



Caribbean American Chamber Of Commerce and Industry, Inc. (CACCI)

Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CACCI) Continues to Urge Small Business Owners to Utilize Business Resources At its Power Packed Business Networking Power Breakfast Meeting Series

New York City. The Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc. (CACCI) sponsored its Monthly Membership Networking Power Breakfast Meeting on Friday, April 24, 2009 at its Flatbush Caton Market Conference Center, 814 Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn, NY.

The theme: Small Business Owners: Strategies and Opportunities for Surviving and Thriving during this Economic Downturn was addressed by banking and business experts. George Hulse, Vice President of Health First and CACCI Board Vice Chair served as moderator. Derek Broomes, CACCI Board Chair discussed the downturn in the economy and encouraged participants to take advantage of CACCI's small business services.

Richard G. Campbell and Gavin Ndabahaliye, JPMorgan Chase Business Banking Specialists and Sherry Ann Brown, Carver Federal Savings Bank, Branch Manager, discussed several products, services and financing available for small business owners, and underscored the importance of credit worthiness; William "Bill" November, SCORE Counselor discussed free confidential small business counseling that are available through CACCI for established and startup entrepreneurs, some of whom are making the leap from employee to employer. Edmund Sadio, Owner/Broker, Century 21 Achievers spoke about Affordable Housing, Loan Modification and Home Lending and encouraged the audience to take advantage of the federal, state and city "housing assistance" programs that are in place. Sabra Richardson, former banker and currently CACCI's Director of Small Business Programs discussed NYC DSBS M/WBE Certification Program, the process for accessing government contracts, and CACCI's Financial Literacy Program that helps business owners to become financially sustainable.

CACCI board member Alfred Thiebaud, Owner of Delicioso Tropical Ices, presented a case study and described how he rose from humble beginnings to ownership of a NYC M/WBE certified family-owned company, currently headquartered in the Bronx with over 150 vendors, and plans for a huge expansion to other boroughs. He credited Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (BOEDC) for providing start up technical assistance and help to secure a small business loan.

Joe Ithier, former president of BOEDC, currently a business consultant, brought good news as he announced a new initiative that he and Deborah Martinez, a former New York State Commissioner of the Consumer Protection Board, in collaboration with New York State and Puerto Rico will launch later this year. He further indicated that a Caribbean Trade and Investment office, to be based in Puerto Rico,

will partner with several other organizations in New York including CACCI and the CACCI Trade Center, and with CARICOM. Dr. Waldaba Stewart, Executive Director of the Southern Diaspora Caucus discussed the benefits of fair two-way trade between New York, Caribbean and Latin America. NYC Councilmember Dr. Kendall Stewart reported on the NYC budget, and his continued commitment to support the development of CACCI's Caribbean Trade Center.

Dr. Roy A. Hastick, Sr., President and Founder, CACCI, and Power Breakfast Meeting Convener briefed the audience on one of the outcomes from the recent Summit of the Americas, held in Trinidad and Tobago which was the proposed microenterprise initiative of President Obama's administration which will have a positive impact on the Caribbean and Latin America.

The Hallmark of this event was the presentation of 2009 Membership Plaques to new CACCI members. CACCI president encouraged participants to continue to persevere and use the available business resources that were discussed at this Meeting to survive and thrive during this recession. "Even during these challenging economic times, there are opportunities and free counseling to start, grow and expand your business," Hastick said.

For information on CACCI's next Small Business Assistance Workshop on Marketing and Promoting: Selling your Goods and Services to the Public, May 6th; CTO/CACCI Caribbean Tourism Organization Diaspora Conference June 11th; CACCI's Annual Entrepreneur of the Year Awards Luncheon and Fundraiser, June 19th; or Caribbean Heritage Month activities, or any of CACCI's small business programs such as: NYC DSBS Certification process and preparation, export/import assistance, vending at Flatbush Caton Market—www.flatbushcatonmarket.com; CACCI membership, free confidential business counseling services through CACCI partner SCORE, monthly business networking meetings, referrals for small business financing through CACCI member banks, contact CACCI at info@caccitradecenter.com or Tel.: (718) 834-4544. www.CaribbeanTradeCenter.com.