

The Gleaner  
**Hospitality Jamaica**

KEEPING YOU CONNECTED TO THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2020



**WOMEN IN TOURISM**



JWN Academy preparing people for the hospitality industry

Twenty-five finalists to vie for Tourism Service Excellence Awards

Bartlett announces date for registration of the Tourism Workers' Pension Scheme



The women of Bonny Gate pose on the steps of the historic Rio Nuevo Great House. From Left: Ena Sinclair; Shakira Deer from the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport; Ruby Lyn-Bennett; Norma Nugent; Shirley Vernon; Hermine Henry; Juliet Smith; Rose Anna Smith. CONTRIBUTED

# NO WOMAN LEFT BEHIND

*Bonny Gate Women's Group empowers community to keep Jamaican traditions alive*



Hermine Henry admires crafts which are displayed in the space loaned to the Bonny Gate Women's Group by the Rio Nuevo Great House. CONTRIBUTED

**H**UDDLED IN the undercroft of the Rio Nuevo Great House, their eyes laser-focused on the needle and cloth in hand, women gather for the Bonny Gate Women's Group needlecraft training session. The original goal was to train 60 women from Bonny Gate, St Mary – many unemployed, with children, or aiming to escape violence. They are now oversubscribed, with groups from across St Mary and St Ann flocking to the training grounds.

The ladies of Bonny Gate have produced works of art for Prince Harry, several Jamaican prime ministers, and many other dignitaries, using Jamaica's original hardanga style of embroidery. Now they are expanding their capacity to produce by inviting more women into the fold – and transforming lives as well.

"We're fully booked but when we get the call, it's hard to tell the women 'no' because these skills could be what saves many

of them from domestic violence and poverty," said Shirley Vernon, the project manager for the Bonny Gate Women's Group training initiative.

In 2019, the group received grant funding from the Digicel Foundation to execute their training programme. The group was selected from over 100 applicants to receive one of 15 Digicel Foundation Anniversary Grants – called the 15 Strong. With the funding, Bonny Gate Women's Group purchased supplies and hired expert trainers to share the traditional Jamaican needlecraft with more women.

"The Digicel Foundation gave us the wings to make our dreams possible," said Vernon. "The women are so appreciative – you should see them."

The group also received entrepreneurship training through a partnership with the Digicel Foundation and the UWI, Mona Centre for Entrepreneurship Thinking and Practice. With this



A cohort of trainees gather at the Rio Nuevo Great House.

training, the group was able to create a sustainability plan that will aid them in building and sustaining a viable enterprise that benefits the trainees and the community.

**A VISION TO BUILD JAMAICA**

There is a great demand for locally produced, authentic products among tourists. The art and craft industry is worth around J\$4 billion, and the area of needlecraft has great potential as a ‘Made in Jamaica’ product. This project will provide income for rural women and their families, while encouraging entrepreneurship.

“This initiative was so timely. There is a major need for these skills in the tourism industry – we need to preserve our heritage in the craft industries,” said Vernon, who has been receiving daily calls from women and women’s groups who want to know how to get training in their area. “The opportunities that this training creates can only help Jamaica to achieve Vision 2030.”

Along with the production of the craft items for sale in the local markets and to businesses, a cohort of trainees will be equipped to become trainers for younger women in the surrounding communities. This should result in better quality products being made available for visitors to the island to take home with them.

**ABOUT THE BONNY GATE WOMEN’S GROUP**

The Bonny Gate Women’s Group was established as one of several rural women’s initiatives under the auspices of the now-defunct Jamaica Women’s League



Women gather at the Bonny Gate Women’s Group for training in hardanga and other needlecraft techniques.

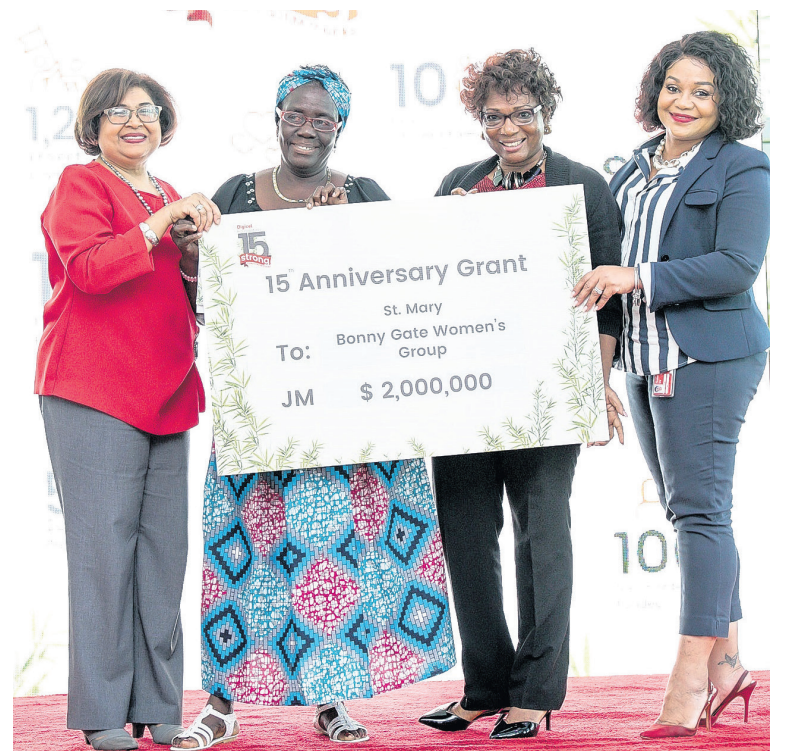


Norma Nugent shows off a craft piece.

