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## UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

For more information contact  
bha@bahamashotels.org or 242-322-8381

### Board of Directors and Membership Meeting

BC Hilton, 9:30 a.m.  
August 7, 2014

### Board of Directors and Membership Meeting

Venue TBA, 9:30 a.m.  
October 2, 2014

### 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Tournament

Ocean Club Golf Course  
October 12, 2014  
12:30pm Tee Off

### Caribbean Hotel Investment & Operations Conference

Dominican Republic  
November 13-14, 2014

### Annual General Meeting

Atlantis Paradise Island  
December 5, 2014

### Annual Online Holiday Auction

December 5-19, 2014

### Caribbean Travel Marketplace

January 28-30, 2015  
Puerto Rico



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### *The Future is Now*

Years of preparing our people, infrastructure and facilities for an anticipated new era of tourism growth are now converging with the distinct reality that the future is now. In all likelihood, 2014 and 2015 will be viewed as turning points when The Bahamas tourism industry pulled itself out of a six year recession and moved into a new phase of its lifecycle.

With well over \$4 billion in recent public and private sector investments, including new public infrastructure and facilities, major tourism developments, and product upgrades throughout The Bahamas, we are poised for growth.

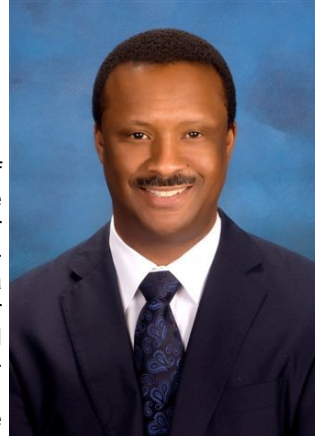
In the midst of these positive developments we continue to face many challenges and questions. How can we be more price competitive and operate profitably when faced with the pressures of high energy costs and the impending VAT? Will the demands for skilled labor create shortages and wage inflation? Will we be able to attract sufficient airlift at affordable rates to support the expected growth? Will the public-private sector marketing power be ready to drive the business necessary to meet and exceed our expectations?

On each of these fronts there has been progress and collaboration, but more must be done.

The most pressing point around readiness lies with the Value Added Tax which is set for a January 1, 2015 implementation date. VAT has been a top line BHTA agenda item for three years. Working together with our partners, we are seeing a much lower rate of 7.5% and are still working on a number of issues of concern to our industry. I invite you to review the VAT readiness article in the *Member Update* to get a better idea of what your business should be doing now to mitigate its bottom-line impact and plan for its implementation.

In this issue you will see key results from our initial round of detailed energy audits as part of the CHENACT project. This is instructional, as significant no-cost and low-cost savings opportunities exist for many hotels. We will commence the next round of hotel audits in the fall and invite member's to participate who have not yet signed up.

A number of companies have upgraded their training programs. Baha Mar has major recruitment and training initiatives underway, with more planned as they gear up to fully staff their operations. Sandals, Hilton, Atlantis, Comfort Suites and others have stepped up their training efforts and the recently opened Memories on Grand Bahama embarked on a major training program. The National Training Agency and the College of The Bahamas Culinary and Hospitality Management Institute are providing support on the public sector side.



BHTA's concentration over the past 10 years on numerous school initiatives continues to pay off as we have seen a surge in promising young talent preparing to enter our industry.

Four years ago industry convened a meeting with key stakeholders to begin to plan an airlift development strategy. Up to that point insufficient coordination amongst the stakeholders was taking place to attract airlift. Since then, the Ministry of Tourism, the Promotion Boards, the Nassau Airport Development Company, BHTA and key hoteliers have embarked upon a collective effort to plan for and attract new airlift. Much more progress is needed to secure an estimated annual increase in 300,000 seats to Nassau alone, with more to Grand Bahama, Abaco, Exuma and other Family Islands. We hope to see more announcements shortly.

Looking immediately ahead it is clear that our success will be tied to how we work towards our common goals. Collaboration within the private sector, the Ministry of Tourism, and other stakeholders is key. We can point recently and historically to areas where our partnerships have worked to the destination's benefit. Now, even more so than before, we must take that collaboration to a new level.

**Stuart Bowe, President**  
Bahamas Hotel & Tourism Association

**BHA 2014 Executive Committee****Stuart Bowe**

President  
(Atlantis Paradise Island)

**Robert 'Sandy' Sands**

Immediate Past President  
(BahaMar Limited)

**Vaughn Roberts**

Senior Vice President  
(BahaMar Limited)

**Magnus Alnebeck**

Vice President, Grand Bahama  
(Pelican Bay Resort @ Lucaya)

**Dean Spychalla**

Vice President, Out Islands  
(Valentines Resort & Marina)

**Patrick Drake**

Vice President, Nassau-Paradise Island  
(Sandals Royal Bahamian)

**Vernice Walkine**

Vice President Allied Members  
(Nassau Airport Development Company)

**Earle Bethell**

Treasurer  
(Comfort Suites PI)

**Nina Maynard**

Small Hotels Representative  
(The Corner Hotel)

**Beverly Saunders**

Workforce Development Chairperson  
(Atlantis Paradise Island)

**Suzanne Pattusch**

Executive Vice President and  
Corporate Secretary

**BHTA STAFF:****Suzanne Pattusch**

Executive Vice President

**Charlotte Knowles-Thompson**

Executive Administrator

**Dominique Duncanson**

Executive Assistant

**Latasha Allen**

Workforce Development, Administrative Assistant

**Shamine Johnson, Manager**

BHTA Grand Bahama and  
Marina Operators of The Bahamas

**Frank Comito**

Executive Consultant

**New Address:**

Hotel's House, East Bay Street  
(242) 322-8381

[www.bhahotels.com](http://www.bhahotels.com)

**ADVOCACY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS****BHTA Urges Businesses to Plan Now for VAT Implementation :****Organization Creates Member VAT Resource Page on Website**

With the Government's VAT implementation date set for January 1, 2015, BHTA President Stuart Bowe urges businesses to begin planning as much as they possibly can now to avoid costly delays and transition challenges.

The Government released the draft legislation, regulations and tariff schedules on July 24th. BHTA is reviewing these documents and in discussions with Government. Legislation is expected to be passed in August. "Businesses should not sit back and wait for these items to be in place". We encourage all stakeholders to utilize this time to gain more knowledge on VAT and to plan for its implementation wherever possible" states Bowe.

BHTA, along with the Chamber of Commerce, has reached out to the Ministry of Finance to collaborate on the public-private sector implementation and transition to VAT. The Prime Minister, in the Government's recent budget communication announced his intention to establish a private sector task force to guide the training and education aspects of readiness. Given the predominance of tourism in the economy, BHTA has expressed a desire to be represented on that task force.

