



DIVISION OF FINANCE AND THE ECONOMY

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT FORUM

Agenda

15th NOVEMBER, 2019
MAGDALENA GRAND BEACH
AND GOLF RESORT



**The New Economy
Enabling The Future**



Agenda

8:00 a.m.	Registration	
8:30 a.m.	Safety Briefing National Anthem Opening Prayer	PASTOR LOWELL OTTLEY
8:37 a.m.	Introduction	Master of Ceremony DR. KERN JOHNSON
8:40 a.m.	Welcome Remarks	ASSEMBLYMAN JOEL JACK Deputy Chief Secretary and Secretary of Finance and the Economy
8:50 a.m.	Address	HON. KELVIN CHARLES Chief Secretary and Secretary of Education, Innovation and Energy
9:05 a.m.	BREAK	
9:15 a.m.	Introduction	Master of Ceremony DR. KERN JOHNSON
9:20 a.m.	Keynote Address The Caribbean's Digital Transformation	DR. KIERON SWIFT <i>Project Development Consultant Inter-American Development Bank</i>
10:00 a.m.	Panel Discussion: Disruptive Technology - Shaping Industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MR. JOHN MOLLENTHIEL <i>Chief Strategy Officer - WiPay</i>• MR. DWIGHT SCOTT <i>Co-CEO, ORBA/Blackrock Technologies</i>• MR. RUSHIO BILLINGS <i>Co-CEO, ORBA /Blackrock Technologies</i>



Agenda

11:00 a.m.	Entertainment	MR. KLEON McPHERSON MR. XAVIER EDWARDS
11:20 a.m.	Sponsor Presentation & Giveaways	
11:30 a.m.	LUNCH	
12.30 p.m.	Presentation: Commercializing Creative Content	DR. KERON NILES <i>(UWI/EDAB – Creative Industries)</i>
1:00 p.m.	Panel Discussion: The Creative Economy - Design Applications and Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DR. KERON NILES <i>UWI/EDAB - Creative Industries</i>• MR. MARCUS LING <i>Founder - Idlewood Bespoke</i>• MS. DAYLE ANGUS <i>Founder - Linkage/ House of Abeje</i>• MS. AVIEN THOMAS <i>Founder – Osanie Trinidad and Tobago</i>
2:00 p.m.	Panel Discussion and Entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MR. JARON NURSE• MR. TYRONE DOMINIC WALTERS• MR. JOEL MURRAY
3:00 p.m.	Vote of Thanks	MS. TRICIA BECKLES <i>Manager, Strategic Business Support and Development Unit Division of Finance and the Economy</i>





Welcome



I am extremely delighted to welcome you to our Youth Empowerment Forum this morning. This is a yet another one of the Division's flagship events during this period of celebrations, which is now Finance Month, as we have extended our activities owing to the overwhelming support and interest expressed by you, our stakeholders. In recognition of the fact that the youth of today are our leaders of tomorrow, we have always seen it fit to engage our young adults on the island in discussions on pertinent issues. This Forum being one such medium through which you can engage in opportunities for development and networking and forging alliances in areas of mutual interests.

In keeping with our theme, ***"The New Economy: Enabling the Future"*** we have decided to focus on opportunities in the digital economy. We will therefore, be looking at the technological innovations in the Caribbean that improve our competitiveness and empowers citizens, as well as the topic of Disruptive Technology and the role it plays in shaping modern industries and improving access for young entrepreneurs. We continually see how technology has transformed markets by offering simplicity, convenience, affordability and accessibility, and its influence on the way we learn, work, and socialize; and as a Division we seek to ensure that this new economy is integrated, dynamic, resilient and inclusive.

Even as we advance the process of economic diversification as a country, into sectors other than petroleum and petroleum related products, our research has shown that one of the greatest prospects lies in the development of our creative industries. The creative sector has enormous potential in terms of the contribution it can make to our Gross Domestic Product, to employment creation, to the generation of copyright and to foreign exchange earnings. The creative sector is also highly linked to several other sectors in the economy, so that any development in this area will inevitably redound to the benefit of others. We can look forward to hearing more about sustainable commercialization of this sector and what we can do to facilitate greater derivation of benefits from it.

