



**BAHAMAS**

**HOTEL & TOURISM ASSOCIATION**

The Unified Voice of Bahamian Tourism.

# ANNUAL REPORT

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BHTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS & MEMBERS MEETINGS 2018



# BHTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS & MEMBERS MEETINGS 2018

In 2018, The Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association continued to gather industry stakeholders throughout the year to report on; and discuss matters of critical importance to the Tourism Industry. BHTA Members meet to network with fellow executives, and to glean important industry relevant information including; past performance statistics, future performance outlook as it pertains to occupancy levels, annual daily rates, and airlift. Stakeholders from both the private and public sector often give infrastructure updates; and provide insight into new proposed developments. Each Board of Directors and Members Meeting hosts a minimum of one “Keynote Speaker” who will speak on topics of interest.

In 2018 the BHTA hosted Mrs. Joy Jibrilu, Director General of Tourism, The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism and Aviation. The Director General spoke of “Creating a World Class Bahamas”.

Following the Director Generals remarks at the first BHTA Board of Directors and Members meeting of the year in February 2018m, The Honorable T. Brent Symonette, M.P. Minister of Financial Services, Trade and Industry and Immigration, Ministry of Financial Services, Commonwealth of The Bahamas gave a keynote speech on “How the Ministry of Financial Service, Trade and Industry and Immigration can Impact and Improve Doing Business in the Tourism Industry”.

Further in the year Permanent Secretary (NAME) of the Ministry of National Security addressed members on the topic of crime and safety in The Bahamas, and the role they played in the Tourism Industry.

In August 2018; The Hon. Thomas Desmond Banniste, Minister of Public Works, Member of Parliament (FNM), Carmichael, New Providence addressed members on the Topic “ Short, Medium and Long Term Goals to address the cost and reliability of electricity and other important infrastructure/ product improvement plans for the Bahamas”.

In addition to the industry reports and Keynote Speakers, the BHTA meetings often serves to



recognize performers in industry such as the National Culinary Team and CH Recognition of 2017 National Culinary Team and CHTAEF and Pat Bain 2018 Scholarship Recipients.

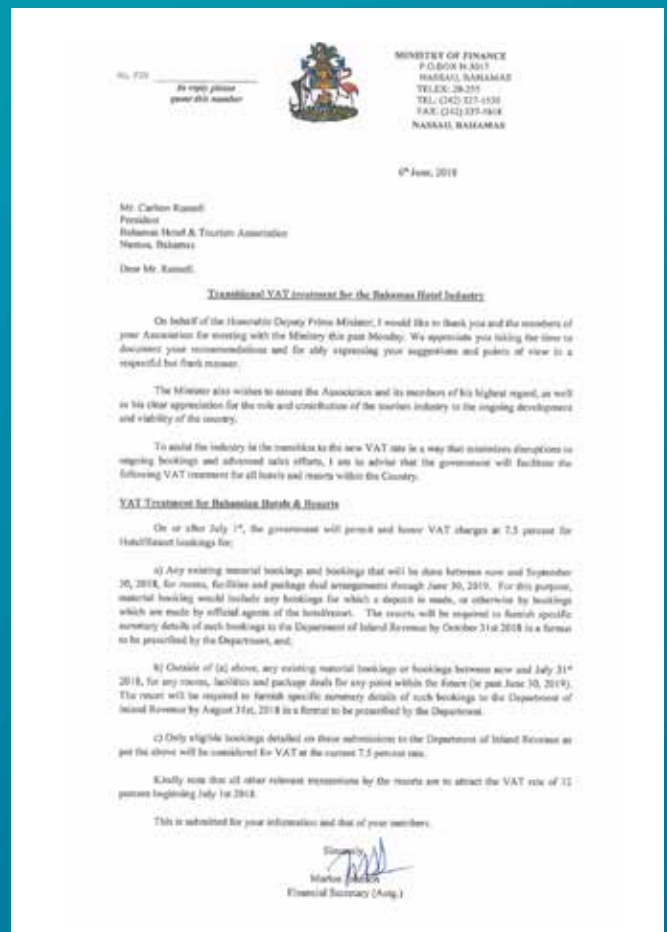
In 2019, the BOD and Members Meetings will continue to be a source of information and an opportunity to network with fellow industry stakeholders, and to learn about industry performance, trends and forecasts.



# BHTA AND VAT

In late May and early June 2018, The Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association met with industry stakeholders and varying industry representatives including The Bahamas Out Island Promotion Board, (BOIPB) The Bahamas Hotel and Restaurant Employers Association, (BHEA) The Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Board, (NPIPB), The Association of Bahamas Marinas, (ABM) and BHTA's Executive Committee to discuss the then-proposed increase in VAT from 7.5% to 12%. BHTA representatives and industry stakeholders also met with the Deputy Prime Minister, The Hon. Peter Turnquest and Financial Secretary, Marlon Johnson to discuss the implications of the VAT increase on industry, and the proposed implementation date.

A process of intense communication culminated into a position paper which was submitted to the Deputy Prime Minister on June 4th 2018. The position paper outlined the industries support for the governments' efforts to transform the socio-economic state of The Bahamas to "secure a better life and future for all Bahamians". The paper also stressed the need for collaboration and meaningful engagement and input from private sector stakeholders. The position paper also provided insight into the sensitive inner workings of the industry; it's strengths, vulnerabilities and challenges.; and proposed recommendations in light of the proposed increase in Value Added Tax. A process of collaboration and communication followed submission of the letter; The Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association, industry stakeholders and key government representatives including The Deputy Prime Minister and the Financial Secretary worked arduously and collectively to address industry concerns. This process of engagement resulted in a series of transitional arrangements aimed at mitigating the impact of the increase in VAT, taking into consideration the importance of the tourism industry to the economy of The Bahamas, and



issues which could have adversely affected international third party on-sellers and their ability to market the destination to the discerning tourist market. The process of private-public sector communication and collaboration was deemed productive.

The BHTA, acting as the liaison between the public and private sector communicated the government's position and publications to the tourism industry such as the industry specific Transitional Arrangements. In addition, the BHTA assisted in providing clarifications and answers to questions arising from the implementation and transitional arrangements via communications with the respective government representative.

