



BERMUDA  
EDUCATION  
NETWORK

FALL 2022





## CORE TEAM

Kristen Scott Ndiaye  
*Development Director*

Kelly Rodday  
*Content Designer*

Bryce Williams  
*Project Manager*

Stephanie Hollis-Bloom  
*Administrative Assistant*

## NETWORK TEACHERS

Tiffany Bean

Angela Tota-Francis

Florence Brown

## BOARD MEMBERS

Alan Burland  
*Chairman*

Cora Lee Starzomski  
*Treasurer*

Gloria Dill  
*Secretary*

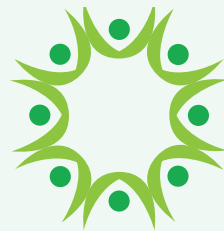
Colm Singleton  
*Director*

Sarah Bailey-Munroe  
*Board Member*

Lorene Philips  
*Board Member*

Edmeiko Butterfield  
*Board Member*

**BERMUDA EDUCATION NETWORK**  
48 St. John's Road  
Pembroke HM 07  
(441) 505-5020  
[admin@ben.bm](mailto:admin@ben.bm)  
[www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com](http://www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com)



**BERMUDA EDUCATION  
NETWORK**



Dear Friends of BEN,

I hope that you fared okay in Hurricane Fiona.

Amidst all the ensuing inconvenience I'm trying to stay grateful that she only gave us a glancing blow and have come up with a potential silver lining: hurricanes help me to have a clear out — clear the furniture, bring unwanted items to the dump, and throw away outdated condiments. After the storm has passed, the power has been restored and I've finished cleaning up, I'm looking at a somewhat tidier house and a garden that has had a thorough pruning.

The last year for educators in Bermuda's public schools has felt like a constant hurricane. All of this "bad weather" impels our organization to prioritize.

It has galvanized our efforts to support teachers and forced us to narrow our focus to what is essential, and our core goal has never been clearer: it's all about reading. As you'll see in this issue, the quarter has seen us working toward a learning continuum that provides experiential opportunities and a love of reading from preschool to P6.

The cumulative effect of all the "storms" of 2022 have yet to be fully counted, but our network continues to grow stronger, and our resolve is steady that together we can make a difference for students at risk of reading failure and by doing so, provide better life and career prospects for the next generation of Bermudians.

Sincerely,

**Becky Ausenda**

Founder of Bermuda Education Network

## OUR MISSION:

To build a professional learning community  
that increases opportunities and services  
to public school students.

## BALLOTS ARE IN!

BEN's Outstanding Teacher Awards presented by Allied World recognize the accomplishments of exceptional teachers in all levels of Bermuda's public school system and honours one teacher as the overall recipient of the annual Outstanding Teacher prize. Our committee is now taking part in classroom observations of our nominees, which plays a role in finding a representative that will advocate for the profession, helping BEN to engage and inspire other teachers and community stakeholders.

To read more about the awards, visit: <https://www.royalgazette.com/education/news/article/20221008/allied-world-to-sponsor-teacher-awards/>.







# ROCCO'S READING SUCCESS STORY

## HOW BEN'S SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMME IS USING THE CAMP ENVIRONMENT TO CREATE A LOVE OF READING.

Eight-year-old St George's Prep student, Rocco Rodday, is not a fan of reading. In fact, his mother, Kelly, says he not only "absolutely hates it" but he is also "quite vocal" about it. He would much rather be fishing or playing Pokémon!

The format of the three-week Bermuda Education Network's (BEN) Horizon's summer reading programme, however, proved ideal for him.

For the past two years, Rocco had been reading below grade level, but by the Spring he had improved considerably and was "approaching grade level", meaning he was only about six months behind where a typical P3 student should be.

This improvement, says Kelly, was down to the dedication of Rocco's school reading teacher, Natalie Roberts, who was a huge factor in his success. But then the long summer holidays came along.

A primary school teacher herself, Kelly says she often has students who she wishes she had another month with. This was the case with Rocco. He just needed that little bit more and that's where the summer reading programme came in.

Sneaking a reading programme into a fun, camp environment worked wonders for Rocco, who was particularly excited to be doing it with a good friend as well. Reading was mixed with art lessons from Kaleidoscope and marine science experiences from BUEI. The marine science experiences turned out to be his favourite and he particularly enjoyed the glass bottom boat ride and making his own fossil.

Without the summer reading programme, which is provided by BEN free of charge, parents might have to resort to hiring tutors to help with their child's reading over the summer. This is expensive and often a major obstacle for parents.

