



**We**  
WOMEN  
EMPOWERMENT



# Celebrating the Extraordinary Legacy of Hazel A. Brown L.L.D



**FEARLESS  
POLITICS**  
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF  
**HAZEL BROWN**





# Let's Feel the Feelings

At eighty four years I now, as Shadow put it, really "Feeling the Feelings". Therefore I find it too painful and too soon to speak of one of my dearest and closet friends in the past tense.

We met when she joined Housewives Association of Trinidad and Tobago (H.A.T.T).

I loved/love Hazel as the sister and close female friend I never had. We were very alike in that we complemented one another. Hazel could work within the "system". Her brilliance and incisiveness propelled her to take on any giant, from the top down and the outside in. I was the outsider operating from the bottom up and inside out.

A powerhouse of passion and energy she was committed to the aims of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Building on sharing and inclusivity she worked toward ensuring gender equality promoting women's human rights, and empowerment, nationally, regionally, and globally.

**Hazel lived a life of Service to Social Justice & Human Rights:** Aiming To facilitate the process of social transformation, her dream was to re-

structure gender imbalance, recognizing women's rights as human rights through systemic change.

Hazel demanded **Integrity & Accountability, Inclusion, Democracy and Sisterhood** so we could share and grow together in strength.

I was privileged to be part of the establishment of the Women's Training Centre. We worked in the public as well as the private sector with Health Workers, Directors, Managers, General Staff, Teachers as well as Community Leaders and Facilitators. We offered training programmes, workshops, seminars and interventions for personal empowerment and advancement through the development of leadership, mediation and team building skills.

She loved the irony and the political satire embedded in my Theatre of Carnival annual shows. Her subsequent theatre debut came when she told me "Camps, I need direction. I want to play Baby Doll in the ole'mas competitions." So said, so done.

Now that she has returned to the stardust of which we are all made I take great solace knowing that she "is still at it"

Much, much love Hazel my dear friend.

**Ellen O'Malley Camps (Helen Camps)**  
Founder, Housewives Association of Trinidad and Tobago

Hazel Brown was a champion for those who needed a voice. Although she was well known in T&T, my first interaction with her was at the People's Forum in Sri Lanka in 2013. She was a strident voice for the rights of women and the underprivileged. Her contributions were down to earth and filled with common sense. She was held in high esteem by the hierarchy at the Commonwealth Foundation in London who were ready to support her always worthwhile projects. The country has lost a hero and we hope that others have been inspired to continue her work.

**Dr. Solaiman Juman FRCS.**  
Former President of the Commonwealth Medical Association

## Hindu Women's Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago

Hazel's passing is a loss to all of us in the sorority of the nation's women's movement. Her loss is being felt not only by women in T&T, but also in the Caribbean and beyond. She will surely be missed. The Hindu Women's Organisation (HWO) joins the nation in extending our heartfelt condolences to the family and loved ones of our Activist Extraordinaire, Hazel Brown.

Over and over again, Hazel's infectious enthusiasm will have energized the members of the Network of NGO's to vigorously pursue the issues at hand. The HWO joined the Network of NGO's for the Advancement of Women in 1994 as a fledgling organisation seeking to make its voices heard by articulating the problems facing Hindu women and to make pronouncements on matters of national interest from a Hindu perspective. It was around that time when the national women's movement was at the peak of its preparatory work for the fourth World Conference on Women which was due to be held in Beijing, China in September 1995. Hazel also played a pivotal role in offering her insight, her support and advice as the HWO

sought to break new ground in demanding change to the well-entrenched Marriage Acts of Trinidad and Tobago.

Hazel's passion for social justice, her vision for the advancement of women, and her boundless courage to speak truth to power were all compelling factors in her leadership style which carved a pathway for so many others to follow. As the nation continues to shower so many accolades upon Hazel, it is undeniable that Hazel has left an indelible legacy for posterity.

The intensity with which she sought to improve the lives of women in every sphere of their existence could have emerged only from her compassionate nature. It is therefore most fitting that Hazel be remembered as an "Activist Extraordinaire".

May Hazel's soul attain the glory of Moksha (Liberation) Om Sadgati.

