

## TRIBUTE TO JANICE V. P. MAISON, CAHE POH, CPHE



It is with anguish and a deep sense of loss that we received the news of the swift passing of Janice Vilma Patricia Maison, teacher, leader, colleague, nutritionist, food technologist, researcher, mentor, friend, confidante and entrepreneur; born on the 14<sup>th</sup> April 1950 in British Guiana now the Republic of Guyana, South America.

Janice attended The Bishops High School, the top high school for girls in the country gaining a solid educational foundation and finishing skills that equipped her for the magnitude of pursuits to follow. She gained a Trained Teachers Certificate majoring in Home Economics, a Bachelors Degree in Education from the University of Guyana, a Master of Science Degree in Food and Nutrition from the University of Manitoba and several Diplomas and Certificates ranging from studies in Hotel and Restaurant Management, Catering, Nutrition, Business and Research.

In her professional career of well over forty years she worked as a teacher of Home Economics in secondary schools, Head of Home Economics Departments, part-time lecturer at the University of Guyana, Guyana School of Agriculture, the Carnegie School of Home Economics, Consultant for the Pan American Health Organisation, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund and other International organisations as well as the former Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute. She was Country Project Coordinator for many projects and also worked as Nutrition educator and trainer for several government and non governmental agencies especially with women in grass root communities in rural areas of Guyana. At the time of her retirement she was the Director of the Food and Nutrition Policy Unit Ministry of Health in Guyana with overall responsibilities for defining food and nutrition problems and the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of food and nutrition policies, plans and programmes.

Janice travelled widely mainly fuelled by her involvement in professional activities touching all of the continents except the Antarctica and Oceania. She was closely affiliated to the Bishops High School Alumni Association and the Caribbean Association of Nutritionists and Diabetics (CANDi) where she served as President from 1995-1997. She was a valued member and Consultant for the Guyana Association of Home Economists (GAHE) and a member since 1974. She served three different stints as President of that Association. Janice was well respected by all especially the young home economists. She was their key role model and biggest fan.

Her journey with the Caribbean Association of Home Economists Inc. (CAHE) began in 1982 and she served in many capacities, first as Chairperson Research Committee 1993 – 1997. It was during this period that she was influential in the development of a number of structures for the Association including its Code of Ethics, engineering the compilation of the History of Home Economics in the Caribbean and initiating discussions with Mc Millan for the preparation and publishing of the CAHE recipe book, finally published in 2006. She also served as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, 1997-1999, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, 1999-2000, President, 2001- 2005; Immediate Past President, 2005- 2009 and was a Consultant to CAHE at the time of her passing. This long and meritorious career led to her membership in the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE). She maintained unbroken

membership from 1996 and served as member on Executive Council as the representative for the Region of Americas 2004 – 2006 then as the Vice President for the Region of Americas, 2006-2010.

Mrs. Maison was a presenter at numerous local, regional and international conferences and workshops and spoke on topics ranging from nutrition, consumerism, sustainable development and poverty alleviation both on behalf of the Government of Guyana and her professional affiliations. Her most prized research project was her Masters thesis “The optimization of soy-enriched rice-cassava yeast bread using response surface methodology”. She was constantly engaged in data collection and other research activities for local and international nutrition related agencies.

Many publications are attributed to her name and she was an avid contributor to “Cajanus”, the publication of the then Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute’s quarterly, the Caribbean Home Economist and its newsletters over the years. Her work was also published in the Guyana Review and the Guyana National News Magazine to name a few. She was the brainchild, contributor and editor in chief of the Caribbean Association of Home Economist’s Inc. recipe book “An Adventure in Caribbean Cuisine” a historical perspective of Caribbean and recipes. She was also instrument in the writing and publication of the “CAHE Chronicles: The first 30 years”.

Several organisations recognised her service, commitment and outstanding achievements. She was heralded best graduating student in her class by the University of Guyana and won a Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship to study for the Master of Science degree in Food and Nutrition at the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada. She also received the prestigious CAHE Gold Pin Award and awards from the Guyana Teachers Union and the University of Guyana Guild of Graduates to name a few.

Janice was in every essence the model professional that went beyond the call of duty in executing her assignments. She loved life and is remembered for her congenial spirit and voluntary work, the latest being chairmanship of the IFHE team for the United Nations Department of Public Information Conference in July 2015 in New York. Her advocacy for home economics and as a member of the national breast feeding thrust in Guyana are treasured since these impacted many lives for the better. Janice was fashionable and until recently enjoyed strutting across catwalks as a model for several fashion designers. She loved to dance. She was also a talented baker and cake decorator. “Cakes by J” was her passion. Bridal cakes were her forte.

She will be sadly missed by her husband, Leyland, step and adopted children, sisters, many relatives, friends, high school alumni, church family and the home economics fraternity. She has given yeoman service to her community, her nation and to the wider world. She left an indelible footprint wherever she went. Her smile, her laughter, her kindness, her caring nature and her zest for live will forever be remembered.

May her precious soul rest in peace

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