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WOMEN IN TOURISM





Dorothy Vendryes exits her brand new Mercedez-Benz at the opening of Norma Webster's salon at Fairview in Montego Bay.

Blood, sweat and tears

The Dorothy Vendryes story

Janet Silvera
Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

THE LIKES of the late Elizabeth Taylor, Lady Mountbatten, and Princess Margaret are among the women of fame to sit in the hairdresser's chair in Dorothy Vendryes' beauty salon in the 1950s.

Vendryes (formerly Gourzong), one of the first black women on the island to capitalise on the tourism

industry after returning to Jamaica from the world-famous Wilfred Academy, opened her first salon at the Casa Montego Hotel (now Fantasy Resort).

"I would import staff from the USA, France, the United Kingdom, and Canada, because our clientele was mainly wealthy visitors who knew and had the best," Vendryes told **Hospitality Jamaica** during a 'Women in Tourism' interview last weekend.

Not that local beauticians were not employed to her salon in fact, she said they were her right hand.

As her business acumen grew, Vendryes opened another salon at the Montego Beach Hotel (then Sunset Lodge). In no time, she was on to three salons.

"I had an aim, a goal, and I knew I was going after it and nothing would stop me," she stated with conviction.

Through blood, sweat, and tears,



she said she was driven to find herself.

The Montego Bay businesswoman said soon to come after were the exclusive Tryall Club, Royal Caribbean (now Sandals Royal), the elegant Half Moon, and Runaway Bay Hotel (now Jewel Runaway Bay).

She was now owner of seven beauty salons in the country catering to tourists who spent an average of six to eight weeks in Jamaica. She would work in the hotels from Mondays to Saturdays and serve her local clients on Sundays.

"I wasted no time at all. I had no fun, no parties. It was all work."

Vendryes said she worked from 6 a.m. to 1 a.m. daily, even though she had 40 persons employed to her.

With the money earned from these salons, she was able to buy land and build one of the first small hotels to be owned by a Jamaican woman.

She opened the Royal Court, a 26-room resort in the early 1970s, building an additional four rooms after. Royal Court became one of Montego Bay's most popular hotels.

The other woman excelling in



DOROTHY VENDRYES

"I wasted no time at all. I had no fun, no parties. It was all work."

the industry at the time was Rita Hojan, owner of Negril's first resort, the Sundowner Beach Hotel (now Sandals Negril).

Other female trailblazers who made their impact in the tourism sector, and who came after Vendryes, include Roma Chinsue of the Wing Victory, Claire Garth of the Blue Harbour and Lolita

McGann at Doctor's Cave Beach Hotel.

"Persons borrowing money to invest in hotels then were referred to me for advice by the Jamaica Development Bank, that would give them loans," said Vendryes.

The hotelier became president of the small hotels association and said there was a period when women were excelling in that aspect of the industry.

"We were fighters; we would fight for our rights. We became the backbone of the economy."

DOWNTURN TREND

Dorothy Vendryes said with the birth of the all-inclusive concept, there was a downward trend for small hotels. "We started suffering because we could not compete. They were cutting their rates below us and it was impossible for us to match."

She said this resulted in the death of the small hotels, which were mainly operated by women or families.

According to Vendryes, they fought long and hard at the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association meetings, but were constantly losing.



Dorothy and husband, Dr Anthony Vendryes.

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Marsha-Ann Brown A lifelong romantic

MARSHA-ANN BROWN, director of romance, is responsible for capturing the imagination of couples around the world and helping to create memories that will last a lifetime.

Her role is pivotal to the Sandals brand, a company that has built its reputation on providing two people in love with the most romantic Caribbean experience possible.

Being a lifelong romantic, Brown brings her passion for love and creativity to each couple's experience. No matter the occasion, be it a destination wedding, honeymoon, anniversary or vacation from everyday life, Brown is always finding ways for couples to celebrate their love. Working closely with brides and grooms, she connects with them and ensures that each moment is one

that they will treasure forever.

Whether it is suggesting a romantic candlelight dinner or setting up a proposal on the white, sandy beach, Brown spends every day inspiring couples to surprise one another and set the mood for undeniable romance.

FAVOURITE MOMENT

She still swoons when she remembers the time a groom surprised his bride with a saxophonist in their Love Nest Suite at Sandals La Toc, playing her favourite Kenny G song – a moment that neither of them will forget.

Beyond working with couples, Brown also played an integral role in expanding Sandals Resorts wedding programme with the creation of 'Your Wedding. Your Style', a new way for millennial brides and grooms to plan their

destination wedding along with an online wedding designer that allows soon-to-be brides to personally style and execute their special day.

An 18-year veteran of Sandals Resorts, Brown started her career with the company as a sales manager at the former Sandals Dunn's River. It was her passion for love and romantic personality that led her to this dynamic role as director of romance.

Prior to joining Sandals, Brown worked in service and special events for hotels, including Biltmore Hotel, Doral Saturnia International Spa, and Hilton Corporation. She holds a bachelor of science degree in hospitality management from Florida International University and a master of business administration from Nova South Eastern University.



Ann-Marie Burke
HR Director



Angella Bennett
Dir. of Sales & Marketing



Nikesha Baker
Payroll Mgr.



Belinda Blake
Leisure Groups Sales Mgr.



Deyon Brown
Reservations Mgr.



Coreen Chin
Banqueting Mgr.