On August 2nd, 2018 @ 12:00 the Ministry of Finance, Department of Inland Revenue in conjunction with the BHTA, held a VAT Workshop at the BC Hilton Nassau. There team members from the Department of Inland Revenue provided an overview of the Transitional Arrangements for tourism industry stakeholders; The "Prescribed Department of Inland Revenue VAT related Submission Forms", required to be eligible for the transitional considerations; and gave insight into the VAT Filing Process post implementation of the VAT Increase. The BHTA continues to act as liaison in instances where members reach out to the organization for assistance with VAT related matters.



## NHI

The Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association (BHTA), alongside varying industry representatives including The Bahamas Hotel and Restaurant Employers Association, (BHEA) The Bahamas Out Island Promotion Board, (BOIPB), The Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Board, (NPIPB) and The Association of Bahamas Marinas (ABM), has remained close to the topic of Universal Health Care throughout the varying iterations of NHI policies, and proposed implementation plans. In the last few years, the BHTA has met with varying public and private sector representatives and has hosted presentations by the Ministry of Health; representative agencies and individuals to ensure members and stakeholders remained informed and able to provide feedback where and when possible.

Most recently, in November 2018, the BHTA, the BHEA, and industry met with representatives from the National Health Insurance Authority to provide feedback on the proposed policy. Tourism stakeholder reiterated their continued support of the overarching concept of universal health care; however, continue to assert; any NHI policy; it's aims, intentions and implementation cannot place an onerous financial burden on employers who already face extremely high costs of doing business in The Bahamas. Discussions continue as the BHTA, and varying private and public stakeholders remain committed to working collaboratively to achieve common goals.



# THE BAHAMAS & THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION



The Government of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas has re-engaged its efforts to become a member of the WTO. Their aim is to complete requisite procedures in 2019 in advance of the next ministerial conference which is scheduled for June 2020. The Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association has been engaged in discussions with relevant stakeholders from both the private and public sector re the topic of the Bahamas' ascension, most recently meeting in October 2018 with the lead negotiator Zhivargo Laing and members of the negotiating team from the Ministry of Financial Services, Trade & Industry and Immigration. The BHTA also attended the varying stakeholder sessions, alongside industry partners and met with stakeholders such as the Chamber of Commerce throughout 2018.



The BHTA has expressed the following sentiments pertaining to the impact of the Bahamas' ascension to WTO.

Bahamian manufacturers, particularly those MSME's who produce Bahamian made products, jams, jellies, jewelry, art, crafts, carvings and other items reflective of Bahamian culture and customs should not be adversely affected by the Bahamas' ascension to WTO. Given the realities of the cost of doing business, and the benefits of economies of scale which are not available to businesses operating in The Bahamas, local MSME's

should be protected to ensure that we are able to enhance Bahamian entrepreneurship, ownership and subsequently the diversification and strengthening of our economy.

Also, the BHTA reiterated its concern, questioning how the government proposed to make up for revenue lost, i.e. duties and other cross border tariffs, post WTO ascension. The organization continued to assert, Bahamian businesses would be ill-equipped to bear the burden of addition fees or taxes to mitigate the loss of government revenue given the cost of doing business in The Bahamas, the recent increase in VAT, the cost of energy etc.

The BHTA will continue to liaise and communicate with members, industry stakeholders, and the cadre of micro, small and medium sized enterprises; Tru Tru Bahamian entrepreneurs and public sector representatives to achieve common goals.

# HOTEL LICENSING



The Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association and public sector partners including the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism; Hotel Licensing Department and Board members; the Bahamas Investment Authority, the Ministry of Finance; the Department of Inland Revenue and promotion board partners, The Bahamas Out Island Promotion Board (BOIPB) continue to collaborate on matters of importance to the Tourism Sector.

Topics of mutual interest in 2018 were: Hotel Licensing, Hotel Encouragement Act & Regulations and Business License.

The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism's Hotel Licensing Department invited the BHTA and BOIPB to a number of meetings to discuss proposed measures, and ongoing initiatives to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the facilities.

The Hotel Licensing Department will launch early 2019, a Property Management System (PMS) to improve the hotel licensing processing procedures throughout the islands of The Bahamas. A presentation was made to BHTA and BOIP members in December 2018. The benefits of the new PMS system are reported as follows

- Reduces for industry stakeholders much of the time associated with meeting requirements for operation of hotels/vacation home rentals (VHR), and the bureaucracy associated with doing business in The Bahamas;
- Enables real time tracking by operators of the status of license/registration applications and online communication with the Hotel Licensing Department;
- Provides a means for online submission and approval of license and registration applications by hotels and vacation home rentals respectively; in addition to electronic payment of fees;
- Provides a mechanism for issuance of electronic certificates (license and registration certificates);
- Provides operators with the means of electronic transfer of all relevant supporting documents in respect of applications, and for electronic storing of all documents for files related to the issuance of licenses and certificates;
- Provides operators with the ability to log product upgrades and update property amenity information on their properties.



In addition to Hotel Licensing and Business License Improvements the BHTA and the BOIPB, throughout 2018, met with representatives from the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism and the Bahamas Investment Authority to discuss The Hotel Encouragement Act. They raised the point, amongst others, that small and medium sized hotel operators who renovate, or upgrade their property had concerns with the current prerequisite that the capital expenditure would need to be worth 25% of the market value of property to qualify for the 10% reduction in customs duty.

This requirement was often prohibitive for many properties due to vast disparities in cash flow and land value. The BHTA/BOIPB suggested the prerequisite be reduced or eliminated as product improvement, upgrades should be encouraged in order to maintain market, and in some cases, brand standards.

While, in practice, applicants may still receive consideration for the exemptions even if they did not meet the threshold; approvals were given on a discretionary basis. It was suggested that the legislation be amended to reflect the elimination of the threshold requirement. Also, it was suggested that the list of materials and supplies for concessions be updated as some of the language was outdated, too specific and did not take into consideration new products, materials used by hotel properties and restaurants.