**Key Readiness Activities Identified**

In a recent letter to Minister of State for the Ministry of Finance Michael Halkitis, BHTA advised that the elements for a public-private sector training initiative should include:

- ◆ VAT fundamentals – How it Works
- ◆ A Review of All Relevant Aspects of the Legislation, Regulations, and Guide Notes
- ◆ The Government's Reporting and Filing Requirements and Processes
- ◆ Options for Business Software and Point of Sales Systems
- ◆ Updating Business Communication Pieces, inclusive of contracts, websites, billings, receipts, menus, etc.
- ◆ An Understanding of Transition Issues – Inventory Management; pre-booked and contracted business
- ◆ Training – Managers, Accounts Personnel, front-line personnel

BHTA advises that the abovementioned 'elements' should be detailed, focused in their scope, and consider outreach to the Family Islands and Grand Bahama. According to Bowe, businesses should focus on what they can do now, until the details of customs duty schedules and regulations are released.

**Members Can Now Access VAT Resource Page**

To assist its members with readiness, BHTA has established a VAT Readiness page on its website which can be accessed by going to <http://bhahotels.com/vat>. The site will be fluid, with new items and links added as resources become known and available. Businesses can also access the Ministry of Finance VAT website by going to <http://www.bahamas.gov.bs/wps/portal/public> and selecting the Value Added Tax tab on the left.

Since October, 2012, BHTA has provided members with a steady flow of information about VAT. BHTA's online Member Resources VAT page provides basic information on how VAT works with documents developed by the Ministry of Finance and BHTA allied member KPMG. The site also includes studies and other information on VAT and its potential impact as developed by BHTA, the Chamber's Coalition for Responsible Taxation, Ernst & Young, Oxford Economics, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, and KPMG.

**What Businesses Can Do Now**

Presently, members should be reviewing their accounting and recordkeeping systems to ensure they will be able to track and record daily operational transactions. This is particularly important for small businesses which may not currently be tracking and capturing all this information. If the systems are not in place, a business stands to pay far more in VAT than they should, or not be able to fully claim input credit. This is effectively a form of double taxation.

In addition, businesses should identify any organizational literature pieces that require language changes or indicate whether VAT is included or not. The Government has communicated that all types of transactions will be posted inclusive of VAT.

Businesses which computerize sales transactions will need to modify point of sales systems. This may be a simple software adjustment or may entail extensive changes for larger businesses.



**Initial Readiness Meeting Held with Ministry of Finance**

Recently, BHTA convened a small representative group of tourism-related businesses to meet with Ministry of Finance officials to discuss the technological aspects of VAT readiness and implementation. It is the intention of the Government to allow for online registration and filings.

The required frequency of filings will depend upon a business's annual turnover. The frequencies communicated to date are:

- A. businesses with a turnover in excess of \$5 million to file monthly
- B. businesses above \$400,000 and under \$5 million would be required to file quarterly
- C. businesses under \$400,000 file biannually.
- D. Any business under \$5 million could opt to file more frequently should they wish.

**Airline Processing Fees and Departure Tax Increase Update July 20**

“BHTA, continues to liaise with the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Finance, and Airline Representatives to ensure agreements between the Commercial Airlines and The Bahamas Government, specifically the Ministry of Finance and the Bahamas Customs are communicated and enforced in accordance with what was mutually agreed upon by pertinent private and public sector representatives.”

**Key Salient Points:**

- ◆ Issues related to the existing airline fees were brought to the attention of the BHTA after the implementation of Bahamas Aviation Fee Changes effective July 1 2013.
- ◆ As it had done in the past, BHTA liaised with the Commercial and Private Airlines, Airline Association Representatives, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Tourism, the Aviation Council, Civil Aviation and Bahamas Customs to attain an amicable resolve to the issues which threatened airlift to the Bahamas.
- ◆ Discussions culminated in the following agreement:
  - An increase of Departure Tax Fees from \$ 25.00 - \$ 29.00.
  - The increase would replace any current processing fees and existing level of service fees. (i.e. Custom Processing Fees for scheduled airlines and Attendance Fees for off hour services)
- ◆ In his 2014 Budget Communication the Prime Minister stated that the attendance and processing fees would be replaced by a \$4.00 increase in the Departure Tax for airlines that committed to 300 + annual rotations
- ◆ The budget communication created some concern as it also indicated that: “to be eligible, the major commercial airlines would need to bring processing fees up to date”.
- ◆ As the Departure Tax, which was designed to replace the “current processing fees” had not yet been implemented, there were concerns vocalized from airlines re the government perceiving a financial liability for the processing fees on behalf of the Airlines. This perceived liability would continue to accrue until the government implemented the Departure Tax increase through the filing of the said increase with IATA.
- ◆ BHTA continues to liaise with Government in an effort to ensure the agreed upon Departure Increase is implemented through requisite actions undertaken by the Ministry of Finance and that the Airlines would not be subject to any financial liability for the customs and processing fees perceived to be owed by the Airlines.

**Update on the Installation of APC's in the Lynden Pindling Airport.**

About the APC: Automated Passport Control (APC) is an innovative program developed to provide travelers with shorter wait times, as they move through the Border Patrol inspection process by collecting passport and declaration information at a self-service kiosk. Passenger processing could be increased by 400% with the use of the APC's. Automated Passport Control does not require pre-registration, is easy to use and maintains the highest levels of protection when it comes to the handling of personal data or information. Cities such as Chicago, Houston, Vancouver have installed APC's in their airports.

BHTA's Executive Committee Member, Vernice Walkine reported that NAD had secured agreements from the Ministry of Tourism, Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Board to share equally, with NAD, the cost of purchasing approximately 19 APC's for installation in the Lynden Pindling Airport. The installation of the APC's would not deplete the number of existing US Custom and Immigration Officers, as system redundancy requirements would see the same number of officers deployed as that which currently exists.

It was originally forecasted that the APC's would be installed in the summer of 2014, however this time line has been delayed. It is planned that the APC's will be installed before the end of year.

**BHTA Turns Attention to Universal Healthcare**

With the Government's stated commitment to advance a universal healthcare program by January, 2016, BHTA is taking initial steps to become formally engaged in the process with Government and other private sector stakeholders. In a letter sent recently to Ministry of Health Minister The Honourable Dr. Perry Gomez, BHTA President Stuart Bowe requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss the status of the proposed universal health coverage and how BHTA can be engaged in the Ministry's consultation process.



In his communication Bowe indicated "This is a matter of great importance to our organization. Given the predominance of tourism on our economy and employment base, we look forward to being a well-engaged stakeholder in your deliberations." Following the communication, BHTA Executive Vice President Suzanne Pattusch was invited to attend a day-long National Consultation on Universal Health Coverage on July 15<sup>th</sup> conducted by the Ministry of Health and the Pan American Health Organization, an affiliate of the World Health Organization. Numerous issues tied to the offering of universal health care, systems and careprovider readiness, cost and prevention measures were discussed at the meeting.

