



Business Perspective

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Competition Policy & Law Business Mixer

ADVOCACY UNIT: 2017 CONSIDERATION



One of the factors to look more closely at in 2017 will be that of refugees seeking asylum in Belize. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defines a refugee as someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries.

Belize has a Refugee Act that stipulates the legal ways as it relates to the handling of refugees seeking asylum. A Refugee Eligibility Committee (REC) that is spearheaded by UNHCR and the Government of Belize was formed to approve or deny refugee cases that are submitted for consideration. Today the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) is represented on the REC and has

the power to cast a deciding vote on whether refugees from across Central America and the rest of the world can be awarded refugee status in Belize. Currently, the Chief Policy Analyst represents the BCCI on the REC and has gained valuable knowledge as it relates to reasons why people leave their country and seek refuge in other countries.

The majority of the refugees seeking asylum are from El Salvador due to the rise in gang violence in that country. However, despite this fact the committee members are expected to follow the refugee guidelines that are stipulated in the Refugee Act to determine eligibility status of each applicant.

Noteworthy to mention, is the fact that there are currently more than 21 million refugees across the globe, part of the largest mass displacement on record since World War II. Perhaps, we as Belizeans can adopt President Obama's strategies on how to address this global crisis. President Obama put forward a call to action in June 2016, challenging private sector companies to provide the following: (1) ensure that refugees can have access to schools and learning programs, (2) increase employment and business opportunities and (3) enable access to the resources they need to become self-reliant.

The reality in Belize is that refugees are already here and it is forecast that many more will enter our country legally and illegally and they will have an impact on both the private and public sector. In moving forward into 2017 and beyond, the question of how we will deal with this situation is heavily dependent on our perspective on how we view refugees.

Chief Policy Analyst - Sharry Sampson



WELCOMING OUR NEW MEMBERS!

- BLACK ORCHID CACAO COMPANY
- PINE LUMBER COMPANY LIMITED
- BELIZE INDUSTRY GROUP
- PLETTS ELECTRONICS
- BELIZE LIVE STOCK PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION
- RAJU'S VARIETY STORE
- BUSINESS INFORMATION SERVICES & SYSTEMS
- REVJ'S CREATIVE DESIGN & GIFT SHOP
- CENTAUR COMMUNICATIONS CORP LTD.
- SEA FRONT INN
- EL TOQUE MOHO LIMITED
- TAKE N PAY GROCERY SHOP
- INNOVATIVE SIGNS
- TOLEDO VETERINARY CLINIC
- NALEDO BELIZE LIMITED
- VIRGIN SOLUTIONS
- WE BELIZE AQUAPONICS & EARTH
- TOLEDO ASSOCIATION OF BUSINESSES

Connect Capacitate Champion

CHRISTMAS EXPO EXTRAVAGANZA 2016

The King's Room was filled with joy, laughter, food, drinks and much much more! Orange Walk's very own Super Furia Band took over the stage on December 3rd & 4th, 2016 and had the people in the room dancing to the very cheerful music playing. It was definitely two whole days to get you right in the Christmas Spirit. Ramada Princess Hotel was definitely the place to be. BCCI did everything possible to draw in the customers not only from Belize City but all over the country to the event. Visitors to the Expo had the opportunity to win Airline tickets, Overnight stays on the Island of Caye Caulker, Fun day trips to San Ignacio and not to mention your finger licking Christmas Ham. Tickets were sold at a cost of \$3.00 and upon purchase a raffle ticket was issued to each visitor for a chance to win one of the gate prizes.

It was not only the BCCI working their absolute best to make the event a success but the Exhibitors went above and beyond to sell and market what they do best. GS-COM had a blowout sale up to 50% discount! That's a sale indeed! Bowen & Bowen had their very own \$1 coke and also, Fuze Tea and their awesome "Powerade" refreshments. There were games and raffles that were done hourly by ExportBelize, which had the kids occupied for quite some time. Santa was also a part of the event taking memorable pictures with the families. Tasty rum cakes, cupcakes, chocolate cheesecakes came all the way from Caye Caulker; Clivia's Cakes definitely had deals and giveaways with her pastries. T-Shirt Factory came out with discounts on t-shirts, cups, puzzles, mugs, towels and much more. With one purchase of a product the kids enjoyed dipping in Santa's Christmas bag for a present from T-shirt Factory. Not to mention red, white and any other "Barefoot" flavored wines were sold by James Brodie Company Ltd. Premium Wines & Spirit and The Wine House also brought their different types of wines for your every taste.

