

Women praised during BHTA meeting Grant highlights importance of Brand Barbados

By Cara L. Foster

DURING the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association's (BHTA) Quarterly Meeting, yesterday, some women in attendance were acknowledged for the good work they have done throughout the years.

Speaking during the meeting which was held at the Hilton Resort, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the BHTA, Rudy Grant, expressed that it was fitting to take some time out to acknowledge the significant role that women played in the development of the country. He specially acknowledged Heather Hinds, The Club Barbados and CHTA Caribbean Hotel Worker of 2016 and commended her for the hard work over the past 30 years in the industry. Furthermore, it was revealed that she did not miss a single day of work and believed the manner in which she functioned for the past 30 years is a good and clear example on how all of us should function in our establishments and country.

Echoing the words of Grant, Chairperson of the BHTA, Roseann Myers, added that considering the different natural challenges women encounter Hinds was still able to attend work each and every single day, which he believes is a phenomenal achievement. She noted that positive and encouraging stories like Hinds' should be shared more with the world while stating that Hinds is a representative of all the women that make the hotel industry work.

Myers also acknowledged Annette Weekes, a controller of Customs, and expressed that the BHTA is forever grateful for the fact that she held their hand during their hard times and never complained about the amount of responsibility that came with her job title.

Myers went on to note that the theme for this year's International Women's Day was "Be Bold for Change" and explained that it is a theme that forces



President of the Barbados Bankers Association Donna Wellington, left and General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union, Toni Moore, during the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association's quarterly meeting at the Hilton Hotel yesterday morning.

them to critically look at the ways in which they can step boldly forward and embrace the change that we are experiencing in the world. In addition, while it is important to be bold in change

personally and individually, the reason for the meeting was to find ways in which they can go forward and be bold in managing and leading change in Barbados.

Myers encourages more discussion on tourism

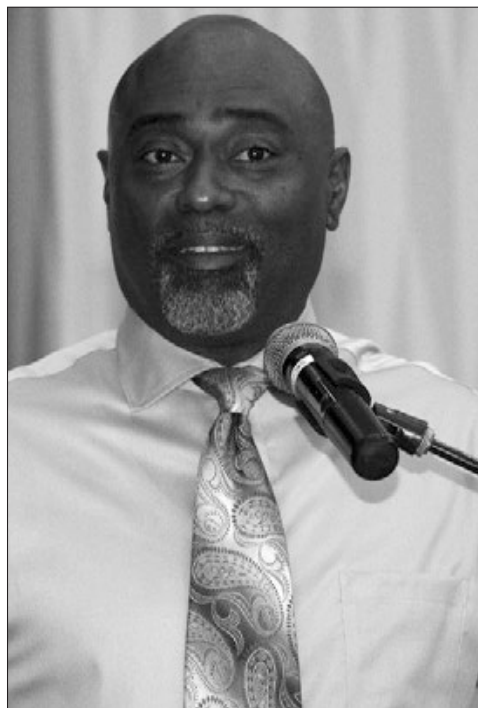
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noted that the human resource factor is our most important asset. Donna Wellington, President of the Barbados Bankers Association, who addressed the matter of financing also revealed some strategies that the banks are using to assist the sector.

Myers noted that these presentations were meant to be used as a tool to generate discussions and aid persons in identifying the different avenues that they may need help to grow and develop the tourism industry. She also noted that whereas the focus of yesterday's meeting was on the role of tourism and strategies for improving tourism competitiveness, it was recognised that they "have to look at competitiveness in the current economic environment". Furthermore, the private sector and other social partners must also be included, so that the views on the issues at large may be discussed to get the support they need for continued maintenance of the market share and growth necessary for the tourism sector based on the environment.



Chairperson of the BHTA, Roseann Myers as she gave her remarks during the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association's quarterly meeting at the Hilton Hotel yesterday morning.



Chief Executive Officer of the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association, Rudy Grant, as he gave his remarks during the BHTA quarterly meeting yesterday morning.

Grant highlights importance of Brand Barbados

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IT is important for us to ensure that those persons who are providing accommodation for tourists, in particular AirBnB, do so in a manner that does not harm the Barbados brand in any way.

That is according to Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association (BHTA), Rudy Grant, during their quarterly meeting which was held at the Hilton Resort yesterday morning.

Grant explained that the growing popularity of AirBnB requires regulations to be implemented to ensure that there are minimal standards that all accommodations must adhere to.

He explained that AirBnB is an online agency which provides short-term rentals, homes and motels; quite similar to Home Away, FlipKey and Couch Surfing, and noted that since these online agencies play a role in the experiences of tourists, it is imperative to ensure that AirBnB is conducting their businesses in such a way that will bring about positive reviews.

He revealed that the BHTA has been given the opportunity to submit comments towards these proposed regulations on unregistered accommodations, and believes that the regulations are urgently needed to safeguard the accommodation sector. Furthermore, the issue of taxation, which is also being given consideration by the Barbados Tourism Product Authority (BTPA), is also important as it relates to unregistered accommodation. It was divulged that the BHTA Secretariat will be working closely with the tourism partners to advocate for a level playing field in the accommodation sector.

Grant noted that there are two critical issues which need to be addressed when discussing AirBnB. The first issue, as mentioned before is protecting the Barbados brand. He explained that it is important to make sure that all accommodation suites adhere to the quality standards that are instituted by the BTPA, as failing to implement such measures could impact negatively and hurt "brand Barbados".

Acknowledging the instantaneous utilisation of social media to convey visitors' experiences, Grant said that every effort needs to be made to ensure that only positive messages are circulated to portray positive visitor experiences in the destination.

"As we encourage more people to come to Barbados, it is imperative that we engage in actions to provide a very positive visitor experience," he said.