



**FirstCaribbean**  
International Bank

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### READING BUILDS KNOWLEDGE

St. John's, Antigua. February 3, 2023. Students at two schools will benefit from the gift of books as a result of a partnership between Hands Across the Sea and CIBC FirstCaribbean, established four years ago to support libraries across the OECS.

Presentations were made on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2023 to the All Saints Secondary School and the Christian Union Junior Academy.

Speaking at the presentation at All Saints Secondary School, Executive Director of Hands Across the Sea, Amanda Sherlip noted that over the four years of the partnership, the FirstCaribbean ComTrust Foundation has so far donated one hundred and ten thousand US dollars (US\$110,000.) to this worthwhile project across the OECS.

“In Antigua alone, 103 library projects, from pre-schools through to secondary schools and community groups, have benefitted. We believe it is important to purchase and donate new, relevant, interesting and culturally responsive books. We are committed to buying new books because motivational reasons to read, keep changing.”

The bank's Country Head, Ladesa James-Williams, who is also a published author, also encouraged the students to read every day:

“Read every day. It is my commitment to reading every day that has contributed largely to my personal success that moved me from a humble little country girl to a mature bank manager. So read, read, read and increase your knowledge.”

Mrs. Karen Browne-Francis, Education Officer, Library Services, the Ministry of Education, thanked CIBC FirstCaribbean and Hands Across the Sea for their ongoing commitment to literacy and the support being provided to libraries in Antigua and Barbuda.

Well known and respected educators Mrs. Vernest Mack and Mrs. Hyacinth Gonsalves-Barreiro serve as the Hands Literacy Links in Antigua.



*Presentation at All Sains Secondary School with Staff, students, bank and Hands Across the Sea officials.*



*#Hands Across the Sea Executive Director Amanda Sherlip reading to students.*





*Presentation at Christian Union Junior Academy.*



*Country Head Ladesa James-Williams presenting her book to Fiona Henry, teacher at Christian Union Junior Academy.*

### **About CIBC FirstCaribbean**

CIBC FirstCaribbean is a relationship bank offering a full range of market leading financial services through our Corporate and Investment Banking, Retail and Business Banking and Wealth Management segments. We are located in fourteen (14) countries around the Caribbean, providing the banking services through approximately 2,700 employees in 54 branches and offices. We are one of the largest regionally listed financial services institutions in the English and Dutch speaking Caribbean, with US\$13 billion in assets and market capitalization of US\$1 billion. We also have a representative office in Hong Kong that provides business development and relationship management for our fund administration. The face of banking is changing throughout the world and CIBC FirstCaribbean intends to lead these changes with the expertise, integrity and knowledge gained from banking in the Caribbean since 1836.

CIBC FirstCaribbean is a member of the CIBC Group. CIBC is a leading Canadian-based global financial institution with 11 million personal banking and business clients. Through our three major business units - Retail and Business Banking, Wealth Management and Capital Markets - CIBC offers a full range of products and services through its comprehensive electronic banking network, branches and offices across Canada with offices in the United States and around the world.

For more information about CIBC FirstCaribbean, visit [www.cibcfib.com](http://www.cibcfib.com), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) or [YouTube](#).

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