

CHTA salutes Icons of Hospitality

Jamaica's Edmund Bartlett receives President's Award for Caribbean Tourism Excellence

BARBADOS, May 23, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Giants of Caribbean tourism were honored by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) as Icons of Caribbean Hospitality, the highest recognition the association bestows.

Gordon "Butch" Stewart of Jamaica, Sir Royston Hopkin of Grenada, and George Myers of Jamaica who rose to prominence in the Bahamas were lauded during the second annual Caribbean Travel Forum, held in Barbados this month. CHTA President Nicola Madden-Greig presented the awards posthumously to the three legends.

During his lifetime, Stewart, founder of Sandals Resorts International, elevated Caribbean tourism to the pinnacles of global leadership in sustainable luxury. He was also known for his commitment to improving the quality of life and employment opportunities for those in the most dynamic sector of the regional economy.

"Three determined young men dreamed of making their mark in Caribbean tourism and hospitality, and along the way, they forged a new path, mentoring and molding other young Caribbean dreamers to aim for excellence. They have now been named Icons of Hospitality by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association, and I could not be prouder," said Adam Stewart, son of the famed hotelier and Executive Chairman of Sandals Resorts International.

"To Sir Royston, my dad's good friend; to Uncle George, who led the way and made us laugh, and to Father, my hero, and the biggest dreamer of them all: Your example of how to build lives of service and contribution continues to inspire us all. We – the next generation of Caribbean hoteliers, stand on your shoulders, and you can be certain that the high expectations you have



CHTA President Nicola Madden-Greig presents the late Gordon "Butch" Stewart's Icon of Caribbean Hospitality award to his son Adam Stewart, Executive Chairman, Sandals Resorts International.

set for us all will be exceeded for and because of you,” he added.

Sir Royston Hopkin was bestowed the Icon Award not only for his professional achievements as an internationally recognized hotelier, stated Madden-Greig, but also for “a vision larger than himself, his hotel [Spice Island Beach Resort], and his island, which inspired – and continues to inspire – succeeding generations.”

Hopkin’s daughter, Janelle Hopkin, who serves as President and Managing Director of Spice Island Beach Resort, recalled that starting at 21 and continuing for more than 50 years, Sir Royston’s dedication to “Spice”, the local and regional hospitality industry, and Grenada in general, gained him the respect and admiration of his fellow hoteliers, deep friendships, and fans around the world. From humble beginnings to his knighthood by Queen Elizabeth II, his career was the epitome of lifetime achievement.



Kendra Hopkin Stewart, President of the Grenada Hotel & Tourism Association (center), accepts the late Sir Royston Hopkin’s Icon of Caribbean Hospitality award from CHTA President Nicola Madden-Greig and Acting CEO & Director General, Vanessa Ledesma.

Hopkin was a natural talent, she recalled. “Hospitality is a service-based business – for people, by people. There are certain things you can learn in this business, and others you cannot. My father had a way with people. His instinct was unerring. He also possessed an uncanny ability to work with and through them. For me, those were his greatest assets.”

She continued: “Thank you CHTA for bestowing this honor upon him. Although I could not be in attendance, the moment was truly special. It was an opportunity to not only pay tribute to a true icon in the industry, but also a chance to recognize the lifelong achievement of a great and well-respected man, who also happened to be my dad.”

CHTA also saluted Caribbean tourism stalwart and preeminent Caribbean businessman, the late George Myers, a legendary figure dearly cherished in his native Jamaica, and revered in the Bahamas and throughout the region. He was especially known for his pivotal role in shaping the tourism landscape of Nassau Paradise Island, for mentoring many across the industry, and for providing employment opportunities for Bahamians and Caribbean nationals over the decades.

Frank Comito, former CHTA CEO and Director General, reflected that Myers' contribution to the development and growth of tourism in the Bahamas and the Caribbean was immeasurable.

"He recognized the depth and power of marketing the Caribbean brand when over 40 years ago he was one of the founders of Caribbean Travel Marketplace, which continues today and has helped to attract millions of additional visitors to the region every year.

"He taught us the value of partnerships and collaboration, leading by example as President of the Bahamas and Caribbean hotel associations and founder and longstanding chair of the Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Board. He had a special knack for identifying talent and through his companies and organizations, he identified and supported the professional development of hundreds of Caribbean nationals. We are all better because of George."



Joy Jibrilu, CEO of the Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Board (right), accepts the late George Myers' Icon of Caribbean Hospitality award from CHTA President Nicola Madden-Greig.

The honorees were heralded for mentoring today's generation of hoteliers, their philanthropy efforts, and their strong support of CHTA throughout the years.

Edmund Bartlett, Jamaica's Minister of Tourism, received the first CHTA President's Award for Caribbean Tourism Excellence.

One of the minister's notable international successes was the establishment of the Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre, which brings together distinguished international experts to examine resilience from several viewpoints, and which Madden-Greig described as "a timely and much needed forum for the examination of the key elements needed to strengthen the region's major economic driver, tourism."

"As the longest serving tourism minister in the Caribbean, Minister Bartlett has placed the region at the forefront of leading international initiatives and we are very proud of him," she said.

About the Caribbean Hotel and
Tourism Association (CHTA)

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) is the Caribbean's leading association representing the interests of national hotel and tourism associations. For more than 60 years, CHTA has been the backbone of the Caribbean hospitality industry. Working with some 1,000 hotel and allied members, and 33 National Hotel Associations, CHTA is shaping the Caribbean's future and helping members to grow their businesses. Whether helping to navigate critical issues in sales and marketing, sustainability, legislative issues, emerging technologies, climate change, data and intelligence or, looking for avenues and ideas to better market and manage businesses, CHTA is helping members on issues which matter most.

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