

NO: 76/19

## **BARBADIANS URGED: REPAY TRUST LOANS**

Minister of Small Business, Entrepreneurship and Commerce, Dwight Sutherland, is urging all persons who receive seed capital from the Trust Loan Fund Unit to repay those loans.

He was speaking on Tuesday in Bridgetown, following a visit to Liz Catering Beverages, a business operated by David Harewood at the River Bus Terminal.

Acknowledging that Mr. Harewood had successfully repaid his loan to the Unit, in two months, the Minister said: "I am urging all those persons who access the seed capital to indeed [know] we trust you and we want you to trust yourself. There are some people who are in the minority that we are having challenges with in terms of finding them, but that is in the minority. But I know that 99 per cent of the persons who would have accessed the loan...would have benefited from the loan in terms of enhancing their business.

"We want you to do the right thing which is to repay the loan. There may be challenging times and some months you may miss a payment; at least call the Trust Loan manager/officer or whoever and say to them...we cannot pay this month, but I can only pay like a small portion of what I am supposed to pay. We will work with you. But do not come and take the money with the view that you are not going to repay. We have ways and means of recovering our money, and...we'll put the necessary systems in place to ensure that we recover the money."

Clearing up a misconception that everyone seeking \$5,000 would receive this amount, Mr. Sutherland stressed that the trust loan was up to \$5,000. Stating that he didn't want people to believe they would get \$5000 because they requested it.

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**ADD: BARBADIANS URGED: REPAY TRUST LOANS -1**

He said if the Unit analysed that the need was only for \$3,000, this amount would be disbursed.

“It is a need and not a want because we have other persons there who really would like to access the funding, and it is up to \$5,000 and not you are coming for \$5,000, if you need \$2,500. We will assess your need and we will give you the funds accordingly,” the Commerce Minister said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Harewood, who said he had operated in the ‘van stand’ since 2004, noted that he received the loan in November 2018, and had carved out a niche selling juices, which contained no corn syrup as well as pastries that were in demand. “I did that and was rather successful.... The product is Tropical Delite out of Canada, and it is corn syrup free.... I just provided samples of the products to the customers and it took off from there,” he stated.

Asked if he would encourage others to access the trust loan, he said “Yes, because it is easily accessible. The Government made it possible for small people to get it and expand themselves instead of sitting down. I love it. I would advise any youngster who really serious, you’ve got to be serious about what you are doing though, to come on board and get little help.”

Mr. Harewood, who should be receiving another loan from the Unit, added that he envisaged himself in the next few years as an importer with plans “to open a little warehouse” handling products “way different” from what currently exists.

**(JG/BGIS)**

NO: 77/19

### **CDD TO HONOUR 12 WOMEN**

Members of the public have the opportunity to nominate outstanding women in their communities to be honoured in observance of International Women's Day on March 8.

The Community Development Department (CDD) will partner with the Institute for Gender and Development Studies of the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus to recognize eleven women, one from each parish, as well as one woman in her twenties.

Nominees should be women who have made a difference in the community, or society at large in any social issue, such as gender-based violence, child welfare or entrepreneurship.

Nomination forms may be collected from the Community Development Department, East Wing 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Warrens Office Complex, Warrens, St. Michael, or any community or resource centre.

Completed forms must be returned to the respective centres of the CDD by Friday, February 8.

For more information, persons should call 535-1655, or visit the nearest community or resource centre. **(PHG/BGIS)**

NO: 78/19

### **ST. PETER PARISH MONTH CELEBRATIONS NEXT MONTH**

Past and present residents of St. Peter are invited to celebrate their parish next month at a number of activities hosted by the St. Peter Parish Independence Committee.

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**ADD: ST. PETER PARISH MONTH CELEBRATIONS NEXT MONTH-1**

The month of activities will begin with a Heritage Breakfast Walk, on Saturday, February 9, from Orange Street (Esplanade). Registration will take place from 6:00 a.m., and the walk will begin at 6:30 a.m. Breakfast will be available at the end of the walk for a small fee, and will be served at Orange Street.

On Friday, February 15, there will be a family event called 'Parish Feud', and on Saturday, February 23, a Poetry Nite will be held. Both will begin at 7:00 p.m. Poets from St. Peter and other guests will be performing, and persons would be invited to perform at the open mike session.

