

## **SENATOR V. IRENE SANDIFORD-GARNER, MBA**

Senator V. Irene Sandiford-Garner was born on August 4<sup>th</sup>, 1961. She received her primary, secondary and tertiary education in Barbados at the St. Andrew's Girls' Primary School; Queen's College; the Barbados Community College and the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus.

Senator Sandiford-Garner has been married to Granville Garner for the past 23 years and they have two sons, Fidel, 22 and Malcolm, 18.

### **PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND**

Senator Sandiford-Garner holds a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) from the University of The West Indies Cave Hill Campus and she and her husband own a business. She has also worked as a journalist and Marketing Executive throughout her professional career.

The Senator was the recipient of the Barbados Nation Newspaper's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Scholarship and studied Mass Communications at the Virginia Commonwealth University at Richmond Virginia in the United States. She is noted as the first female Barbados journalist to enter Grenada following the United States intervention in 1983.

Mrs. Sandiford-Garner also holds graduate and post graduate qualifications from the Chartered Institute of Marketing, UK; and the Credit Union National Association of America (CUNA).

She is a staunch credit unionist and spent the period 1995-2006 with Barbados' largest credit union as Marketing Manager initiating their launch into the United States in 1996.

While at the Credit Union the Senator was the organisation's Barbados Workers' Union Chairperson for eight years.

A prolific writer, the Senator authored a column as a freelancer in the country's largest circulated daily newspaper for seven years before her active participation in local politics necessitated its conclusion in 2006.

Senator Sandiford-Garner was appointed Barbados Principal Delegate to the Inter-American Commission on Women (CIM) in October 2008. She has participated in the 25<sup>th</sup> Regional Women of the Church of God Symposium; UNIFEM workshop in Trinidad & Tobago "HIV /Aids and Sex Workers In the Region"; delivered the feature address at the Caribbean Institute of Women in Leadership launch; was sole discussant in UNIFEM panel/interview re: "Women in Local Politics"; featured speaker for the International Women's Day symposium organised by the National Organisation of Women.

## **POLITICAL CAREER**

Senator Sandiford-Garner is a member of the Upper House of Parliament and member of the Democratic Labour Party Government (DLP).

She has filled positions on the Executive of the DLP from 2000-2005 and was the party's candidate for the parish of St. Andrew in the 2008 General Election.

Following the DLP's victory at the polls in January 2008 she was appointed Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Culture and Community Development. She was promoted to the Prime Minister's Office nine months later.

Senator Garner, now Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Health, also sits on the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Governance, the committee responsible for reviewing all legislation prior to final drafting. This position has enabled her to bring a gender perspective to laws before final approval. This has included pending Employment Rights Legislation, the Shops Act and housing legislation. She also is a member of the Barbados Government team which sits on the tripartite Social Partnership committee which comprises Government, Labour and Civil Society.

As a member of the Government Senator Garner has used her position at the highest level to ensure that the Government's policies and legislation are reflective of the concerns and rights of those who are least able to speak for themselves.