The BHTA and The BOIPB will continue to work with public and private sector partners to achieve common goals.





# TOURISM AND HEALTH PROGRAM

The Bahamas Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Tourism, in conjunction with the Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association (BHTA), the Bahamas Out Islands Promotion Board (BOIPB), and other industry stakeholders, continued to partner with the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), and the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) to implement a joint Tourism and Health Program (THP) in The Bahamas. The collaborative effort, aimed at protecting and enhancing the health and well-being of its visitors and locals, thereby promoting sustainable and profitable tourism in the Caribbean, was originally launched in 2016 as part of a regional tourism and health project, jointly funded by a grant from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

One specific component of the program recently introduced to tourism stakeholders, is the Tourism and Health Information System (THiS), a “novel and innovative program designed to enhance existing health, safety and environmental monitoring programs, and mitigate against potential impacts of health and safety issues which may occur”. Communication sent to hotel properties by the BHTA and the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism’s Hotel Licensing Department at the behest of the Bahamas Ministry of Health, states the “THiS” system was designed to “report health and safety concerns in real time to the Ministry of Health in the first instance, and only after an alert (# of reporting greater than threshold)” to CARPHA.

The BHTA and its partner association, the BOIPB, will continue to work with the public and private tourism stakeholders to achieve the goals set forth in the mandate of the Tourism Health Program

## LAUNCH of Tourism & Health Program in Countries



# SUSTAINABLE TOURISM



## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM/REGIONAL CLIMATE RESILIENCY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT TRAINING WORKSHOPS

The Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association participated in a number of workshops hosted by local and regional industry partners including The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism (BMOT); The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) and The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB).



A recent CTO press release stated the following: “These workshops were aimed at facilitating the sharing of knowledge and best practices on strategies related to climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as identifying sound disaster risk management approaches. Commencing on September 25th, 2018, the trainings comprised a one-day Sector Consultation and Validation Workshop on the updating of the Caribbean Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework, which was facilitated by Dr. Jennifer Edwards, consultant hired by the CTO for said purpose. Training on the updated Disaster Risk Management Manual for the Caribbean Tourism Sector coupled with a Training of Trainers Workshop, followed from September 26-28th, which was facilitated by a representative from the University of Technology of Jamaica. The activities in the Bahamas culminated with a Regional Workshop on October 1st and 2nd, 2018, which brought together the Hotel and Tourism Association Executives and Officials from the Ministries of Tourism /Tourism Authorities from CTO member countries, to enhance awareness and subsequent utilization of the updated manuals and tools. These workshops form part of the ‘Supporting a Climate Smart and Sustainable Caribbean Tourism Industry (CSSCTI)’ project being implemented by the CTO, with assistance from the Caribbean Development Bank through the African Caribbean Pacific Group and the European Union funded Natural Disaster Risk Management (NDRM) programme for CARIFORUM countries.” CTO went on to thank a number of organizations: “The CTO is grateful to the Caribbean Development Bank and our regional development partners the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association, Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, Caribbean Institute for Metrology and Hydrology, and the Commonwealth of Learning for their support and technical assistance in implementing this initiative. Special thanks are owed to the Ministry of Tourism of the Bahamas and the Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association for their collaboration and support towards the success of the workshops.”





The Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association met with the recently appointed Chairman of Bahamas Power and Light, Dr. Donovan Moxey and other BPL representatives to discuss the very important issue of “cost and supply of electricity in The Bahamas”. Nassau, Family Island, small, medium and large-sized properties; and other tourism related organizations were represented by attendees at the meeting held at BPL headquarters on December 3rd 2018.

The overarching aim of the meeting was to discuss BPL’s outlook for the future cost and supply of electricity, to provide insight into the unique requirements of the tourism industry; and to examine potential collaborative measures which could be deployed in the short, mid and long-term to address the cost and supply of electricity; which at it’s escalating rate was exacerbating an already high cost of operations for businesses in the Bahamas.

The energy-related challenges are shared by a diverse range of tourism dependent organizations. Small family-owned businesses, medium and large sized properties, both in New Providence and throughout the Family Islands continue to face similar challenges; a mounting bottom line expense which by and large, exceeds even the most generous forecasted budget expectation. The financial

ramifications of an unabated rise in electricity cost poses common threats; for some, substantive revenue erosion threatens their ability to cover basic operation costs and their ability to expand, pay salaries, spend funds on training, essential product improvement, sales and marketing etc.

Furthermore, an erratic supply of electricity, i.e. brown outs and black outs; translates into additional costs for properties who must rely on redundant power facilities, and/or if assets are damaged or degraded due to power issues. Finally; and this rings true particularly for businesses where redundant power is not available, the loss of power hinders the operator’s ability to service a tourism market which, for the most part, has no concept of unstable power, and who ill-tolerates such issues arising during their high-cost vacation. The BHTA will continue to work collaboratively with the respective private and public sector representatives to address the grave issues of cost and supply of energy in The Bahamas



# LOCAL SOURCING

BHTA continues to support Bahamian Culture, Cuisine and Customs, and the proliferation of Local Sourcing/ Buying Bahamian.

## Supporting Bahamian Culture Cuisine and Customs

The BHTA continues its efforts to highlight, support and showcase quality, authentic experiences, Bahamian products - authentic arts and crafts; customs and heritage; flora and fauna indigenous to the destination through proposed and existing initiatives such as:

- Tru Tru Bahamian Movement – Strives to broaden the impact of the tourism spend within local economy as the purchase of local products supports local businesses, employment and provides economic stimulation in a diverse area of local economy.
- Tru Tru Bahamian Festival: A two-day annual family friendly festival held on the first weekend in February, which showcases “all things Bahamian”. The festival gathers Tru Tru Bahamian artisans, purveyors of delicious Bahamian food and drink, performers, dancers and provides attendees with a schedule of entertaining events. A variety of illustrations of Bahamian pastimes, flora, fauna, traditional song and dance, and many more exciting Bahamian experiences are showcased on the historic grounds of John Watlings Distillery.
- Tru Tru Bahamian Mini Marketplace: The BHTA continues to facilitate “mini Tru Tru Bahamian marketplace events” during peak seasons where hotel properties host a number of artisans at their property, offering guests “arm’s length access to high quality Bahamian made art and crafts”.
- Tru Tru Bahamian Marketplace: The BHTA and the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism held its first Tru Tru Bahamian Marketplace in 2016. The marketplace gathered over 100 local Tru Tru Bahamian artisans and connected them with wholesale purchasers throughout industry. The BHTA would like to partner with the Bahamas Ministry and other private and public sector partners, such as Creative Nassau, the newly enacted Small Business Development Center and the Tourism Development Corporation to host more Tru Tru Bahamian Marketplace Events.
- Tru Tru Bahamian Virtual Portal. The BHTA continues its efforts to partner with public and private sector representatives to bring to fruition a long-standing project; The Tru Tru Bahamian Virtual Portal. This online facility would allow Tru Tru Bahamian Vendors to showcase and sell quality authentically Bahamian goods to Bahamian wholesale purchasers using a standardized template where artisans would effectively market their product and provide key information such as pricing; and fulfillment schedules.

Another objective of the Tru Tru Bahamian Movement is to encourage “local sourcing”. Currently approximately 85 cents of every dollar spent in the Bahamas leaves the country. The BHTA seeks to stem the leakage through the creation of linkages between the tourism industry and Bahamian entrepreneurs.

The BHTA considers Local Sourcing as a vital component of expanding and diversifying The Bahamian economy; by supporting Bahamian businesses, we stimulate markets in areas that are currently underdeveloped. The benefits of stemming the outflow of funds and keeping them in our own economy is vast. The trickle-down effect of local sourcing is an obvious benefit, as this creates job growth, and expands entrepreneurial opportunities. Local Sourcing was one of the Five Focus Areas outlined in the BHTA’s strategic plan for 2017. In August 2017 Representatives from The Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association met with The Hon. Brent Symonette, Minister of Financial Services, Trade & Industry and Immigration and The Minister of Tourism, The Hon. Dionisio D’Aguilar, to discuss strategies to enhance local sourcing opportunities for the tourism sector. The BHTA continues to engage the Local Sourcing Committee in pursuit of it’s mandate. Most recently the focus for the committee has been on the WTO ascension process, and how it would affect efforts to propagate “Buying Bahamian”. The Local Sourcing Committee met with the lead negotiator Zhivargo Laing and members of the negotiating team and were apprised of the status of the ascension process and to garner feedback. Most recently, a questionnaire was distributed to committee members and Tru Tru Bahamian entrepreneurs, requesting information on existing and proposed tariffs rates on varying imported items which may “compete” with Bahamian made goods.

In addition to WTO related stakeholders, the BHTA Local Sourcing Committee has forged a relationship with the newly created Tourism Development Corporation, led by Janet Johnson and the Access Accelerator Small Business Development Center, (SBDC) led by Davinia Blair, Executive Director.

On November 28th 2018, The BHTA participated in a Private Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Conclave facilitated by the SBDC which brought together a variety of organizations whose mandate was to help micro, small and medium sized business succeed, through various means of support. At the conclave, the respective organizations presented their mandate to support MSME’s. Ensuing discussions highlighted overlaps, areas of collaboration and synergies between the varying private and public sector organizations. The BHTA will work closely with the SBDC and those establishments to achieve common goals.



## LOCAL SOURCING

# THE BAHAMAS NATIONAL CULINARY TEAM/TASTE OF THE CARIBBEAN 2018



The 2018 National Culinary Team returned home donning a plethora of medal wins, specialty awards and Hall of Fame acclaim! Team Bahamas were thrilled to win Gold for the “Caribbean National Team of the Year”, as they plated a delicious, Bahamian- flavor infused, three course lunch for judges and over 100 lunch attendees. Chef Jamal Small, a young, but seasoned contender achieved the highest ranking for” Caribbean Chef of the Year”, bringing home the win and a Gold medal for Team Bahamas. In addition, Chef Small was inducted into the coveted “Hall of Fame” the highest ranking possibly attained in the Chef of the Year category. Junior Chef Hazen Rolle also blazed a trail, winning top honours and a Gold Medal for “Junior Chef of The Year”, he too was inducted into the Hall of Fame. His induction into this prestigious class of competitors, will make it the second consecutive year the Bahamian Team has attained this status, a testament to the formidable young talent in The Bahamas.

Young and innovative first time contender Chef Celeste Smith won Silver in the Pastry Chef Competition with a barrier-breaking dessert; stately Chef Owen Bain won Silver in the Beef Competition, followed by newcomer Derrick Blackmon’s Bronze in the Bartender Competition and Chef Pratt’s Bronze in Seafood. One of the highlights of the night was had when Junior Chef Rolle was called to the stage to receive the coveted Hans Schenk Commemorative Award for the Most Innovative Dish



Utilizing Indigenous Ingredients. Hazen Rolle, one of the youngest chefs participating in the competition won the Award over the entire slate of elite senior chefs, and talented junior chefs. This is the second time a Bahamian Chef has surpassed all other chefs and taken home the distinctive award; Chef Kevyn Pratt won the Hans Schenk Award in 2011, at the tender age of 20, as he outperformed a vast, formidable cadre of regional competitors with his creative, indigenously influenced culinary offering. Both Chefs achieved this sought-after award under the tutelage of Master Chef Devin Johnson who helped to orchestrate and guide the team's training and performance for the 2018 competition.

This is the first time in history a country has won The Caribbean Chef of the Year, Caribbean Junior Chef of the Year, The Hans Schenk Commemorative Award and come away with Gold for Caribbean Team of the Year as well as Silver and Bronze medals in individual competitions.

The BHTA will continue to support and facilitate the participation of the National Culinary Team in the esteemed regional competition as part of an overarching effort to showcase the Bahamas as a "premier culinary destination". Also, the benefits of the partaking in the prestigious regional competition is far reaching as it provides an opportunity for our burgeoning chefs to glean vastly important experience; working with seasoned chefs and competing on a regional stage. Furthermore the Chefs become an inspiration for young aspiring culinarians and mixologists; a beacon of hope and pride for many Bahamians as the team represents their county with passion, dignity, a sense of spirit and reverence for the field of cuisine and mixology.