The Government has commissioned a study by Sanigest International, a leading health care consulting firm which specializes in advising countries in the design and implementation of health care services. They will provide expert technical and administrative analysis for the implementation of National Health Insurance. The study is scheduled for completion in August.

In 2006, when national health insurance was proposed, BHTA was an active member of the Coalition for National Health Care Reform, a joint effort of the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce, BHTA, labour unions, the medical and insurance industries and other private sector organizations. The Coalition promoted collaboration with Government to shape a phased in program which the country could afford, advance greater efficiencies in the health care delivery system and ensure public choice. Members will be kept apprised as matters develop on this important issue.

### President Bowe Elected to CHTA Executive Team

BHTA President Stuart Bowe was elected as 2nd Vice President at the recent general meeting for the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association

The five Vice Presidents and Treasurer to serve under Lee are as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Karolin Troubetzkoy, president, St. Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association and owner and executive director of Anse Chastanet and Jade Mountain Resort, St. Lucia
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Stuart Bowe, president, Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association and senior vice president and general manager of Coral Towers at Atlantis, Paradise Island, Bahamas
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Karen Whitt, director, Turks & Caicos Hotel and Tourism Association and general manager, Regent Palms Turks & Caicos
- 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President Patricia Affonso Dass, immediate past president, Barbados Hotel & Tourism Association and general manager of Ocean Two Resort & Residences, Barbados
- 5<sup>th</sup> Vice President William "Bill" Clegg, regional vice president, Franchise Service and Programs for Choice Hotels International
- Treasurer James Hepple, president and CEO, Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association



### Bahamas Suzanne Pattusch Welcomes Emil Lee as President of the CHTA



MIAMI, FL (July 7, 2014) – Emil Lee, general manager of Princess Heights Hotel, St. Maarten, took over the reigns as president of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) for the next two years and was welcomed in his new role by Suzanne Pattusch, executive vice president, Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association. "Caribbean community is key to our sustainability going forward," said Suzanne Pattusch, adding: "We are reaching further into the global markets if we can find a way to market collaboratively." CHTA elected a new slate of officers at its Annual General Meeting (AGM), held July 1, 2014 at the Hyatt Regency Miami. Lee was sworn in as president of CHTA during the AGM. Lee and the officers will serve the membership of CHTA for the 2014-16 biennium.

### Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Board Travel Partners Conference 2014

#### United Airlines

- ◆ Chicago O'Hare: expanded its non-stop flights from one to four flights per week effective Dec. 19, 2013
- ◆ Washington Dulles: non-stop Saturdays and Sundays effective June 17 – Aug. 16, 2014
- ◆ Houston: expanding to year-round service beginning Dec. 3, 2014

#### JetBlue

- ◆ Washington Reagan National: daily non-stop service effective June 19, 2014

#### Delta Air Lines (seasonal daily non-stop service)

- ◆ Detroit: December 21, 2013 – August 15, 2014
- ◆ Minneapolis: February 15 – March 29, 2014
- ◆ Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, Raleigh-Durham: Dec. 21, 2013 – Jan. 4, 2014

#### Southwest Airlines

- ◆ Baltimore BVI: July 2, 2014

**TOURISM NEWS**

**Out Islands Promotion Board Celebrates Boost In Tourist Arrivals**



Hoteliers in the Out Islands have a lot to celebrate as they have seen a boost in international tourist arrivals, according to Bahama Out Islands Promotional Board Executive Director Shavonne Darville.

Recently, it was revealed that tourist arrivals were up by 14.7 per cent at the end of March. During a board of directors meeting held at the British Colonial Hilton on June 4, Ms. Darville said this was credited to an aggressive marketing approach. "March and April tend to be extremely good months in tourism and so everyone is buoyant at this time because occupancies have been good. Our room nights sold in terms of hotel properties up until April we were up by 10 per cent so it's something to celebrate," she said.

"We have seen a mixed strategy in terms of the Out Islands. This is in terms of both raising strategies in occupancy rates and raising average daily rates (ADR) and in some cases some properties are sacrificing occupancy for rate. With that said, we've seen an increase to date that we can report to members that as of the end of April, we had a 14 per cent increase of levees recorded and that is despite that to date we still have 20 members not reporting for April as yet."

However, she said while the promotion board is rejoicing, there is still a lot of work to be done. "We realize that there is a challenge being an archipelago with budget that it really is difficult for the Out Islands to replicate Nassau and Grand Bahama in all of the islands and that is something we as a country continue to struggle with in determining which island receives more priority than others. As a result, there are definitely more structural improvements to be made on basically all of the Family Islands, some more desperately than others," Ms. Darville said.

"These structural improvements do end up impacting the ability to deliver a certain tourism product. But one thing we do excel in is our service level. We've been known for it. Quite a number of Family Island resorts have shown up in Trip Advisor and quite a number of the properties have received certificates for excellence for 2014."

The BOIPB executive director said because of budget constraints, officials and industry partners have had to become creative and 'make every penny count.' "Because of that we have had to engage in public partnerships as well as other private partnerships in order to do endeavors so that we can get further exposure. We recently partnered with the Ministry of Tourism with the Bahamas Telecommunications Company (BTC)," Ms. Darville said.

"We want to communicate that we have some magnificent Out Islands and they are to be enjoyed not only by international visitors but to send the message home to Bahamians that we really need to appreciate the jewels that we have out there." The Bahama Out Island Promotion Board has been in existence since 1974. To date, the Board boasts 45 members nationwide.

**JIBRILU NEW TOURISM DIRECTOR GENERAL**

On June 1, 2014, Joy Ann Jibrilu assumed the post of Director General of Tourism, replacing thirty year Tourism veteran, David Johnson who is now the new Chief Executive Officer of the Hotel Corporation of The Bahamas and will lead that organization's transition to the Tourism Development Corporation.