Sale on cell phones, double up, top up? It was all done on December 3rd & 4th at the Expo 2016. SMART came out and the booth was basically packed all day for both days. In addition, to go along with your delicious finger licking ham that was on a super sale by Smiling Meats, Horizon Academy had Jam and crackers. Notably, the jam was made by the Kids of Horizon Academy. 100% Belizean products sold at \$10 Belize dollars.

This was Belize Chamber of Commerce & Industry 5th annual Christmas Expo Extravaganza, it was definitely a success. The 5th Annual Expo could not have been possible without the help and support of our members, sponsors and to our most important guest, the Belizean Public. We're looking forward to another Christmas blowout in 2017!

Marketing & Public Relations Officer - Viannie Reyes



HR Perspective

Focus on being productive instead of busy

“On a team, it's not the strength of the individual players, but it is the strength of the unit and how they all function together”.

- **September 2016** - The Chief Policy Analyst, Ms. Sharry Sampson, and our Manager of Member Relations, Ms. Yorshabell Cattouse, attended a Workshop in St. Lucia on how to conduct Research.



- **October 13th – 16th** – The Membership Program Administrator, Mr. Christopher Pech, attended the annual “Merida Expo”. He reported that our booth had many visitors who were very interested in what Belize had to offer. (*see recap on page 8*)



- **October 19 -20** – The CEO, Mrs. Kim Aikman, and Manager of Member Relations, Ms. Yorshabell Cattouse, attended the “Florida International Trade & Cultural Expo” in Broward County, Florida. They also reported having many visitors to their booth expressing interest in doing business in Belize. *(See recap on page 12)*



- **November 14th – 18th** – The Chief Policy Analyst, Ms. Sharry Sampson, attended a training in Suriname on “Competition Policy and Law”.



- **November 18th** – Manager of Member Relations Ms. Yorshabell Cattouse and Membership Program Officer, Keisha Reyes, attended the “Belize National Entrepreneurship Convention” conducted by BELTRAIDE.



Continuation...

- **November 21st – 26th** – The Membership Program Administrator, Mr. Christopher Pech, attended a Regional Entrepreneurship & Innovation workshop in Bogota, Columbia.



We culminated the year with the Western Union's participation in the Love FM's Christmas Parade and our annual Staff Party. December is that time of year again when **friends** and **family** think about the Christmases of the past and plan for the coming holiday with their loved ones in mind. As we reflect on this **wonderful holiday**, we must keep in mind that Christmas is not just any holiday but may be the most imperative one of the year for some people. It is a time for recollection, a **time to share the goodness of your heart with others**, and for expressing with words and gifts what someone means to you. It is a chance to **"Make Wishes Come True"** (that was the theme for WU's Christmas Float) and to give something from your heart.

On Saturday December 10th, 2016, The Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry held their staff Christmas party at the Lions Club. At the start of the gathering, there was the welcome address by the CEO- Mrs. Kim Aikman. After which, there were distribution of awards and the exchange of gifts. Mr. Delwin Soberanis was chosen as "Employee of the Year". There was a voting process and he was chosen by majority of the staff. Congratulations again Mr. Soberanis! Awards were also given out to: Ms. Shahida Young, Mr. Christopher Pech and Ms. Yorshabell Cattouse for "Punctuality" (always being the first persons at work) and to Ms. Ruth Gillett, Ms. Sharry Sampson and Ms. Danette Burns for "Perfect Attendance" (never missing a day of work).

We are grateful for all the support we have received from our staff and members.