Colleen Smith
Exec. Housekeeper



The Female Force behind

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Lavern Myrie
Accounts Mgr.



Claire Nugent
Guest Relations Mgr.



Nersibelis Burrowes
Marketing Mgr.



Camille Seaton
Rooms Division Mgr.



Doneida Simpson
Spa Mgr.



Sheryl-Kaye Thompson
Sales Mgr.



Kadieann Wright
Training Mgr.



Angella Bennett: Motivated by the ever-changing tourism industry

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

A GRACEFUL, calm, cool and collected person are some of the adjectives used to describe director of sales and marketing at Melia Braco Village, Angella Bennett.

Bennett began her career in tourism as guest services/receptionist at the Half Moon Hotel just over 28 years ago, under the guidance of veteran hotelier Myrtle Dwyer.

After her stint at Half Moon, which lasted until 1991, she moved on to Destination Management Company (DMC) Tour Operator management with Caribic Vacations where she served for nine years, managing the portfolios of major European tour operators selling Jamaica.

Bennett's journey in tourism took her to RIU Hotels and Resorts, where she excelled as director of sales between 2003 and 2016, opening four of their five Jamaican hotels and directing the sales of their all-inclusive brand here.

Bennett joined the Melia team a year ago.

According to Bennett, the industry has had significant growth. "Tourism is one of the fastest-growing industries globally. When I started in the 1990s, the focus of the destination was to grow its visitor arrivals from the traditional North American hubs and Europe, but boldly the industry ventured in to Latin America as well as Japan, a country that was already captivated by Jamaican's reggae music."

GREAT RESULTS

She said the results have been phenomenal.

Visitor arrivals are up and a number of major international brands have invested on the island.

Bennett's is motivated by the ever-changing industry and tells Hospitality Jamaica she keeps current with all aspects of world news and trends in travel.

She is encouraged by her own trajectory and says continuous growth and self-development inspire her to reach for the sky.

"There are endless possibilities within the industry," said Bennett.



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Niurka García-Linton Touching hearts in the industry

Paul H. Williams
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

AT RIU Hotels and Resorts – Jamaica, Niurka García-Linton is the director of sales. She has been with the group for nine years but has been working in the tourism sector for over two decades.

García-Linton's work in the industry started in Cuba, where she was born and raised, and where she worked as a representative in a destination-marketing company. Her relationship with Jamaica started in the 1990s, and in 1998 she began her permanent residence here. She is married to a Jamaican.

The RIU international chain, which has a portfolio of more than 100 hotels in more than 15

countries, is one of many companies with which she has worked. "Working with these specialist companies has allowed me to develop a broad-based background in tourism, leisure, and hospitality, which, combined with an entrepreneurial drive and business-management skills, have resulted in my being able to effectively lead change in competitive business environments," García-Linton said.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Her professional experience includes the successful management of a 2,600-room inventory, yield management, business plan development, key account management, contract negotiations, budgeting, and

forecasting. Add to all of this, customer relationship management, sales and marketing management planning, business growth realisation with established and new accounts, revenue-development strategies, group and meeting management and incentives, marketing analysis, and mentoring.

"I value honesty, integrity, transparency, and humility, not only professionally, but also personally. I believe they are the foundation of a healthy working and personal environment. I love people, value others' opinions, and the simplicity of life. I believe in leaving a legacy – a positive one. I love to touch people's hearts even if with a smile," García-Linton told **Hospitality Jamaica**.



Kerry-Ann Quallo-Casserly The trailblazer

ROYALTON'S REGIONAL director of sales and marketing - Jamaica and St Lucia, Kerry-Ann Quallo-Casserly was just a teenager when she stepped into the hospitality and tourism industry.

In fact, it was a summer job advertisement at Couples Tower Isle for a playmaker for which she applied at 19 years old, which led her to the industry in which she has been stamping her class for the past 23 years.

She has moved up the ranks, serving in the recent past as director of sales and marketing at both the prestigious Superclubs and Iberostar resorts.

Quallo-Casserly, who is also a University of the West Indies - Western Jamaica Campus (WJC) ambassador, is committed to constant self improvement.

She attained a bachelors degree in business administration at the

Nova Southeastern University, while working full time and doing weekend classes and did so well in that programme that she was awarded a scholarship to pursue her master's degree in which she also excelled.

She was also involved in the Alpha-chi mentorship programme while studying at the institution.

No stranger to awards, Quallo-Casserly has listed among her most memorable moments in tourism, as the 2016 Hospitality Jamaica Awards for the Best All Inclusive (over 300 rooms), Best In Innovation and the People's Choice Awards, which she collected on behalf of Royalton White Sands.

Her illustrious career in the industry has seen her coping Manager of the Year at SuperClubs and Employee of the Year at Couples Tower Isle during the period she was employed to both resorts.



Morales' passion for excellent service magnified when she graced the tourism industry in 2008, and this is where she perfected her events, sales, and marketing skills.'

Shaniin Morales From country girl to top tourism executive

BORN IN Kingston, Shaniin Morales proudly identifies as a "country girl".

Growing up in Little London, Westmoreland, with her grandparents, working in the family's supermarket is where she had her first taste of customer service. She learned the importance of recognising the value in everyone, regardless of attire and approach.

Morales is the group sales and marketing manager for Hard Rock Café Montego Bay.