For more information, persons should call the Community Independence Celebrations Secretariat at 621- 2700, or email [cicsbarbados@gmail.com](mailto:cicsbarbados@gmail.com).

**(CICS/BGIS)**

**ATTENTION NEW EDITOR:**

**YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO COVER THESE EVENTS.**

NO: 79/19

**EMPLOYERS LOOKING FOR WELL-ROUNDED WORKERS**

Today's employer is looking to hire well-rounded individuals who are "workplace ready" by possessing skill sets that complement their academic achievements.

Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training, Dr. Romel Springer, stressed this recently, while speaking at Alexandra School's annual Speech Day and Prize-Giving ceremony.

Dr. Springer told students, faculty and parents that the face of education had changed globally and it did not look the same as when they were going to school.

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**ADD: EMPLOYERS LOOKING FOR WELL-ROUNDED WORKERS-1**

He pointed out that if the Ministry was to realize its mandate “to assist in the development of responsible citizens who are disciplined, industrious, creative and confident and who can function effectively in a modern society”, then it was crucial that greater attention be paid to engaging students in active learning in an effort to make them workplace ready.

“The challenge, however, is that many of these jobs for which you are being prepared have not even been created as yet, hence the need for you to be adaptable and to be competent in a skill set which complements academic achievement. Employers require creative and problem-solving skills and an ability to adapt to change. School is therefore challenged to engage students in an atmosphere which will facilitate an easy transition to the work place.

“To this end the introduction of the Caribbean Vocational Certificate (CVQ) alongside the more familiar CXC certification offers students an opportunity to work in a collaborative environment and to exhibit their creativity in a practical way. The CVQ programme allows for the practical application of academic principles and offers a realistic insight into workplace practices and expectations,” he asserted.

The Parliamentary Secretary reinforced the point that the ability to be a team player was a “highly desirable” trait in today’s workplace, and the project based learning in the CVQ programme allowed for this skill to develop. He said he was “heartened” to see that the Alexandra School had been steadily increasing its subject offerings for certification at the CVQ level.

He also directed his comments to parents saying that schools could not produce outstanding citizens without the support of home and family.

**ADD: EMPLOYERS LOOKING FOR WELL-ROUNDED WORKERS-2**

“I challenge you today to be an integral part of the solution to the problems facing our young people. Be bold and assume your role as parents. Be bold to lend support for that which is good and to be intolerant of that which is bad.

“Set the right example so that when your child follows in your footsteps you can proudly declare imitation to be the best form of flattery. You have a responsibility to lend support if education is to be used as the vehicle to take your child, your family and this country forward,” he urged. **(MR/BGIS)**

NO: 80/19

**CONSULTATIONS DONE & ENOUGH TIME GIVEN**

Enough time and consultations were given prior to Government’s announcement that all petro-based single use plastics will be banned in Barbados from Monday, April 1.

Minister of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy, Kirk Humphrey, made this clear during a joint press conference with Minister of the Environment and National Beautification at the Ministry’s Charnocks, Christ Church office, on Tuesday. He was responding to comments that “not enough time was given to get rid of old stock”.

Stating that the time had come for the line to be drawn in the sand, Mr. Humphrey said: “April 1 is that line. After April 1, the items we mentioned will not be able to be used.”

Products such as single-use plastic cups, cutlery, including plastic knives, forks and spoons; stirrers; straws; plates; egg trays (both plastic and styrofoam), and styrofoam containers used in the culinary retail industry will be banned from that date.

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**ADD: CONSULTATIONS DONE & ENOUGH TIME GIVEN-1**

Meanwhile, the ban on all petro-based plastic bags, with the exemption of those used for the packaging of pharmaceuticals/medicines, hygiene and the preservation of food, will take effect from January 1, 2020.

Mr. Humphrey explained that consultations with stakeholders began in early September, and they indicated at that time that the original start date of January 1, 2019 was too soon and that they would need an additional six months to get rid of existing stock.

“That moved us from January [2019] to April [2019] giving people enough time to move the existing stock. Unfortunately, some people, notwithstanding the request for six months, have brought in more styrofoam, needing an additional six months to be able to get rid of it.

“It will not happen in Barbados because I know we have been very, very fair, and because I know we have had the necessary consultation, and because I know we communicated this at every single stage where we were, and because I know that the idea came from them [the manufacturers and importers] to give them until April 1, that request cannot and will not be accommodated,” the Minister stated.