Allsides Workroom (Allsides), a non-profit organisation established in 1936. The goal of Allsides was to improve the lives and income opportunities of rural women who

stayed at home with their families.

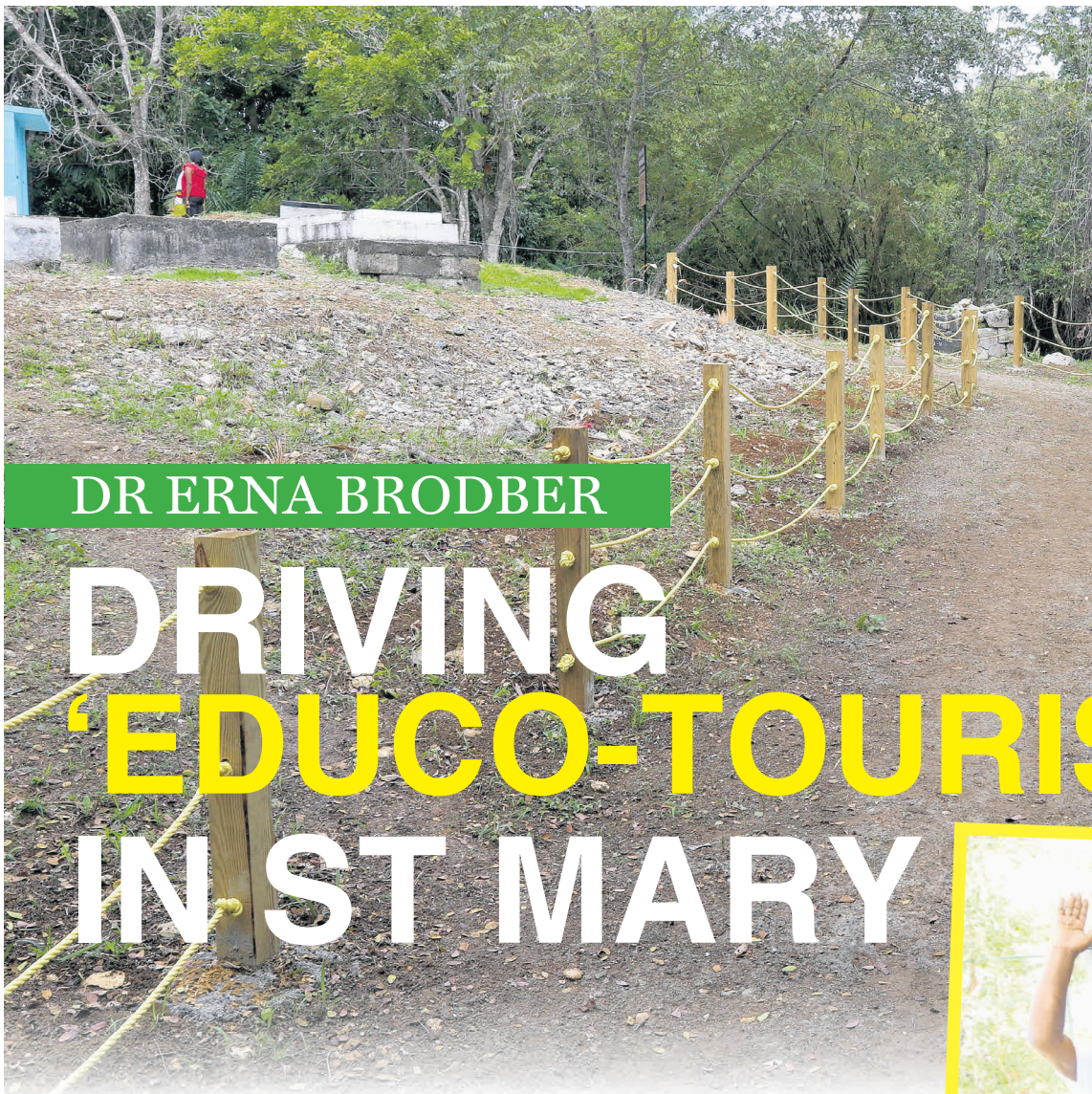
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Shirley Vernon (second right) and Norma Nugent (second left) accept a cheque from the Digicel Foundation’s Jean Lowrie-Chin (left) and Heather Moyston.



Mrs Juliet Holness, MP (centre), receives a gift created by the Bonny Gate Women’s Group in St Mary and presented by members of the Digicel Foundation during their 15th anniversary ceremony.



Left: Woodside entrance  
Inset: The Woodside Ancestral Gardens welcome sign.

DR ERNA BRODBER

# DRIVING 'EDUCO-TOURISM' IN ST MARY



Woodside community members celebrating at the announcement of being the winner of the Carib Cement Build Your Community Competition in 2019. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

IT IS now a popular exercise worldwide for persons trying to find their ancestors; however, the community of Woodside in St Mary will tell you it does not need [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com).

“For data on their ancestors, there exists a Wall of Honour, providing a jumping off point for further research,” says Dr Erna Brodber, St Mary’s pioneer of ‘educo-tourism’.

The renowned academic, novelist, sociologist and anthropologist credits Carib Cement for making this possible.

Although she has travelled to many parts of the world to teach, give lectures and conduct research, her base remains Woodside, St Mary, the village where she was born and raised. Such has been her love and commitment to her community, that her skills and expertise have been directed at uncovering its history and advocating for its recognition and development. As she has moved forward, she has insisted on taking everyone in the community with her, and through this her village has become known as a centre for educo-tourism, heritage tourism and now, with the establishment of the Woodside Ancestral Garden, spiritual tourism.

