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UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

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

Preparing to Better Service the Latin Markets'

Tuesday, March 15th
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
British Colonial Hilton

"The Art of Customer Care"

A Customer Service Workshop Geared to Small & Mid-Sized Hotels

Offered on Two Different Dates: March 16 & 17; 9am to 4pm
Atlantis – Mangrove Cay Room Beach Tower'

Bahamas Investment Mission to Canada March 28-30th

Office of the Prime Minister and Bahamas Investment Authority
in cooperation with the private sector

Bahamas Out Islands Promotion Board Membership Meeting Wednesday, April 6th TBA

BHA Board and Membership Meeting Thursday, April 7th

9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
British Colonial Hilton

Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association Investment Conference May 10-12

Montego Bay, Jamaica

Go to www.caribbeanhotelassociation.com

2011 Food, Flavour, and Beverage Trends: Growing Revenue and Increasing Customer Traffic

June 7-8-9

Bartender Workshop, Tuesday, June 7th

F&B Seminars and Workshops, Wednesday & Thursday, June 8-9

Food and Wine Pairings Workshop and Social, Thursday, June 9

Taste of the Caribbean June 23-26

Miami, Florida
Details available soon....

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Hitting the Ground Running....

BHA wasted no time gearing up for an exciting year of member activities. With a view towards meeting both the immediate and long-term needs of our industry, your 2011 Executive Committee and the BHA staff put together an aggressive agenda, some of the details which are outlined in this **Member Update**.

While we slowly climb out of the worst recession in 80 years, The Bahamas must position itself to be a fierce competitor in the global tourism marketplace. Major foundational work is unfolding and underway to improve our airports, seaports, roads, utilities and communications infrastructure. Some policies have been put in place to address businesses concerns in recent years and more are under consideration to stimulate business and help reduce the high cost of conducting business.

Investor interest in The Bahamas is returning, sparked in large part as developers observe major public and private sector investments in ports, downtown Nassau, and the BahaMar project. These capital investments underscore the critical need for us to further invest in our human capital as well.

How competitive we can be continues to depend on how aggressive we are at continuing to work on those things which we can control. Our global challenges are real:

- Rising oil prices will continue to place pressure on us to be more energy efficient
- Changing consumer behaviours and multi-generational travel needs challenge us to meet the new consumer on their ground and their terms
- Emerging economies in South America, China, India and elsewhere dictate a change in how we market and service them to expand our market potential
- The speed at which technology continues to change and how products are accessed by the consumer forces us to adapt or be left behind.

"BHA's leadership team understands the weight of the moment. We must better service and communicate with you"



Stuart Bowe, President

- Exceptional service must be our competitive edge in an environment where 'value is king'
- Making travel to all of our islands easier and price competitive when the cost of travel globally is rising rapidly is essential to our success

The programs of BHA, our sister Promotion Boards, and the Ministry of Tourism and Aviation have shifted in recent years to address those challenges. Today it is imperative that we take our efforts to an entirely different level, if indeed we will be able to effectively compete.

Business-wise, the year started at a slower pace than many of us anticipated. January was a disappointing month and only later in February did we see an uptick in business activity. Fortunately, many hotels are reporting strong bookings over the coming months.

The marketing work of our Promotion Boards, the Ministry, and individual properties continues to be essential to our business success today.

Likewise, BHA's leadership team understands the weight of the moment. We must better service and communicate with you, while advancing policies favourable to our industry and ensuring investments in our industry's physical and human capital yield dividends for us well into the future.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND ADVOCACY

Meetings with Ministers

Wanting to compare notes and priorities with two of the most important areas of Government, BHA President held separate meetings with Tourism and Education Ministers last month. Both meetings resulted in commitments to work together on key areas of mutual interest and a pledge to be part of a collaborative effort between Government and industry to address our workforce development issues.



No Business Licence Tax Increase for Hotels

In January the Business Licence Act was amended by the Government to address concerns raised by BHA about the unintentional impact on most hotels from earlier amendments to the Act which were adopted last fall. Without the change, most hotels would've seen a 50 percent increase in their annual tax obligation. Now, all hotels are classified separately in the Act and required to pay on .05 percent of turnover.