Team Bahamas is comprised of:

- Chef Devin Johnson, Head Team Consultant
- Chef Mario Adderley, Team Manager
- Chef Owen Bain, Team Captain
- Charlotte Knowles-Thompson, Team Administrator
- Chef Jamal Small
- Chef Kevyn Pratt
- Chef Asteir Dean
- Chef Carvison Pratt
- Chef Tamar Rahming
- Chef Celeste Smith
- Junior Chef Hazen Rolle
- Donovan Moss (Apprentice)
- Ryan McIntosh (Apprentice)
- Mixologist Derrick Blackmon
- Alternate Mixologist Chavano Jones





The team's participation could not be possible without public and private sector stakeholders such as The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism, Atlantis, Baha Mar, (REV) Cable Bahamas, Aliv, BC Hilton, Carriearl Boutique, Berry Islands, Sandals Emerald Bay, Sandals Royal Bahamian, Lyford Cay Club, Comfort Suites, Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Board, Bahamas Out Islands Promotion Board, Association of Bahamas Marinas, Bahamas Food Services, Bahamian Brewery, Ardastra Gardens & Zoo, Cheryl's Taxi & Tours, Majestic Tours, Liquid Courage, University of The Bahamas, Coventry Realty (Heron Cove), Bahamasair, Commonwealth Brewery, Fusion Superplex, Cassava Grille, Manuelo Lettuce Eat, New Oriental Cleaners, Cacique Judges, Bahamas Culinary Association and Wildflowers Event and Occasions.







# Junior MINISTER OF TOURISM



## 2018 Junior Minister of Tourism

This Program offers one candidacy per island, including New Providence, and is open to Bahamian citizens of both government and private, 11th grade students, preferably of Hospitality Studies. Entry into the Program comes through a school's direct nomination or by students participating in an inter-school speech competition for selection as the school's representative.

The program was launched in 2002 to promote awareness among high school students and consists of three phases: Sourcing interview, speech preliminaries and speech competition finals (March 22nd). Latasha Allen represented BHTA for the sourcing phase.

Khalea Richard of Forest Heights Academy, Abaco beat out 13 other students from around the country. President Carlton Russell brought remarks on behalf of BHTA and presented the scholarship award.

## WINNER: 2018 – 2019 Junior Minister of Tourism, Khalea Richard, Forest Heights Academy, Abaco

Winners are chosen based on 60 percent score from the speeches and 40 percent from a mystery topic. The Finals were held on March 22nd @ SuperClubs Breezes.

Khalea beat out 13 other students from around the country.

President Carlton Russell brought remarks on behalf of BHTA and presented the scholarship award.

## PRIZES:

Winner: Patrick S.G. Bain Scholarship Fund (tenable at the University of The Bahamas), an entry in CTO Youth Congress, \$500.00 cash prize and a trophy. The winner's school also receives \$500.00 and a floating trophy.

2nd Place: \$300 cash prize and a trophy. The school also receives \$300 and a plaque.

3rd Place: \$200.00 cash prize and a trophy. The school also receives \$200 and a plaque.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

### CARIBBEAN HOTEL & TOURISM ASSOCIATION'S EDUCATION FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

Thanks to the support from BHTA members and CHTEAF corporate supporters, the Bahamas received a total of nine (9) scholarships totaling \$45,000.00 for the 2018-2019 Academic Year.

Details for securing applications and criteria can be accessed by going to:

**<http://www.caribbeanhotellassociation.com/CHTAEFapplication.php> or Scholarships**

### PATRICK SG BAIN SCHOLARSHIP

A four-year scholarship not to exceed \$1,000 per year, per student is being offered toward the tuition of a Bahamian student or employee enrolling in the University of The Bahamas - Culinary Arts and Tourism Studies. The scholarship can be applied towards tuition, books, fees and lab charges related to courses of study. This would not extend to, school store charges or any accommodation-related expenses.

It is Jointly funded by the BHTA and the Bahamas Hotel & Restaurant Employers' Association (BHREA).

The scholarships are being offered in the name of the respective organizations and in tribute to the late union leader Patrick SG Bain, in recognition of his commitment to education and building business-labour partnerships.

\$5,0000.00 was awarded to six Bahamians for the 2018 – 2019 Academic Year

For questions or additional information, contact Latasha Allen at [lallen@bahamashoteltourism.org](mailto:lallen@bahamashoteltourism.org) or 502-4200.

### EDUCATORS' INDUSTRY INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

Under the theme: "Global Education: A Mindset Reset", The BHTA in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Ministry of Tourism & Aviation (MOTA) and The University of The Bahamas hosted the 15th Annual Educators' Industry Internship Programme June 25th – 29th, 2018 in New Providence.

Forty-eight (48) participants interned at 15 organizations, with an approximate 50% return rate of participants. A special thank you to the following presenters: Mr. Scott Allan and Mr. Kevin King - Baha Mar, Demetria Rolle, Scholarships – University of the Bahamas and Chilean Burrows, Acting Administrator - MOE Scholarships.

This Program is supported by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Tourism, University of The Bahamas and Industry Partners such as Hotels, Attractions, Restaurants and other hospitality-oriented businesses. It was originally conceived through a Tourism-Education task force which was established by BHTA, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Education as an outcome from the Ministry of Tourism's first National Tourism Conference. Public and private school Teachers, Guidance Counselors, Principals and Administrators spend one week in industry, learning about the range of careers and businesses in the tourism industry and how to better prepare young people for its many opportunities. Participants congregate at an opening ceremony, and are then dispersed to BHTA member businesses, where they shadow real life employees operating in a variety of tourism/hospitality related industries for three days. In addition to being exposed to varying work environments, the educators spend a day "outside of industry" experiencing areas of historical or touristic significance.



The objective of the program is to close the gap between the classroom and the workplace by creating quality work and learning experiences by deepening teachers understanding of the myriad of career options within the industry, enhancing the learning and teaching of skills and attitudes required for success within the industry, exploring ways to integrate and support the development of individual skills which will enable students to perform effectively in their future careers.