Tobago as an island is blessed with many successful entertainers in the music industry, and we are thankful that we can have them share their journey and experiences with you this morning. Within this very audience there may be hidden potential just waiting to be explored, and we are happy to have provided an avenue to make this possible. As we proceed this morning, I urge you to listen attentively and to engage the panelists and each other in fruitful discussions. Let me at this juncture, on behalf of the Division of Finance and the Economy and indeed on my own behalf, thank you for coming out and for being a part of the Finance Month celebrations. I also want to thank those who were unable to be here physically, but still took the time to listen to today proceedings via live stream on the world wide web.

Thank you and welcome.

Joel D. A. Jack
*Deputy Chief Secretary and
Secretary of Finance & The Economy
Tobago House of Assembly*



Presenters

Keynote Speaker **DR. KIERON SWIFT**

Dr. Kieron Swift is a Project Development Consultant with the Compete Caribbean Partnership Facility (CCPF) - a multi-donor private sector development facility that is funded by the United Kingdom's Department of International Development (DFID), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

His current focus is supporting the development of the Caribbean private sector by strengthening the region's capacity to stimulate innovation in firms, while addressing key constraints on the business climate side. This includes identifying and coordinating projects that fund innovation and productivity-enhancing activities at the firm level, utilizing different instruments such as innovation funds, corporate venturing, and entrepreneurship support programs, as well as working with governments to enhance the environment in which firms invest and operate through legislative and regulatory reform, and the integration of technology-enabled systems.

Dr. Swift formerly worked for the Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) - an advisory body to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago - where he led the EDAB's innovation and competitiveness work stream.

His experience spans both policy development and programme management, having managed the idea2innovation (i2i) grant funding programme for three years, co-developed the revised National Innovation Policy of Trinidad and Tobago, and during a previous stint at the National ICT Centre (now known as iGovTT), conducted research that informed the execution of the country's first National ICT Strategy, fastforward.

Dr. Swift has a BSc in Electrical and Computer Engineering (with specialization in Computer Systems and Communication Systems) from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, an MSc in Public Policies for Science, Technology and Innovation, and a PhD in Science and Technology Policy from the University of Sussex in the UK.



MR. JOHN MOLLENTHIEL *Chief Strategy Officer - WiPay*

John Mollenthien is a Senior ICT, Strategy and Management Professional with over 20 years' experience in both private and public sector organizations. In 2005, he returned to Trinidad and Tobago as the country's first Deputy National Chief Information Officer, with responsibility for operationalizing the National ICT Strategy. He has represented Trinidad and Tobago at numerous regional and international ICT fora, and functioned as the primary liaison in Government-to-Government arrangements with Canada and Singapore.

He has served as CEO in 2 State companies with broad national mandates and is currently the Chief Strategy Officer at WiPay, a local FinTech company that is disrupting the payment landscape in Trinidad and Tobago and the wider Caribbean.

Prior to returning to Trinidad in 2005, Mr. Mollenthien worked with a leading Canadian company in the high performance computing space, managing multiple technical teams across Canada and China. He has also led teams in several internationally established ICT companies, and his placements have been global in scope, ranging from New York's Wall Street to London's infamous Square Mile to Canada's high-tech capital in Markham. Mr. Mollenthien holds a Master of Business Administration from Henley Business School and a Bachelor's of Science degree in Computer Science from the University of the West Indies.





Presenters



MR. DWIGHT SCOTT

Co-CEO, ORBA/Blackrock Technologies

Dwight Scott is a passionate lover of humanity and as such, is seen as a people connector and a business builder. He is a co-founder of ORBA Holdings a Multi-Product SaaS company. ORBA Holdings is the Caribbean's largest B2B/SaaS company.

Mr. Scott studied at Morehouse College, Oakwood University and Harvard University. He is the president and ceo for ORBA EQUITY, a \$90m private EQUITY firm focused on early-stage enterprise investments.

Prior to that, he was the founder of The Jamaica Loan Shop, the Caribbean's first Fintech focused lending platform; a co-founder and the chief executive officer of Urban Warehouse Holdings; a co-founder and the president of LendMe; co-founder of Staffgenius; and a co-founder at TECH-TOUR.