Meant to be a sacred space, the Ancestral Gardens pays homage to the convergence of Taino, African and European presence.



Dr Erna Brodber

Dr Brodber hopes that visitors from Jamaica and around the world will come to contemplate their lives and learn from the history of those who once occupied the area.

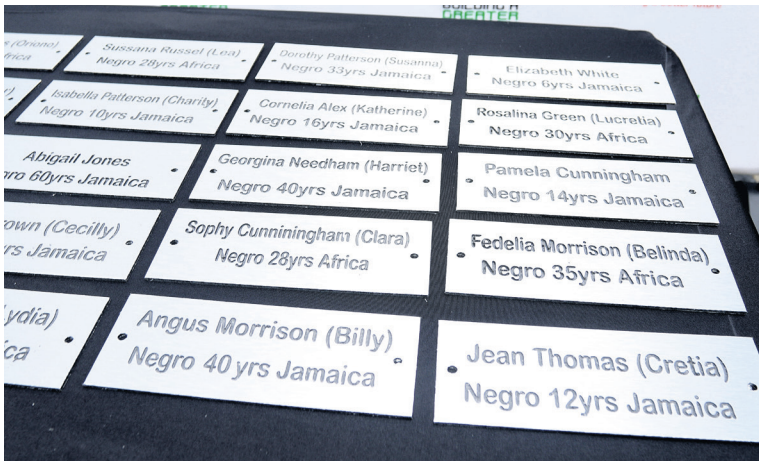
The dream of the Ancestral Gardens, conceptualised more 15 years ago, became a reality when the Woodside Community Action Group emerged winners of the

Caribbean Cement Company Limited’s Build Your Community Competition last year and earned the prize of a community development project valued at \$5 million dollars.

Acting on the specifications of the community’s proposal, contractors commissioned by Carib Cement transformed an area which was mostly a roughly cleared space surrounded by bushes and which was accessible only by gingerly descent down a slope. The work crew, including tradesmen and labourers from the community, installed: concrete benches, a symbolic replica of a Taino hut, railings, concrete steps, concrete pathways, protective barriers, signage, and a wall of

honour on which names of enslaved persons who worked on the former coffee plantation in the area will be mounted. Carib Cement also renovated restrooms, provided a water tank, paved a section of the road entering the community, and donated a string trimmer (weed-whacker) to help with the ongoing clearing of bush and brush.

This and other improvements to the area make the space easily accessible and welcoming for either hosting events or for quiet individual reflection. It is hoped that the garden will increase the number of visitors to the area, reignite community tourism, provide employment for residents in the



Some of the names uncovered by Dr Erna Brodber's research which will be mounted on the Wall of Honour, a component of the Ancestral Gardens donated by Carib Cement.

capacities of bed and breakfast hosts and tour guides.

In her own words, Dr Brodber expresses her hope: "There is no need for this sacred tourism to be a one-day experience only. There are other significant sites in Woodside with which one can also relate, such as Atabey, a Taino petroglyph discussed in the historical records since 1820. We also have caves, significant enough to attract the Leeds University in the UK and to be pictured in Fincham's **Jamaica Underground**. There are people in the village that can make some dollars leading tourists through these caves".

Situated within central and western St Mary, Woodside is a farming community located close to Highgate and Guys Hill. Four national heritage sites have been declared in the area by the Jamaica

National Heritage Trust, namely: Dryland or 'One/Long Bubby Susan', a cave with a petroglyph; St Gabriel's Anglican Church; Taino Steps, and 'Daddy Rock'.

Other intriguing features of the community make it highly attractive to researchers and students.

"Since 1988, we have operated a tourism product in our village which we call 'educo-tourism', because it emphasises knowledge, and most of our clients are college and high-school students and their teachers. It is structured so that both locals and foreigners/visitors share knowledge," said Dr Brodber.

Usually, guests to the area stay in homes in the village learning, among other things, to eat and prepare their foods, while exchanging their culinary forms. "There is always a cultural session in which we teach each other cultural items



Basil Walker, who grew up in Woodside, reviews the names of the enslaved persons which will be mounted on the Wall of Honour in Ancestral Gardens. Among the names is that of his ancestor, Mary Drew. Dr Erna Brodber's research has identified the names of enslaved persons and their descendants, some of whom still reside in Woodside. The Wall of Honour was built as part of Carib Cement's project in the community.

such as dances and songs, poems, stories and games. The main fare has been, however, visits to our historical sites, three of them now defined a sacred space," Dr Brodber said.

The Woodside Community Action Group is hoping for further developmental support to market and sustain its unique product, including the annual observation on August 1, when the emancipation is celebrated and the declaration reenacted. Also this year, a landmark activity will take place at Woodside with the staging of

a Taino peace-and-dignity run in which Tainos from outside of Jamaica will participate.

The Anglican Church, owners of the property on which the heritage sites are located and who granted

permission for the establishment of the Ancestral Gardens, have proven to be visionary, innovating and very supportive of the community's developmental and advancement efforts.



From left: Angela Heron of the Woodside Community Foundation; Ronaldal 'Kaikotekina' Pairman and her daughter Tanama-Areyto; Robert 'Kalaan' Pairman, kasike of the Jamaican Hummingbird Tribe; Dr Erna Brodber of the Woodside Community Foundation; and Reverend Father Seymour Hutchinson, pastor of St Gabriel's Anglican Church.



