



**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Students Take Centre Stage as CIBC Caribbean Brings Stories to Life Across Three Schools for Read Across Jamaica Day

Kingston and St. Andrew, Jamaica, 6 May 2026 — Classrooms were transformed into spaces of imagination, discovery, and possibility as students across three primary schools embraced the magic of storytelling for Read Across Jamaica Day.

In celebration of literacy and the transformative power of reading, CIBC Caribbean partnered with St. Francis Primary and Infant School, Tarrant Primary, and Duhaney Park Primary to deliver a morning that placed students at the heart of the experience, celebrating their voices, their curiosity, and their limitless potential.

From eager four-year-olds listening wide-eyed to their first stories at St. Francis Primary and Infant School on Old Hope Road, to curious early readers at Tarrant Primary on Molynes Road, and the energetic young learners of Duhaney Park Primary, the day unfolded as a vibrant journey through storytelling, connection, and inspiration.

Guided by CIBC Caribbean team members, students were not simply read to, they were invited into stories. They were encouraged to imagine, to ask questions, and to see themselves reflected in the pages before them. Laughter, excitement, and moments of quiet wonder filled the classrooms as books became bridges to new ideas and possibilities.

The initiative brought together a dedicated team of CIBC Caribbean representatives, each contributing not only their time, but their presence, encouragement, and genuine engagement with the students.

At St. Francis, the youngest learners leaned into each story with a sense of discovery, many experiencing the joy of shared reading in a deeply personal way. At Tarrant Primary, students responded with enthusiasm, their interactions reflecting growing confidence and a deeper connection to reading. Meanwhile, at Duhaney Park Primary, the atmosphere was equally dynamic, with students immersing themselves in stories that sparked imagination and joy.

Principal of Tarrant Primary, Hadajah Freebourne-Raffington, underscored the importance of such initiatives. “Reading is one of the most powerful tools we can give our children. When organisations like CIBC Caribbean take the time to sit with our students, to read with them and truly engage them, it sends a strong message that education matters and that they are valued. Experiences like these help to build confidence, spark curiosity, and strengthen a child’s love for learning.”

For the students, the experience extended far beyond the classroom activity. It became a moment of connection, an opportunity to see professionals step into their world, share stories, and reinforce the idea that reading is not only essential, but empowering and enjoyable.

Reflecting on the day, Barrington Watson shared, “Reading to a child may seem simple, but it has the power to shape how they see the world and themselves. Today was about more than stories, it was about connection, inspiration, and helping these students recognise their potential and understand that their future is filled with opportunity.”

This initiative forms part of CIBC Caribbean’s continued commitment to youth development and education, recognising literacy as a critical foundation for personal growth and national progress.

Read Across Jamaica Day remains a powerful national platform, uniting schools, organisations, and volunteers in a shared mission to promote literacy and empower the next generation. At its heart, however, are the students, young minds discovering their confidence, their voice, and their place in the world through the power of reading.

For CIBC Caribbean, the message is clear, every story shared is more than a moment, it is a spark and the beginning of a brighter future.

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CIBC Caribbean Team members (from left) Claudia A. Forbes, Director - Corporate Credit Risk; Renee Whitehorne, Marketing Manager and Barrington Watson, Director Corporate Banking present a gift of books to Tarrant Primary Schools' student usher, Katalya Rhamdeow during "Read Across Jamaica Day" celebrations on Tuesday, May 5, 2026.



Barrington Watson, Director Corporate Banking, CIBC Caribbean reads to students of Tarrant Primary School during "Read Across Jamaica Day" celebrations on Tuesday, May 5, 2026.



Claudia A. Forbes, Director - Corporate Credit Risk, CIBC Caribbean "high fives" a student of St. Francis Primary School during "Read Across Jamaica Day" celebrations on Tuesday, May 5, 2026.



Ms. Ricketts (2nd right), Librarian at St. Francis Primary receives a gift of books from CIBC Caribbean team members (l-r) Claudia A. Forbes, Director - Corporate Credit Risk; Barrington Watson, Director Corporate Banking and Renee Whitehorne, Marketing Manager during "Read Across Jamaica Day" celebrations on Tuesday, May 5, 2026.



CIBC Caribbean Marketing Manager, Renee Whitehorne has the undivided attention of Tarrant Primary School students during "Read Across Jamaica Day" celebrated on Tuesday, May 5, 2026.



CIBC Caribbean team members present a gift of reading material to Colleen Reid Grant, Principal of Duhaney Park Primary School during the celebration of Read Across Jamaica Day on Tuesday, May 5, 2026.



CIBC Caribbean Advisor, Jevene Henry (left) has the rapt attention of students of Duhaney Park Primary School during Read Across Jamaica Day celebrations on Tuesday, May 5, 2026. Looking on are fellow CIBC Advisors (2nd left - right) Shenae Williams, Celena Reid and Leonardo Green.

CIBC Caribbean

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