

Champions of Business

For the past 9 years, the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce has been hosting its prestigious Annual Business Hall of Fame with a gala ceremony to recognize and celebrate the contribution of Business to the national community.

This year, the Chamber is going one step further and re-branding the event as the Champions of Business. You may be wondering why rebrand such a successful annual event? Simply, the Chamber, being representative of the Voice of Business, identified the need - and decided it was time - to also recognise not just business icons with past success stories, but those right now in the making and which are right now impacting positively on our economy and social fabric.

Therefore, the Champions of Business will retain both the original spirit and category of the Business Hall of Fame, and in addition will introduce two new categories to recognize entrepreneurs as up-and comers as well as medium sized companies from our membership who have established their brands in the region or international arena. These categories are branded Emerging Entrepreneur and Internationally Known...T&T Owned.

At the heart of every business is an idea, a leader and a vision - every winner in business starts here. The recipient of the “Emerging Entrepreneur” would have displayed a winning combination of all three, and is making a positive and progressive impact on his or her industry and community. This year, four nominations were received, namely, Dean Ackin of the Ultimate Group, Mazuree Ali of TriniTrolley.com, Jeunanne Alkins of Everything Slight Pepper and Kwesi “Hypa Hopper” Hopkinson of Scorch. The winner for 2014 in this category will be announced on the evening of October 17.

For the “Internationally Known...T&T Owned” award, we looked at medium-sized Member companies that are at least 75% owned by T&T nationals, which has been profitable and growing fast, and which are engaged in business development expansion with an established footprint either regionally or

internationally. One business emerged a clear winner for 2014, namely Sacha Cosmetics Ltd., headed by businessman Kama Maharaj.

For the Business Hall of Fame, which remains the only one of its kind in Trinidad and Tobago, nominees must have made a significant impact as a business leader over the length and span of their business career and be recognized as a role model for future business leaders. Over the past 9 years, the Chamber has inducted 23 icons of local business into its Hall of Fame, and this year, two more will be added in a gala ceremony which has become the standard for this event. Those individuals will be Mr. Raymond Dieffenthaler (posthumously) and Mr. Michael Mansoor.

The stories of these seven – winners by any stretch of the imagination – will be told in word and film and we are certain they will serve as inspiration to not just business people but anyone who aspires to personal and professional excellence.

We anticipate that the Champions of Business will quickly establish itself and, as the Business Hall of Fame did, will be a “must do” event for the business community in T&T.