Special thank you to the following properties that provided the teachers an opportunity for internship:

Ardastra Gardens & Zoo  
 Comfort Suites PI  
 Majestic Tours  
 Powerboat Adventures  
 The Warwick Paradise Island

Atlantis PI  
 Graycliff Hotel  
 Mandara Spa  
 RIU Hotel

British Colonial Hilton  
 Harbourside Resort  
 Nassau Airport Development Company (NAD)  
 SuperClubs Breezes



## GRAND BAHAMA

The 9th Grand Bahama programme was held July 16th – 20th, 2018. Twenty-three educators participated. A special thank you to Mrs. Gaylene Pinder, Sr. Education Officer - MOE and her team – Mrs. Desiree Forbes, Student Achievement Officer and Ms. Terah Smith, Chief Clerk - MOE who coordinated the programme.

A special thank you to the following presenters: Mrs. Carla Brown-Roker, Youth Officer – MOY, Ms. Anne Russell, Sr. Exec. Officer of Scholarships - MOE, Miss Ketora Clarke - Eight Mile Rock High School, Mr. Jeffrey Pinder, Sr. Exec. Of Product Development – MOE.

The opening was held at Castaways Resort on July 16th followed by three days internship in industry – July 17th, 18th & 19th. Latasha Allen represented BHTA by giving the Welcome and Statement of Purpose at the Opening. The Closing and certificate presentation were held on July 20th at Castaways Resort. A special thank you to Castaways for hosting the Opening and Closing events.

Thank you to the following properties that provided the teachers an opportunity for internship:

Grand Bahama Nature Tour  
Taino Beach  
Paradise Cove

H. Forbes Charter  
Pelican Bay  
Fragrance of The Bahamas

Island Seas Resort  
Fragrance of The Bahamas  
Wyndham Fortuna Beach

## 18TH CACIQUE AWARDS

The BHTA secures nominees and selects the finalists and winners for seven categories (1) Manager of the Year (2) Employee of the Year – Front of The House, (3) Employee of The Year – Heart of The House (4) Supervisor of The Year (5) Sales Executive of the Year (6) Chef of The Year and (7) Hotelier of the Year. Only Operator Members of the BHTA are eligible to submit nominations. Allied Members, while not eligible to nominate, are encouraged to recommend to a hotel General Manager or Human Resources Director, an outstanding employee, Manager or Chef which the hotel should consider nominating.

For Nomination forms or more information, contact Latasha Allen, 502-4200 (Operator) or 502-4208 (Direct), Email: [lallen@bahamashotel tourism.org](mailto:lallen@bahamashotel tourism.org)

**Deadline: Friday, September 28, 2018**

**THE EIGHTEENTH CACIQUE AWARDS**

Recognizing and rewarding the sector's best in development, growth and service

**FAMILY ISLANDS ARE ESPECIALLY ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT NOMINATIONS**

The Bahamas Hotel & Tourism Association (BHTA) is pleased to announce the 18th Annual Cacique Awards Competition. The deadline for nominations is Friday, September 28, 2018.

The Cacique Awards honor establishments and individuals who have made significant contributions to the hotel and tourism sector in The Bahamas. The awards recognize professionals who are outstanding and always strive to achieve excellence in their work. Those whose attitude and behaviour have contributed to the success of our sector.

**17TH CACIQUE AWARDS WINNERS**

- Manager of The Year - Monique Taylor, British Colonial Hilton
- Supervisor of The Year - Jerome Sears, British Colonial Hilton
- Employee of The Year - Front of The House - Dickson Storr, Melia Nassau Beach Resort
- Employee of The Year - Heart of The House - Kendal Devonous, Atlantis FI
- Sales Executive of The Year, Doryn Vindra Probst, British Colonial Hilton
- Chef of The Year - Cheryl McKennis, British Colonial Hilton
- Hotelier of The Year - Dean Spychalla, Valentin's Residence Resort & Marina

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Latasha Allen at 502-4200 or email: [lallen@bahamashotel tourism.org](mailto:lallen@bahamashotel tourism.org)

## JUNIOR HOTELIER PROGRAMME

This Programme was crafted to raise students' interest and knowledge of the real world-of-work! Through early exposure to the industry and interactions with industry professionals, students explore the myriad of career options available in the industry, engage industry professionals in discussions on industry expectations, acquire knowledge, soft skills and awareness of industry and guests' needs and expectations and link classroom learning and experiences to real work experiences and expectations. Five schools are presently in the programme.





### GOLF TOURNAMENT

The BHTA held its 20th Annual Golf Tournament at The Ocean Club Golf Course on Sunday October 28th; where over 110 golfers from all facets of industry in the Bahamas, gathered to play in the tournament. The annual event supports BHTA's workforce development efforts and initiatives including scholarships for students embarking upon tourism related studies.

The Tournament's popularity has grown exponentially over the past few years, as the players have come to know it as a fun filled, aptly challenging, socially invigorating tournament that provides players with a variety of unique perks; the opportunity to win a vast selection of fabulous prizes, collectively worth upward of \$10,000; and the ability to enjoy mix n' mingling at sponsors "booths", which are set up throughout the course, offering golfers drinks, music, games and prizes!

The prestigious title of "Winners of the BHTA's 20th Annual Golf Tournament" was awarded to Richard Alexander and Ralph Mottinger who walked away with the top team designation and stay-vacation prizes at The Ocean Club, A Four Seasons Resort and Resorts World Bimini. 2nd place was awarded to Leander Brice and Ural Pratt; 3rd Place went to John Kinger and Chris Wheaton. Other winners included Men's and Women's Longest Drive which went to Leander Brice and Victoria Bethel and Men and Women's Closet to the Pin, which went to Brent Martin and Isabella Overend respectively. The Best Dressed Booth was awarded to Valentines Resort and Marina, with Royal Fidelity coming in with a

close finish for 2nd Place. First-time participant First Caribbean International Bank won 3rd Place for Best Dressed Booth.