Graduating from The Mannings School, she spent time studying mass communication at Northern Caribbean University and is currently pursuing her master's at the University of Technology, Jamaica.

PASSION FOR EXCELLENT SERVICE

Morales' passion for excellent service magnified when she graced the tourism industry in 2008, and this is where she perfected her events, sales, and marketing skills in the capacity of wedding manager, catering sales manager, and senior group sales and incentive manager for various hotels and Amstar DMC.

Morales is responsible for accomplishing marketing and sales objectives by planning and developing advertising, retail, restaurant and trade promotions. Her thorough experience in group-incentive travel, coupled with FIT and cruise-ship marketing is one of the reasons Hard Rock Café Montego Bay made her the first hire

in the entire company.

One of her fondest moments as a child took place in the supermarket in which she grew up. A very attractive man walked in, and Morales ran around the back to brush her hair in an attempt to create a good first impression on the handsome stranger.

As soon as she came back around, her grandmother shouted, "Shaniin! Go wrap out two pounds of chicken back!"

It was then that she realised that her life would be surrounded by humour, wit, and a bit of the unexpected.

The advertisement features the logo for VIP Attractions, with 'VIP' in large letters and 'Attractions' in smaller letters below it, flanked by three stars. Below the logo, it says 'Club MOBAY' and 'Club KINGSTON'. The main headline reads 'VIP ATTRACTIOnS' in large, bold letters, followed by the tagline 'Salutes the Women... and men in Tourism.' in a script font. A sub-headline states 'Our success in this industry is as a result of the professionalism, dedication, commitment and service that you our staff offer each day!!' Below this, another line reads 'VIP ATTRACTIOnS...RELAX, CONNECT, DISCOVER'. At the bottom, there is a group photo of approximately 15 staff members, mostly women, dressed in统一的制服，smiling and posing in a group shot.

Joy Roberts A love affair with tourism

JOY ROBERTS' love affair with the tourism industry began in 1977 when she joined the national airline, Air Jamaica. She spent six years there learning the intricacies of the industry and serving in several areas, chief among them in customer service.

She was drawn from Air Jamaica back into entrepreneurship which had initially enticed her when she was but 21 years old. This time, due to her love for the island which she developed from her father taking her and her siblings on numerous tours, she started a travel agency – New World Travel & Tours. At the time, not many persons were offering tours of the island and the Caribbean, and she capitalised on that market. She also offered charters into Montego Bay and serviced the embassies whose staff often times wanted a Jamaican holiday and visits to South America and the Caribbean. Roberts even at one time offered a travel school to equip persons for the travel industry. As a consultant, she also did business plans for small airlines in the region, including the old Caribbean Airlines.

SOJOURN INTO REAL ESTATE

Another suitor was calling Roberts and so began her sojourn into real estate. She excelled in this area locally and in the United States. This led her to getting certifications in several areas, including green technology for properties, restoration of historic buildings, urban planning, and project management.

Having served on the board of the Tourism Product Development Company Ltd in 2007 to 2011, Roberts returned in 2016, this time as deputy executive director, where the relationship with tourism was once again consummated.

This travel, tourism and real



Joy Roberts, acting executive director, the Tourism Product Development Company.

estate professional for more than 25 years is excited to share the knowledge and experience gained with companies such as Air Jamaica, Caribbean Airlines, New World Travel & Tours, Moving Media, CD Alexander and CTICo locally, and international companies such as Jamaica National Mortgage, Transcontinental Lending, Realty Executives and JSR Properties.

Roberts, who is also a business development trainer and a motivational speaker, has served as chair of several related boards and committees, locally and internationally. She presently sits on the boards of Jamaica Vacations, River Rafting Authority and Victory Academy.

Armed with a diploma in marketing, a Commonwealth executive master's degree in business administration, and a sense of purpose, she is driven by her belief and proven knowledge that, in her words, "with God all things are possible."

Nicola Madden-Greig An industry stalwart making indelible marks

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

COURTLEIGH HOTEL Group's director of marketing and sales, Nicola Madden-Greig, has spent more than 20 years in the hospitality sector.

Madden-Greig, one of three women to have served as president of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA), has worked in air travel, cruise shipping and the attraction sector.

Before her promotion to the Courtleigh Group, she was assistant group sales manager at Half Moon Resort, and director of sales at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel.

The Convent of Mercy (Alpha) alumnus graduated from Florida International University with a bachelor's degree in tourism and hospitality management. She holds an executive master's in business administration (distinction) from the Mona School of Business.

Madden-Greig has also been quite busy making a contribution to the JHTA, holding various positions such as councillor, chairman of the fundraising and public relations subcommittee, and area chairman of the Kingston Chapter.

NEW CONCEPTS

As JHTA president, Madden-Greig introduced new concepts including working with the Tourism Linkages Council to present the first Tourism Speed Networking event; expanding the marketing of the *Our Jamaica* magazine to include an e-zine, website, mobile app, the *Our Jamaica Meeting Planners Guide* and the *Our Jamaica Attraction, Dining and Entertainment Guide*; as well as a memorandum of understanding with the Code, a worldwide organisation which seeks to eradicate the exploitation of children in the travel and tourism industries.

Her many other responsibilities include being



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Nicola Madden-Greig, director of sales and marketing, the Courtleigh Group.

chairman of the Tourism Product and Development Company (TPDCo) finance and development subcommittee, a Tourism Enhancement Fund and TPDCo board member, a member of the joint JHTA/Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) marketing subcommittee, a member of the JTB events subcommittee, a board director of the JTB and the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association, and chair of the Gastronomy Tourism Network, which has just launched the Jamaica Blue Mountain Culinary Trail.

