

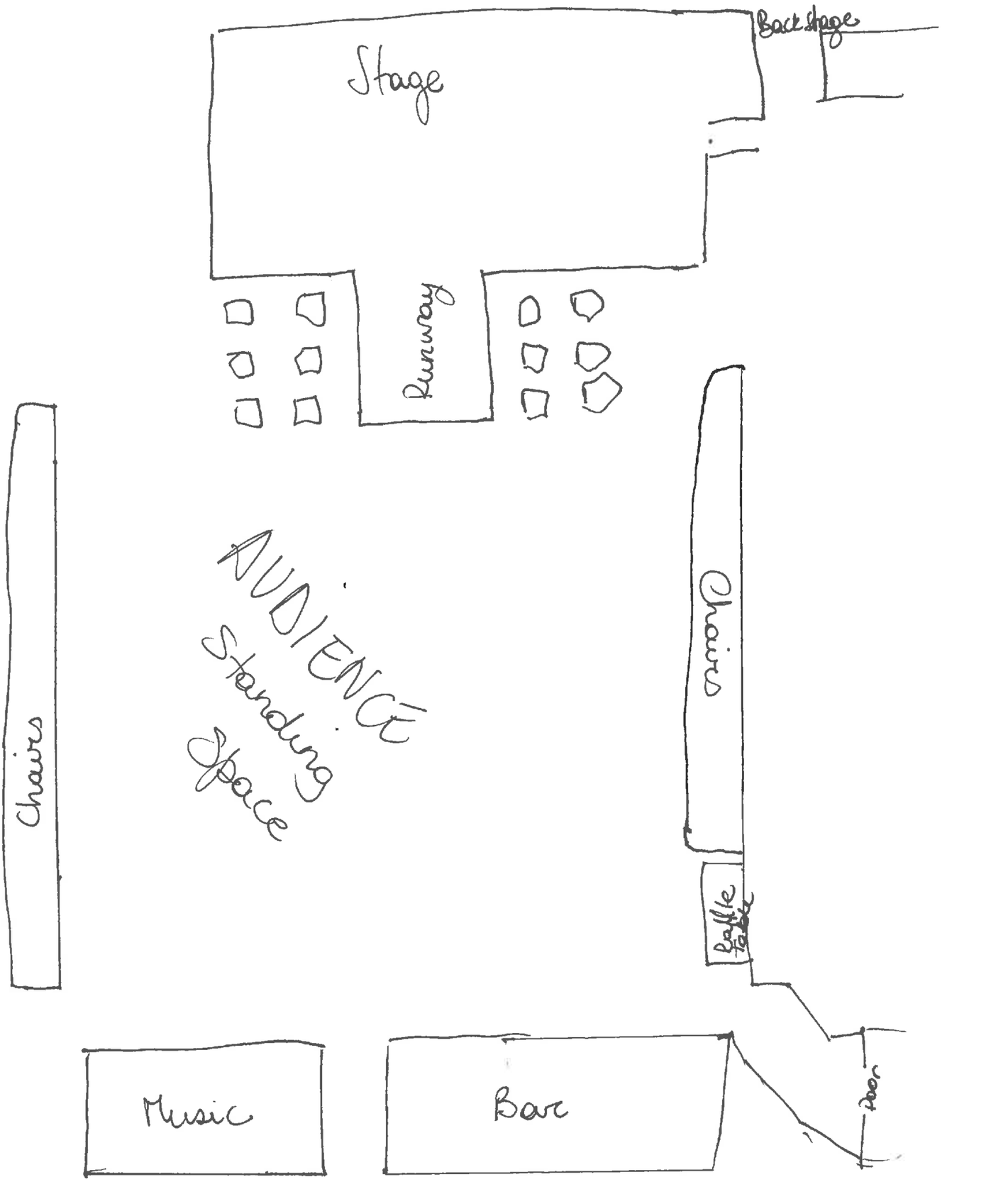
KARIBU

CULTURAL CELEBRATION

THROUGH THE YEARS

KARIBU. CVDED Fashion Show Highergraund Showcase noor;

Room Layout



The Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) extends a heartfelt thank you to the years of event participants, makers, models, performers, guests, donors, sponsors, staff, and partners for building this event's legacy. We could not do this without you.



NOTES FROM OUR STAFF

"Karibu is not a usual fashion show. It is a fundraising event, a cultural journey experienced through New American fashion, and celebration of the beauty of our diversity as a community.

To date, thanks to wonderful models, stylists, DJs, photographers, and faithful sponsors, such as the UVM Fleming Museum, Mutual of America, UVM Medical Center, and more, we raised funds to support and serve over 57 asylum seekers families from Uganda, Ivory Coast, Egypt, Iraq, Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Republic of Congo, Ghana, Benin, Turkey, Colombia, Cameroun, Nigeria, Somalia, Nepal, Burundi, and Tanzania; our oldest head of household participant was 86 years old and the youngest was 17 years old.