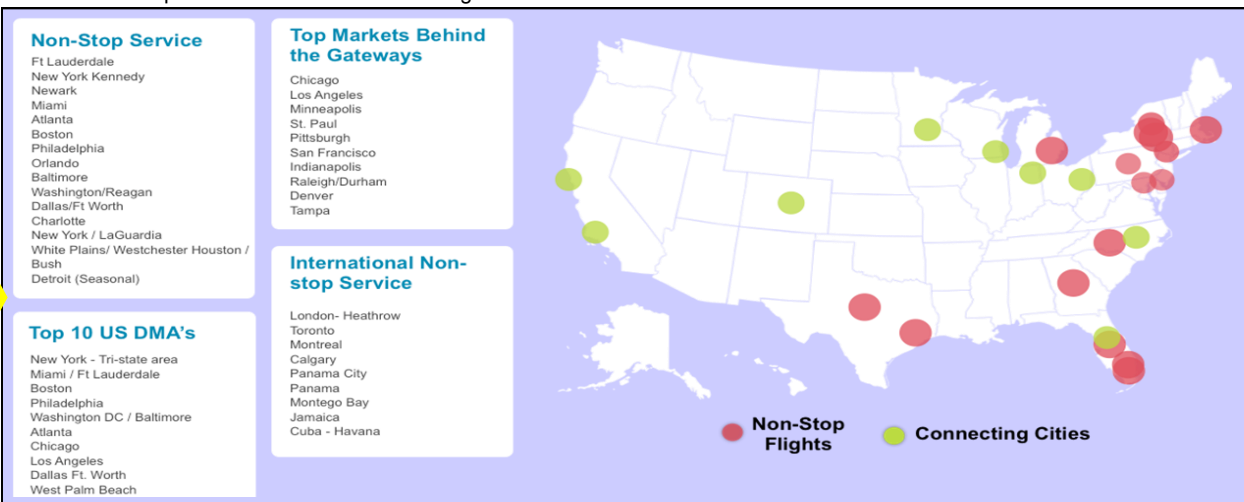


Mrs. Joy Ann Jibrilu was the Director of The Bahamas Investment Authority within the Office of the Prime Minister. In that capacity she was instrumental in the invigoration of the tourism plant, brand and product. Specifically, the joint venture between Sunwing of Canada and Hutchinson Whampoa which fueled the economic resurgence of Grand Bahama; the Eleuthera Cove project; Resorts World Bimini; Albany and Mahogany projects in South-western New Providence and the expansion of Club Mediterranean in San Salvador.

Called to The Bahamas Bar in 1989, this barrister at law served as Legal Advisor in the Ministry of Finance during 2007 and 2008 and as a consultant to the Ministry of Financial Services and Investment between 2005 and 2007. She served as a director on several boards including the Securities Commission of The Bahamas, The Bahamas Financial Services Board (BFSB) and the Domestic Investment Board.

The new Director General is supported by Ellison "Tommy" Thompson, the current Deputy Director General of Tourism who will now assume responsibilities for Global Marketing.

**Bahamas Non-Stop Airlift June 2014**



## HOTEL PERFORMANCE - THE ISLAND OF THE BAHAMAS

The sample of hotels in Nassau/PI is based on 97.7% (2014) of the available rooms for GBI closed between 2013 & 2014 and were therefore no longer 2014 and 58.2% of the available rooms for the Out Islands in 2014. The below contains both large and small hotels. All data subject to revision.

APRIL 2014 PRELIMINARY												
APRIL 2014	THE BAHAMAS			NASSAU/PI			GRAND BAHAMA			THE OUT ISLANDS		
	2014	2013	% CHG	2014	2013	% CHG	2014	2013	% CHG	2014	2013	% CHG
Available Room Nts	340056	353302	-3.7%	227236	240300	-5.4%	64190	51162	25.5%	48630	61840	-21.4%
Occupied Room Nts	220134	206213	6.8%	156774	156757	0.0%	36832	23267	58.3%	26528	26189	1.3%
Avg Room Occupancy*	64.7%	58.4%	6.4%	69.0%	65.2%	3.8%	57.4%	45.5%	11.9%	54.6%	42.3%	12.2%
Rooms Revenue	\$54,788,543	\$45,923,896	19.3%	\$43,904,926	\$38,829,802	13.1%	\$2,961,286	\$2,013,618	47.1%	\$7,922,230	\$5,080,476	55.9%
Avg Daily Room Rate	\$248.89	\$222.70	11.8%	\$280.05	\$247.71	13.1%	\$80.40	\$86.54	-7.1%	\$298.64	\$193.99	53.9%
<b>YEAR TO DATE (APR 14)</b>	<b>THE BAHAMAS</b>			<b>NASSAU/PI</b>			<b>GRAND BAHAMA</b>			<b>THE OUT ISLANDS</b>		
	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>% CHG</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>% CHG</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>% CHG</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>% CHG</b>
Available Room Nts	1404669	1403334	0.1%	943534	956283	-1.3%	235308	207200	13.6%	225827	239851	-5.8%
Occupied Room Nts	844292	795795	6.1%	607712	603843	0.6%	133138	94082	41.5%	103442	97870	5.7%
Avg Room Occupancy*	60.1%	56.7%	3.4%	64.4%	63.1%	1.3%	56.6%	45.4%	11.2%	45.8%	40.8%	5.0%
Rooms Revenue	\$192,256,416	\$183,941,591	4.5%	\$158,205,602	\$156,603,357	1.0%	\$10,394,929	\$8,200,120	26.8%	\$23,655,885	\$19,138,114	23.6%
Avg Daily Room Rate	\$227.71	\$231.14	-1.5%	\$260.33	\$259.34	0.4%	\$78.08	\$87.16	-10.4%	\$228.69	\$195.55	16.9%
All data subject to revision. Some rounding may occur.												
<i>The sample size for the Out Islands was increased to 58.2% of the available rooms from 43.7% of the available rooms in 2011.</i>												

Courtesy of John Thorton  
Account Executive  
Google, Travel



Presented at the Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Board's , 2014 International Travel Partners Conference

### Did you know?

32% of Trips are "Spur of the Moment, or for "no Reason" vs "22% visiting relatives  
83% have a destination in mind when they begin researching their trip

### Sources of Travel Inspiration:

Friends family or colleagues = 62%	Internet = 61%
TV = 39%	1-800 numbers = 4%
Newspapers and Magazines = 30%	Info Brochures = 25%
Books = 17%	Travel Agents = 9%
Radio = 9%	Travel Groups = 8%

US search demand for Nassau Paradise Island is up 9% year to date

1 in 4 searches for Nassau travel come from mobile devices • Mobile search demand for Nassau has grown 37% year over year

• Source: Google Internal Data, Google Search Network, US. Top Nassau travel-related queries.

Nassau is among the top growth Caribbean destinations

(YoY Search Demand, Caribbean Travel Destinations (Google.com Search, US, YTD through May 2014)

Turks & Caicos = 17%  
Puerto Rico = 7%

Nassau = 9%  
Aruba = 6%

**SUSTAINABLE NEWS****CHIKUNGUNGA VIRUS: Members Urge To Take Precautions**

The Chikungunya virus was originally discovered in Tanzania in the 1950s and remained relatively unknown for decades. It is mosquito-borne alpha-virus transmitted primarily by the *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes, the same transmitters of the dengue virus. Humans are the primary amplifying hosts for the Chikungunya virus, and most infected persons develop acute onset of fever and polyarthralgia, a symptom of arthritis. The disease is like dengue fever, causing fever, rash and nausea, as well as joint pains that are usually bilateral and symmetric and can be severe and debilitating. The symptoms of Chikungunya can last for months or years. Mortality is rare and occurs mostly in older adults.

