

TTOC AWARDS CEREMONY - 29th December 2021



WELCOME ADDRESS by the TTOC PRESIDENT - Brian Lewis

There are 86,400 seconds in a day. It takes 3 seconds to compliment someone, including ourselves. That's 86,400 opportunities either to break down or break up. To say the glass is half empty or the glass is NOT half empty.

Fear is the most common human behavior. The two fears that we were born with it is said is the fear of loud noises and the fear of falling. All the other fears are learned fears. Each day we have 86,400 opportunities either to face our fears or to be consumed by our fears.

In 2021 our athletes showed that they faced their fears. They went to Tokyo 2020 in 2021 and gave their best. They did not make excuses and of course they showed emotional stamina, physical stamina and mental stamina by facing their disappointments, their failures, their mistakes and the criticism of those who weren't in the arena; who did not have to overcome economic issues, lack of training issues, doubt tissues, death in their families and close circles.

And unlike many of their fellow citizens who disrobed and took off the robe of the red white and black when the going got tough; they, our athletes who represented Team TTO did not do that. And what they showed was the ability to bounce back, the ability not to live in the past and not to be consumed by their mistakes and failures, and as you would have noted by the end of the year they performed at World Championships and various International competitions bringing great joy and relief and a living example of the importance of bouncing in back; of the importance of seeing the glass as not half-empty and to this we knowledge the tremendous effort, example and role model of the Youth and Young people that put on the robe of the red white and black and went into the cauldron of COVID-19 to represent this beloved nation of Trinidad and Tobago.

Whether they were supported or not; because at the end of the day, we each have to make a decision when we reach that fork in the road, 86,400 times during the day. Face our fears or quit? Ninety percent of the people who fail aren't defeated, they simply quit. The glass is not half empty!

As we look forward to 2022 we are encouraged by the example and the discipline and the resolve showed by team TTO at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and at the Junior Pan Am Games

It wasn't easy - going to these two events, knowing that many of your citizens and colleagues felt that it was madness; that you were embarrassing the country and that they were consumed by their fears which they were perfectly happy to protract and project on Team TTO.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is the 27th edition of the TTOC's Annual Awards. It is the second virtual edition and we at the TTOC are incredibly and amazingly dedicated to bringing a sense of positivity even though positive is no longer a good word in the covid-19 era. But at the end of the day, on this the 29th of December annually, we look and acknowledge and appreciate the good,

the important, those amongst us who are prepared to see the glass not half-empty and to look on the brighter side in the dark tunnel that we have currently faced.

It would be remiss of me if I did not acknowledge that this year was additionally difficult because each of us, myself included, lost very very dear friends, close colleagues, mentors and confidants to COVID-19. The sportsworld itself also suffered some losses. We lost people such as Darryl Mahabir, Anthony Harford, Hubert Stafford Jr, Peter Aleong along with many others whom you would have recognized that the TTOC paid tribute to earlier on during this event.

In closing, I would like to say that it was very difficult; the announcements that would be made because of what I said earlier on, the tremendous effort of every single member of Team TTO at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games and the junior Pan American games.

But at the end the TTOC had to make a call and in the context of the People's Choice it was a decision of the people, by the people and for the people. So I congratulate those who would be announced shortly as the TTOC award winners for 2021.

On a personal note I just want to say thank you to every single one. Adios mi amigos, Adios mi amigas. Thank you very much Trinidad and Tobago. Thank you very much TTOC and thank you very much the Trinidad and Tobago Olympic and Commonwealth Sports movement for your tremendous support over the years; during very difficult times and for your encouragement and joy shared during the good times.

Sayonara.