**Brenda Gopeesingh**  
Past President, Hindu Women's Organisation

## Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA TT)

The Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA TT) mourns the passing of activist and advocate Hazel Brown and offers sincere condolences to her family, friends, allies and members of the Network of NGOs of Trinidad and Tobago for the Advancement of Women, which she led for three decades. We celebrate her life and politics, and her legacy.

Hazel lived and breathed social justice. She spoke of her early conscientization from sitting in City Council meetings when she was ten years old, waiting for the Mayor to sign her report card as she had received a scholarship from the City Corporation. She learned that the state had power and that people had power to make state decisions work for them. This shaped decades of her work to advance women's participation in and leadership of politics, and her passion for local government.

Hazel will also be remembered across the world, from Nairobi to Beijing, London and India. She attended every Commonwealth People's Forum since 1991 and, in 2018, was recognised as an elder 'stateswoman' of the Forum, its longest attendee and foremother of its own feminist unfolding.

She was an angel to those who came to Trinidad for cancer treatment. She met them at the airport, provided accommodation, transportation and friendship. She herself survived cancer three times.

Hazel held on to the dream of an approved National Gender Policy for four decades. Up to this year, she spoke of the significance of a Women's Commission, and why it remained relevant to advancing state accountability.

Hazel was a fighter, prepared to disagree with anyone who stood in her way or who didn't want to put in the time and work that came before status and recognition. She wasn't easy, but she was full of love and care. She could be fierce and unrelenting, but her heart was too large not to be recognized in all weathers and at any distance. It is with great respect that we salute this nearly unstoppable woman.

**There is so much more to be said about Hazel. She arose everyday determined to use her voice and all her energies for dismantling structures of power that oppressed. She was the embodiment of resistance, and she understood the interconnectedness of issues. Rest well Hazel. You will continue to occupy that space in our minds which tells us, "wake up, there is work to do".**

**CAFRA Trinidad and Tobago**

## The National Muslim Women's Organisation of T&T

Twenty-two years ago, Rose Mohammed, approached her friend, Hazel Brown, about establishing a group which would comprise all Muslim women in our country. Hazel supported Rose saying, "There is power in numbers! The only way Muslim women can come together and fight to improve themselves is by creating such a group!"

Rose, as strong-willed as her friend, took her advice and created the National Muslim Women's Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago (NMWOTT) in 2000.

Our organization would remember Hazel as a champion for Women's rights. A brave and courageous individual who fought tirelessly for change and the upliftment of women. She certainly demonstrated her conviction in the adage, "Where there's a will, there's a way!"

We have lost a selfless, free-spirited woman who made a positive difference in our multi-cultural society.

The NMWOTT extends deepest condolences to her family and the national community.

"Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un" We surely belong to Allaah (God) and to Him we shall return.

Rest in eternal peace our dear Sister Hazel.

**Zenobia Mohammed**  
President, NMWOTT

**WE acknowledge every single tribute shared and will continue highlighting them as we continue to honour this Legend, Hazel Angela Brown L.L.D.**

- WE magazine





# Honouring a Fearless Caribbean Leader

“People must “Get Up, Stand Up and Speak Up” - Hazel Brown

**H**azel Angela Brown L.L.D. was born on 31st January 1942 in Port of Spain. She attended Bishop’s Anstey High School in Port of Spain and then also St. Joseph’s Convent, San Fernando. She was born into a family that knew the importance of being involved in community work. Thus, Hazel received her first training at the feet of her parents and experienced at an early age, what it took to be a serious activist.

Most people in Trinidad & Tobago will remember Hazel for HATT (Housewives Association of Trinidad and Tobago), which she formed in 1971 with the aim of raising awareness about consumer rights. This was just the beginning as she became a spokesperson for women and women’s rights throughout her life, gaining title after title for the work she pio-

neered. She tackled delicate issues and was not afraid to say what she thought. Her legacy will be remembered for a long time.

Hazel Brown has been professionally involved in research, social development and community organization projects since 1969. Her focus has been primarily on the areas of poverty eradication, consumer affairs and promoting gender equity. She has organized and conducted numerous seminars and workshops toward these ends through the organizations that she has been a part of as well as in collaboration with government ministries, CARICOM, Commonwealth organizations, OAS, IDB, PAHO, UNIFEM, UNESCO and other UN and regional agencies.