Madden-Greig's influence and contribution have transcended the shores of hospitality and tourism. She is, and has been, involved with several associations; founder and co-chair of the Kingston City Run charity, and a mentor in The University of the West Indies, Mona Campus mentorship programme.

So, what is keeping her moving? She said she loves what she does and applies a professional approach to every aspect of her job, which has not gone unappreciated.

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WOMEN IN TOURISM

Senior housekeeper Lilieth Earle.



FILE PHOTO

Linda Cunningham, a craft vendor in Savanna-la-Mar who makes tams, beaded chains, dolls, bags, shakers, knitted swimwear and jewellery from coconut shells.



Two waitresses at the Iberostar Grand serving guests at the Chef on Tour event last year.



From left: Kathleen Hudson, tour guide with Taste of Jamaica, keeps Nickesha Clarke, vacation planner sales supervisor, Moon Palace Jamaica Grande, and Georgia Black, vacation planner, Moon Palace, entertained.

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From left: Sandals Resorts' regional public relations coordinator, Khadine Daley; Acting Commissioner of Police Novelette Grant; and Sandals Montego Bay's training manager, Sigourney Hastings during a recent forum at Sandals Royal Caribbean.

AT RIGHT: A Baltimore Ravens cheerleader getting a massage at Jewel Paradise Cove Beach Resort and Spa.



Cinderella Morgan (second right) and her colleagues from the housekeeping department at Hilton Kingston Hotel take time out to pose for the cameras in this Gleaner file photo.

BELOW: Former Director General of Tourism Carole Guntley (centre) is flanked by (from left) Royalton White Sands' Kerry-Ann Quallo-Casserly, RIU's Niurka García-Linton and Melia Braco's Angella Bennett.



SANDALS SALUTES WOMEN IN TOURISM



From as far back as 1981 when Sandals was first created, the team standing beside The Honourable Gordon 'Butch' Stewart included strong, brilliant and determined women like Eleanor Miller and Betty-Jo Desnoes. Today, these women remain pillars of strength in the Sandals Group and over the years, they've been joined by thousands of like-minded women who through their integrity and professionalism help to make our company the World's Best year after year.

Across the region, Sandals employs 14,000 talented individuals - 49% of these individuals are women with a further impressive 52% of our women holding managerial positions. Our female leaders make critical decisions, head award-winning teams and confidently move our company forward. Sandals is never shy about celebrating these shining stars and recognising their contributions to our company's success and to the success of the industry at large.

All throughout our company, there are stories of inspiring women from diverse educational and social backgrounds and varying nationalities and ages who continue to make our company what it is today.

Whether our women lend their talents to our Accounting, Watersports, Weddings or Engineering Departments, we are happy to salute them and indeed to salute all women in tourism!

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Sonja Nalkiran Passionate about her job

SONJA NALKIRAN, who was recently promoted to general manager of the Iberostar Grand in Montego Bay, has been described by many as a woman who is highly passionate about her job.

Originally from Vienna, Austria, Nalkiran has been working with the Iberostar group since December 1997, initially as public relations manager for the company's first hotel in Mexico, the Iberostar Tucan & Quetzal in Playaca, before moving to Jamaica.

Since coming to Jamaica, she has managed the Iberostar Rose Hall Suites and was credited with leading the hotel to the successes such as recipients of the AAA Four Diamond Award, 2015 TripAdvisor Hall of Fame and TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Awards #9

Families – Caribbean as well as Green Globe certification.

The resort, under Nalkiran's watch, has been lauded by visitors, as, among other things, the perfect hotel with excellent staff, outstanding food, clean rooms, and a generally lovely atmosphere.

KEY ELEMENT

For Nalkiran, one key element that makes Jamaica unique is its people and their openness and friendliness, even as the country boasts a beautiful topography, with majestic mountains vegetation, beautiful waterfalls, rivers, and some of the finest beaches in the West Indies.

Nalkiran is married to a Jamaican and has lived here for a number of years.



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THE JAMAICA PEGASUS HOTEL
Michelle Vassell (Operations Manager), Prudence Simpson (Director of Marketing), Anne-Marie Gordon (Front Office Manager), Faith McFarquhar-Gordon (Human Resource Manager), Roxanne Williams (Banqueting Manager), Loraine Tait (IT Manager)



THE KNUTSFORD COURT HOTEL
Georgia Guscott (Senior Sous Chef), Sarah Hutchinson (Senior Operations Manager), Patrice Powell (Executive Housekeeper)



COURTLEIGH HOTEL & SUITES
Sharon Callen (Night Operations Manager), Rosalee Stewart (Executive Housekeeper), Celia Steele-Lewis (Sales Manager), Rochelle Fairclough (Sous Chef), Cecile Reynolds (Operations Manager)



THE HOLIDAY INN RESORT
Marcia Black (Human Resource Manager), Lorraine May (Building Manager), Phyllis Thomas (On property Revenue Manager), Celene Drummond (Building Manager), Marion Campbell (Rooms Division Manager), Carol Lynton-Dunbar (Senior Sales & Revenue Manager)



Lyndsay Isaacs celebrates over 30 years in tourism

"MY MOST memorable experience in the industry would be when little Ajay sat in his bed in the hospital and said, 'Ms. Lyndsay I can see you!' It brought tears to my eyes."