It provides an excellent enhancement to the public-school curriculum, and Kelly was so impressed with BEN's dedication to support public school students and their teachers that she began working for them as the P3 teacher representative. She also became camp director this summer.

In September, Rocco was able to begin the current school year reading at grade level and who knows, maybe one day he will choose to read a book while waiting for a fish to bite.

Watch a short film about the impact of BEN's Summer Learning Programme at <https://www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com/summer-learning-programme/>.

"Legend had a great time, and enjoyed the balance of art, hand eye skills, reading, and playtime. Well done and Jah blessings to you all."

- Oladapo & Buze Frederick





# COMMITTING TO THE COMMUNITY

## FORTITUDE RE

Fortitude Re started doing business in Bermuda in 2017. Their charitable budget included time and money and they were looking to put it toward an organization that would be able report the impact of their dollars while at the same time make the staff feel engaged in the community.

The Monday meeting opened like any other – new data reporting and targets. The subject also came up that they were officially on the hunt to find an organisation run by passionate people, with whom they could build a lasting relationship and help in a variety of ways.

That day, BEN arrived to give a presentation about the need for attention to education inequity on the island --- especially after the pandemic. BEN was looking to tackle it a different way: by building a professional learning community for educators.

Through building up the network of teachers and connecting them with community partners and advocates, BEN is looking to increase the opportunities and services available to public-school children.

Fortitude Re CRO, Andrew Sooboodoo, recalled the stress his mother felt working at a school for children with severe educational needs in the UK.

**“Fortitude was looking for a way to support the cause. They felt that the people who work at BEN came across as not just passionate but experienced and knowledgeable.”**



A teacher's job is rewarding but arduous. BEN's Outstanding Teacher Awards are an incredible way to recognize the excellent work that is happening, up the standard of teaching and possibly prevent teacher burnout in the public system. A teacher's wellness is at the helm of good quality education.

Since starting the relationship, Fortitude has taken every opportunity for community involvement. For the next six months, employees have committed to reading at the BEN Book Club — an interactive public preschool story time. Staff have been excited to get involved and help inspire children to enjoy reading. Some are taking their own children along to this monthly event.

Fortitude Re now has a seat at the table and a space to give their opinion and help drive impact. They were able to help identify some administrative blocks and have donated expertise that will build a tool to allow for more efficient and accurate data reporting for its various programs.

That day, the presentation ended with a quote that stuck in the hearts of Fortitude employees: “At first you learn to read, then you read to learn”. Investing resources to help children that have fallen behind at this crucial stage could help in all aspects of their future, especially those that want to get into the insurance industry.