Mr. Humphrey added that his Ministry was presently working with the Chief Parliamentary Counsel to finalize legislation which will carry severe penalties for any breaches.

However, he noted that the aim was to drive the process through a cultural shift and the recognition that everyone had a role to play in protecting the country’s environment for generations to come.

“We know it will take time for people to adjust. We will work with people to ensure that we get where we need to get,” the Minister pointed out.

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**ADD: CONSULTATIONS DONE & ENOUGH TIME GIVEN-1**

He further stated that some manufacturers and retailers have already indicated a willingness to play their part in the process and also fund clean-up campaigns going forward. **(JRB/BGIS)**

NO: 81/19

**MEASURES IN NEW BILL TO ENSURE NO CORRUPTION**

In an effort to prevent corruption, robust measures have been included in the Planning and Development Bill 2019.

This assertion came from attorney-at-law and consultant, Christine Toppin-Allahar, as she gave an overview of the Bill on Tuesday, at a Stakeholder Review for the Planning and Development Bill 2019, at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre.

Ms. Toppin-Allahar said members of the Planning and Development Board and those on the appeal panels would have to declare any conflict of interest. She explained that serious punitive sanctions would be imposed on persons who offered and received bribes.

“It is not fair to penalize people for receiving the bribes, if you do not also penalize the people who offer the bribes...and I think most people will agree with that,” she stated.

The consultant pointed out that to achieve efficiency and accountability, any additional information requirements from applicants must be asked for promptly and upfront by the Chief Town Planner. “There can be no shifting of the goal post... At present, it is often a sequential process. You make your application; they ask you for this; you bring it; then they ask you for that.... That will no longer be allowed,” she stressed.

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**ADD: MEASURES IN NEW BILL TO ENSURE NO CORRUPTION -1**

Ms. Toppin-Allahar pointed out that strict time limits had also been set for the processing of applications, including the inter agency consultations. According to her, uncomplicated applications should take no more than six weeks, while complex ones should take 10 weeks. She explained that deadlines could only be extended with the consent of the applicant, as was the law, before it was deleted several years ago.

She said the Planning and Development Board would be the primary mechanism for decision-making about planning applications in Barbados, although the power of the Minister to deal with applications of strategic importance had been retained. She added that the Chief Town Planner would also make decisions on certain classes of applications.

Ms. Toppin-Allahar further stated that the work of receiving and analyzing planning applications would be in the hands of the Town Planning Department, which would have to make recommendations to the Minister, Board, or Chief Town Planner. **(SABGIS)**

NO: 82/19

**OFFICES OF THE MINISTRY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE OPENING AT 1:30 P.M.**

The offices of the Ministry of the Public Service will open at 1:30 p.m. tomorrow, Thursday, January 24. This late opening is to facilitate the Ministry's first staff meeting under the chairmanship of its Permanent Secretary.

Those offices are: the main administrative office in the E. Humphrey Walcott Building, Corner of Collymore Rock & Culloden Road; the Training Administration section in Warrens Towers II, Warrens, St. Michael; and the Personnel

**OFFICES OF THE MINISTRY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE OPENING AT 1:30 P.M.**

Administration sections, located at “Maxwelton”, Collymore Rock, St. Michael; the back of Holborn Pharmacy, at 36A Pine Road, St. Michael and in Welches Plaza, Welches, St. Michael.

Any inconvenience caused by the late opening of these offices is regretted.

**(SA/BGIS)**

NO: 83/19

**TRAINING TO HELP POSITION TRUST LOAN CLIENTS FOR GLOBAL MARKET**

Training for clients of the Trust Loan Fund (TLF) Unit represents the commencement of a national training initiative intended to position entrepreneurs and small businesses to better leverage opportunities expected from a resurged national economy and global market place.

Small Business Minister, Dwight Sutherland, stated this today, at the official launch of the training at the headquarters of the Small Business Association, Building #4, Harbour Industrial Estate, where clients participated in their first session entitled **Managing Your Small Business**.

Commending the collaborative work of the Small Business Association (SBA) and the TLF, in coordinating the training, he noted that the SBA had, for a long time, played a critical role in developing entrepreneurs and was a key stakeholder articulating a vision for a sector that contributes approximately 67 per cent to the country's Gross Domestic Product.