This journey of celebration, cultural inclusion, and social cohesion would not have seen the light without the creativity, trust, passion, and sense of responsibility of former and current members of our CVOEO family; I would like to thank: Jan Demers, Deb Asante, Joan White, Michael Gauthier, Linda Amante, Heather Davis, and Travis Poulin.

I would like to thank Paul Dragon, our Philanthropy and Fiscal teams, as well as Board of Directors for keeping this journey alive; and a special thank you to Lindsay Reid, Virginie Diambou, and Addie Chris for the creation of this book.



I am so proud and honored to be part of such a collaboration. Thank you All for the impact you keep on making on so many lives!"

—**Sandrine Kibuey,** Director, Statewide Housing Advocacy Programs



"The Karibu Cultural Celebration honors the diversity that makes our community stronger. It brings us together to appreciate di˜erent cultures, traditions, experiences, and perspectives, and to recognize the many ways people contribute to our community.

We appreciate variety in so many parts of our lives, the food we eat, the music we listen to, the art we enjoy, and the clothes we wear. We enjoy discovering something di˜erent. So why shouldn't we feel the same way about people?

Our di˜erences in culture, language, background, and experience do not have to divide us. Instead, they give us opportunities to learn from one another, broaden our understanding, see the world from di˜erent perspectives, and enrich the community we share.

This is also what the New Hope Award represents: recognizing individuals whose contributions have made a meaningful di˜erence in the lives of their fellow community members and in the communities they serve. Karibu reminds us that we can celebrate our di˜erences while still creating a community where everyone feels respected, valued, and included. We don't have to be the same to belong together.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who, year after year, contributes their time, energy, generosity, and support to making Karibu such a vibrant and successful celebration of our community. A very special thank you to the Crystal family for your continued generosity and for helping make the New Hope Award possible. And thank you to the Fleming Museum for welcoming us and hosting this special celebration. Your support and partnership help make Karibu possible and allow us to come together to celebrate the diversity and strength of our community."

—**Virginie Diambou,** Director, O˜ce of Racial Equity & Community Inclusion



ABOUT KARIBU

Karibu, which means “welcome” in Swahili, is CVOEO’s annual community-centered cultural event celebrating the growing diversity of the Burlington area through fashion, performance, and storytelling.

Since its inception in 2017, this event has grown into a meaningful celebration of culture, creativity, and community, bringing together makers, models, performers, and community leaders. Central to this event is our annual New Hope Award Presentation Ceremony where we are honored to celebrate New Americans whose leadership, service, and dedication strengthen our community.

Central to this annual event is our fundraising e° orts to support CVOEO’s Asylum Seekers Assistance Program. Together, we raise funds to support asylum seekers in our community, while also o° ering a moment of recognition and celebration of the culture and talent in Vermont’s New American community.

ABOUT NEW HOPE

Through the generous support of the Crystal family, the New Hope Award was established in 2017 to annually recognize two individuals' contributions, accomplishments, and impact within the community.

Community members nominate New Americans who enrich our communities through their leadership, service, and accomplishments. A committee of CVOEO sta° then anonymously review all nominations and selects two recipients who receive a cash gi¸ and an award during the annual award ceremony.

The New Hope Award brings people together in recognition, gratitude, and celebration. By honoring the accomplishments and stories of New Americans in Vermont, it creates space for reflection, connection, and shared appreciation for the many ways community members make a di° erence.





KARIBU

CULTURAL CELEBRATION

THROUGH THE YEARS

A chronological celebration of CVOEO's signature Karibu Cultural Celebration and New Hope Award Presentation Ceremony, featuring the makers, models, performers, and partners who make this annual event to support Vermont's asylum seekers possible.



NEW HOPE

From the beginning

"It is a must-attend event that is not only celebrating diversity but also elevating it and recognizing community members who work towards improving their communities."

—**Mona Tolba,** 2024 New Hope Award recipient

Since 2022, the New Hope Award Presentation Ceremony has become a cornerstone of the Karibu Cultural Celebration, bringing the community together to honor award recipients in a larger and more vibrant setting.

While the ceremony was once an intimate gathering of family, friends, and sta°, it has evolved into a public celebration that reflects the spirit of New Hope: recognizing individuals whose contributions strengthen our community and inspire others.

Award recipients are honored through a presentation led by the Crystal family before joining an evening of music, dance, fashion, and joy.