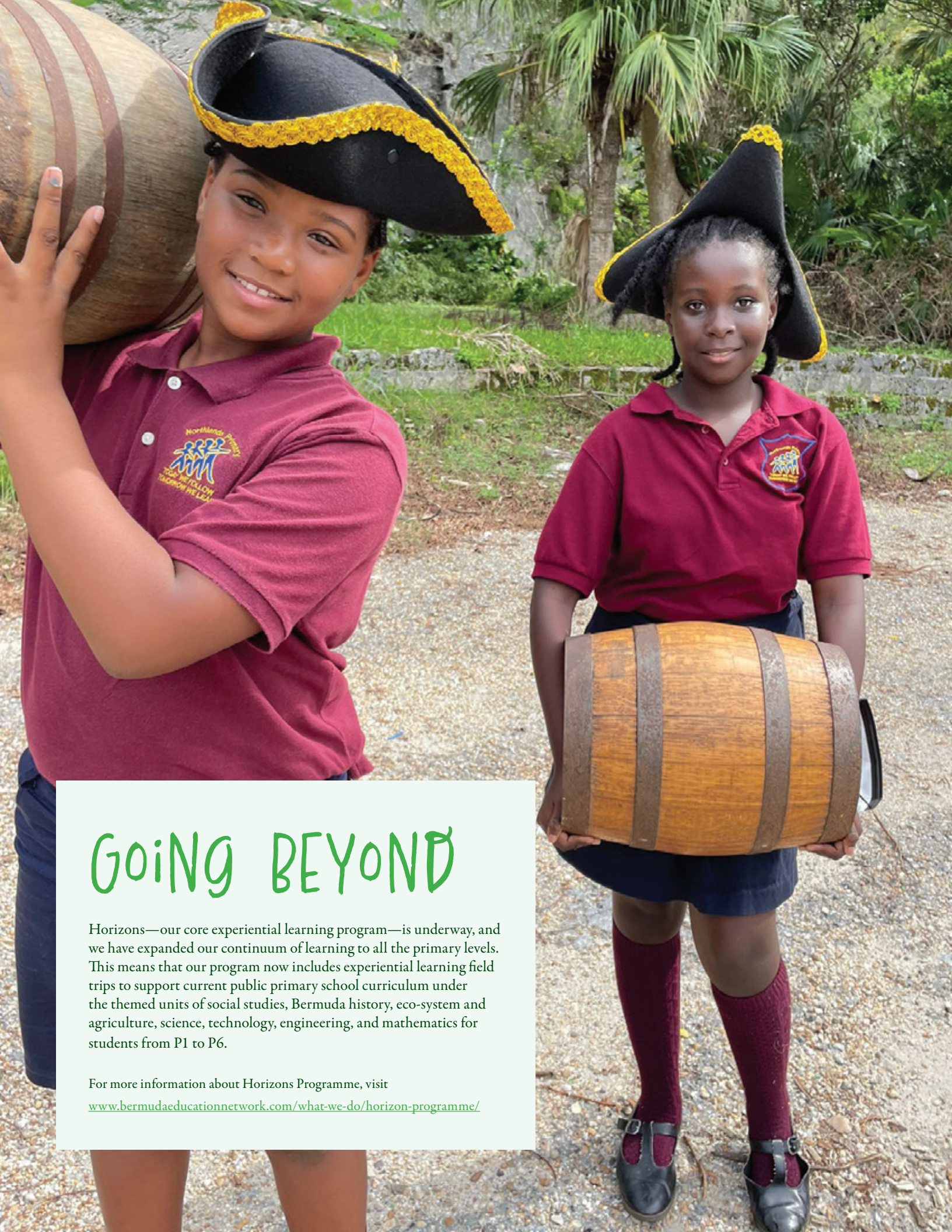
**“Fortitude Re believes that every child deserves an education that will allow them to reach their potential and lead a full life. They recognize that if we work together, we can be the catalyst for dramatic systemic change in Bermuda’s public schools.”**

BEN's partners are individuals, social businesses, corporations, and community organizations who provide the financial and human capital that allows us to support our public-school teachers and students.

To read more about becoming a partner, visit  
[www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com](http://www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com).







## GOING BEYOND

Horizons—our core experiential learning program—is underway, and we have expanded our continuum of learning to all the primary levels. This means that our program now includes experiential learning field trips to support current public primary school curriculum under the themed units of social studies, Bermuda history, eco-system and agriculture, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics for students from P1 to P6.

For more information about Horizons Programme, visit [www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com/what-we-do/horizon-programme/](http://www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com/what-we-do/horizon-programme/)

# MAKING HER WAY

## HOW LATOYA PEARMAN WENT FROM EDUCATION ADVOCATE TO BEN PROGRAM COORDINATOR



The majority of our island's Bermudian students are in the public school system and she sees so many children coming out doing brilliant work thanks to amazing teachers, yet this excellence is not being celebrated.

**"She also believes as a community, Bermuda needs to do more to support the island's public schools, and the disparity between public perception and actual reality concerns her."**

This is why she does what she does. She wants to be part of the transformation process and she has done this by throwing herself into her new role as Horizons Coordinator so she can give every public-school student the same exposure she strives to give her own children.

Resuming expeditions was, however, a baptism of fire! So many children, including Latoya's own son and daughter, missed out on these over the last couple of years and she was excited to get students and teachers out of the classroom and back out into the community.

Just over 100 expeditions were arranged once regulations were relaxed to allow field trips in April, and most of them were sell-outs within 24 hours of being announced.

Horizons focuses on experiential learning or learning by doing. All expeditions are developed to support the curriculum, but every now and then an unusual opportunity comes along. This year it was to see the yachts from the Clipper Round the World Race. The students were amazed at their size and couldn't believe how far they had travelled.

Hands-on experiences such as steering a clipper, experiencing the beauty and biodiversity of Spittal Pond, stepping back in time to learn about the people who lived in Bermuda in the 18th century at Verdmont Museum, allows students to better connect theories learned in the classroom to the real world.

Do you want to become a part of the team? Visit <https://www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com/volunteer/> for more information.

Latoya Pearman, busy mother-of-three to 13-, 11- and eight-year-old children, re-entered the workforce in April, to manage logistics for the Bermuda Education Network's (BEN) Horizons Programme.

A passionate advocate for Bermuda's public schools, Latoya accepted the offer after seeing how much her own daughter had enjoyed and learned from the programme.

But that wasn't the only reason.