Ajay was only six years old and had been diagnosed with cataracts in both eyes. He had just undergone corrective surgery with the assistance of the Sandals Foundation, and waiting for him were his mother and Lyndsay Isaacs, regional public relations manager for Sandals and Beaches Resorts in the Ocho Rios region.

The fact that Lyndsay Isaacs' most memorable experience involves helping someone in need comes as no surprise to those who

know her. She is the epitome of selflessness and compassion.

Throughout her time in the hospitality industry, more than 30 years to be exact, Isaacs has made her mark through her devotion and commitment to philanthropy and community development. She admits that as a youngster, she never thought of a career in the tourism industry. She had in fact wanted to become a doctor, "to help others, especially those most in need of good health", she said.

Fate, however, had other plans and what initially began as a summer internship as a data entry clerk at Sandals Montego Bay straight out of high school has turned into a lifelong career, built

on her love for the company's commitment to philanthropy.

Over the years, she has held positions ranging from public relations assistant, public relations supervisor, senior wedding coordinator and community relations manager.

Always on the go and never without her signature cheerful smile, Isaacs is in love with her career. "The best thing about working in tourism is meeting people from all walks of life and to be given the opportunity to share our wonderful culture and learn theirs as well", she said. "It's also about offering service excellence to make everyone feel welcome and at home."

Alex Ghisays realises her dream

ALEX GHISAYS began her career in the Jamaican tourism industry in 1984 with the SuperClubs chain. Working as a personal assistant to Tony Ferrari, who encouraged her passion for public relations, Ghisays jumped into the deep end by working with MTV and Bon Jovi on a large project, as well as countless brochure shoots, weddings and press visits at Hedonism II. She made the move to Couples Resorts in 1997 as executive assistant to the then CEO and President Paul Pennicook, with special emphasis on public relations and events.

Since 2001, Ghisays has been the group public relations director for Couples Resorts and has spearheaded the group's on-island fundraising efforts, including the Annual Charity Golf Tournaments in Ocho Rios and Negril, which have raised more than \$30 million to date for local schools, hospitals, a boys' home and two animal shelters.

In 2005, Ghisays and Diane Pollard, president and CEO of ITF,

realised their dream and the Issa Trust Foundation was formed as the non-profit arm of Couples Resorts to improve the lives of Jamaican children, particularly in the fields of health care and education. The Issa Trust Foundation, chaired by Paul Issa, has provided approximately US\$8 million in savings to the country's health-care system since its inception.

PR DIRECTOR

Ghisays serves proudly as public relations director on the board that will be staging an evening with Air Supply at Couples Sans Souci on June 24, with all proceeds going towards the paediatric ward of the St Ann's Bay Hospital.

In recognition of her work with various local charities sponsored by Couples Resorts, she was made a justice of the peace for the parish of St Mary in 2006.

Divorced, Ghisay's inspiration is her 18-year-old son, Sage, who is an honour-roll student about to enter university to study finance and banking.



CONTRIBUTED

Lyndsay Isaacs (right), regional public relations manager for Sandals and Beaches Resorts in the Ocho Rios Region, accepts a Tourism Service Excellence Award from Carole Guntley, former director general in the Ministry of Tourism.



Betty Ann Brown Committed to the development of people

CAMPERDOWN HIGH School old girl and director of human resources at the Hyatt Ziva, Betty Ann Brown, has had an extraordinary work life in both the education and hospitality sectors, steadfastly committing herself to the development of people.

Her working years began in the classroom, where she taught at Holy Childhood and St Hugh's high schools, before crossing over to tourism.

"I started in 1993 as a telephone operator for Jamaica Pegasus. Shortly thereafter, I moved to reservations and then I went back to tourism school," Brown said.

"I went to UWI and spent two years in Nassau in The Bahamas, then went on internship to Sandals St Lucia, where I got my immersion into the all-inclusive arena; became front office manager at Trelawny Beach Hotel, and also did PR," she explained.

But Brown did not stop there.

She went into public service and worked in the Ministry of Labour in the Labour Law and Conciliation Unit and during that time, completed her masters degree in human resources management.

She also did a stint lecturing at the Sam Sharpe Teachers College in St James, and later assumed the task as Half Moon's training manager; then Ritz Carlton and Palmyra, before returning to Ritz for its opening as the Hyatt.

For Brown, her most memorable moment in tourism came at the Ritz, when one of the resort's landscapers was selected as the tourism industry's employee of the year.

"That was my proudest moment, that one who was so humble and from the line would have been given such an honour," she said. "The second was closing the Ritz Carlton without a 'peep' from any employee – having that seamless transition into the new organisation."

Diana McIntyre-Pike Still leading the way in community tourism

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

IN 2009, the Government of Jamaica conferred upon Diana McIntyre-Pike the Order of Distinction for tourism and community service.

Before and after that, McIntyre-Pike has received other awards, including the Caribbean Hotel Association Award (CHA) in recognition of outstanding efforts which have significantly contributed to the advancement of the hotel industry in the Caribbean; the Women's Bureau Jamaica International Women's Day Award for Community Tourism in 2012; and the Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Award.