Corporate Sponsors and contributors included, Atlantis Paradise Island, Bahamas Food Services (BFS), Baha Mar, British Colonial Hilton, First Caribbean International Bank, Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Board, Restaurants Bahamas, Royal Fidelity, The d'Albenas Agency, Valentine's Resort, Bahamian Brewery (Sands Beer), J.S. Johnson, Pirates Republic Brewing Company, Corner Bank (Overseas) Ltd., Paradise Island Tourism Development Association, Grand Hyatt, Baha Mar, SLS Baha Mar and Rosewood, Baha Mar, Abaco Beach Resort & Marina, Abaco, Albany, Aliv, A'Louise Designs, Ardastra Gardens and Zoo, The Bahamas National Culinary Team, Bahamas Wholesale Agencies, Cheryl's Bahamas Taxi & Tours, Cia Monet Candles, Soaps & Scents, Comfort Suites PI, Dolphin Cay, Duke of Nassau, Graycliff, Hopetown Harbour Lodge, Elbow Cay, Abaco, John Watlings Distillery, Luciano's Of Chicago Restaurant, Lyford Cay Club, Octis Organics, Odyssey Aviation, Old Bahama Bay, Grand Bahama, Resorts World, Bimini, Royal Blue Golf Course, Standard Textile, Sunrise Beach Club & Villas, The Ocean Club, A Four Seasons Resort, Treasure Cay Beach Marina & Golf Resort, Abaco and Warwick PI. The BHTA staff, Latasha Allen, Dominique Duncanson, Sharon Farrington, Cornell Collins, Bridget Murray, Abigail Johnson, Patrae' Williams, Teiane Bethel, Sharon Whylly and Fellesia Davis; Co-Chairpersons Victoria Bethell and Frederick Lunn and Lloyd Jones, and Ocean Club, host of the event.



## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SYMPOSIUM

The BHTA was pleased to receive an invitation to participate in a National Skills Development Seminar hosted by the Ministry of Labour and the Organization for Responsible Governance (ORG) on Sept 17th at the National Training Agency. The preceding brief provided by ORG gave the following description of the mandate of the Skills Symposium

“It is widely recognized among the Key Sectors that a significant gap exists between the current and future labour needs in The Bahamas and the skills of the local workforce. Bahamian employers regularly struggle to find sufficient staff with the necessary technical and soft skills. The longstanding negative impact of this disparity has critically limited growth of the private sector and subsequently the economic development of the nation. Understanding and addressing this skills gap must be given immediate priority to avoid the risk of further economic deterioration. Additionally, reduction of the skills gap in The Bahamas will provide a critical and necessary

step toward improving ease of doing business; the expansion of the private sector; and growth of The Bahamas Gross Domestic Product. As such, toward an objective of facilitating local economic development, The Ministry of Labour Commission of Employment and Training Opportunities and The Organization for Responsible Governance will organize a National Symposium for private industry, government, civil society, academia and international partners to collaborate in a comprehensive Assessment and Analysis of the Skills Gap in The Bahamas.” Objectives outlined by the brief included the following goals: “to develop a consensus-based Assessment of the current skill needs among the key sectors in Private Industry in The Bahamas, to collect information on the skills challenges faced by the sectors and identify common themes and priorities, to develop an exhaustive list of the competencies, credentials and certifications that are required to stimulate growth in the Bahamian economy to identify related challenges that affect skill development, such as education, immigration and systemic issue, to create ongoing systems and forums for collaboration among industry leaders and



Associations to address the specific needs within their sector and subsectors to provide skills data to existing and future vocational and certificate institutions for program planning and to create a report of the event and follow up activities and present it publicly via media and social media.

In addition to opening and closing presentations, remarks were made by The Hon. Dion A. Foulkes Minister of Labour, and formal remarks were made by the Honourable Prime Minister of The Bahamas, Hubert A. Minnis. The full day symposium facilitated a series of activities that, as per the brief were “designed to share and leverage the collective knowledge and skills of private industry leaders, Associations, Government, Academia and Civil Society around the issue of skill development in The Bahamas.”

The Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association facilitated the Tourism and Hospitality session; and led the ensuing presentation on the perceived skills gaps within the industry and possible solutions to bridge the perceived gap. The BHTA will continue to collaborate with the respective public and private sector to facilitate common goals outlined in the mandate.





# BHTA Hotel & Allied Members:

## ALLIED MEMBERS

American Eagle-Envoy  
Arawak Imports Ltd.  
Arawak Port Development Limited (ADPL)  
Ardastra Gardens  
Avis Rent-A-Car  
Bahama Islands Resorts & Casinos Co-operative  
Bahamas Experience  
Bahamas Food Services  
Bahamas Hotel Employers Assoc.  
Bahamas Petroleum Company  
Bahamas Realty Limited  
Bahamas Waste  
Bahamas Wholesale Agency (BWA)  
Bahamasair  
Bahamia Rental  
Bahamian Brewery & Beverage Co.  
Bank of the Bahamas International  
Basden Elevators  
Bedford Baker  
Benelda.com  
Blue Illusions Limited  
BOIPB  
British Airways PLC  
Burns House - Commonwealth Brewery  
Cable Beach Manor  
Cable Beach Resort Association  
Cacique International  
Caribbean Bottling Co.  
Caribbean Hospitality Management Consultants  
Caribbean Island Concierge Ltd.  
Carter Marketing  
Cheryl's Bahamas Taxi and Tours  
CIBC First Caribbean International Bank  
Clear Solution Plus  
Cole Ins. Agents & Brokers Limited  
Commonwealth Building Supply  
D'Albenas Agency Ltd.  
Deloitte & Touche  
Dolphin Encounters  
Downtown Nassau Partnership Limited  
Dupuch Publications  
El Shaddai Party Rentals & Supplies Ltd.  
Equilibrium Events Inc  
Exclusive Island Tours Limited  
Festival Rum Bahamas  
Fidelity Bank (Bahamas) Limited  
Freeport Harbour Company  
Fun Foods Wholesale  
GBITB  
Glinton Sweeting  
Graphite Engineering Ltd.  
Green Systems Limited  
Gunité Pools  
H. Forbes Charter Co. Ltd.  
Harbour Safaris Ltd.  
Hertz  
Hospitality Marketing & Management  
Island Destination Services Ltd.  
Island Human Resources  
Island Sun Tours Ltd.  
Island Wholesale Ltd.