Chikungunya was once isolated in Asia, Africa and the Indian subcontinent. By 2007, the disease had spread to northeastern Italy, infesting 10 persons. The disease has made it way to the Americas and is spreading rapidly.

In December 2013, the World Health Organization reported the first local transmission of Chikungunya virus in the Western Hemisphere, with indigenous cases identified in Saint Maarten. In the last six months, the Pan American Health Organization documented nearly 4,600 new cases of Chikungunya in the Caribbean. Chikungunya is spreading rapidly on the French Islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique, accounting for 2,800 of new cases.

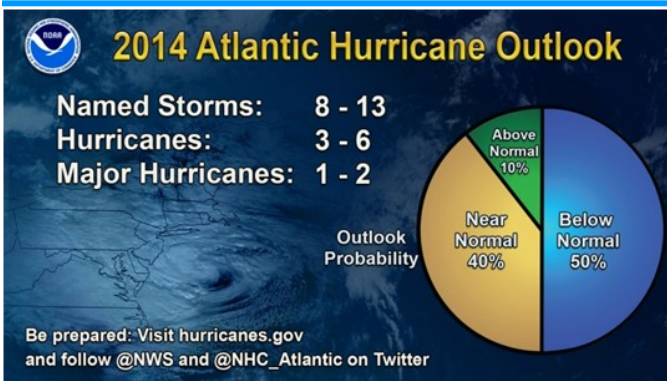
It has been reported that there have been a total of "165,800 suspected and 4,805 laboratory-confirmed chikungunya cases from five jurisdictions: Dominican Republic (77,320), Martinique (35,000), Guadeloupe (35,000), Haiti (11,802), and St. Maarten (3,380)." The highest incidences have been reported from St. Maarten (115 cases per 1,000 population), Martinique (76 per 1,000), St. Barthelemy (74 per 1000), and Guadeloupe (52 per 1000). At least 20 states and islands of the Caribbean have confirmed new cases as of late June 2014, with 793 occurring on the French side of St. Maarten and 123 on the Dutch side. According to the Caribbean Tourism Organization, Chikungunya is now in Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Dominican Republic, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Haiti, Martinique, Puerto Rico, St. Barthelemy, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Martin and the US Virgin Islands. We have also received unofficial notification of local transmission of Chikungunya in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The progression of the sickness in the region is occurring at the rate of one country every seven to fourteen days. The Bahamas has confirmed its first case of Chikungunya. A tourist visiting from the Dominican Republic was admitted to the Princess Margaret Hospital this past weekend, the day after arriving in the country.

The Department of Environmental Health Services (DEHS) is aware of this threat to the health of the population. In January 2014, DEHS implemented a heightened monitoring programme for *Aedes aegypti* at all ports of entry in The Bahamas in response to the alert of Chikungunya transmission in Latin America and the Caribbean. This activity will continue. Additionally, the systematic monitoring of localities for mosquito breeding will continue and fogging exercises will be conducted for the established prevention protocols.

The DEHS and the Department of Public Health and other relevant agencies of government have put together a Public Education programme that is already underway. This initiative will be stepped up in the immediate future. Members of the public has a responsibility to ensure that their immediate environment is not a breeding ground for mosquitoes, the carrier of this virus. Ensure that empty containers, pots and garbage bins around your homes do not have settled water in them that can become breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

The Ministry of the Environment and Housing and the DEHS will continue to work with the Ministry of Health to contain the disease and to ensure adequate and optimum treatment of those who may be infected. The DEHS has also been instructed to "ramp up" its fogging programme throughout the archipelago.

**Hurricane Season Underway....**

- ◆ Near-Below Normal Hurricane Season Predicted
- ◆ It Only Takes One Storm to Create Havoc
- ◆ Members Urged to Review Plans and Policies

With the US National Hurricane Center (NHC) predicting a slightly below normal activity hurricane season, all should be reminded that it only takes one major hurricane to inflict considerable damage. NHS is predicting 8 to 13 named storms this season with 3-6 becoming hurricanes and 1-2 growing to major hurricanes (111 mph or higher).

Businesses and residents are advised to review their readiness plans. To assist with your plans, you can access the below documents on BHTA's website at [www.bhahotels.com](http://www.bhahotels.com)

- ◆ [Updated BHTA Hurricane Preparedness Plan & Cancellation Policy](#)
- ◆ [Hurricane Readiness Procedures Manual](#) - Specifically for Hotels (with applicability to most businesses)
- ◆ [Updated Insurance Readiness & Tips](#) – prepared by Smith Orloff & Associates

You are also encouraged to visit the *PlanIt Now* website. This provides useful preparedness information for visitors, residents and businesses. It can be accessed thru [www.bahamashurricaneprep.com](http://www.bahamashurricaneprep.com).

As we have in previous years, BHTA will coordinate private sector readiness and response efforts with the Ministry of Tourism. The Ministry chairs a coordination task force (ESF12), which we support, and met in April to review readiness plans. ESF12 represents the tourism industry as part of the National Emergency Management Agency's overall disaster readiness and response activities.

Note: If you're cell phone number and emergency contact information has changed during the past year or you have a new designated contact person for notices, communications, emergencies or if you've added a satellite phone since that time, please provide by responding to this email.

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

### A Mentoring Session with the National Culinary Team and COB Chefs

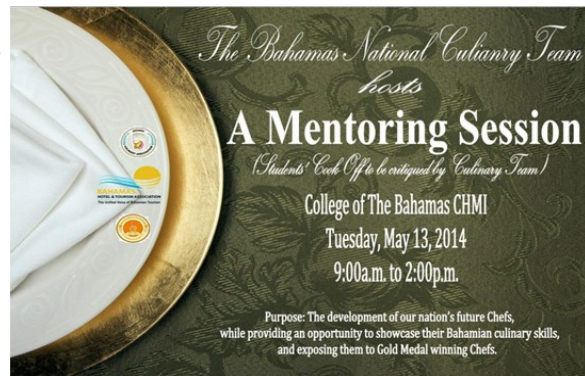
The BHTA brought the National Culinary Team to meet and mentor aspiring young chefs enrolled in the College of the Bahamas's CHMI program. The Team gave the students a "market list" similar to what they themselves are given at the Taste of the Caribbean Competition. The young chefs were asked to create a dish around a specific theme. The Chefs would then critique the dishes plated by the young chefs.

The mentoring session was a smashing success. The junior chefs were able to showcase their culinary skills, as well as hone and develop their culinary and competition skills through the feedback from the Gold Medal Winning National Culinary Team.