Not all children in Bermuda have the opportunity to visit cultural, historical or thought-provoking places such as BUEI, the Kaleidoscope Arts Foundation, National Trust properties, or the Aquarium. She believes that they should.

Her own children attend Purvis Primary and the Whitney Institute Middle School and her oldest daughter will start at the Berkeley Institute in September, something Latoya is very excited about. As an alumna herself, she appreciates the institution's history, what it means to Bermuda and what it has done for Bermuda.



# ALIGNING VALUES

Why the Willens  
Family choose to  
support Bermuda  
Education Network

“Education is about establishing empathetic connections between people with diverse mindsets and backgrounds. The organization is fostering people - first, hands - on learning experiences and their ever - evolving grassroots initiatives are consistently the result of collaboration between locally based experts. BEN harnesses the power of real humans and storytelling to democratize access to learning for all students in our community.”

*-Heather Willens-Trimingham*

To learn more about how you can support as an individual, visit: <https://www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com/become-a-financial-partner/>



## INTRODUCING THE BEN HONOUR & MEMORIAM PROGRAM

Share the memory of your loved one and their special connection to students, their community and education by making a gift or creating a legacy in honour and memoriam through the Bermuda Education Network. Our team is here to guide you through our giving opportunities that will preserve and share your loved one's legacy.

Visit: <https://www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com/in-memorial-and-honour/> for ideas on how you can celebrate a life through donation.





# SUPPORTERS

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE

For over 10 years, Bermuda Education Network has been leveraging the power of community to ensure better educational outcomes in the public school system. Your donation ensures more support for teachers and, consequently, an increase in the opportunities and services made available to public school students. Together, we can transform the lives of Bermuda's children.

**\$2,500**

*allows a public-school student to enroll in our Summer Learning Programme*

Watch a 2-minute video about Summer Learning Program: <https://www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com/summer-learning-programme/>

**\$500**

*allows a preschool family to participate for a year of BEN Book Club, our early reader initiative designed for preschoolers and P1 students.*

Watch a short video about Ben Book Club: <https://www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com/ben-book-club/>

**\$850**

*allows a public-school primary student to participate in our Horizons Programme.*

Read more about how this program is supporting the public-school primary school curriculum here: <https://www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com/what-we-do/horizon-programme/>

**\$50**

*contributes to transportation, books, and supplies to help our experiential learning continuum continue to run.*

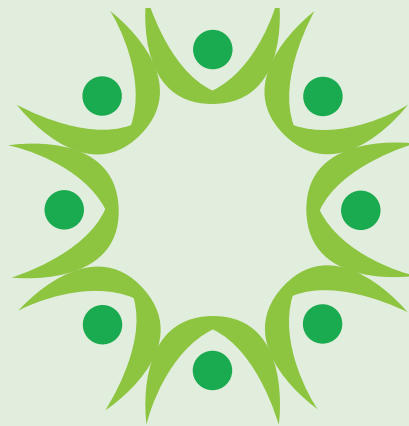
Read our annual report for more information: [https://www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Annual\\_Appeal\\_BEN\\_Web.pdf](https://www.bermudaeducationnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Annual_Appeal_BEN_Web.pdf)



*Follow the QR code to donate today*

- ALLAN & GILL GRAY PHILANTHROPIES
- CENTENNIAL BERMUDA FOUNDATION
- FORTITUDE RE
- ALLIED WORLD ASSURANCE COMPANY HOLDINGS
- ASCOT BERMUDA
- ARCH REINSURANCE
- BF&M
- CONYERS
- CG INSURANCE
- EDMUND GIBBONS LTD.
- FIDELITY BERMUDA
- JRG REINSURANCE COMPANY LTD.
- KATTEGAT
- RENAISSANCE REINSURANCE
- SOMPO INTERNATIONAL
- VALIDUS RE
- WILTON REINSURANCE
- LANCASHIRE FOUNDATION
- BERMUDA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
- PETER CUNDILL FOUNDATION
- HEATHER WILLENS-TRIMINGHAM
- ANDREW AND MARGOT SOOBOODOO
- TERRY RATCLIFFE





## BERMUDA EDUCATION NETWORK

**EMAIL:**  
admin@ben.bm

**PHONE:**  
(441) 505-5020

[bermudaeducationnetwork.com](http://bermudaeducationnetwork.com)

**MAILING ADDRESS:**  
Bermuda Education Network  
48 St. John's Road, Pembroke, HM 07

 @BermudaEducationNetwork

 bermudaeducationnetwork

 Bermuda Education Network