J.S. Johnson & Co. Ltd.  
Jet Blue  
John Watling's Distillery  
Johnson Bros. DBA Little Switzerland  
KPMG  
Leisure Travel & Tours  
Luciano's of Chicago Restaurant Ltd.  
Majestic Tours  
Mandara Spa  
Milo B. Butler  
Ministry of Tourism  
MMT Alternative Energy Solutions  
My Own Water Sports Ltd.  
Nassau Airport Development Company  
Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Board  
National Art Gallery of The Bahamas  
OMG Bahamas Ltd.  
Palm Cay  
Pearl Investment Management Group Ltd  
Physio Care Ltd.  
Pirate Republic Brewing Company  
PITDA  
PricewaterhouseCoopers  
Pure Salt Design  
Purity Bakery  
Q-Tech Communications  
Quencom  
Reel Dreams Sport Fishing Charters  
Ridge Enterprises Ltd.  
Royal Bank of Canada/RBC FINCO  
Rum Cay Media Group Ltd.  
Sandypoint Development Company Limited  
Serena Williams Media & Public Relations  
SIDDA Communications  
Sigmatex Lanier Textiles  
Sky Bahamas Airlines Limited  
SMG Bahamas  
Smith Orloff & Assoc  
Southwest Airlines  
SportsArt Fitness America  
Standard Textile  
Stuart Cove's Aqua Adventures  
Sunryse Information Management  
Sunsplash Events Ltd.  
The University of The Bahamas - CHIMI  
Tristar Insurance Agents & Brokers  
Tropic Ocean Airways  
Tru Bahamian Food Tours  
Turning Point - Consultants  
Underwater Explorers Society  
UWI Centre For Hotel & Tourism  
Management  
Whittingham Design Consultants Ltd  
Zamar Productions

Blue Marlin Cove Condominium & Marina  
British Colonial Hilton  
Caerula Mar Club  
Cape Santa Maria  
Carriearl Boutique Hotel  
Castaway Resort & Suites  
Casuarinas  
Club Peace & Plenty  
Comfort Suites  
Conch Inn Hotel & Marina Ltd.  
Coral Sands Hotel  
Embrace Resort  
Fernandez Bay Village  
Grand Hyatt at Baha Mar  
Grand Isle Resort & Spa  
Grand Lucayan  
Graycliff Hotel  
Green Turtle Club  
Hawk's Nest Resort & Marina  
Hideaways at Palm Bay  
Hopetown Harbour Lodge  
LandShark Dive Resort  
Lyford Cay Club  
Melia Nassau Beach Resort  
Ocean West Boutique Hotel  
Old Bahama Bay  
Orange Creek Inn  
Orange Hill Beach Inn  
Paradise Harbour Club & Marina  
Paradise Island Beach Club  
Pelican Bay Lucaya  
Pigeon Cay Beach Club  
Resorts World Bimini Bay  
Romora Bay  
Rosewood at Baha Mar  
Runaway Hill  
Sammy T's Resort  
Sandals Emerald Bay  
Sandals Royal Bahamian  
Sky Beach Club Resort  
SLS LUX at Baha Mar  
Small Hope Bay Lodge  
Stella Maris Inn  
Sunrise Beach Club And Villas  
Sunshine Paradise  
Swains Cay Bonefish Resort  
The Abaco Club RC, Ltd.  
The Four Seasons Ocean Club  
Tiamo Resorts  
Treasure Cay Hotel & Resort  
Valentines Resort & Marina  
Viva Wyndham Club Fortuna

## HOTEL MEMBERS

Abaco Beach Resort  
Abaco Inn  
Atlantis Paradise Island Resort  
Bay View Suites Paradise Island  
Bell Channel Inn  
Bimini Big Game Club

# Staff Photos:



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***Sharon Farrington***  
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***Dominique Duncanson***  
*Executive Assistant*



***Latasha Allen***  
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# Bahamas Hotel & Tourism Association

## 2018 Leadership Team & Staff

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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#### Chairperson – CABRA

##### **ROBERT 'SANDY' SANDS (4.7.18)**

#### Chairperson – Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Bd.

##### **FRED LOUNSBERRY (4.7.18)**

#### Chairperson – Association of Bahamas Marinas

##### **BASIL SMITH (4.7.18)**



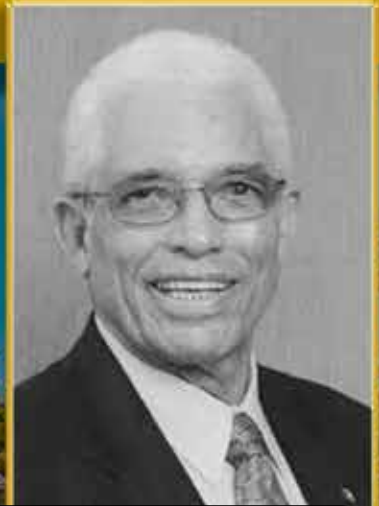
# LIFETIME DIRECTORS



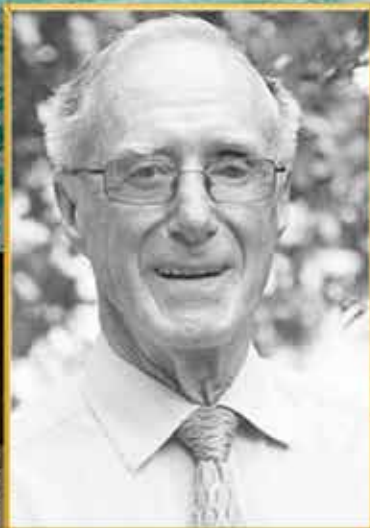
*George Myers*



*Nettica R. Symonette*



*J. Barrie Farrington*



*William Saunders*  
*Deceased*



*Andres Wiberg*