BHA 2011 Executive Committee

Stuart Bowe
President
(Kerzner International)

Robert 'Sandy' Sands
Immediate Past President
(BahaMar Limited)

Stephen Kappeler
Sr. Vice President
(Cape Eleuthera Resort and Yacht Club)

Michael Weber
Vice President, Grand Bahama
(Radisson @ Our Lucaya)

Shavonne Darville
Vice President, Out Islands
(Gems at Paradise)

Pablo Torres
Vice President, Nassau-Paradise Island
(British Colonial Hilton)

Peter Maguire
Treasurer
(Lyford Cay Club)

Nina Maynard,
Small Hotels Representative
(The Corner Hotel)

Beverly Saunders
Workforce Development Chairperson
(Kerzner International)

Vernice Walkine
Allied Member At-Large
(Nassau Airport Development Company)

Frank Comito
Executive Vice President and
Corporate Secretary, BHA
Bahamas Hotel Association

BHA STAFF:

Frank Comito, Executive Vice President
Charlotte Knowles-Thompson, Exec. Administrator
Dominique Duncanson, Executive Assistant
Shamine Johnson, BHA Grand Bahama and Marina Operators Manager
Maria Butler, Accounts Manager (part-time)
Yvonne Rahming, Receptionist (shared)
Bridget Murray, Workforce Development Manager
Latasha Allen, Workforce Develop. Admin. Asst.

Changes to Investment Threshold Requirement

To stimulate refurbishments, upgrades and capital investments by hotels, the Government is giving serious consideration to BHA's request to amend the Hotels Encouragement Act by eliminating or significantly reducing the current investment requirement in order to be eligible for duty exemptions. BHA shared with Government the results of a survey of members which showed considerable property improvements by hotels would take place if the current threshold, requiring hotels to invest at least 25 percent of the market value of the hotel to be eligible for duty exemptions, was eliminated.

Advice to Hotels Delinquent on Room Tax Payments

Hotels which are delinquent in filing and paying their monthly room tax obligation to the Ministry of Finance are advised to make every effort to become current. BHA has requested the Ministry's cooperation in working with those hotels which demonstrate good faith in addressing their arrears through a payment arrangement, while agreeing to remain current on their monthly payments.

MEMBER SERVICES**"Preparing to Better Service the Latin American Market"*****A Workshop for Key Front Line Managers and Personnel***

COPA Airline's service from Latin American starts this June, opening up new markets and tremendous opportunities to build on them.....if we are ready. A workshop for key front line managers and personnel in the tourism industry sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism and the Bahamas Hotel Association, aims to help the industry:

- Better Understand the Latin Market and It's Potential
- Better Ready Your Front-Line Team to Service This Market
- Understand Language Translation Services Available to Support Your Readiness Efforts
- Learn About Spanish-Language Training Available to Your Team-Members

Tuesday, March 15th, 2011
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon
Governor's Ballroom C
British Colonial Hilton

Please RSVP by Thursday, March 9th at 322-8381 or bhahotels@bahamashotels.org

'The Art of Customer Care'***Tailored for Front Line Staff and Managers of Small and Mid-Sized Hotels***

During this one day workshop your employees will learn techniques that drive customer service excellence through engaging behaviours, right attitude and a renewed sense of ownership in managing the guest experience.

Offered on Two Different Dates: March 16 & 17; 9am to 4pm, Atlantis Resort – Mangrove Cay Room Beach Tower, **Cost: \$30, includes materials, break and lunch**

Please RSVP by Friday, March 11th at
322-8381 or bhahotels@bahamashotels.org

Note: Inquire about special room rates available to Grand Bahama and Family Island hotels.

Weekly Buyers Guide to Bahamian Produce

Working with the Bahamas Agricultural Investment Corporation, BHA is now sending weekly bulletins to hotels, restaurants, chefs and others showing the availability, quality, cost and access instructions for Bahamian-produced fruits and vegetables. The project is one of the key outcomes from a series of recommendations BHA made to agriculture interests in recent years. If you have not yet received an email copy of the weekly guide, please contact BHA.

Industry Data and Reports Online

BHA continues to serve as a resource and clearinghouse for key national, regional and international tourism data. Members can receive a copy of the latest Member Data Update online by visiting: <http://www.bhahotels.com/tourism-statistics>

New Visitor Data Tools Being Developed

Members attending BHA's February meeting got a glimpse of a 'work in progress' by the Ministry of Tourism's Research Department to provide more user-friendly means to identify visitor profiles and interests, secure customer feedback, and for members of BHA and the respective Promotion Board, to be able to mine in greater detail this information



COMING SOON...

► **Hotel Accounting Excel Workshops Being Planned :**

Geared primarily to small and medium-sized hotels, this practical workshop will walk participants through the basics of Excel-based accounting and recordkeeping. The workshops will be held on New Providence, Grand Bahama, Abaco, Eleuthera, Exuma and Cat Island. Details will be made available after March 15th.

► **Upcoming Energy Cost-Savings Workshop –**

Details are being put in place to provide members with a workshop offering practical and implementable information, tools and resources aimed at becoming more energy efficient.