It is needless to say Diana McIntyre-Pike is worthy of such

awards, because, for over four decades, she has accomplished much in the field of community tourism and is world renowned for her contribution. In the early 1990s, the International Institute for Peace Through Tourism (IIPT) invited her to Montreal, Canada, for its second global summit.

BRAND NAME

She said, "It was after this summit that the over 800 delegates from 70 countries embraced this brand name from us in Jamaica, and the IIPT also decided to set up the IIPT International Community Tourism Network and appointed me as the chairman."

In 1978, McIntyre-Pike introduced the concept to the then director of tourism, Desmond Henry. They branded

it 'community tourism', subsequently formed South Coast Marketing Limited, and researched the feasibility of the development of community tourism in south coast communities, especially Treasure Beach, St Elizabeth. The response was positive.

Throughout her long and distinguished involvement in tourism, McIntyre-Pike has held many important positions such as chairman of the CHA's small hotels committee. Continuing to lead the pack, she is the founder, president and community tourism consultant for Countrystyle Community Tourism Network/Villages as Businesses, and founder/partner for Countrystyle Caribbean Vacations and Tours.



Diana McIntyre-Pike

Shelly-Ann Fung A stickler for guest satisfaction

Paul H. Williams
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

SHELLY-ANN FUNG'S EMPLOYMENT in the hospitality industry started when she was only 16 years old as an entertainment coordinator at Sandals Resorts, where she eventually rose to the positions of trainee manager, entertainment manager, sales manager, and group manager for wedding at the corporate offices of Sandals Resorts International.

Fung also did a stint at Ritz-Carlton Rose Hall in the capacities of assistant director of activities and director of guest experiences. Since 2013, she has been employed to VIP Attractions, where she is the commercial director. Her job is to supervise the local and international sales

team. Her responsibilities include overseeing product development, identifying new market opportunities, determining the optimal pricing to balance profit with customer/guest satisfaction, and directing marketing operations.

PROFESSIONAL AWARDS

For her dedication and commitment, Fung has won many professional awards, the most recent being the Director of the Year award at VIP Attractions, last year. There were quarterly awards at Ritz-Carlton Rose Hall Golf Resort and Spa. At Sandals Dunn's River Villagio Golf Resort and Spa, there was a string of awards including Most Improved, Employee of the Month, Employee of the Year 1998, the 2004 General Manager Award, the 2003 Spirit of Creativity Award, and the 1999 Chairman Award, which consisted of the

Butch Stewart Scholarship to Hocking Technical College in Nelsonville, Ohio, from which she obtained an associate degree in hotel restaurant management.

It has been 17 years since Fung has been working in the hospitality industry. This longevity, she said, is because of "the guest satisfaction and customer-retention element", knowing that she can contribute to the return of tourists to the island. "I also appreciate great customer service, and in hospitality, this is a necessity," she also said.



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Erin Davidson
General Manager

Sheryl Dixon Wilks
Director of Human Resources

Eleanor Cole Reivers
General Manager

Shernette Crichton: A class act

HALF MOON'S director of resort operations Shernette Crichton's venture into tourism was influenced by her many visits to her sister, who worked in the hotel industry in Negril.

So intrigued was she that after leaving Westwood High School in Trelawny, she enrolled in the Food and Beverage Management certificate programme at the Montego Bay Community College before moving on to the

College of Arts Science and Technology (CAST) (now University of Technology, Jamaica) where she attained a diploma in institutional and catering management.

"During my tenure at CAST, we were required to complete four weeks of work experience prior to graduating. I was placed at Half Moon Hotel. My work experience at Half Moon piqued my passion for the industry, and after leaving CAST, I returned to

Half Moon for a one-year trainee manager programme in 1990," she explained.

SEVERAL JOBS

Crichton has stamped her class in several capacities over the years, including assistant manager sales; special projects with responsibility for environmental protection and development of standards; director of training and staff development; hotel manager and

interim general manager.

She holds a first degree in hospitality management from the Florida International University and a master's degree in organisational behaviour from the University of London. She is also a certified hospitality educator.

Crichton credits "dynamic changing scenes at Half Moon through its growth and development and the opportunity to travel and interact at all levels" as among the reasons for her longevity in the industry as well as her personal growth and development through succession planning.



Shernette Crichton



WE SALUTE THESE **OUTSTANDING WOMEN** IN TOURISM



KAREN LANIGAN

Karen Lanigan, General Manager for Couples Swept Away, has been with Couples Resorts for the past 18 years. She started out as an Executive Assistant Manager and was then promoted to the position of Operations Manager and finally General Manager for the last 14 years. Karen is a passionate supporter of the Issa Trust Foundation, specifically assisting with the Foundation's Paediatric Medical Missions in Westmoreland and Hanover. She obtained her BSc in Hotel & Restaurant Management from the University of New Haven.



PETRONIA BROOKS

Petronia Brooks is the Group Financial Controller of Couples Resorts, and has over 18 years of executive management experience having worked as Financial Controller for Couples Negril and Grand Lido Negril (Super Clubs). She sits on the Board of Directors for the Issa Trust Foundation which is a non-profit organization established by Couples Resorts. Petronia obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Business Management from Nova Southeastern University and is a Chartered Accountant having completed the US CPA exams. She is currently pursuing her certification in Financial Planning and Analysis at the B&B University College in Kingston.

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WITH JUST under three years of service in the tourism sector, chief financial officer of the Tryall Club, Patricia Henry, considers herself a newcomer to the tourism industry, but one who will be around for a long time to come.