Residents of Woodside and members of the Community Action Group show off their skills at carving letters for their special pickle, which was presented as a thank-you gift to Klao Bell-Lewis (centre), community outreach manager at Carib Cement.



Woodside Ancestral Gardens.

MICHELLE TULLOCH

# Making waves with the National Tourism Debate

LIVING IN Montego Bay with her son Kimani Brown, who had just started high school, Michelle Tulloch found herself interacting with youths, whose views of the tourism sector was unflattering.

Tulloch said she could not help herself, having worked in the industry for years and being a beneficiary. For her, it was critical to find out what the country's youth understood about the industry and what they expected to get from it after graduating high school.

"It struck me that their views in general, and expectations, were low," Tulloch told **Hospitality Jamaica**. "They considered the options to be few, whether it was for a short-term spin in the working world before moving on to university, or seeking a career path. Most students believed that the only jobs which were available were in food and beverage (waitress or bartending)."

## LEADING THE CHARGE

Observing the growth of the industry and the contribution it had made to the economy, she decided that if she led the charge and begin the conversation between students and their peers, in the form of a debate, they would begin to understand the dimension of this industry.

The National Tourism Debate was born out of the need to fill the void that existed, Tulloch explained.

"I realised that if our students became more knowledgeable of how the industry works, it would provide corporate Jamaica with well-prepared recruits, a better calibre of persons for employment."

The National Tourism Debate, now in its 10th year, was officially launched three weeks ago at the S Hotel Convention Centre with the blessing of the Ministry of Tourism, the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association, and



Michelle Tulloch

the Montego Bay Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Admitting that her intentions were also strategic, owing to the fact she was also preparing herself to start her own business, Tulloch said this was clearly a niche that wasn't satisfactorily filled.

"In order to develop a viable debate, this was an unserved niche which would be responsive in terms of participation and sponsorship," she tells **Hospitality Jamaica**.

Focusing on community projects and tourism, her company first considered a football knockout competition. But they scratched that, and in 2010 created the Western Tourism Debate, which was the nucleus of what now exists.

"We approached the Minister of tourism, Edmund Bartlett, who encouraged us to go national, to engage all schools islandwide."

And 10 years later, she says the National Tourism Debate is on its way to becoming a national institution. "It has been fully embraced by the students and administrators of the more than 20 schools that are participating this year, and continues to grow from year to year."

It was easy for Tulloch to take



Belair High School students receiving their \$100,000 prize for placing first in the 2019 National Tourism Debate from Kerry Thomas (left) of 1 Luv TV and Michelle Tulloch (right). CONTRIBUTED



Michelle Tulloch (left) with students and their teacher from Belair High in Mandeville. CONTRIBUTED

this route as well, owing to the unofficial title she has been given by those who know her. "She is regarded by many as a promotional guru. Michelle is head of her own communications company, 1 Luv TV, and executive director of the National Tourism Debate. Her years of experience includes having

assisted many commercial entities in Jamaica and The Bahamas to achieve improved performance," National Tourism Debate judge Clinton Pickering says.

Tulloch has had vast amount of experience managing a number of businesses. After acquiring early work experience in a family

business in hotel pest control and sanitation, she moved into newspaper sales and marketing, where she excelled at generating successful promotions in print. She later added television advertising and marketing strategies to her skill set. She broadened her experience in The Bahamas, where she worked on the promotional positioning on two major projects, one in tourism and the other in service production.

She returned to Jamaica, to Montego Bay in particular, years later to draw on her combined experience to establish 1 Luv TV, Montego Bay's hometown station, which now has a coverage 'footprint' that reaches as far as Negril.

"Ms Tulloch's communication and interpersonal skills assist in translating her creative and promotional ideas into reality for the bottom line benefit of her clients," said Pickering, lauding her.

Her National Tourism Debate attracts schools across the island, including St James, Westmoreland, Hanover, Manchester, St Ann, Kingston and St Andrew.

**Hospitality Jamaica** celebrates Michelle Tulloch as a Woman in Tourism.

Email us at [hospitalityjamaica@gleanerjm.com](mailto:hospitalityjamaica@gleanerjm.com)

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# Sugarcane Bay Hotel investment to bring 375,000 visitors to St Ann

## CARL GILCHRIST

*Hospitality Jamaica Writer*

**I**N WHAT is considered the biggest tourism investment locally, ground was broken last Friday in Llandoverly, St Ann, for the construction of the Sugarcane Bay Hotel, a US\$1-billion project, which is expected to build 4,700 rooms over a 10-year period.

In welcoming the investment in St Ann, Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett noted that over the last three years, much of the investment in the tourism product has been in Trelawny, St James, Hanover, and Westmoreland.

“And what a development it is,” he observed. “It’s going to bring a billion dollars of investment, which is the largest investment ever in hotel business in Jamaica and arguably any other business; it will bring a total of 375,000 visitors to the parish, which will increase the contribution of St Ann to hotel development and to tourism and the economy overall.”

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Andrew Holness has assured the investors that investing in Jamaica was a safe bet.

“You’re on a very solid



Prime Minister Andrew Holness, Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett and Mayor of St Ann’s Bay Michael Belnavis (fifth, sixth and seventh from left, respectively) and members of the Karisma Hotel chain symbolically break ground to start construction of Sugarcane Bay Hotel in St Ann. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS**

institutional foundation, so your investments will be secured,” Holness stated. “It will be secured from a legal perspective; our judicial system is very strong and resolves commercial disputes appropriately.”

He said the Government

practises fiscal discipline as an established policy, regardless of which party is in power.

