

Usain Bolt Receives Vanguard Award

World and Olympic champion sprinter, Hon. Usain Bolt, O.J., was conferred with the prestigious Vanguard Award by the Institute of Caribbean Studies (ICS), at the 16th Annual Caribbean American Heritage Awards Gala, on November 13, at the Renaissance Marriott Hotel, in Washington, D.C.

Jamaica's Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Anthony Johnson, made the presentation to Mr. Bolt's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Wellesley Bolt, who accepted the award on behalf of their son, who was unable to attend. Presenting the award, Ambassador Johnson said that Jamaica has defied the imagination and produced some of the greatest athletes in the world and Usain Bolt's performances have single-handedly changed the trajectory of games. "One would have to be on another planet to be untouched by the tremendous achievements of Usain Bolt. This outstanding Jamaican athlete has single-handedly revitalised the sport of track and field by his strength and charisma," he added. Accepting the award on behalf of his son, Mr. Wellesley Bolt thanked the institute for recognising his son's athletic contribution. He apologised for Usain not being able to attend personally to accept the award, as he had a prior engagement. "As parents of Usain, we are very proud of his accomplishments and wish we had two Usains," he said. Some three weeks ago the 23-year-old Bolt became the youngest Jamaican ever to receive the Order of Jamaica (OJ). He is the first man in Olympic history to break the 100m and 200m world records, which he did at last year's Beijing Olympic Games. He also broke both records at the World Games in Berlin, Germany, in August, with times of 9.58 seconds in the 100-metre dash and 19.19 seconds in the 200 metres. Heritage Gala Chairman and President of the ICS, Dr. Claire Nelson, explained that the ICS was more than honoured to present its premiere recognition on behalf of the Caribbean American community to Usain Bolt, recognising the phenomenal success of this world class Jamaican athlete, along with the other outstanding recipients. "Every year, the ICS looks at identifying and recognising the outstanding contributions made by persons of Caribbean heritage, as we feel that their work should be recognised and highlighted," she said.