



CALABAR HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION FLORIDA CHAPTER INC.

A Non-Profit 501c(3) Organization

November 29, 2020

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME MESSAGE

Dear Calabar Alumni and Friends:

It is indeed an honor and a privilege to be allowed to serve as president for the next two years. I congratulate the new board on their willingness to volunteer their time and efforts to being on the board of directors. On behalf of the board, my sincere appreciation goes to all the registered members who were engaged in the voting process. Hats off to you. You are now founding members of this new membership methodology and as such, you are at the core of this united force for good that we will grow together. Please spread the word to your Calabar brethren and friends about joining us as members of Calabar Alumni Florida and the [ease of registration](#).



We will continue the great work begun by our founding brothers who crafted the articles of incorporation to be an official Florida non-profit corporation and obtained the federal tax-exempt status as a charitable organization under section 501c3 of the IRS Code, thereby cementing the chapter's bona fides as an official charitable nonprofit. This tax-exempt status allows Calabar Alumni Florida to compete in the non-profit space for donations that qualify to [possibly lower your tax bill](#). Our deepest gratitude goes out to the former board members for all their magnanimous volunteering.

Now, while some are old hands at the charitable giving culture here in the US, we still have some work to do in fostering this paradigm of philanthropy amongst the Jamaican diaspora. So, it is here that we want to make major strides. One of my aims is to champion and promote the need, almost the duty, to give back. By giving not only are we aiding Calabar and our high school heritage, but we are contributing to the development of Jamaica. Therefore, Calabar Alumni Florida must be seen as a worthy and recognized vehicle that supports the cause that I know we are all are passionate about, the continued improvement and support of Calabar.

The Journey of Giving Back

What can each of us do to spur each other on the journey of giving back? Well, I won't pretend that I can come up with one of those [inspirational wise sayings](#) about why it is good to give back, although I do have my favorite philanthropy quotes. I am sure we can all agree that education is a great equalizer and that the smallest act of kindness especially in a setting such as present-day Calabar, may reverberate in ways one cannot fathom. As far as the Board's part in this journey, it is our responsibility to facilitate and cultivate an atmosphere of giving by making sure the association is a trusted non-profit brand that you can count on. A place where information is communicated in a clear and concise manner, making donations and volunteering is a hassle-free experience, providing updates on initiatives and showing the end results of donor-funded projects geared toward the enhancement of Calabar. Our website, with its easy to remember URL, cbarfla.org, will be the primary repository for all information and we will utilize social media and other means of technology to maximize our renewed approach. (Long before COVID-19 I was advocating the use of Facebook Live to broadcast our membership meetings). So go right now, please take a moment to follow us on: Instagram at [@cbar_florida_chapter](#) and [Twitter](#) and Facebook: [@cbarflorida](#).

Although financial contributions are one of the most recognized ways to give back, there are other options that are very much appreciated, welcomed and certainly valued. Volunteering your time and talents are immeasurable and is an integral part of all successful charitable organizations, so we implore old boys to step up here as well. We are in need of marketing professionals and social media experts right now, but you name it, the offer will not be turned down.

Entire Florida and beyond

At the heart of an effective alumni organization, no matter the educational level, three things are key: membership, membership and membership. Calabar Alumni Florida is no different, so a strong and vibrant membership is crucial. We will be working hard on alumni engagement and we recognize that for this to grow, even if our primary goal is fundraising, a two-way relationship between us and our members must take root. The association's supporters contribute money, time, and passion, and we, the board must in turn devote energy towards enhancing the member experience. We will do this by establishing programs that are beneficial to members, providing top-quality fundraising and social events, and as inferred above, offer a well-run organization that is accessible in every way and transparent in all that we do.

With that said, membership in Calabar Alumni Florida is not limited to only Florida residents, but we welcome those old boys who live beyond the State borders anywhere in North America--frankly anywhere in the world. If you are looking for a Calabar Chapter to call home, we welcome you with open arms. Already we have registered alumni members among our ranks as far away as California and Calgary.

Work has begun

The work of the Board has begun in earnest and we have met twice already since being installed less than a month ago. One of my first orders of business was to draft our bylaws. Well, I can report that that task is completed. It can be reviewed [here](#) and of course on our place for all things Calabar Alumni Florida, our website, cbarfla.org. There is the Green and Black Business Network (G&B Network), a program still in its infancy but will be given a proper launching in the weeks to come. Essentially, we are encouraging businesses owned by Calabar alumni or their direct relatives such as spouses or children to opt into our Green and Black Business membership and have interaction and access to our members and in return, they must provide the members with discounts or other benefits. You will hear more about the G&B Network.

While I can go on and on, I must close out the remarks with a report that the energy of your new board is high so, as the pandemic rages on as the holiday season approaches, we will continue to brainstorm innovative ideas on how to keep members engaged. Planning for activities in 2021 is already afoot!

As your elected president, let us become that awesome force for good.

Please stay safe and well. I end with the chorus of the school song.

Here Sir, here Sir, here Sir, here Sir
So we answer near or far
Here Sir, here Sir, here Sir, here Sir
At the call of Calabar.

Sincerely yours,

Karl Thompson

Karl C. Thompson
President