COB students were riveted as the professional chefs described how they succeeded with their aspirations to become Top Bahamian Chefs; from burgeoning young chefs, in the very same starting point as the COB chefs, to where they are today. A question and answer session had the National Culinary Team go back in time, to speak about what motivated them, what kept them going, despite challenges, and what they thought was the most important advice to give to the aspiring chefs.



Many of the National Culinary Team members attributed the cultivation of their passion to the Matriarch of their family, their Mother or at times, Grandmother. They gave sound advice, "Never give up, always strive to develop your skills to new heights, take risks, learn through competitions they are important to your development, Compete Compete Compete!; take heed of what is going on around you, new flavor, influences, technology, be cutting edge, but don't forget where you came from" The young chefs were smitten, and subsequently present at almost every training session from that day on. In fact on the night of the Gala Dinner, where the National Culinary Team served 100 heads a diverse, and delicious 7 course menu of culinary masterpieces, the young chefs were there with the Team, every step of the way, helping to prepare and plate. The young chefs expressed an insatiable desire to learn from the team, to follow in their footsteps and use the elder chefs experience to help them forge their own path as they embarked upon their own culinary inspired journey.



### Junior Minister of Tourism Competition supported by BHTA

The BHTA continues to support the development of the workforce in order to meet to the needs of the Tourism Industry. The Junior of Minister Competition, has been supported by the BHTA since its inception almost a decade ago. Each year, 11<sup>th</sup> grade students from schools throughout the nation go through a selection process which culminates in a final speech competition. The finalists compete for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the competition, however every finalist is considered to be a "Director General" for their respective Island. The winner of the competition is designated the prestigious title of Junior Minister of Tourism for the Year. The BHTA supports the competition by awarding the Junior Minister of Tourism a Pat Bain Scholarship (tenable at the College of the Bahamas) worth approximately \$16,000.

This year, Taliah Cooper of Preston Albury High School, Eleuthera, made history when she won the Jr Minister of the Year Competition and became the first Family Islander to capture the coveted title. Larissa Smith, of C.R. Walker in New Providence won 2<sup>nd</sup> place with Dava Major, of Grand Bahama Catholic School attained 3<sup>rd</sup> place. The BHTA is pleased to support this endeavor which helps to prepare students as they emerge from the world of academics into the business of the number 1 industry, Tourism.



### Over 100 Educators Learn About Tourism Through Summer Internship Program

On July 14<sup>th</sup>, the BHTA's launched its 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Educators Internship Program in New Providence and Grand Bahama. The Program is supported by the Ministry of Education and Industry Partners such as Hotels, Attractions, Restaurants and other hospitality oriented businesses.



The program was originally conceived through a Tourism-Education task force which was established by BHTA, MOT and the Ministry of Education as an outcome from the Ministry of Tourism's first National Tourism Conference. Educators include, Teachers, Guidance Counselors, Principals and Administrators. 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. In addition to being exposed to varying work environments, the educators spend a day "outside of industry" experiencing areas of historical or touristic significance. To date over 1,000 Educators have gone through the program.

#### *Nassau, Bahamas 2014 Program*

This year over 85 Educators were welcomed at the opening ceremonies at the College of the Bahamas in New Providence, before being sent to various hotels, restaurants and attractions to work in varying aspects of the industry. The educators were also treated to a tour of Historic Charlestown, located in Historic Nassau. The tour took participants to various sites of historic and cultural significance including the John Watlings Brewery, the National Art Gallery, Delancy's Bed and Breakfast, Graycliff Hotel and Restaurant and Chocolate Factory and the Educulture Junkanoo Museum.

#### *Grand Bahama 2014 Program*

Grand Bahama had 45 Educators participate in the Educators Internship Program. Educators met at the opening ceremony held at Castaways Resort and Suites, before they were dispersed to shadow employees in varying businesses. The closing ceremony, held at Pelican Bay, garnered favorable reports from the educators, who were pleased to be engaged in the program.



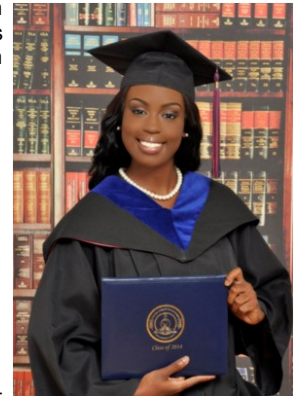
### **BHTA's Tourism Champions – Rising Stars**

The BHTA continues to advocate for and promote workforce development and readiness through initiatives such as the Tourism Champion's – which, in 2014, has turned its focus on "Tourism's Rising Stars". The program serves to highlight the nation's recent graduates and aspiring leaders in our industry.

Each Rising Star is asked three industry relevant questions:

- ◆ Can you briefly describe your aspirations for a future in the Tourism Industry?
- ◆ Why did you choose tourism as a career?
- ◆ What should The Bahamas focus on to stay competitive?

Rising Stars, their answers and graduating photo are showcased in the Nassau Guardian on a weekly basis, given space availability. We invite members to recommend individuals who could be showcased. Contact Charlotte Knowles-Thompson at [cknowles-thompson@bahamashotels.org](mailto:cknowles-thompson@bahamashotels.org)



### **Grand Bahama Expands Jr. Hotelier Program**

Entering its 4th year, the objective is to raise the awareness through engaged participation of industry stakeholders and students in both Jr. and Sr. High Schools, the myriad of career opportunities that the Tourism Sector has to offer;

Since the beginning the 2013 calendar school year, we have made positive impacts in the following schools:

- ◆ Holmes Rock Primary School
- ◆ Mary Star of The Sea Primary School
- ◆ Eight Mile Rock High School
- ◆ St. Georges High School
- ◆ Grand Bahama Catholic High School
- ◆ PACE Center and Genesis Academy

To date **296** students have participated in the Jr. Hotelier Program; with an additional **89** students set to begin the program beginning the fall (September 2014) semester 2014.

This is only the beginning! Already on the table for 2014-2015 academic school year we are targeting the following schools:

- ◆ Sunland Baptist Academy
- ◆ St. Paul's Methodist College
- ◆ Sir Jack Hayward High School

We continually thank our industry partners who volunteer their time and go into the schools to share experiences, talk to specific disciplines, and serve as mentors to our young minds.

**NEWS FROM GRAND BAHAMAS OFFICE**

The Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association held its 3<sup>rd</sup> Grand Bahama Meeting on Friday June 20, 2014 at the Grand Lucayan Resort. With the participation of over 40 members and industry partners in attendance, the discussions centered around the overall development and increase of support for tourism in Grand Bahama through stronger public private sector collaborative efforts.

The Grand Bahama meeting was the first official BHTA meeting which welcomed newly appointed, Director General Mrs. Joy Jibrilu.