MR. RUSHIO BILLINGS

Co-CEO, ORBA /Blackrock Technologies

Rushio Billings is a technology enthusiast who believes that the right human capital can be leveraged to make the world a better place. He is a co-founder of ORBA Holdings a Multi-Product SaaS company. ORBA Holdings is the Caribbean's largest B2B/SaaS company.

Rushio studied computer science with an emphasis in programming at the Northern Caribbean University. He is the president and Ceo for ORBA TECHNOLOGIES, a technology firm focused on building SaaS enterprise products and services.

Prior to that, he was the VP of engineering for Caricoin, the Caribbean's first Fintech focused blockchain platform; a co-founder and the chief technology officer of LendMe; co-founder of Staffgenius; and a co-founder at TECH-TOUR. Mr. Billings has represented his country at the worldskills international competition in London and well as Microsoft Imagine cup.



DR. KERON NILES

UWI/EDAB - Creative Industries

Dr. Keron Niles is currently a Lecturer within the Institute of International Relations at the University of the West Indies. Prior to that appointment, he was employed as the Business Unit Manager for Research and Policy at the Economic Development Advisory Board of Trinidad and Tobago. The Board reported directly to the Office of the Prime Minister and he was primarily responsible for the production of policy briefs to facilitate a sustainable green economy transition.



Dr Niles is also the Managing Director of Koru Green Ltd, a firm dedicated to commercializing creative content that currently represents the dynamic musical band known as Freetown Collective. He also serves as the Chairperson of the 2Cents Movement, an organisation geared toward youth development through performance art. As a certified youth worker for the past 21 years, and a published poet, Dr. Niles has been involved in international outreach projects in Guyana, Suriname, Haiti and Kenya. Dr. Niles also serves as an advisor to the Port of Spain Hub of the Global Shapers Network - a global youth movement founded by the World Economic Forum.

He Holds a Bachelor's degree in Government (with minors in History and International Relations) from the University of West Indies and a Master's Degree in International Law from the University of Aberdeen.



Presenters

MR. MARCUS LING

Founder - Idlewood Bespoke

Marcus Ling is a Trinidadian-American fashion designer based in Port of Spain, and the Founder/Creative Director of Idlewood Bespoke. Mr. Ling was born in New York City to Trinidadian parents and spent most of his adult life in Shanghai, China, where he began his design career, and migrated to Trinidad and Tobago in 2017, setting up shop in Woodbrook, Port of Spain. Much of his work is focused on classically-tailored suiting, while his ready-to-wear collections often feature traditional Chinese motifs, reinterpreted with a modern minimalist twist, that pay homage to his background and lineage. His Woodbrook studio has gained prominence as a creative hub, hosting art exhibitions, concerts and other cultural events. One of his goals is to help provide a platform for the youth of Trinidad and Tobago to pursue their creative and entrepreneurial interests.



MS. DAYLE ANGUS

Founder - Linkage/ House of Abeje

Dayle Abeje Angus, 26, is the owner and designer behind the House of Abeje (HOA) design company and the brand LINKAGE. Dayle has always had a taste for culture fueled by her multicultural background; her father of Jamaican heritage and her mother a Tobagonian. She constantly pushes to bring diversity to fashion through design. Dayle holds a BA in Fashion Design, at Marymount University in Arlington, Virginia.

She created HOA which is a byproduct of her love for Caribbean culture. Her style ranges between edgy and classic with attention paid to comfort and details. She loves to work with asymmetry and also mixing different fabrics together to create a look.



Dayle has worked in various areas of the industry and most recently she has opened her own designer boutique under the name House of Abeje in Tobago and released her 2018 collection Mesh Lyfe under the LINKAGE brand. Since then, she has released two other collections including her latest installment ÖKÜNKÜN was released at New York Fashion Week, September 2019. She has worked with Brian Macfarlane in his recent contribution of Cazabon: The Art of Living, her section being Gang Gang Sarah and Tom. Her 2017 collection Et. Al. was released under the brand name LINKAGE at the Tobago Fashion Coda 2017.

MS. AVIEN THOMAS

Founder - Osanie Trinidad and Tobago

Fashion designer and business woman **Avien Osanie Thomas** was born in 1985 in the eternally cosmopolitan vibe of Trinidad and Tobago. Since her early years she expressed an innate creative aptitude that carried her through her formative years.

