



HIGH COMMISSION FOR ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 45 Crawford Place, London W1H 4LP  
Tel: 020 7258 0070 Fax: 020 7258 7486  
E-mail: HighCommission@antigua-barbuda.com  
Website: www.antigua-barbuda.com

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Antigua and Barbuda Youth Cricket Scholarship Programme with Harrow School, UK**

Antigua and Barbuda High Commission, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025 – The Ministry of Education, Sports and the Creative Industries, in collaboration with the Antigua and Barbuda High Commission (London), is pleased to announce the second year of a scholarship programme for young cricketers from Antigua and Barbuda to study and play cricket at the prestigious Harrow School in the United Kingdom.

Building on last year's success, the upcoming summer term will take place from 22<sup>nd</sup> April to 28<sup>th</sup> June 2025 and will provide a platform for two young Antiguan and Barbudan male cricketers aged 13 to 15 to develop their skills and gain international exposure. The players will reside at Harrow School where they will receive coaching, engage in competitive matches, form valuable friendships as well as participate in a full academic programme.

In 2024, the first players to benefit from the scholarship programme were Tanez Francis, a student at Jennings Secondary School and a player for the local Empire Nation team and Matthew Miller, a student at the Antigua Grammar School and a member of the Jennings Tigers team.

While attending Harrow School, Matthew and Tanez studied a range of subjects including Math, English Language and Literature, Physics, Design Technology and Engineering, Biology, Sports Science, History, Spanish, Theology and Philosophy.

Reflecting on his time in the UK, Matthew shared: *"Firstly, I'll always be grateful for the chance to visit England—it's always been a dream of mine. I was almost overcome by the weather when I first arrived since I didn't know if I would have liked the cold. I was warned, yet it still caught me off guard. After the initial shock of the temperatures, I settled in quite quickly. Seeing Trent Bridge and Lord's, the home of cricket, were two incredible highlights of my trip—places I had only ever seen on TV. The weather and pitches in England differ from those in the Caribbean. They made things a bit challenging for me, but I had to adapt quickly. It is vital for me to develop the ability to adjust my playing style and technique to fit any condition as an aspiring professional. This assisted me in coming up with ways to properly negate situations like swing and seam friendly environments and/or conditions. During my time at Harrow School, I played 5 matches, scored 170 runs and took 10 wickets. My best performance was against Cranleigh. I scored 86 not out and took 2 wickets for 13 runs in 6 overs at an economy rate of 2.17. Overall, I had a wonderful experience at Harrow and will always remember it. I hope to return."*

Matthew was recently selected to be part of the West Indies Under-19 training programme in preparation for the ICC Under-19 World Cup in 2026.

Tanez also reflected on his experience: *"My time in England was a good experience. The biggest challenge was adapting to the weather. It was challenging because I've never played cricket when it's cold and it was tough to get used to. One of my standout moments was scoring 56 not out in my first match, which I'm really proud of. It felt like a solid way to start things off, and it gave me confidence for the rest of my time there. Looking ahead, I'm taking away a stronger mental game and a deeper understanding of how to handle pressure in tough conditions. The ability to adapt quickly is something I'll keep with me moving forward. The experience has definitely helped me grow, and I'm excited to build on it in the future."*

The Honourable Daryll S. Matthew, Minister of Education and Sports, expressed his deep appreciation for the support and hospitality provided by Harrow School. He particularly acknowledged the efforts of Mrs. Natalya Silcott, Mathematics Master and Awards Registrar, and Mr. Johnny Marsden, Mathematics Master and Master-in-Chief of Cricket, for their pivotal roles in supporting the development of this programme.

"This cricket exchange programme has been an outstanding success and a testament to the power of sports as a tool for cultural exchange and personal growth," said Minister Matthew. "Tanez and Matthew have not only improved their cricketing abilities but have also gained exposure to a different culture and environment, which will serve them well in their future endeavours. We are immensely grateful to Harrow School and its staff for their dedication and support in nurturing our young athletes."

Her Excellency Karen-Mae Hill, High Commissioner of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Kingdom, also commended the initiative, highlighting its significance in broadening the awardees' academic perspectives.

"This programme has been an excellent opportunity for our young athletes to experience the rich cricketing culture of the UK while developing their academic ability," said High Commissioner Hill. "It has reinforced the importance of being well rounded as athletes, balancing the demands of competitive sports with maintaining good academic performance".

As in 2024, Senator Shenella Govia will co-ordinate the application process. All interested applicants aged 13 to 15 who wish to participate in the 2025 Harrow Cricket Scholarship Programme should apply by e-mailing Ayana Dorsette at the Ministry of Education, Sports and the Creative Industries at [ayana.dorsette@ab.gov.ag](mailto:ayana.dorsette@ab.gov.ag), highlighting their interest in the programme and providing their CV. Final selections will be made by Harrow School after an interview process. Further details regarding the selection process and requirements can be received from Senator Shenella Govia who will be co-ordinating the advertising and application process across schools and local cricket clubs.

Harrow School, founded in 1572 under a Royal Charter from Queen Elizabeth I, is one of England's most prestigious and historic independent schools for boys. Located in Harrow on the Hill, northwest London, the school is renowned for its academic excellence, rich traditions, and distinguished alumni, including Winston Churchill, Lord Byron, and Benedict

Cumberbatch. Harrow offers a rigorous curriculum alongside a wide range of extracurricular activities, fostering leadership, creativity, and character development.

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