► **Using Data to Drive and Measure Business Activity –**

A hands-on workshop to assist hotels with using new database tools being developed by the Ministry of Tourism in cooperation with BHA and the Promotion Boards.

EDUCATION ACTIVITIES: INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE...

Junior Hoteliers Program to Reach Over 1200 Students

As part of its program of activities to improve the quality of the industry's current and future workforce, two years ago BHA created the Junior Hotelier Program which is now reaching over 200 students annually. The program is presently offered in Oakes Field, Centreville & Stephen Dillet Primary Schools and Anatol Rogers High School. Additional schools committed last month to launch the program next September when we expect to be in 20 schools reaching over 1200 students. After twelve weeks in the program, students come away with a greater understanding of tourism and the opportunities the industry presents.



President Bowe Invites HR Professionals to Support and Collaborate

Over 50 persons, most of them members of the BHA Human Resource Professionals Association (BHAHRP), were provided with an overview of BHA's growing education and training initiatives by President Bowe. The President described the considerable challenges facing the industry, particularly in finding and keeping good people. He indicated that the huge manpower demands of the BahamaMar project should serve as a wake-up call to all of us to put in place aggressive and collaborative plans now to ensure we are ready. Citing the tremendous job which many of the HR professionals do, President Bowe challenged them to consider how best the HR professionals can work with BHA and share their recommendations at BHA's April membership meeting. He also recommended that the group establish a support network to assist Family Island properties in addressing some of their fundamental HR needs.

Collaborative Approach Needed to Address Workforce

Recognizing the lack of a coordinated national effort to meet the tourism industry's human resource needs now and into the future, and the anticipated needs which will result from the BahaMar project, other developments and natural attrition, the Bahamas Hotel Association proposes to establish a Tourism Workforce Development Collaborative. The purpose of the Collaborative is to:

- Create a world class standard of excellence for the industry
- Prepare and equip existing and potential employees with knowledge and skills to perform at world-class standards
- Build a competent pool of resources for the industry
- Create and sustain the talent pool to meet industry needs now and in the future
- Build community awareness on viable career options available in the industry

Building on BHA's current outreach partnerships, the Collaborative will include: BHA, the Ministry of Tourism and Aviation, the Ministry of Education, the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce, the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute, representation from the nation's private schools, the Ministry of Labour, the College of The Bahamas, the American Hotel & Lodging Association Education Institute, the Bahamas Culinary Association, and the BHA Human Resources Professionals Association. President Bowe has discussed the collaborative approach with the Ministers of Tourism and Education, the BHA Human Resources Professionals, and other stakeholders and will be further advancing the initiative in the coming weeks.

Broadening Business Participation in Bahamahost



The Bahamas Chamber of Commerce and BHA have proposed to the Minister of Tourism that the two organizations assist with the roll out of Bahamahost to the private sector in order to broaden participation in the national initiative. BHA assisted the Ministry in recent years in revamping Bahamahost to place major emphasis on providing exceptional customer service. The new Bahamahost program has been well-received by the private sector since it was re-launched last year.

Abaco Stakeholders Organizing to Address Workforce Challenges

BHA's Executive VP Frank Comito participated in a workshop on Abaco recently to bring key hotel, tourism, education and other stakeholders together to discuss how they can better address their growing challenges in finding, keeping and motivating employees. Comito shared with the group a number of initiatives which BHA could assist with putting in place in Abaco. Organized by Simone Bowe-Mullings, VP for Human Resources at Baker's Bay and Golf Club, a number of the attendees are developing several priority projects which they plan to introduce this year. Both BHA and the Abaco Ministry of Tourism office have offered to assist.

Job Readiness Boot Camp Enters Fourth Year

Providing over 500 high school seniors each April with a final opportunity before graduation to ready themselves for the world of work, this year two sessions will be held – in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and College of The Bahamas on March 31st and April 7th. Topics will include: the top 10 core competencies required for entry-level positions, successful interviewing and recruiting practices, professionalism in the workplace, moral and ethical behaviour in the workplace. The sessions are designed to enhance students' preparation to enter a competitive, global workforce, with major emphasis on soft skills.

