

Jamaican-born appointed Deputy Chief

Them say within every nook and cranny throughout the world there is a Jamaican - so true. Now a Jamaican-born policeman has been appointed to the second highest rank in Toronto's police force, in Canada.

Peter Sloly, who hails from Kingston, Jamaica, recently became the second black person in the history of the Toronto Police Service (TPS) to be made its Deputy Chief. At 43 years old, he is also the youngest Deputy Chief ever in the Toronto police force.

Deputy Chief Sloly, whose family left Jamaica in 1976, joined the Toronto police force in 1988. During the past 21 years in the force, he has served as Unit Commander, in charge of Operational Services, Staff Planning and Community Mobilisation, and worked in Major Crime, Youth Bureau and Public Order. In 2001, he went to Kosovo as part of the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission and was a Command Staff Officer and the Canadian Contingent Commander.

As Deputy Chief of Police in charge of Executive Command, he now oversees several units, which include Professional Standards, Investigative, Risk Management, Legal Services, Public Information, Crime and Information Analysis, and Records Management.

At a recent ceremony, organised to acknowledge his achievements and attended by police officers, judges, lawyers, community workers, friends and family, Deputy Chief Sloly paid tribute to the many persons who have "done good" and were responsible for his success.

Calling his parents, Michael and Arthurine Sloly, his role models, he said they brought their children to Canada from Jamaica for a better life.

"My promotion is a measure of validation for their life-long efforts to provide for their children, teaching us good values, and raising us to be contributing members of society," he said.

The Deputy Chief, who is very proud of his Jamaican heritage and was one of the delegates to the first Jamaican Diaspora Conference in Kingston, in 2004, emphasised that no one can achieve success without the help of others.

"In Jamaica we have a saying, 'we likkle but we tallawah'. This means we are but a few people from a tiny island, but we have produced great things - from Nanny's victories, to Garvey's treatises, to Miss Lou's stories, to Marley's songs, to Bolt's records. We know that none of these accomplishments happened in a vacuum, and we know that these people did not do it alone. None of us can achieve true success without the help of others," he said.

Presenter after presenter not only congratulated Deputy Chief Sloly, but also shared personal stories.

Describing the Deputy Chief as his hero, Constable Ojo Tewogbade said he will never forget the compassion shown by Sloly when his two daughters were diagnosed with kidney disease and multiple sclerosis. Ojo said the Deputy Chief prayed with him and gave him words of wisdom by saying, "Ojo, what you cannot change, don't let it change you."

Jamaican-born Minister of Health Promotion for Ontario, Margaret Best, told the gathering that the Jamaican Diaspora is important to the province of Ontario. She congratulated the Chief of Police for embracing diversity in the Toronto Police Service.

Bringing greetings on behalf of the government of Jamaica, Consul from the Jamaican Consulate General, Nigel Smith, said the Deputy Chief stands as a beacon for the Jamaican community, "as someone who has demonstrated that with single mindedness of purpose and hard work, one can achieve his or her goals."

The first black person appointed Deputy Chief of the TPS, Keith Forde, congratulated the newest addition to the Toronto police hierarchy and told the audience that in order for Deputy Chief Sloly to succeed, he needs "your support, your prayers and all your help."

Former Member of Provincial Parliament, Jamaican-born MaryAnne Chambers, said she wrote a letter in 2007 in support of Sloly's nomination for a Harry Jerome Award for Professional Excellence. She described Sloly's career as an exceptional one, "which has included a scope of service well beyond what most police officers will ever experience."

"That scope has included international assignments in peacekeeping and strategic planning, membership of the Board of Directors of the Ontario Association of Police Chiefs, and participation on task forces established to address some of the social issues that can result in dysfunction in our communities," she said.

Chief of Police for York Regional Police, Armand La Barge, said he and Sloly are members of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and he recognised the new Deputy Chief as an individual who is going places.

"He is the type of individual to create and make things happen. He's a valuable member of the association. The future of

policing in this country is in great hands," he said.

The Jamaican community will be hosting a special tribute for the new Deputy Chief on Friday, November 20, to be held at the Jamaican Canadian Centre.