“So you can be certain that whatever you invest here will not be at the mercy of whimsical

tax policy or other forms of regulations that could deplete or ruin your business.”

The development, spread

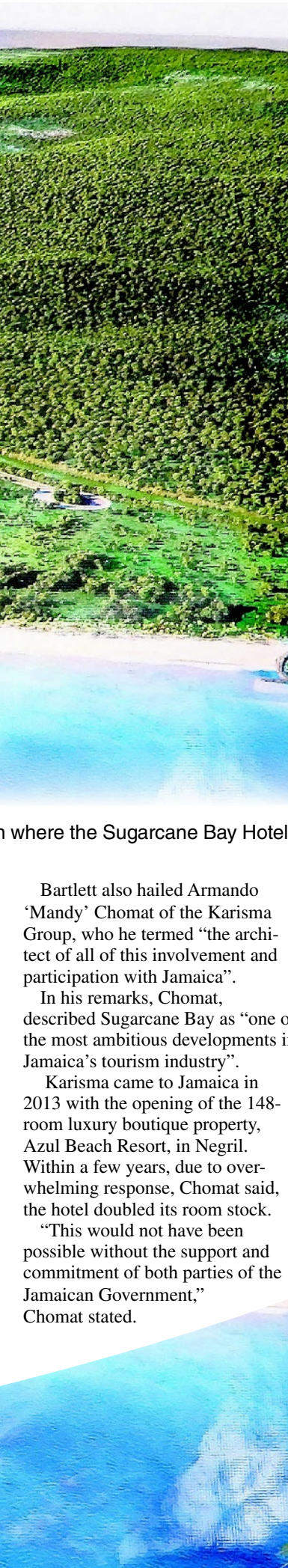
An aerial shot of the lands in St Ann will be sited.

across 226 acres of land located between Salem, Runaway Bay and Priory, is expected to provide 10,000 jobs and inject J\$850 million annually into the economy. Upon completion, it is expected to pull 375,000 tourists annually to St Ann.

Bartlett hailed Dr Wykeham McNeill for the role he played during his tenure as minister of tourism, noting that the development stretched back several years.

According to Bartlett: “It’s perhaps the longest gestation period that a development facility has had in many, many years; and because it has taken us so long to have it, we’re now satisfied that everything is in place for it to move with alacrity, with speed, and also to accomplish that which it is designed to do; and what it is designed to do is to reimagine the parish of St Ann.”





CAROLYN MCDONALD-RILEY

# The 'link' in tourism linkages



Carolyn McDonald-Riley presents a plaque to one of the chefs in the Tourism Linkages Network food competition.

**C**URRENTLY THE director of the Tourism Linkages Network at the Tourism Enhancement Fund, Carolyn McDonald-Riley is a Jamaican national, and brings with her many years of experience in the public and private sectors.

She has been tasked by the Ministry of Tourism, as a priority, to coordinate and implement effective sustainable strategies to strengthen as well as facilitate linkages between tourism and other economic sectors, namely, agriculture, manufacturing and entertainment.

McDonald-Riley's previous experience as the economist for the tourism ministry, where she spent over 10 years, included administering the incentives schemes of the sector, monitoring the industry performance, and analysing its impact and opportunities.

In addition, she has worked with a wide cross section of stakeholders representing public, private and non-government interest groups. McDonald-Riley has played an integral role in the development of several policies geared at sustainability, diversification, growth, and promoting efficiency within the industry.

She is also an attorney-at-law and is qualified to practise in Jamaica. She is a trained and certified mediator with the Dispute Resolution Foundation. Her qualification includes an MBA from The University of the West Indies in finance and public sector management and a BSC in economics.

In 2006, she was the tourism ministry's nominee for the Civil Servant of the Year Award. She is also a distinguished president of the Kiwanis Movement and currently the district administrator for Circle K, which has the responsibility for the Caribbean District Circle K clubs. She is married to Joseph, and they have three children.



The link in the midst, Carolyn McDonald-Riley (right) share lens time with (from left) Metry Seaga, Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett, Minister Floyd Green, Jamaica Manufacturers and Exporters' Association President Richard Pandohie, and Tourism Enhancement Fund's Executive Director, Dr Carey Wallace. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

where the Sugarcane Bay Hotel

Bartlett also hailed Armando 'Mandy' Chomat of the Karisma Group, who he termed "the architect of all of this involvement and participation with Jamaica".

In his remarks, Chomat, described Sugarcane Bay as "one of the most ambitious developments in Jamaica's tourism industry".

Karisma came to Jamaica in 2013 with the opening of the 148-room luxury boutique property, Azul Beach Resort, in Negril. Within a few years, due to overwhelming response, Chomat said, the hotel doubled its room stock.

"This would not have been possible without the support and commitment of both parties of the Jamaican Government," Chomat stated.



From left: Pam DeHaan, director of marketing, TripCentral; Gayla Bejczak, Sunwing Vacations; Angella Bennet, regional director, Jamaica Tourist Board, Canada; Dianne Jackson, VP, retail, Red Label Vacations CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Hockey fans were happy to receive Jamaica-themed products.



Estatic hockey fans.

# JAMAICA TOURIST BOARD SCORES WITH HOCKEY FANS

**J**AMAICA TOURIST Board (JTB) brought the unique spirit of Jamaica to a packed ice arena in Toronto, Ontario, at a nail-biting hockey game between the Toronto Maple Leafs and the Arizona Coyotes in February.

As the title sponsor, Destination Jamaica was visible to the more than 16,000 hockey fans who descended on Scotiabank Arena in downtown Toronto to catch the game. Fans were delighted with the many Jamaica-inspired promotional activities that took over the stadium for the night. The game was also televised across Canada, reaching 1,930,000 at-home viewers.