The TLF, he added, had already begun to punch above its weight and was being recognized as a trailblazer in the provision of affordable finance to small businesses across this country. “The TLF is also being positioned to give added impetus to the national effort to ensure that the micro, small and medium-

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## **ADD: TRAINING TO HELP POSITION TRUST LOAN CLIENTS FOR GLOBAL MARKET-1**

sized enterprise (MSME) sector contributes meaningfully to the growth of the national economy and to give opportunity to average Barbadians to own a business,” Mr. Sutherland said.

Meanwhile, Manager of the Unit, Jerry Amos, in endorsing the Minister’s comments, said: “To date, we have approximately 1,300 applications. We have already approved 352 loans and we have another 111 applications that we have already reviewed and approved and the others, we are just waiting to go through them one by one, as the criteria has changed quite a bit.”

He also noted that the majority of applicants were from the service and retail sectors, with quite a few in manufacturing. Explaining how they were working to encourage others to access the funding, Mr. Amos stated: “What we are trying to do is push the cultural industries. We are trying to get some folks from tourism, so what we are actually going to do is reach out to them and try to see if we can get them to come forward for the loan because some people don’t fully have an understanding of what it is. And, I guess some people are saying ‘well \$5,000 may not be able to meet what they are actually doing, but it can help them to get through.... So, we actually have to get out there and greet them and meet them where they are at.”

**(JG/BGIS)**

NO: 84/19

## **NEW SUITE OF SMALL BUSINESS INITIATIVES ON STREAM**

The training being provided to clients of the Trust Loan Fund (TLF) Unit constitutes a critical component of a new Small Business Development Centre (SBDC) framework, called SBDC Barbados, which should be launched by mid-March.

**ADD: NEW SUITE OF SMALL BUSINESS INITIATIVES ON STREAM-1**

Minister of Small Business, Entrepreneurship and Commerce, Dwight Sutherland, disclosed this today, at the official launch of training for clients of the TLF Unit, at the headquarters of the Small Business Association.

In explaining the SBDC model, he said it was the preferred method which micro, small and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) development would vigorously pursue going forward.

“Essentially, the SBDC Model is a mechanism that applies the resources of government, higher education and the private sector to solve business problems and foster entrepreneurship. SBDCs are therefore business assistance organizations that promote growth, innovation, productivity, revenue generation, and export facilitation through improvements to the MSMEs business administration,” Minister Sutherland said.

Noting that a National SBDC strategy had been developed by his Ministry together with strategic partners, he added that SBDC Barbados would revolutionize service delivery to all small businesses across the island, so they could become more effective and efficient, while being positioned to seize global opportunities.

The Minister said Government remained committed to the establishment of a new suite of small business initiatives, including the Financial Literacy Bureau (FLB) that is expected to play a major role within the wider SBDC programme. Stating it was Government’s intention to ensure Barbadians could make sound financial decisions for their businesses, families and communities, Mr. Sutherland added that the FLB aimed to improve individual financial well-being and literacy and would provide the opportunity for businesses to advance in terms of accessing finance.

**ADD: ADD: NEW SUITE OF SMALL BUSINESS INITIATIVES ON STREAM-2**

Telling participants that their major challenge was one of accessing finance, he stressed: “We are here to ensure that come one year down the road, and as soon as six months down the road, when you graduate from this small seed capital of up to \$5,000, you would have the capacity and the capability to approach any financial institution as a result of what we will be doing from here onwards. So, financial education is a core component of the Bureau’s mission. The first of many of the Bureau’s objectives is to ensure that businesses are provided with timely and understandable information to make responsible decisions about financial transactions....

“Some of you are stand-alone entities with only yourself employed in the businesses, but we want to make sure that come two years down the road, you can indeed employ more than two or three persons and indeed that you see the global market place as your romping ground and not just 166 square miles that we live in. So, we want to provide the capability and the opportunity for you to become export driven, not just operating on these shores.”

Mr. Sutherland also disclosed that from February Government would also be introducing a Community Cluster initiative, as part of the SBDC model, and it would see the lowering of operational and business costs to entrepreneurs, while stimulating innovation and productivity.

According to him, cluster members would be expected to engage in business development training together, share business experiences and opportunities, engage in customer referral practices, form strategic business partnerships and generally seek to trust and support each other as community practitioners.

**(JG/BGIS)**