Pilot AHLAEI START Program at Anatol Rogers Taking Off

Motivated by the Ministry of Tourism's support to help educators teaching hospitality courses in the high schools to attain hospitality teacher certification through the American Hotel and Lodging Association's Education Institute, and by participating in BHA's Summer Educator Internship Program and other BHA activities, in 2008 Janelle Cambridge introduced the AHLAEI START program, a three-year credentialing curriculum designed for students wishing to pursue a career in hotels. This year it is being offered at all three grade levels and 18 12th graders are now doing weekend internships at Comfort Suites, Wyndham, Atlantis, Breezes and the Lyford Cay Club. Four of the students have qualified to compete in an AHLAEI 'hotel competition' for students in Orlando this April – a first. BHA has assisted with the program. **CONGRATULATIONS** to Ms. Cambridge for taking such a positive initiative!

COB Apprenticeship and Curriculum Review

In an effort to upgrade the Apprenticeship Chefs and Tourism programs and ensure their relevancy to industry needs, BHA has been working with COB's Culinary and Hospitality Management Institute in recent months but identifying and facilitating a number of volunteers from the industry to observe classes, facilities and meet with faculty and students.

Scholarship Applications Being Accepted

Last year a record 13 Bahamians were granted scholarships to pursue tourism-related studies at COB, Johnson and Wales University, and Florida International University, thanks to the generous support of our members. Applications are still being accepted for the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association Education Foundation Scholarship, deadline by March 30th. The deadline for applications for the COB Industry Partners Pat Bain Scholarships is: April 31st.

Applications are available on line at: Long link: www.bhahotels.com/education-training/16-scholarships

Record 16 Hotels Donate to NY Times CHTA Education Foundation

Promising Bahamian students wishing to pursue a career in Tourism were given a boost thanks to the generous support of 16 member hotels who donated vacations in support of the NY Times Consumer Travel Show Silent Auction. Last year's contributions resulted in three scholarships being awarded to Bahamian students. **THANK YOU** to the following hotels for their support this year:

Atlantis Paradise Island
British Colonial Hilton Nassau
Cape Eleuthera Resort
Hideaway at Palm Bay
Sheraton Nassau Beach Resort
Sunrise Beach Villas
Swains Cay Resort
Unique Village

Bluewater Resort
Comfort Suites Paradise Island
Graycliff Hotel
Old Bahama Bay Resort
Stella Maris Resort Club;
Sunrise Resort and Marina
Treasure Cay Hotel and Resort
Wyndham Nassau Resort



RECOGNIZING INDUSTRY'S FINEST

The 2010 Cacique Award Winners

The industry's stars were shining at the 14th Annual Cacique Awards ceremony in January at the Rainforest Theatre, with the Ministry of Tourism putting on another fine program which in part featured our finest in the BHA Cacique categories.



Congratulations to this year's hotel-related Cacique winners:



Employee of the Year
Micklyn Lightbourne,
Sandals Royal Bahamian Spa



Supervisor of the Year
Vivienne Haynes,
Kerzner International



Sales Executive of the Year-
Molly McIntosh,
Green Turtle Club, Abaco



Human Resources Professional
Marilyn Brennan,
Lyford Cay Club



Manager of the Year
Kressville P. Ritchie,
Sandals Royal Bahamian



Chef of the Year
Michael Adderley,
Kerzner International



Hotelier of the Year
George Markantonis,
Kerzner International Bahamas



Lifetime Achievement Award
William Saunders,
Majestic Tours



Minister's Award
Ali Bain,
Sandals Royal Bahamian Spa

Tourism Champions Launched

As part of the Bahamas Hotel Association's efforts to broaden public awareness and interest in the range of career and business opportunities in the tourism industry, BHA launched a weekly feature with the Nassau Guardian called 'Tourism Champions' on February 28th. The feature showcases our many and varied achievers and aims to stimulate greater pride and professionalism in our industry by their example. The first two weekly profiles featured: BHA President Stuart Bowe, Senior Vice President for Kerzner International and Mark Rolle, Director of Property services, British Colonial Hilton. Upcoming articles will profile: Noel St. Claude, Executive Chef at the Treasure Cay Resort in Abaco; and Micklyn Lightbourne, Butler at Sandals Royal Bahamian Resort.

Saunders Honoured As Lifetime Director

Longstanding Allied Member William Saunders joined Nettica Symonette, George Myers and J. Barrie Farrington as the fourth Lifetime Director, receiving the honour at BHA's Gala Ball last December. Majestic Tours joined BHA as an Allied Member in 1962, and today is the longest serving Allied member of the 59 year old organization. Then President of BHA Sandy Sands commended Saunders for his dedicated support and invaluable contributions to BHA and the industry.



Elma Garraway Receives BHA Business-Education Partnership Award

Recognizing her longstanding support for bringing business and education together, Bahamas Hotel Association President Stuart Bowe recently presented Ministry of Education Permanent Secretary Elma Garraway with the BHA Business-Education Partnership Award.

