

# Charitable Choices: Andrew Tyrrell of the Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton

The Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton is a registered charity that promotes value differences and how they are essential to social, cultural, and economic growth. We spoke with their president Andrew Tyrrell to learn more about what they do.



## Describe your charity/non-profit/volunteer work in a few sentences.

The Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton is a registered charity that promotes value differences and how they are essential to the social, cultural, and economic growth of the Halton Region. Its mandate is to provide cultural education that develops an understanding and knowledge of other cultures, history, art, literature and music of Black and Caribbean cultures. It makes people aware of discrimination and the impact of racism on the community and promotes mutual respect, acceptance, and harmony among community members. CCAH strives to increase communication by breaking down barriers and building bridges of understanding between

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\$215

\$185

\$180

**What problem does it aim to solve?**

CCAH contributes towards an integrated and socially cohesive society by building bridges, fostering inclusiveness, and providing a sense of belonging and connection to the community. We strive to increase awareness and understanding by taking action regarding racism and the Black community. We provide opportunities for community members and students to dialogue about issues of race and the means to address them. With this, CCAH increases a sense of citizenship, pride, respect and cross-cultural understanding.

**When did you start/join it?**

I became President in January 2019 but the organization was established in 1977.

**What made you want to get involved?**

My parents were life-long community builders. My Mother was the long-serving President of CCAH for over 30 years. The CCAH Board of Directors nominated me as President when she passed away in October 2018.

**What was the situation like when you started?**

When I started, CCAH was a small volunteer-based organization with no staff. It had started to make inroads with both publicly funded school Boards. During the last 4 years, the CCAH school programming has increased dramatically. It now has three full-time staff, and over 30 staff involved in running specific projects.

**How has it changed since?**

Black history is now embedded in the curriculum of both publicly funded school Boards. With our programming, students celebrate the history, legacy, and contributions of Black Canadians; develop knowledge and understanding of slavery in Halton Region and Canada; honour those who suffered and died; celebrate the courage to fight for justice and equality. Finding Freedom on the Sixteen is a one-hour documentary film project funded by Kia Communities in Motion that brings to life the remarkable history of people of African descent who settled around the Oakville harbour formed by the mouth of Sixteen Mile Creek. The film features interviews by descendants of the first Black families of Oakville dating back to the mid-1800s. It is to be provided to schools in the Halton area free of charge for educational purposes.

This is a partnership between the CCAH and Anthony Sherwood Films Inc. Racialized students will have a greater understanding of their historical origins. Non-racialized students will also have a greater appreciation for the historical significance of Black people in the Halton Region. These activities will generate knowledge, enthusiasm, civic memory and pride in students and community members resulting from their experiences with the documentary. This will bring about opportunities to learn, dialogue and take action on issues that impact the



### What more needs to be done?

Awareness that Black history is Canadian history needs to grow. Funding from programs such as Kia Communities in Motion is beneficial to help raise awareness and build on our education.

### How can our readers help?

By making requests of School Boards to bring Black history into the curriculum and provide opportunities for students to learn about this important part of Canadian history.

### Do you have any events coming up?

We support one of our school Boards by tutoring 120 students each week from grades 1 to 12. Now in its 17th year, we are hosting our annual Youth Summer Leadership Program in July. August 1st and Civic holiday weekend, CCAH will celebrate Emancipation Day in Oakville and Milton. On August 27th, CCAH will celebrate

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