Ms. Brown is a phenomenal Caribbean woman and leader. She has visited and worked with women’s organ-



2011 and 2022 National Awardees - Medal for Development for Women Gold, Hazel Brown L.L.D and Dr. Gabrielle Hosein.

izations and leaders in all Commonwealth Caribbean countries on matters related to consumer affairs, politics, development and gender equity issues. She has also been involved in work as a civil society representative at OAS and IDB fora.

Ms. Brown is a founding member of the Network of NGOs of Trinidad and Tobago for the

Advancement of Women. The Network is a comprehensive national umbrella organization formed in 1985 to present the position of women in Trinidad and Tobago at the End of Decade Conference in Nairobi. The Network is an advocate and support system for women’s organizations in Trinidad and Tobago and shares membership with many regional and international networks of women.

She is the past Secretary General of the Commonwealth Women’s Network and has been engaged in Commonwealth activities since the first Commonwealth People’s Forum at CHOGM in Harare in 1991. She has consistently advocated for a strong voice and space for Civil Society in Commonwealth activities and decision-making. The Network’s main goal is to improve the quality of life of women throughout the Commonwealth.

The UWI conferred Ms. Brown with an Honorary

Doctor of Laws (LLD) at the St. Augustine Campus 2017 Graduation ceremony. She delivered a most memorable speech at the Graduation Ceremony sharing, “My greatest disappointment during my years of advocacy has been the lack of consistent, purposeful organising, by people like yourselves in this room, in areas of active citizenship. There is much talk but there is not enough of the necessary action that is required around advocacy for social justice.”

***This necessary action, she said, goes far beyond volunteering. Rather people must “Get Up, Stand Up and Speak Up for Gender Justice” and cultivate a gender-sensitive approach in every area of life to achieve an equitable and just society.***

*The WE publication recognize the tributes from IGDS, UWI, CAFRATT, InterClub of Trinidad and Tobago and her family members in compiling this summary and the list of Awards.*



## Her Esteemed Awards

- 2018** Interclub of T&T - Women Working Together for commitment and contribution to the United Nation’s Commission on the Status of Women (UN-CSW),
- 2017** University of West Indies, Honorary Doctor of Laws conferred at the St. Augustine Campus Graduation ceremony
- 2012** Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies – Beryl Yearwood
- 2011** T&T National Award - Medal for the Development of Women, Gold
- 2011** Embassy of the USA – International Women of Courage
- 2011** AFETT Women of Influence Award
- 2011** IWD/NALIS A Leading Lady of our time
- 2010** Chinapoo Village Social Welfare Organization in collaboration with Holy Trinity Spiritual Baptist Church
- 2009** Gayelle The Channel – Annual Pierrot Awards
- 2006** Women’s Ministries Department of the South Caribbean Conference of SDA – Community Service Award
- 2004** Y.M.C.A. -Influence which has enriched the community
- 2003** Diego Martin Regional Municipal Corporation Community Awards
- 2003** Council of the Elders Spiritual Shouter Baptist
- 2001** United Nations International Year of the Volunteer - National Woman Volunteer Award
- 2000** Guyana Cancer Society - Lifetime Membership, outstanding assistance to Guyanese Cancer Patients receiving treatment in T&T
- 2000** United Nations System Barbados & Eastern Caribbean Awards Received — Cultural
- 2012** National Carnival Bands Association (Baby Doll) 3rd Place (Individual)
- 2011, 2010** St. James Traditional Mas (Baby Doll) 1st Place (Individual)
- 2010** Senior Carnival 3rd Place (Individual)

*This list was originally part of the research by IGDS, presented at the 2015 Fearless Politics Conference - In recognition of the work of Hazel Brown. It was further updated for this publication.*

**WE are certain there are more awards not included here and invite you to add to this list, email: [guardian.wemagazine@gmail.com](mailto:guardian.wemagazine@gmail.com)**



CELEBRATING THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE AND LEGACY OF

**Hazel A. Brown LLD**

**TUESDAY 4 OCTOBER 2022 AT 10AM**  
CATHEDRAL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
INDEPENDENCE SQUARE, PORT OF SPAIN





Photos courtesy Friends and Family of Hazel Brown, Institute for Gender and Development Studies, Network of NGOs of TT and the many other women's organizations, Hazel relentlessly shared her voice and presence with.