Centre ice glowed with Jamaica's vibrant rhodamine 'Red logo' while Toronto band The Arsenals provided a soundtrack of pulsating Jamaican ska music, infusing the air with a distinct irie energy. Throughout the night, attendees were invited to participate in a 'Spin the Wheel' contest for a chance to win swag bags filled with



From left: Simone Smith, chief reporter, Toronto Caribbean Newspaper, poses with Jamaica Tourist Board's Angella Bennet, regional director, Canada, and Donald Dawson, deputy director of tourism, sales.

Jamaica-branded products, such as hockey pucks, knit toques, mugs, baseball hats, T-shirts and more.

During the game, JTB hosted an exclusive reception for VIP guests in an upper-level private box with

a spectacular view overlooking the rink. Destination Jamaica representatives shared information about the island's recent 'Jamaica, Heartbeat of the World' campaign as they mingled with members

of the media, industry partners, travel agents and tour operators, while enjoying the excitement of the hockey game. Guests tucked into a spread of Jamaican-inspired cuisine, including jerked chicken,

beef sliders, lamb 'lollipops' and coconut shrimp, served alongside an open bar that offered Appleton Estate Rum.

Jamaica also partnered with Ocean Coral Spring by H10 and Red Tag Vacations in a half-time giveaway for one lucky winner, who received a seven-night all-inclusive stay for two at the brand new five-star Montego Bay resort and a travel voucher for [RedTag.ca](http://RedTag.ca) valued at US\$2,500.

"Canadians certainly love their hockey, and Jamaica's partnership with the Toronto Maple Leafs gave us an amazing opportunity to connect with fans and showcase Jamaica's undeniable energy and appeal," said Donald Dawson, deputy director of tourism, sales, Jamaica Tourist Board.



Dr Andrew Spencer (centre, back row), executive director of the Tourism Product Development Company Limited (TPDCo), and David Dobson (third from right, back row), – senior director in the Ministry of Tourism, pose with individual finalists of the 2019 Tourism Service Excellence Awards (TSEA). From left (back row) are Angelita McDonald – Montego Bay, Paul Norman – Ocho Rios, Akeem Miller – Port Antonio, Kenard Swaby – Kingston, Leroy Miller-Port Antonio. Front row (from left): Maxine Henry – Negril, Giselle Bradshaw – Negril, Marsha Wiles – Ocho Rios, Sherritta Savage – Montego Bay and Celia Steele – Kingston. The occasion was the announcement of the 2019 TSEA finalists. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

# 25 finalists to vie for Tourism Service Excellence Awards

**T**WENTY-FIVE FINALISTS are set to contend for the major award of national champions in the Tourism Service Excellence Awards (TSEA) comes March 14.

The announcement of the 2019 finalists took place last week at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel in Kingston.

The finalists, 12 which represent organisations, 10 from the individual category, three from craft, and one from the raft captain category, were selected from the six resort areas.

Some 207 nominations were received this year, a dramatic increase from last year's 107. The nominations came from the major subsectors of the tourism industry, from which 87 semi-finalists were shortlisted and further narrowed to decide the 25 contenders for the major awards and prizes.

Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett, who was unavoidably absent, brought his message via video recording.

He stated that 60 per cent of the value of experience of the visitor in the destination was service.

"It's you who have made the connection between hearts in tourism. What we offer is larger than they



Dr Andrew Spencer (third from left, back row), executive director of the Tourism Product Development Company Limited (TPDCo), and David Dobson (fourth from left, back row), senior director in the Ministry of Tourism, join the organisation's finalists of the 2019 Tourism Service Excellence Awards (TSEA). They represent Sandals Negril Resort and Spa, Chukka Caribbean Adventures, Mystic Mountains, Blue Mountain Bicycle Tours, Joy Spence Appleton Estate Rum Tour, Courtleigh Hotel and Suites. Club MoBay, Chukka Caribbean Adventures, Mikisha Silvera (TSEA coordinator), Golden Eye Resort, Jakes Hotel Treasure Beach, Sunset at the Palms, Beaches Negril and VIP Attractions. The occasion was the announcement of the 2019 TSEA finalists.

can take back home, that only their hearts can contain it. The Service Excellence Awards, therefore, is when we pause to celebrate and show appreciation for your service. It is the totality of your interaction

that makes it possible for our sector to be performing so well."

According to Dr Andrew Spencer, executive director of the Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCo), his excitement

of TSEA 2019 stems from the record number of applications this year and the new categories, which are important, "as we focus on all areas of the sector which in the past have been under-represented.

Second, the programme has become institutionalised and is now a staple that players in the industry look forward to".

The finalists for the 2019 TSEA in the individual category are Celia Steele and Kenard Swaby from Kingston, Leroy Miller and Akeem Miller from Port Antonio, Giselle Bradshaw and Maxine Henry from Negril, Angelita McDonald and Sherritta Savage from Montego Bay, Paul Norman and Marsha Wiles from Ocho Rios.

From the organisation category are Courtleigh Hotel and VIP Attractions – Kingston; Blue Mountain Bicycle Tours – Port Antonio; The Joy Spence Appleton Estate Experience and Jakes Hotel Treasure Beach – south coast; Sunset at the Palms, Sandals Negril Beach Resort and Spa, and Beaches Negril Resort and Spa – Negril; Club MoBay and Chukka Caribbean Adventures – Montego Bay; and Golden Eye Resort and Spa, Mystic Mountain – Ocho Rios.