"I started working at the Tryall Club in November 2014. This is my first job in the sector, so I would say I am still a newbie. I have not been around long, but I intend to be here for the long haul, learning and growing by contributing to the Tryall Club, the sector, and my country," Henry said.

"The past two and a half years at Tryall have been prolific, watching the new management team with Aram Zerunian at the helm, transforming the property, improving the product to the delight of our guests, while improving the lives of our valuable staff," she said.

Henry sees tourism as a sector that facilitates and develops expertise and exposure, and an ideal medium for international learning and cultural exchange.

"Tourism is a very dynamic industry that encompasses all the major careers from finance, human resources, IT, engineering, restaurants, and customer service ... Tourism is very competitive not only locally between properties, but also regionally, between countries and internationally, between regions. Year after year, prime destinations rise and fall, and the onus is on each property in each country to play its part in developing its product and increase the demand," she added.

"Tourism has always and will continue to make a meaningful impact on the Jamaican landscape," Henry said.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Patricia Henry,
Tryall Club





Linda Lawrence Strengthening travel industry relationships

DIRECTOR OF sales and marketing at Round Hill Hotel and Villas, Linda Lawrence, joined the executive team at Round Hill Hotel and Villas in 2012 to oversee the sales and marketing activities of the world-renowned resort located in Hanover.

In her capacity, Lawrence has been responsible for strengthening travel industry relationships, consortia relationships and strategic partnerships as well as looking after the brand positioning, marketing, sales and public relations at the 110-acre property, which is highly decorated as one of the most beautiful and elegant resorts in the West Indies.

Prior to Round Hill, Lawrence spent 11 years in a senior-level sales capacity at Half Moon in Montego Bay, between 2000 and 2011, serving as acting weddings manager, regional sales manager and travel industry sales manager.

Lawrence has a master's degree in tourism and hospitality management from Revans University. She completed her first degree in 2003 at the Florida International University where she graduated *summa cum laude* in hospitality management. She also earned an advanced certification in hospitality marketing from Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration in 2015.

A group photograph of twelve women in professional attire standing outdoors in a garden setting. They are dressed in various styles of business wear, including blazers, skirts, and dresses. In the bottom left corner, there is a logo for "Tourism Product Development Co. Ltd" (TPD Co) featuring a stylized sun and water design. Below the logo, the text "women in tourism" is written in a script font. To the right of the group photo, there are five individual portraits of women, each with their name and title below it:

- Joy Roberts, Deputy Executive Director
- Deanne Keating Campbell, Director, Product Quality & Tourism Training
- Yvonne Gardner, Chief Information Officer
- Kenya Keddo Laing, Regional Manager - Destination Assurance
- Beverly Price, Regional Manager- Ocho Rios
- Marline Stephenson Dalley, Community Awareness Coordinator
- Kimberly Evans, Senior Project Manager

From left to right: Tantanica Burnett, Project Manager; Sandy Chung, Director - Product Development; Lezley Bernard, Regional Manager - Kgn & South Coast; Jenna Blackwood, Landscape Architect; Karen Fisher, Office Administrator - Kgn & South Coast; Sharon Dookie, HR Officer; Rachel Worrell, Civil Engineer; Violet Crutchley, Craft Development Coordinator; Karen McPherson, Chief Audit & Risk Executive; Kamille Jackson, Director - Projects; Dahlia Dwyer, Business Development Officer; Ruth Harris - Executive Tourism Training Manager

“I LOVE preparing Jamaican meals because the flavours can't be replicated anywhere else!” exclaimed Glenroy Walker, senior group executive chef at Sandals Resorts International. “I love how you can transform the food in a novel way, and it is exciting. To hear the oooohs and aaaahs and see the look of satisfaction on the guests' faces is gratifying,” he said. Such is the magic and allure of Jamaica's cuisine.

The gastronomic offerings are all wrapped up in the island's bold flavours and tasty notes. Many foodies have travelled from far afield to the island to imbibe sumptuous treats. Likewise, many food aficionados have packed dining halls and five-star restaurants in Europe, North America, and places in between, just to indulge in the unmistakable flavours that are uniquely Jamaican.

Jamaica definitely punches above her weight in the gastronomy arena. Unlike cuisines such as the French and the Italian which have had centuries to perfect their craft, Jamaica is a relative newcomer to the culinary landscape, earning recognition in recent decades. People are always in awe of the flavours and want to know how they can get the ingredients so that they can replicate the taste in their own kitchen. The use of locally grown produce, the aroma and zest of the island's herbs and spices create pleasantly unexpected fusions and mouthwatering menus. This makes Jamaica a bucket-list destination for creations that delight the palates of foodies.

UNIQUE BLEND OF FLAVOURS

“Our authentic spices create a combustion of flavours. The allspice, ginger, thyme, Scotch bonnet pepper that come from the land is beautiful,” said Walker. “I do believe persons come to Jamaica for our cuisine. Jamaica's culture is warm and welcoming, and people gravitate to the culture easily. That warmth oozes out of the food that we prepare, and this draws people to the island,” he said.