At 19 she moved to Jamaica. It was here, in the island of "no worries" that Avien unearthed her love for fashion, style and design. She then established her own fashion boutique in Kingston, Jamaica whilst pursuing a course in Fashion Designing. This love grew and about 10 years later she then dove into her professional career as a handbag designer.

In 2015 Avien launched Osanie, which is now a lifestyle brand of environmentally friendly fashion products, produced with "cork", a material of incredibly unique properties. Osanie aims to create handbags and accessories of premium quality and contemporary designs that allow you to state your environmental values without sacrificing elegance, functionality and personal style.



MR. JARON NURSE

Musician

Jaron Nurse is a Trinidadian born young man who began penning songs and recording them using his webcam and instrumentals from YouTube. With the increase of violence in his community, Jaron has a mandate to change the lives of young people by sharing his testimony through music. In 2014, he was awarded the Councillor's Award from Diego Martin Regional Corporation for his involvement and contributions to his community. He also toured with Pastor Terrence Baynes throughout the Caribbean including the islands of St. Lucia, Dominica, Grenada,





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Guyana, Antigua and Barbuda and Jamaica. In 2016, he received the Barbados Gospel Flame Awards for the "Overseas Artiste of the Year" and recently received the Caribbean Gospel Music Marlin Award for "Reggae Vocal Performance of the Year" for his composition, "Positive Music". Mr. Nurse is very passionate about serving Jesus Christ, and will continue to be a voice for the youths of this nation.



MR. TYRONE DOMINIC WALTERS

Musician

Tyronne Dominic Walters, better known as the "Blessed Messenger" hails from the village of Bethel, Tobago. He is a Gospel Minister who began his singing career at the age of 14 in the Maranatha Christian Assembly Junior choir. He then went on to be one of the lead singers in the gospel group called the "Blessed Messengers", captivating the hearts and minds of people with their unique blend and style of worship and infectious musical arrangements.

Mr. Walters then migrated to the United States for two years. While abroad, he was able to minister in the state of Alabama where he is still remembered for his passion and unique sound. He returned to the shores of Trinidad and Tobago and continued his music ministry, and formed his present band "Triumphant". Mr. Walters continues to spread the gospel to every heart and win souls for Jesus Christ.

MR. JOEL MURRAY

Musician, Entrepreneur

Joel "Positive" Murray is a singer, songwriter, producer, motivational speaker and a young entrepreneur with one of the most unique voices in Caribbean Gospel. Hailing from the beautiful island of Tobago in the small village of John Dial, his catalog of albums include hit songs like 'Never Let Go', 'Two Man Army' and 'Blessing After Blessing'. He has carved out a distinctive territory in the music industry both regionally and internationally over the years, reaching Top 10 spots on both Billboard & iTunes Reggae Albums' Charts.



Among his many accolades, he was the most-nominated artist at the Caribbean Gospel Music Marlin Awards twice in a row, winning eight awards in both 2014 and 2017. His consistency and passion has been his driving force in his writing and production, forming super collaborations with the likes of Jonathan McReynolds, V. Rose, and DJ Nicholas. He has featured on major events across the Caribbean, UK, North and Central America.

Most known by his soubriquet, "Positive", he describes music as a means of sharing uplifting spiritual messages that can influence change for the better. Despite the accolades, impacting the listener is what is important to him. While his mission is to share the love of Jesus Christ, a listener can appreciate the style and depth of Positive's music. Strictly roots and culture, coupled with his authentic flavour, he is Positive.



DR. KERN JOHNSON

Moderator

Dr. Kern Johnson is a positive and influential young man from the beautiful island of Tobago. He grew up in the farming community of Mason Hall and is currently a farmer and veterinarian by profession.

He is the holder of an Associate's Degree in Agriculture, Bachelor's degree in General Agriculture, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and a certificate in Presenting and Communication.

He is a director of the charitable organisation LIFE House Foundation which provides food and clothing to the less fortunate. He is also Vice

President of the NGO BMenTT (Be Male Examples Now) which advocates for issues that affect men and boys and Vice President of the Tobago Youth Council, the umbrella body for youth groups in Tobago.

He continues to work along with various young persons and youth groups to contribute to the positive development of young adults on the island in their varied capacities.



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