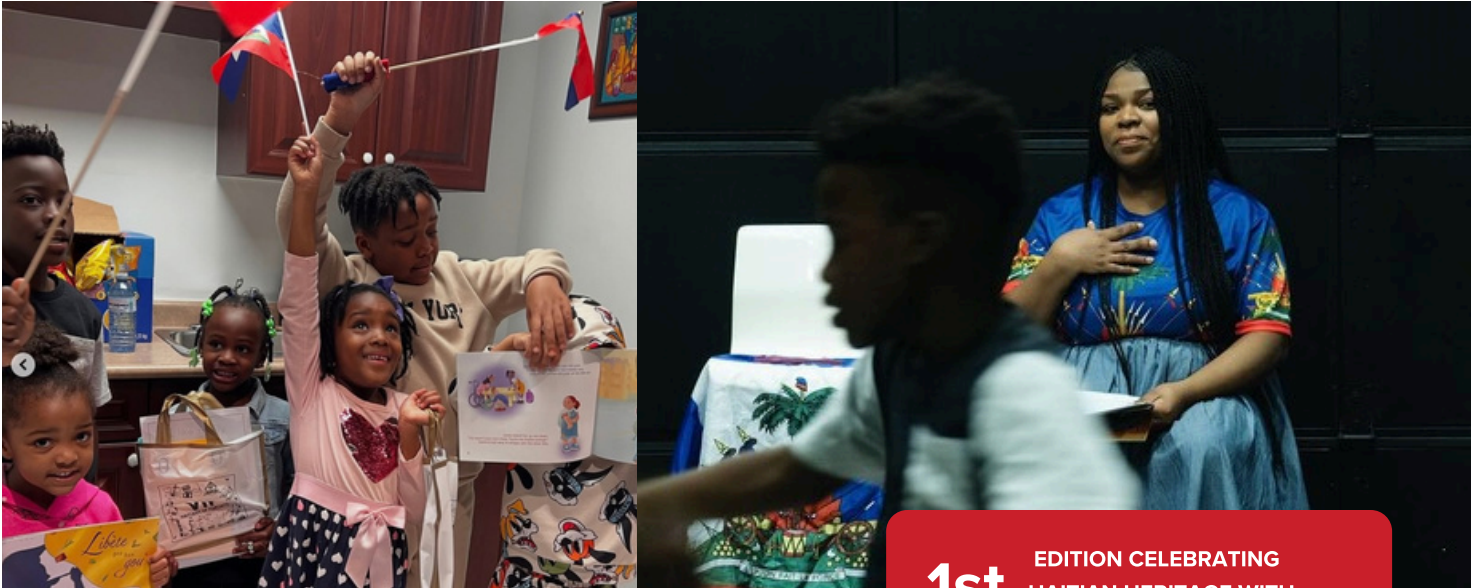
The Haitian Excellence Gala is one of Haitians of Toronto's signature cultural initiatives. It recognizes the achievements and contributions of Haitian professionals, entrepreneurs, leaders and community members while creating a space for connection, representation and pride.

More than an awards evening, the Gala helps make Haitian excellence visible. It brings generations and sectors together, strengthens relationships across the community and gives young people positive examples of what is possible.

WHY IT MATTERS

Positive representation • Community recognition • Intergenerational connection • Professional networking • Cultural pride

TIM TIM BWA SÈCH


1st

EDITION CELEBRATING
HAITIAN HERITAGE WITH
THE NEXT GENERATION

CELEBRATING HERITAGE, STORYTELLING & THE NEXT GENERATION

Tim Tim Bwa Sèch kicked off our Haitian Heritage Month celebrations with an afternoon dedicated to culture, storytelling and connection. Children and families took part in traditional storytelling, drumming, arts and crafts, and readings of books by Haitian authors that explored Haitian culture, identity and what it means to be Haitian.

One of the most heartfelt moments was sharing *Pour Le Drapeau, Pour La Patrie*, a children's book written by our founder, with the children. We also taught them the Haitian song *Tonton Bouki*, giving them a fun and memorable way to connect with our language, music and traditions.

Tim Tim Bwa Sèch reflects our belief that our children are the future. Many are growing up here in Canada, but we want them to know who they are, where they come from and the culture they carry with them. Through this annual Haitians of Toronto event, we are creating a space where Haitian heritage can be experienced, celebrated and passed from one generation to the next.

WHY IT MATTERS

Cultural identity • Haitian storytelling • Intergenerational connection • Youth engagement • Heritage preservation

CULTURE, HERITAGE & IDENTITY



KEEPING OUR CULTURE STRONG WHILE BUILDING COMMUNITY IN CANADA

Haitian culture is at the heart of Haitians of Toronto. For newcomers, culture can provide familiarity and belonging while adjusting to a new country. For children and youth growing up in Canada, it creates a meaningful connection to heritage, history and identity. Through celebrations, recognition, language, food, music, sport and community partnerships, we create spaces where Haitian culture can be experienced, celebrated and shared.

CELEBRATING HERITAGE

Honouring Haitian history, traditions, language, food, music and the stories that connect generations.

CULTURAL PRIDE & IDENTITY

Helping youth and families maintain meaningful connections to Haitian identity while building their lives in Canada.

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

Celebrating Haitian professionals, entrepreneurs, leaders and community members whose achievements inspire others.