The Director General's excitement was contagious as she addressed the importance of expanding upon the various "flavours" of tourism in The Bahamas, through the promotion of Bahamian Culinary Arts. Mrs. Jibrilu described a recent trip to New York where Bahamian chefs were featured and received rave reviews for their food presentation and their culinary creations which featured Bahamian Conch and Lionfish. The favorable reviews were bestowed upon our Bahamian Chefs, by some of the top food critics in the city of New York. The Director General commented on the viability of bringing the Thomas Cook Group to Grand Bahama and the potential to re-attract the European market to the region.

The DG's comments were followed by Mr. Russell Miller, Chairman of The Grand Bahama Island Tourism Board (GBITB), who shared statistical data elucidating the island's increase in visitor arrival figures. The significant increase in air arrival was attributed in large part to new direct service emanating from a number of cities in Canada. Also, the introduction of direct service from major cities across the east coast of the US will contribute to increased air arrival to Grand Bahama. The GBITB also used this opportunity to present the Grand Bahama Police Force an ATV and bicycles to assist in patrols.

Other presentations shared during the meeting included a VAT presentation from BHTA Consultant Frank Comito. The presentation enlightened the group in regard to BHTA's position and recommendations to the government.

Mr. Ian Rolle, President of The Grand Bahama Port Authority also shared with the group the current and new investments to the island inclusive of commercial investments to come.

In support of sharing best practices for the safety of visitors to the Island, Mr. Henri Williams, Chairman of The Grand Bahama Safety and Crime Council gave an overview of the GBCSC. The mandate of which is to foster and support communication between all tourism related entities on the island, and to work with local and international entities in the prevention of crime in the tourism sector.



**Golf Tournament 2014**

*Shotgun*  
12:30pm

**SAVE THE DATE**

**16th Annual Education Golf Tournament**

Sunday, October 12, 2014  
Ocean Club Golf Course

**BAHAMAS HOTEL & TOURISM ASSOCIATION**  
The Unified Voice of Bahamian Tourism

242-322-8381  
www.bha@bahamashotels.org

## ENERGY AUDITS: Substantial Savings Opportunities

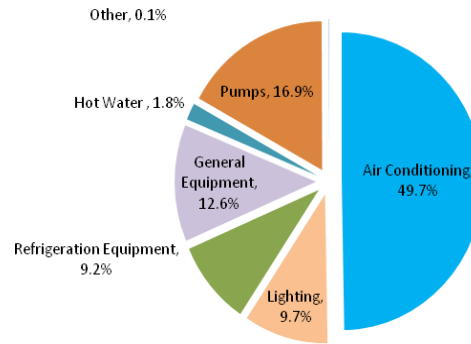
The Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association is participating in the Caribbean Hotel Energy Efficiency Action (CHENACT) Program which is designed to facilitate investments in hotel energy efficiency, micro-generation from renewable energy systems, and replacement of ozone depleting substances (ODS). It is primarily funded by the Inter-American Development Bank with support from the Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association, participating hotels, and the Government of The Bahamas. The initial round of audits were conducted by Energy Dynamics Limited.

In Phase I of a three-year project ten hotels from three islands, Harbour Island, Grand Bahama and New Providence, participated in detailed energy efficiency audits to identify the no-cost, low-cost, medium-cost and high-cost efficiencies which could be put in place to reduce their energy costs. Participating hotels received detailed reports with findings and recommendations.

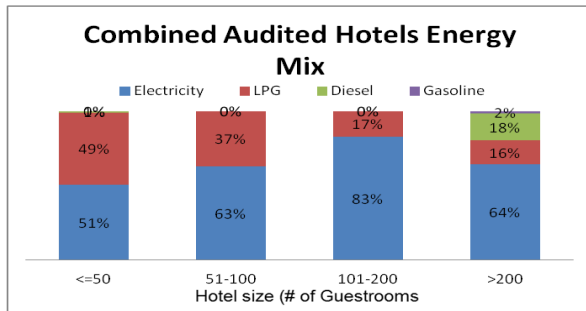
An estimated 30 additional hotels will be audited in 2014 and early 2015. This report summarizes the key findings from the 2013 audits.

### Audits Break Down Key Usage Areas

Air Conditioning is the most significant end-use of electricity, regardless of the size of the hotel. In the Bahamas, hotels consume 34.4 GWh of electricity. As displayed in Figure 1, Air Conditioning accounts for roughly half of the total electricity use. Lighting (8.9%), General Equipment (13.1%), Refrigeration Equipment (9.4%), Pumps (16.6%) and Electric Water heaters (2.3%) contributes to the other half. The energy attributed to pumps includes operation in air condition systems, while the energy attributed to air conditioning does not include pump energy consumption.



■ Air Conditioning ■ Lighting ■ Refrigeration Equipment ■ General Equipment ■ Hot Water ■ Pumps ■ Other



### Source of Fuel by Hotel Size

For most of the facilities audited, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) is used in the laundry area, kitchen area and to provide hot water to various parts of the facility. Diesel is also used in some cases to provide hot water or low pressure steam using diesel steam boilers and in most cases as fuel to power a backup generator. These fuel sources also add to the overall energy consumption of the facility. As shown below, over 50% of the energy mix for each category is attributed to electricity used with LPG being the second largest contributor. A total of US\$ 16,178,708 was spent on 56,163 MWh of energy production for the hotels audited

### Unit Cost for Different Sources of Energy In The Bahamas Energy Source Cost/kWh

At the time the audits were undertaken, per kilowatt hour energy costs by fuel were as follows:

Electricity (US\$/kWh)	0.387
LPG (US\$/kWh)	0.137
Diesel (US\$/kWh)	0.124

### Summary of Potential Savings from First Ten Audits

This table shows a summary of overall Energy Management Opportunity (EMO) savings identified by the energy audits conducted. A simple payback period of 0.69 years is possible with the implementation of the recommended EMOs. Amongst the 10 hotels audited, an initial investment of US\$ 888,035 can result in a 13.4% reduction in the present annual electricity consumption.

	Savings		Initial Cost (US\$)	Simple Payback	Annual CO2 Savings (Tons/ year)
	Energy (kW)	Cost (US\$)			
Bahamas	4,603,420	1,293,003	888,035	0.69	3,028

**Select Areas of Savings and Estimated Payback Period**

This table shows a partial list of recommended Energy Management Opportunities (EMOs) by cost identified throughout the hotel properties audited in the Bahamas. Opportunities listed range from no to low initial capital costs (possible expense activities required) to high capital investments (large amounts of capital funding required). An estimated payback period is identified.