At the awards ceremony later in March, two finalists from the Organisation and individual categories will be named national champions for the 2019 TSEA.

The initiative, which is in its eighth iteration, was created by the Ministry of Tourism and implemented annually by the TPDCo. The awards seek to recognise and reward tourism entities and individuals that have consistently provided exemplary service within the tourism industry.

JWN Academy's Dajorn Commock showing patrons at a Jamaica Rum Festival seminar how to do it.



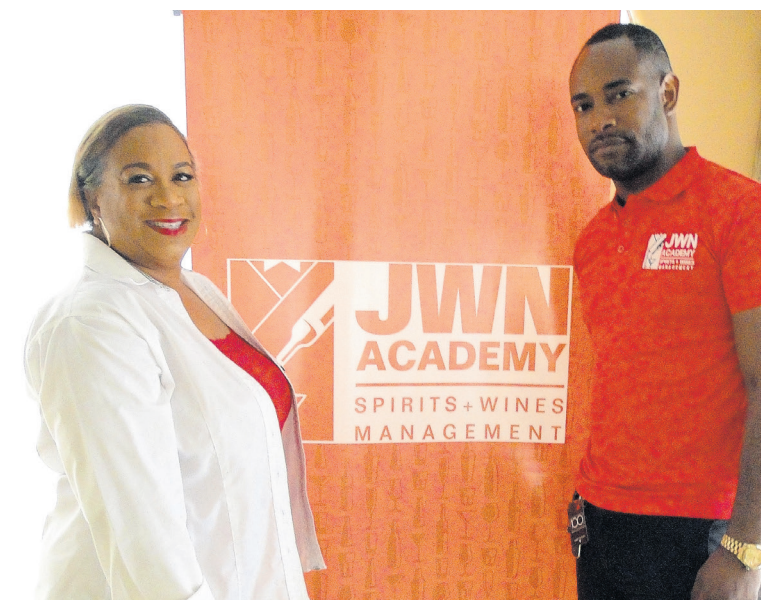
# JWN Academy preparing people for the *HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY*

**Paul H. Williams**  
*Hospitality Jamaica Writer*

**L**IQUORS ARE a major part of the tourist and hospitality industries. They are inseparable. Industry workers such as hosts, bartenders and bar supervisors, and beverage managers then must have a comprehensive knowledge of those alcoholic staples. Thus training is key.

It is offered by many institutions across the country.

Yet one company that is directly involved in the production of liquor is playing a major role in the training of bartenders and bar supervisors, *et al.* For three to four years now, JWN Academy has evolved into a popular place to go to get training. It is an affiliate of the



Former instructor Sharmon Hind-Smith and former student Dajorn Commock now working side by side.

This is how you stir it, Chantal Wilson, of JWN Academy, seems to be saying.



JWN Academy graduates putting some style into the mix at the 2020 Jamaica Rum Festival on Saturday, February 29. PHOTOS BY PAUL WILLIAMS

Campari Academy, and JWN is owned by Grupo Campari.

**Hospitality Jamaica** recently spoke with Sharmon Hinds-Smith, lead instructor, about the roles that the academy is playing in the training of personnel in the hospitality and tourism sectors. One role is promotional as the company wants to make sure that people are aware of its products and choose their products for the right reasons. “It is to cement people’s thoughts about our products and brands,” Hinds-Smith said.

Thus, there is training about the individual brands, which is product knowledge; about how to use and mix the products; and about how to enjoy them in a responsible and safe way. It trains bartenders and bar supervisors, and there is a consumer course on creating cocktails. It is about learning

about rums and aperitifs, and the doors are open to anybody who wants to learn. Hinds-Smith said many hotels take advantage of the courses offered.

Some of these courses are Professional Bartending Levels One and Two, and a beginners course in rums, aperitifs, and digestives.

But it is not just about the knowledge of liquors themselves, and it is very much more than pouring beverages into glasses. It is also about presentation, serving with flair, and at the Jamaica Rum Festival last weekend, patrons got a chance to see the mixing and serving skills of some of the graduates of the academy.

The essence was about educating and entertaining guests and patrons. In a dazzling, synchronised dance routine that also included singing, rapping, and

modelling, some of the graduates showed thousands of patrons what they had learnt from the academy. It was a well-received presentation, the kind that many people might not otherwise get a chance to see. It was symbolic of the kind of services that JWN Academy has to offer and the skills of the people that it has trained over the years.

Hinds-Smith said the academy is “quite popular and has good standing in the adult-beverage industry”, and “a lot of persons recommend us to their employees when they want to get them a little more skilled”.

Dajorn Commock, who is a graduate and now a bar supervisor, said the training was “great” and that he learnt all his skills at the academy.



JWN Academy’s Joedie Foreshaw modelling his muddling at a seminar at the 2020 Jamaica Rum Festival.

# Fashion turns heads at Jamaica Rum Fest



Khristia Franklin says the idea is all hers.

**T**HE 2020 JAMAICA Rum Festival, which took place on the grounds of Hope Gardens on Saturday, February 29 and Sunday, March 1, was a bumper affair.

Two days of a packed venue it was, and to me it was bigger than the first staging last year.

I thoroughly enjoyed myself over the two days even though I was working. From the booths selling some exquisite locally made items, the variety of food, the eclectic music, the samplings, and, of course, the liquors, more so the rum, there was so much to see and taste, so much to turn patrons' heads.

The kaleidoscope of the Jamaica people was out in all its colourfulness, and many went to display their fashion sense. But, a festival such

as this can really cause some people to go into fashion overdrive and you cannot help noticing them, even if you don't care.