One of the reasons for Jamaica's distinct cuisine is access to fresh produce, and for Martin Maginley, executive chef at Round Hill Hotel and Villas, that is key to making phenomenal dishes. He

DESTINATION JAMAICA

WHERE THE WORLD'S FOODIES DINE

*Round Hill Hotel and Villas
Martin Maginley
Executive Chef*

CONTRIBUTED

Chef Martin Maginley, executive chef at Jamaica's Round Hill Hotel, with Pineapple Galette at Condé Nast Traveller Chefs' World Series in London, November 2016.



CONTRIBUTED
Chef Glenroy Walker making jerk marinade for his jerked fish.

loves the fact that he can design dishes that create an experience for the clients because the ingredients are accessible in their organic form. “I take the fresh products that are found on the island and transform them above and beyond to create recipes that you can create at home,” he explained.

When he shares kitchen with international chefs, they are always interested in the Jamaican-infused meals that he prepares. “Chefs gravitate towards the cuisine, because of its bold

flavours, and it gives me joy to share my knowledge and products with them,” he said.

The magic of Jamaican-infused meals is not served only in five-star restaurants, but is available in the most unexpected places on the island, like in a patty shop, in a roadside kitchen simmering on a coal pot, at a jerk joint, on an off-the-beaten-track farm-to-table event or in the Rastafarian Ital stew. It is these authentic encounters that are among the memorable experiences that visitors and Jamaicans alike keep



Jerk fish and breadfruit on the grill.

talking about.

To add another layer to the culinary experience, some attractions and accommodations offer guests the opportunity to participate in the cooking experience. For example, Yaaman Adventure Park offers a culinary tour that allows the guests to participate in the meal preparation. At Goblin Hill Villas, the housekeepers prepare freshly cooked meals, which guests can help to prepare. Additionally, many hotels on the island are now offering farm-to-table experiences.

The See, Touch and Taste Programme at Round Hill Hotel and Villas is very important to Maginley as it gives him opportunities to interact with the guests in the hotel's organic garden and to cook together. This goes a far way in promoting Jamaica's cuisine with people from all over the world.

To hear a guest say, “this is what I came here for”, is music to Walker's ears. And this sentiment is proof that people the world over visit Jamaica to indulge in her enticing gastronomic offerings.

What advice should travellers be given?

David Jessop

Contributor

IN FEBRUARY, a British coroner's court had to rule in a case that raised important matters of principle about the responsibility of tour operators, hotels, and governments. In part, at issue were the warnings given to visitors and the level of responsibility that even the most junior sales staff have in this regard.

Although the background to the case is, hopefully, unique – it involved a judge sitting as a coroner having to rule on the legal nature of the deaths of 30 British visitors who were the subject of a terrorist attack in Tunisia – it raised several important and potentially troubling issues for the industry.

While the hearing was not about the tour operator concerned, the British Government's travel advice, or the woeful inadequacy of the local security personnel involved, much



JESSOP

of the evidence and subsequent reporting focused on this.

In the coroner's court, it was alleged that the staff of the tour operator when asked about the destination and the resort's safety, did not point out either the British Government's travel advice or other prior events elsewhere in the country affecting visitors.

In delivering his judgment, the coroner rejected allegations of neglect against the tour operator and the hotel.

Subsequently, TUI UK released

a statement expressing sympathy for the victims and their families, which, in part, noted: "We have now heard the coroner's findings and his comments regarding the provision of security and visibility of travel advice. These are complex matters and we have already taken steps to raise awareness of the (British Government's) Travel Aware campaign. Together with the travel industry in light of these comments, we must now take some time to further reflect on these areas."

ADVICE FOR TRAVELLERS?

What the case did, however, was to place, more generally, a spotlight on what advice travellers should be provided; how far professional responsibility should go when a vacation has so many moving parts; and the extent to which every visitor should accept, as they would in their home country, that in almost any decision they might take, there is

an element of risk.

The United States and Canada, the countries of Europe, and others like Australia and Japan regularly issue advisory notices to their citizens informing them about the risks they might face when travelling to particular countries. These normally address issues such as crime, security or public health, and can sometimes be discouraging, given their lack of specificity. Despite this, most tour operators, airlines, and travel agents routinely point their customers to the web site containing such information.

However, this can be particularly complicated for an industry selling dreams and can result in tensions. Governments and tourist boards in the host country understandably want visitors to believe that all is well and that nothing will trouble a vacation, while their counterparts in their source market have the legal and moral responsibility to inform their

citizens or customers about risk.

Diplomats say that travel advisories are intended to strike a balance between a citizen's expectations that their government will warn them about any threat to their safety, and the recognition that too strident or disproportionate a warning could result in economic damage to the country concerned and its tourism industry. They also observe that the consequence, behind the scenes, is that what is written then becomes the subject of difficult high-level political or diplomatic exchanges about both the detail and the language used.

Vacations exist to encourage us to relax and seek experience, and increasingly, to want the authentic.

The problem, if that is the right word, is that in the process, the traveller can become too trusting, and paradoxically more liable to be caught up in the unexpected, or in dangerously evolving situations, in ways that no form of travel advice could ever address.

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Left front: Tamika Higgins Baker (Sales & Marketing Manager), right front: Angellie Thompson-Dale (Assistant General Manager IBEROSTAR Grand Rose Hall) middle left: Kymoya Case (Assistant General Manager IBEROSTAR Suites Resort), middle right: Julleth Green (Hotel Inventory Manager) left to the back: Shireen Sommerset (Assistant Financial Manager), right to the back: Kimberly Raynor - Nolan (Resort Groups Coordinator)



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