Senior Administrator/HR Officer – Ruth Gillett and Senior Accounts Clerk – Kara Menzies

Merida Expoferia Recap



Chiapas, Tabasco, Playa del Carmen, Chetumal and local towns and villages in the Yucatan Peninsula were represented at the Expoferia.

Your Chamber promoted Belizean services that would benefit directly from doing business in the Yucatan Peninsula. An estimated 30 companies approached the Chamber with interest in doing business in Belize. Some of the companies that supported the event were in the sectors of construction, tourism, food and agriculture, telecommunications and technology, manufacturing, and pharmaceuticals.

Mr. Christopher Pech represented the Chamber at this event and had the honour of sharing the booths with BCCI's member representatives Tropic Air and the Belize Tourism Board. Mr. Carlos Barrera, from Tropic Air, promoted the new Belize-Merida flight route which connects popular cities in the Mundo Maya Region with Belize. This route opens a new door to many Mexican families who are interested in vacationing in Belize. He was afforded the opportunity to promote the different packages and discounts Tropic Air has to offer in their different routes. Mr. Jorge Requena, from the Belize Tourism Board, shared over a thousand copies of tourist information pamphlets, including travel guides, maps and promotional items with families and individuals who were excited about vacationing in Belize. Mr. Requena was able to personally interact with visitors and respond to frequently asked questions on topics such as documents required to enter Belize, currency exchange, possible destinations, and transportation.

The team ensured to express Belize's warm and friendly environment. The Expoferia, like the previous years has proven very beneficial for Belize and on this basis, the Chamber plans to have annual representation at this event. We are confident that more members will participate and take advantage of the opportunities in networking, business exposure and finding new markets at the Expoferia.

Christopher Pech - Membership Program Administrator



Chamber Events

Business Connex: To promote the launch of a job search engine-EmployMeBelize on November 8th, 2016.



President Circle Lunch –Lunch with the President on 10th November with special guest speaker: Ms. Valrie Grant- Commonwealth Woman Ambassador.



Black Friday – The Chamber hosted its 1st National Belizean Black Friday on 18th November. About 40 companies signed on.



Business Growth & Development workshop facilitated by our Chief Policy Analyst, Ms. Sharry Sampson on November 9th, 2016.



Upcoming Events

Belize Chamber of Commerce & Industry

"Mindfulness in the workplace"
Workshop
 Tuesday January 17th, 2017
 Venue: BTEC Conference room, Freetown Road, Belize | Time: 8:00a.m to 5:00 p.m.
 Cost: \$150 (Inclusive of GST) Light snacks and lunch will be provided

Facilitators:

Michelle Williams, Founder/Director of Om Shanti, Belize
 Jamuna Vasquez, Director of REACH (Research, Education & Advocacy for Social Change)


Mindfulness in the workplace should:

- ✓ Enhance employees' Personal Development
- ✓ Better ones ability to be attentive and focus
- ✓ Lower workplace absence and increase productivity
- ✓ Better Decision Making, Leadership, Performance, Collaboration & Relationships
- ✓ Determine the health, resilience & future performance of your business.

Who should attend:
 HR Managers | Business Owners | Head of Department Managers
 Employees who would like to enhance their personal development & be more productive

Please complete the attached registration form or contact Ms. Keisha Reyes at
 email: membershippo@belize.org | Phone: 223-5330


Belize Chamber of Commerce & Industry

 
 DIRECTORATE
 MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Competition Policy and Law
 Business Mixer*

Date: January 25th, 2017 | Time: 5:30 p.m. | Venue: Best Western Belize Biltmore Plaza Hotel, Philip Goldson Highway, Belize City

The Belize Competition Project

Purpose: To Create enabling policy, legal, institutional, and administrative frameworks for the establishment of a fair effective competition regime in Belize.

All Member States have committed to establishing a Competition Authority to interface with the European Union Competition Authority on competition matters. As one of the countries least advanced with the implementation of the CSME, Belize was allocated funding under the tenth European Development Fund (10th EDF) to increase its participation in the CSME and more specifically to support the development of a Competition Policy and Law for Belize.