CHENACT Bahamas Energy Audit Project								
Energy Management Opportunities By Cost								
Energy Management Opportunities	Current Annual Energy Consumption (KWH)	Projected Annual Energy Savings (KWH)	Initial Cost of Replacement (each)	Estimated Quantities	Total Cost for Replacement	Total Annual Cost Savings	Payback Period (months)	CO2 Savings (Tons/Year)
<b>NO COST</b>								
Unplug Mini Fridge in Unoccupied Rooms	75000	52521	0	150	0	\$19,453.00	0	34.5
Run RO Plant During Off-Peak Hours	128856	13640	0	1	0	\$5,729.00	0	0
Unplug excess ice machines	102828	56088	0	6	0	\$20,785.00	0	36.9
Increase temperature in guest rooms at night (+5 degree	4564740	228237	0	355	0	\$88,034.00	0	150
Reduce laundry parasitic load	448558	9034	0	12	0	\$3,351.00	0	6
<b>LOW COST</b>								
Convert Incandescent bulbs to CFL	11292	8336	\$3.76	50	\$188.00	\$3,169.00	0.7	5
Convert Incandescent bulbs to LED	11292	9319	\$20.00	50	\$1,000.00	\$3,543.00	3.4	6
Convert Candelabra Bulbs to CFL	4320	2374	\$7.78	10	\$77.80	\$961.00	1.0	2
Convert Candelabra Bulbs to LED	4320	2520	\$13.00	10	\$130.00	\$1,020.00	1.5	2
Convert T12 fluorescent tubes to LED	33348	21528	\$24.00	100	\$2,400.00	\$8,184.00	3.5	14
Convert T8 fluorescent tubes to LED	19920	9962	\$24.00	115	\$2,760.00	\$3,787.00	8.7	7
Convert Halogen MR Bulbs to LED	3384	2899	\$14.00	50	\$700.00	\$1,377.00	6.1	2
Convert Halogen Spotlights to LED	240	13793	\$14.00	50	\$700.00	\$5,765.00	1.5	9
<b>HIGH COST</b>								
Energy Management System	1000000	46625	\$8,000.00	1	\$8,000.00	\$19,224.00	5.0	36
Energy Management System	1500000	57737	\$10,000.00	1	\$10,000.00	\$11,949.00	10.0	38
Repair Water Leaks	45294	27634	\$15,000.00	1	\$15,000.00	\$42,423.00	4.2	0
Install Capacitor Bank to improve Power Correction	1500000	20000	\$15,000.00	1	\$15,000.00	\$12,171.00	14.8	0
Install VFDs on Pool Pumps	200538	100269	\$7,740.00	2	\$15,480.00	\$38,695.00	4.8	66
Convert Electric Water Heaters to Solar	33648	19419	\$3,666.67	5	\$18,333.35	\$12,396.00	17.7	13
Energy Management System	3000000	269135	\$20,000.00	1	\$20,000.00	\$83,809.00	2.9	177
Install 5 KW PV System	1500000	7300	\$20,000.00	1	\$20,000.00	\$2,775.00	86.5	5
Convert Electric Water Heaters to Solar	262800	401664	\$6,613.33	10	\$66,133.30	\$122,610.00	6.5	306
Convert mini-split A/C units and window units with Var	90312	39709	\$3,000.00	24	\$72,000.00	\$16,075.00	53.7	30

**Hotels Encouraged to Sign Up Now for Next Round of Audits**

BHTA is facilitating the next round of audits expected to commence by the end of August. Funding support exists to allow for up to 30 more audits. Most of the audits will be directed to Family Island hotels. Participating hotels must agree to provide detailed information on energy usage and equipment. Hotels are not being charged the estimated \$6,000 cost for the audit but must agree to provide accommodations and meals for the estimated two days it takes for two auditors to conduct the review. They are also asked to contribute 10 room nights (subject to their own blackout dates) into the Sky Auction pool to help defray the cost. Other program costs are picked up primarily by the Inter-American Development Bank with support from BHTA, the Caribbean Tourism Organization and the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association.

Hotels interested in learning more should contact the Project Coordinator, Latoya Johnson, at [chenactbahamas@gmail.com](mailto:chenactbahamas@gmail.com).

Journey to Taste...

2014 Taste of The Caribbean Squad



Sheldon Sweeting  
Team Manager/Pastry Chef  
Le Sprouts Personal Touch



Michael Adderley  
Team Manager  
Atlantis



Charon McKenzie  
Beef Competition  
Lyford Cay Club



Jamal Small  
Chef of the Year Competition  
One & Only Ocean Club



Richmond Fowler II  
Seafood Competition  
Albany Private Club



Indra Solihin  
Ice Carving Competition  
Atlantis



Dwayne Sinclair  
Junior Chef Competition  
Lincoln Culinary Institute



Marv Cunningham  
Bartender  
Aura Night Club



Charlotte Knowles-  
Thompson  
Team Coordinator  
BHTA

The Team was Chosen – together, they prepared for the competition for 6 long months..... training weekly, then almost daily. Along the way, they found followers, inspired by their acumen... and their passion.



**Journey to Taste cont'd...**

The Bahamian Business Community gathered behind them, providing financial and in kind support...



Then came the Gala Event – 100 people filled every seat in the Sapodilla Restaurant, and dined on seven courses of Culinary Delights, prepared by the National Culinary Team, with the help of their ardent admirers, the COB junior chefs.



The Team was pleased the guests enjoyed themselves thoroughly...after a long night congratulations was in order...



It was then...on to the competition! A week long intense competition ensued, with Taste of the Islands seeing over 500 guests come to Taste Street Food from every competing country. The competition continued throughout the week, on the final night, the team gathered to accept their medal winnings!



Team Bahamas Won Gold Medals in Pastry and Cheesecake, with Chef Sweeting taking Top Honours as Chef of the Year in both categories, in addition Chef Tracey, for the third time, was inducted into the esteemed hall of fame. Competing in the regional competition for the first time was bartender Marv Cunningham from the Aura Nightclub at Atlantis who was awarded a silver medal in the bartender category. Indra Solihin from Atlantis was also competing for the first time and earned a silver medal in the ice carving category. Richmond Fowler from Albany was competing for the first time in the seafood category and was awarded a silver medal. Silver medals were also awarded to Chef Charon McKenzie from the Lyford Cay Club in the beef category, and Jamal Small from the One and Only Ocean Club in the Chef of the Year category. Representing the Junior Chef category was Dwayne Sinclair, a student at the Lincoln Culinary Institute, who received a silver medal. Public sector support was also provided by the Ministry of Tourism. The private sector stepped up to the plate with a wide variety of Bahamian Businesses providing financial and in kind donations of products and services.

Sponsors and supportive Bahamian Businesses include; the Bank of The Bahamas (BOB) Limited, Bahamas Culinary Association, Bahamas Food Services, Bristol Wines and Spirits, BTC, Bahamasair, Bahamian Brewery (Sands Beer), Majestic Tours, Atlantis, Albany Private Club, Aura Night Club, Le Sprouts Private Catering, Lyford Cay Club, One and Only Ocean Club, and the Sapodilla Restaurant.