And I really do not care about what people wear. It is their call.

However, the storyteller/writer in me has no boundaries when it sees things that are really out of the box, and Rum Fest 2020 had some people jumping way out of the box. They could not be contained.

Like the tall, dark, skinny young man wearing boots. He had a black piece of leather tied around his neck as if it were a leash.

He was walking very fast, as if he were running



J. Wray and Nephew's brand ambassador, St Aubyn 'Captain Kidd' Kidd, is ready for take-off. PHOTOS BY PAUL WILLIAMS



Whose shoes are these?

away from his owner. Another young man, with a French Christian name and a Chinese surname, donned Russian-style trousers and

boots that belie his youth.

At one point I started to concoct a short story based on the tall, full-bodied woman



Toussaint Chen making a bold pants-and-boots statement.

who went around in a short, purple, satin 'nightie'. I wondered whether she had woken up and headed straight to the festival, or she was going to sleep over in the gardens after the show. In the story, I wrote about how she got into Hope Gardens in her nightie, and what happened after the show. The power of imagination.

While talking to a friend, I saw a young woman in a leopard-print pants and a white brassiere-looking wrap for a blouse. I went over and introduced myself. She laughed and shouted, "Sir!"

In my embarrassment, I laughed and I embraced my former student of two years ago whom I did not recognise. That one called for a little rum, so I went in search of a sample as soon as I snapped her and an associate she had not seen for a while.

The brands were not outdone in the ways in which they dressed their 'ambassadors'. Some of these young people left nothing to the imagination, while other



The palooza is back!

kept it subdued. The young man in the black, green and gold Wray and Nephew pilot-influenced attire took branding to another level – way, way into the skies.

While the paloozas were a hit with the women, the cross earrings were on the list of things to wear for the men. The crosses were dangling all over the place while the spirits flowed. The juxtaposition was so stark that I asked myself, "Where is Jesus in all of this, in this the season of Lent?"

And whoever resurrected the paloozas is a winner, for those loose-fitting get-ups that went to the fashion graveyard decades ago were up and walking, especially the striped ones made in China.

While I was staring at an outstanding pair of shoes, the wearer said, "No picha." But when I told her I wasn't interested in her white rompers, she gave permission for the red, white and blue platforms to be taken.

The 2020 Rum Fest was indeed a fashion parade, the epicentre of which was the area

where there was a backdrop on either side of a mounted walkway. There, thousands of pictures, perhaps, were taken as patrons show off what they were wearing. Suddenly, everybody was a model, and the smiles on their faces betrayed their happiness. I cannot recall another event where I have had seen so many happy faces.

On day one, rain, which started early in the morning threatened to dilute the strengths of the occasion, and halt the fashion parade. But, rain or shine, the 'runways' were happening. And it wasn't the rums alone that caused some heads to turn. What some people wore had others spinning about the place.



Lauren Jones of Brooklyn, NY, is a standout in red.



Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett (seated first right) paused for a photo op with tourism workers at the pension sensitisation session at Hotel Tim Bamboo in Portland last Thursday. Sharing in the moment are Mayor of Port Antonio Paul Thompson (seated first left) and Destination Manager for Portland and St Thomas Daryl Whyte-Wong (standing left). The minister announced that registration for the scheme would begin on March 27, 2020. **CONTRIBUTED**

# Bartlett announces date for registration of the Tourism Workers' Pension Scheme

**T**OURISM MINISTER Edmund Bartlett has announced that registration for the historical and highly anticipated Tourism Workers' Pension Scheme will begin on March 27, 2020.

The landmark Tourism Workers' Pension Scheme is designed to cover all workers ages 18-59 years in the tourism sector, whether permanent, contract, or self-employed. This includes hotel workers as well as persons employed in related industries such as craft vendors, tour operators, red-cap porters, contract carriage operators, and workers at attractions.

Speaking at a sensitisation session at Hotel Tim Bamboo in Portland last Thursday [February 27, 2020], Bartlett said "I am extremely pleased that after all the hard work of the senior technocrats of my ministry along with the board of trustees, registration for the scheme will begin on March 27, 2020, at the Montego

Bay Convention Centre. This is truly tourism working for all.

"I am urging all workers in the sector to go out and sign up so they can benefit by contributing to their own retirement after giving of themselves so tirelessly."

The board of trustees, which oversees the scheme, is set to announce an investment manager and a fund administrator to manage the operations of the scheme shortly.

Bartlett added that, "The development of the regulations for the act is nearly complete, which will provide the guidelines on how the scheme will operate."

The regulations will also provide for an augmented pension. Augmented pension beneficiaries will be persons who joined the scheme at 59 years old and would not have saved enough for a pension. With the ministry's injection of \$1 billion to augment the fund, these persons will qualify for a

minimum pension.

The scheme has received overwhelming support from workers, employers, and other stakeholders in the sector who have lauded it as a critical piece of social legislation that will positively impact on many lives.

"This is the time for all tourism workers to feel confident that at the end of their years of service in the sector they love, they can have a guaranteed pension to take care of themselves," said Bartlett.

Sensitisation sessions to educate workers and stakeholders will continue as part of the ministry's awareness efforts and culminate at the Montego Bay Convention Centre for the beginning of the registration process on March 27 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett addressed a wide cross section of tourism workers at Hotel Tim Bamboo in Portland last Thursday to sensitise them to the Tourism Workers' Pension Scheme. The minister announced that registration for the scheme would begin on March 27, 2020. **PHOTO BY JANET SILVERA**