Successful development of a competition Regime for Belize requires active participation by stakeholders and the business community is critical to that success.

R.S.V.P to Christopher Pech at
 Phone: 223-5330 or email: bcci@belize.org

Belize Chamber of Commerce & Industry
  
 CARIBBEAN EMPLOYERS' CONFEDERATION

Presents

Productivity Improvements for Small & Micro Enterprises Workshop

Tuesday, January 24th, 2017 Time: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
 Venue: The Best Western Belize Biltmore Plaza Hotel,
 Phillip Goldson Highway, Belize City.

Snacks & Lunch will be provided. Limited spaces available.

Objectives:

- * To identify the productivity and competitiveness issues in Belize.
- * To identify measures to improve productivity at organization levels.
- * To learn of ILO's Best Practices and Tools to improve productivity.
- * Discussing policies and strategies to address productivity.

Who should attend:

- * Business Owners
- * HR Managers
- * Head of Departments

To Register, please complete the attached registration form or call Ms. Keisha Reyes at 223-5330 or email: membershippo@belize.org

ANNOUNCEMENT

Attention all those who purchased tickets for the World AIDS Day Benefit Concert!!!

**UNITE
FOR THE
CHILDREN
WORLD AIDS DAY
Benefit Concert**

FRI. 25TH NOV.
@ THE HOUSE OF CULTURE
FROM 7PM TO 12 MIDNIGHT

ENTERTAINMENT BY:
PANDEMONIUM * PANERRIFIX
THE PANEMPTERS STEEL ORCHESTRA

\$30	<small>GENERAL SINGLE ADMISSIONS</small>	\$50	<small>GENERAL COUPLE ADMISSIONS</small>	\$60	<small>VIP SINGLE ADMISSIONS</small>	\$100	<small>VIP COUPLE ADMISSIONS</small>
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FOOD & DRINKS ON SALE!!!!

All proceeds will benefit HAND-IN-HAND's Children Living With HIV Program

Due to unforeseen weather conditions, we were unable to proceed with the World AIDS Day 2016 Benefit Concert as was previously planned for November 25th. While we had anticipated postponing for December 1st, the concert's main entertainment (the three major Belizean Steel Pan Bands) were unavailable to perform, due to prior commitments.

The BCCI is a member of the NAC planning committee. Throughout the years, we actively supported community initiatives of NAC. All bands have been confirmed for **February 2017**. Kindly hold on to your tickets as they will be accepted at the event in February. Please stay tuned for updates and promotions of the event time, place and venue. We thank you greatly for your support and understanding!

The National AIDS Commission & Hand In Hand Ministries

Recap of BCCI's Participation in FITCE



Mrs. Kim Aikman, CEO, and Ms. Yorshabell Cattouse, Manager of Member Relations, represented Belize, our Chamber and its membership at the Broward County's 2nd Edition of the Florida International Trade and Cultural Expo (FITCE) on October 19th and 20th, 2016 at the Broward County Convention Center in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, U.S.A. FITCE welcomed local and international companies for a unique opportunity to engage key leaders, experts and attendees from around the world to participate in

dialogue relating to international trade, foreign direct investment and culture. Thirty four countries and over 900 registered guests attended, over a two-day conference of doing business. This year, FITCE had an added feature of Four World Continent Pavilions: Caribbean, Latin America, Europe and the World. Throughout the two days of the expo, on-going workshops were held on topics such as: 11 Steps to Exporting; How to Import into the U.S.A.; South Florida Ports and Foreign Trade Zones; Expanding your Global Sales to Latin America and the Caribbean; Success in the Emerging Markets, ASIA, AFRICA and MIDDLE EAST and Doing Business with the World. The Honourable Elodio Aragon Jr., deputizing on behalf of the Honourable Erwin Contreras, also formed part of an important panel discussion and spoke on the promotion of Tourism, Culture and International Trade to Belize.