2017
Abdelali Amrani
Fardowsa Ibrahim







2018
Masiti Mohamed
Adhikari Family

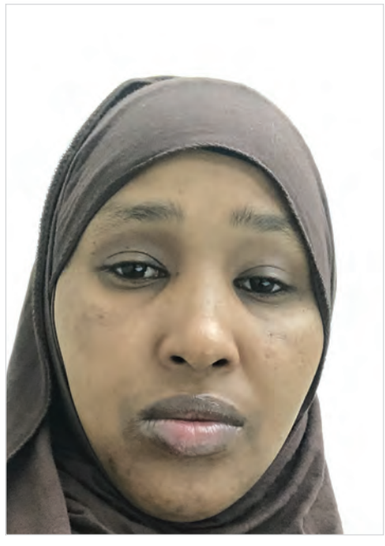
2019
not pictured
Lulé Auden
Gita Dhakal



2020
Omar Biladi
Mohamed Jafar







2021
Hadija Uwizeye
MaryAn Maalin





2022
Hawa Adan
Aden Haji

















2023
Jeetan Khadka
Lorena Neironi Rossi







2024
Samuel Dingba
Mona Tolba









NEW HOPE

Final reflections

As the New Hope Award continues to grow, recipients remain at the heart of its legacy. Reflecting on the significance of the award, Aden shared:

"It provides a testimonial moment of celebration and dedication to community."

When asked what he looks forward to at future New Hope Award celebrations, he added:

"To connect with more community members and learn about the cultures represented in Vermont."

—**Aden Haji,** 2022 New Hope Award recipient



KARIBU

From the beginning

"Karibu shows how I matter and that am not alone. I have a whole community that can help when faced with a problem considering the fact that I had no family support here."

—**Trudy Namubiru,** Two-time Karibu model representing Uganda

At each Karibu event, a sentiment surfaces over and over: joy, belonging, cultural pride, and the experience of being welcomed into community.

People fondly remember representing their countries and cultures, proudly marching down the runway, sharing food and music that reflected their diverse backgrounds, meeting people from di° erent walks of life, and learning from one another. But they also remember quieter moments of connection—the encouragement that eased pre-show nerves, familiar faces returning year a¸ er year, and people helping one another prepare backstage.

As one Karibu model shared,

"I specifically remember all the ladies in the dressing room helping each other get ready, from makeup, to hair, to outfits, to final touches like jewelry, headpieces, sashes. I remember the overwhelming feeling of community and togetherness."

— **Johanne Diambou**
Two-time Karibu model representing Côte D'Ivoire

Karibu is more than an event. It is a space where culture can be shared and celebrated, and where people can feel seen, supported, and connected. Each year, Karibu has explored a di° erent theme through clothing, fashion, performance, and storytelling—from traditional attire and family celebrations to wedding customs, special-event dress, and participants' own choices of clothing representing their countries of origin.

These themes have o° ered a starting place for participants to share something of themselves and their cultures with the wider community. While Karibu has changed and grown over the years—and has taken place in spaces across Burlington, including Higher Ground, Main Street Landing, and the Fleming Museum—its meaning has remained rooted in its name: welcome.

2017

THEME:

TRADITIONAL ATTIRE






Karibu
EXIT






ribu


Karibu




Karibu








Welcome



2018

THEME:

FAMILY FESTIVITY ATTIRE


















EXIT










Chicken Lollipop
Dumplings













2019

THEME:

INTERNATIONAL FASHION SHOW COMPETITION












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CHAMPLAIN VALLEY OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
Bringing gaps. Building futures.




cvoeo






onsor:
AMERICA
Company
Bank
DRM
HallamICS
NFP
One


NIKE
AIR





















2022

THEME:

TRADITIONAL/CUSTOMARY

WEDDING CEREMONY ATTIRE



















































2023

THEME:

ETHNIC SPECIAL EVENTS ATTIRE




cvoéo
DONATE HERE
Kanbu



































2024

THEME:

MODEL'S CHOICE: CELEBRATION OF THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN


FLEMING
WELCOME DESK
cvoeo

















































KARIBU

Final reflections

Karibu is made possible by the people who come together each year to share, learn, celebrate, and build community. Looking ahead, participants shared what Karibu means to them and what they hope for in celebrations to come.

As a past model, Johanne, shared:

"Karibu is a very special event that encompasses learning, sharing, cultural exchange, and celebrating the strength and diversity of our community."

Looking ahead to future celebrations, she added:

"I look forward to learning about more countries and their cultures as well as feeling that sense of community and togetherness that I have felt the past few years that I have participated and attended."

— Johanne Diambou
Two-time Karibu model representing Côte D'Ivoire

Another participant, Trudy, shared:

"This is an experience that shows that America is made up of people from diverse backgrounds who care for one another and contribute to a strong sense of community and support."

—Trudy Namubiru
Two-time Karibu model representing Uganda

As we look to the future, we remain committed to celebrating the cultures, stories, and people that make our community stronger.





Since 2017, the **Karibu Cultural Celebration** has brought people together through fashion, performance, storytelling, cultural exchange, and the annual **New Hope Award Presentation Ceremony**. This commemorative volume honors the makers, models, performers, award recipients, community partners, sta˜, and supporters who have shaped the celebration through the years.

Learn more at **cvoeo.org**.

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Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity