

Rosalind Jackson – Managing Director, Caribbean Catalyst Inc.

Barbados Best Employers 2018 – Launch

Savannah Hotel – January 30, 2018

Valerie Hope, Head of Marketing & Communication representing the Nation Group, Nigel Adams, Executive Manager, Guardian General Insurance Limited., Claire Jordan – BBE 2018 Panellist, representatives of various commercial, industry and professional associations, members of the press, my own energetic and industrious team at Caribbean Catalyst, ladies and gentlemen - a warm *catalytic* welcome to the BBE 2018 launch.

We have a relevant and exciting agenda this morning. After my overview Valerie Hope will speak to **why** the Nation Group in general and the Business Authority in particular continue to partner with Caribbean Catalyst to ensure that BBE is sustained.

We will then hear from Nigel Adams, Executive Manager, Guardian General Insurance Limited, the 2016 medium category winner. He will share some of the benefits that his company has derived from participating in the BBE programme.

We have already engaged the guest speaker for the BBE 2018 Awards Luncheon. She is Kerry Goyette. Kerry founded Aperio Consulting Group in October, 2011. Aperio is in Missouri, their tagline is “Engineering Teams That Work.” We will share a video clip of Kerry as she delivers a Ted Talk focusing on MOTIVATION.

We aim to wrap up by 11:00, after which you are invited to join us for some liquid refreshment and hopefully we can continue the dialogue.

Having outlined the agenda I will now look at what BBE is—the concept and philosophy driving it and the actual process.

If each private and public sector entity/ team/ department in Barbados relentlessly focused on continuously improving leadership of its people and develop an environment of personal accountability then our productivity would soar. That would clearly redound to the sustainability of our nation. Our motivation and philosophy therefore centre around promoting leadership effectiveness through excellent engagement of our best resource – our people- nationwide.

We are on a mission to seek out exemplary talent in our organisations’ leadership, highlight it and show case it so that **Barbadian leadership**

best practices can be shared and replicated by organisations interested in continuous improvement. How do we go about our mission? Not just with passion but also with a clear plan and process.

To get the ball rolling we invite all organisations- private companies, NGOs, statutory corporations, government departments -operating in Barbados, regardless of size to register. You have three weeks; from today until 20th February, 2018; to “GET WITH THE PROGRAMME. Visit our website CaribbeanCatalyst.com for the booklet with the full details.

This booklet will be emailed to various business, industry and professional associations later today for circulation to their membership. It will also be circulated by us within the next 48 hours to our clientele and it will also be the subject of a major email BLAST!!! It is important that the associations represented here today really work to encourage their members to participate. They have nothing to loose and lots to gain as no doubt Nigel will share with us soon.

The registration forms, which can be completed on-line, will be available on our website.

We continue to make a purposeful and intentional effort to run a much **greener** programme each time around and therefore we are encouraging close to 100% electronic communications, reporting and completion of surveys. Please let us keep this at the forefront of how we do what we do not only for BBE but for everything we do.

As you may be aware there are three categories in the BBE programme – small, medium and large. These are based purely on head count. Small – up to 25 employees, Medium – 26 – 150 employees and Large – 151+ employees. Participating companies are being assessed in the following ten areas. Business Strategy, Human Resource Strategy, Culture, Employee Communications, Performance Management/Recognition, Work Environment, Work Life Balance, Community Involvement, Development & Career Opportunities and Compensation & Benefits. This assessment is done via interview with the business and HR leaders as well as a full staff survey.

All survey data is hosted confidentially by our service provider in Houston, Texas. We receive aggregate reports for each company and further analysis is done by our team of HR professionals.

The analysis is presented to our panel of well respected, experienced reviewers. This year joining Pauline Jordan are Peter Benny and Claire Jordan. Those of you who do not know Pauline she is a very talented and practical HR professional who led the HR charge at Cave Shepherd and Duty Free Caribbean for a number of years. After that she was the HR Director at Canouan Resorts Development Holdings Ltd. in the Grenadines. Pauline is now back in Barbados and is a sole practitioner. Unfortunately she is off island for today's launch.

We are pleased to welcome Peter Benny, as our Panel takes on a CARICOM flavour. Peter Benny is the HR Manager at Omai Bauxity Mining Inc., the largest Gold Mining and Exploration Company in Guyana. He has vast experience in HR leadership positions in both Government and private enterprises. Peter will be in Barbados for the Panel meetings in May and also plans to join us for the Awards Luncheon in June.

Our third panellist should be no stranger to the Barbadian business community. We are delighted to welcome Claire Jordan as she shares her twenty years plus of strategic business leadership in a global environment. Claire has over the years demonstrated her excellent understanding of the importance of truly engaging talent for results.

With these three experienced professionals we expect some robust discussions and deep insights emerging from the review process. Many recommendations for improvements are always generated at this juncture. These are shared with participants when we debrief with them in the weeks following the awards.

We at Caribbean Catalyst are indebted to the panel for undertaking this important, independent review function.

After the review panellists have completed their work, finalists will be announced by mid- May. Three category winners are announced at the Awards Luncheon which will be at the Hilton Barbados on 14th June 2018. Save the date!

Remember BBE is NOT a beauty contest; it is a programme aimed at helping organisations to chart their continuous improvement path. Participating in BBE every two years helps an organisation detect trends in key organisation cultural factors.

The other point I want to emphasise is **that striving to be a BBE finalist is a very positive journey. Being a finalist (not just a winner) is a stamp of quality, progressive people practices and leading for business**

improvements through your people. It is a case of the journey being more important than the destination. The destination is *the icing on the cake*, the journey is the **cake**.

Business leaders, we need to have a clear view of what our people are thinking and feeling if we are to inspire them to share in a realistic but stretch vision of the future – our new reality.

Whatever our current business reality is, it is the circumstances in which we **MUST** succeed.

Neither blaming nor judging are progressive or productive activities. As leaders we all have to see challenging times as opportunities to improve our own shop even if we are not 100% sure what those opportunities are yet. We need to find them with entrepreneurial and innovative thinking and actions.

We have at every iteration of the BBE programme looked for progressive ways to add value for participating companies.

In 2010 we did a **staff satisfaction** survey. In 2012 we added a feature to extract an **Engagement Indicator** based on Gallop research. In 2014

we embedded a **Leadership Effectiveness Indicator** based on John Spence's research. In 2016 we extracted a **Productivity Indicator** based on research done by Workplace Productivity Snapshot out of New Zealand. For 2018 our innovation is focused on **indicators of Accountability** from research done by Cy Wakeman, an excellent practitioner who does not see herself as a Consultant but as a "drama diffuser".

Participating organisations will find the debriefing session and detailed reports very insightful and constructive.

At Caribbean Catalyst Inc. we truly believe that participating in BBE gives the organization a very affordable way to understand some of the important intangibles better and to then have practical plans to improve how you better leverage your talent for success.

I hope that after today you have a much better understanding of the BBE programme, its importance and its usefulness to any organisation, regardless of size or sector, public or private.

At this juncture it is indeed my distinct pleasure to publicly thank the Nation Group and in particular the Business Authority for their continued

support of BBE. It would have been easy for the Nation Group to say that in these tough times we cannot continue our sponsorship but they didn't. They too are very committed to this vital programme.

It is my honour to now invite Valerie Hope to share a few thoughts from her group's perspective on the BBE programme.