SHARING HAITIAN CULTURE

Creating opportunities for the wider community to experience, understand and celebrate Haitian culture.

HAITI ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE



300+

COMMUNITY MEMBERS BROUGHT TOGETHER

SPORT. CULTURE. NATIONAL PRIDE.

Haitians of Toronto joined fellow Haitian organizations to organize a community Meet & Greet with the Haitian National Soccer Team. The collaborative event welcomed hundreds of community members and created a memorable celebration of Haitian sport, culture and national pride.

For Haitian youth growing up in Canada, moments like these create a powerful bridge between the country they call home and the heritage they carry with them. They also show how sport can strengthen belonging, inspire young people and bring generations together.

CULTURAL IMPACT

Youth inspiration • Intergenerational connection • Haitian visibility • Shared identity • Community pride

BACK-TO-SCHOOL COMMUNITY IMPACT



150+ COMMUNITY MEMBERS
ATTENDED

SUPPORTING FAMILIES. PREPARING CHILDREN. BUILDING BELONGING.

Our Back-to-School Community Festival brought together approximately 150 children, parents and community members as families prepared for the new school year. School supplies were distributed in a welcoming environment where families could also connect with community resources, volunteers and local partners.

The initiative reflects the way Haitians of Toronto combines practical support with community connection. Children receive tools for school while families build relationships and experience a culturally familiar space where they feel seen and supported.

COMMUNITY VALUE

School readiness • Family connection • Resource access • Volunteer engagement • Community belonging

UBUNTU AWARD RECOGNITION



1st COMMUNITY
RECOGNITION AWARD

RECOGNIZING IMPACT. CELEBRATING LEADERSHIP. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY.

Haitians of Toronto was honoured to receive an Ubuntu Award from Coalition Créole Ontario, recognizing the work we continue to do in the community. The Ubuntu Awards celebrate individuals and organizations whose contributions uplift and strengthen the Creole community, making this recognition especially meaningful to us. [ccon](#)

We are grateful to Dave Champagne and Coalition Créole Ontario for recognizing the work of Haitians of Toronto. It was an honour to be celebrated alongside so many individuals and organizations who are doing meaningful work and making a difference within our community.

This recognition is also a reminder of why we started. As Haitians of Toronto continues to grow, we remain committed to supporting our community, creating opportunities, celebrating our culture and building something that future generations can be proud of. We are grateful for the recognition, but the work continues.

RECOGNITION VALUE

Community impact • Creole representation • Cultural leadership • Organizational recognition • Community pride

UPCOMING PROGRAM

NOUVEAUX DÉBUTS

A new beginning. Practical support for building a life in Canada.

Nouveaux Débuts will be a new program from Haitians of Toronto, launching in November 2026, designed to support Haitian and Black Francophone newcomers and families as they establish themselves in Canada.

The program will bring together practical learning, employment readiness, language and digital skills, financial education, housing information, community navigation, mentorship and connections to resources and opportunities.

Delivered in English, French and Haitian Creole, Nouveaux Débuts will provide culturally responsive support that recognizes the unique experiences of Haitian and Francophone Black newcomers.



Building on the community needs identified through our ongoing newcomer inquiries.



EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS

Résumé writing, interview preparation, job readiness and career exploration for meaningful opportunities.



LIFE IN CANADA

Financial literacy, housing information, insurance education and guidance for navigating Canadian systems.



DIGITAL & LANGUAGE SKILLS

Beginner English support, computer literacy and accessible multilingual information (English, French, Creole).



CONNECTION & BELONGING

Mentorship, one-on-one guidance, networking, referrals and culturally familiar community support while maintaining language, culture and identity.

LOOKING AHEAD 2026-2027

SUSTAINABLE STAFFING

Build paid program and administrative capacity so community demand does not depend primarily on volunteers.

SETTLEMENT & EMPLOYMENT

Expand newcomer navigation, referrals, workshops and employment-readiness supports through the Nouveaux Débuts program.

YOUTH & FAMILY PROGRAMS

Grow educational, cultural and community opportunities for children, youth and families.

HAITIAN COMMUNITY HUB

Our long-term vision is to establish a Haitian Community Hub: a permanent home for settlement support, employment services, youth programming, workshops, cultural programming and community gatherings. The Hub would also provide a space where Haitian history, art, language and culture can be preserved, celebrated and shared with future generations.

MEASUREMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

Implement consistent service tracking so future reports can demonstrate verified reach, outcomes and community needs.

CULTURE & HERITAGE

Expand cultural programming that celebrates Haitian history, language, arts, food and traditions while creating opportunities for youth to connect with their heritage and share it with the wider community.



THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY

We are deeply grateful to everyone who has supported Haitians of Toronto throughout 2025–2026. Your belief in our mission, your partnership and your commitment to our community have made our work possible.

Together, we are building a stronger, more connected and more resilient Haitian community across Ontario.



SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thank you for your leadership, guidance and ongoing support.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Thank you for your time, energy and dedication to our community.

OUR PARTNERS

Thank you to our community, corporate and institutional partners for your collaboration and support.

OUR SPONSORS AND FUNDERS

Thank you for investing in our vision and helping us increase our impact.

OUR COMMUNITY

Thank you to the individuals, families, youth and newcomers who continue to trust us and be part of this journey.



UNITY • COMMUNITY • STRENGTH

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