We are grateful to have received this special invitation from Broward County Commissioner, Mr. Dale V.C. Holness and from Board members of the Belize American Chamber of Commerce in Florida. As part of the International Delegation, we had a booth space showcasing the services of the Chamber and selective products of Belize. We appreciate the support of the members who responded with in kind donations of their products to showcase in Belize's stand. Thank you to Marie Sharp's Fine Food Products, Bella Dee's Soap, Belize Chocolate Company, Cuellos Distillery Limited, Belize Tourism Board and BELTRAIDE.

We received over 100 business interests to connect to our members and to do business with Belize. It is our aspiration that next year more members can take advantage of this valuable network and trade opportunity.

Manager, Member Relations - Yorshabell Cattouse



Press Release Recap- BCCI Business Mixer – Importance of the Signing of the UNCAC

Wednesday, December 14th, 2016

The Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) hosted a business mixer on the “Importance of the Signing of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)”, on Thursday December 8th 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at the UWI Auditorium, Open Campus Belize, Princess Margaret Drive, Belize City. A Panel Presentation comprising of Special Guest Speakers: BCCI President Mr. Nikita Usher; Dr. Carla Barnett, Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Mr. Christian Salazar Volkmann, The United Nations Resident Coordinator presented to you on the UNCAC and what this signing means for Belize. Members of the BCCI entered for free, non-members at \$10.00 and Students with their student identification card entered at no charge.

The BCCI is a member of an UNCAC Joint working group, which also includes members of the Government of Belize and the National Trade Union Congress of Belize. This Mixer was one of the series of activities that the joint working group has organized. The BCCI launched its Anti-corruption campaign on September 3rd at our Expo Belize Market Place advocating for Belize to become a signatory to this Convention. Members of the joint working group participated in media rounds and appeared on Love FM, Channel 5’s Open Your Eyes and Krem speaking on this topic and what it means for Belize. The selection of the date for the signing of the UNCAC for December 9th was significant since it was considered International Anti-Corruption Day.

The signing of this convention allowed for effective implementation of a foundation framework that will enable: Preventive Measures; Criminalization and Law Enforcement; International Cooperation; Asset Recovery; and Technical Assistance & Information Exchange.



Western Union Corner

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, last year Western Union offered a Double Your Cash promotion for the period November and December. To date, the following customers have won and collected cash. We congratulate them on their win and thank them for their loyalty to our network.



Robert Parks - Belize



Jingli Liu - Corozal



Lei Wei Huang - Santa Elena



Charles Rubio - Caye Caulker



Federico Caballeros - San Pedro

This year for the first time we took part in the Love FM Christmas Parade. This was a joint effort with our Belize City BCCI WU sub-agents such as: **Toto's, Diversified Life Solutions, Doony's, Low's Supermarket, 88 Shopping Centre and our main BCCI office.** These locations provided staff for the float. We were able to provide some promotional items and sweets to the onlookers.



This was a wonderful experience enjoyed by all on the float. We were happy to put smiles on the faces and in the hearts of the children. We look forward to continue supporting the Belizean community.

Western Union Supervisor - Danette Burns



WESTERN UNION WU

NEW OPENING HOURS 2017

CONEY DRIVE OFFICE

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Saturdays
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

WWW.BELIZE.ORG



223 - 5080



@Belize Chamber



bcciwu@belize.org

JOIN OUR NETWORK

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU ?

- ✓ Access to the largest business network; strongest and most active business advocacy organization in Belize
- ✓ Connect you to leaders and policymakers that shape the business environment
- ✓ Provide valuable savings and discounts on business services
- ✓ We keep you Informed
- ✓ Business Exposure
- ✓ Better your know how
- ✓ Grow your Business potential
- ✓ Advertising Opportunities
- ✓ Mediation Service
- ✓ Trainings/Workshops
- ✓ Life and Health Insurance
- ✓ Expo, Import & Export Trade Missions
- ✓ Membership Discount Card, ID cards



CONNECT CAPACITATE CHAMPION

Dedicated to the growth, prosperity and development of our members

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Tel: +501-223-5330 Fax: +501-223-5333
Email: bcci@belize.org Website: <http://www.belize.org>



Happy New Year

2017

May this year be filled with joy, happiness and success!

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***For more
information
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website: www.belize.org