

CHAMPIONS OF BUSINESS

Osmond “Ossie” Carlyle Hale Business Hall of Fame Inductee (Posthumous)



True leaders are defined by how they inspire others, and Ossie Hale’s genuine love for people was a hallmark of his success.

Born in 1926 in Woodbrook, Trinidad, Osmond “Ossie” Carlyle Hale was a proud alumnus of Queen’s Royal College. After graduating, he enlisted with the Canadian army as part of the Allies’ World War II effort. Once the war ended in 1945, Ossie returned home. By the end of that year, his father, longtime manager of the Canadian-owned Hand Arnold, had bought the business and invited his son to join the team as a salesman.

At the time, Hand Arnold was a food commission agent, placing orders with overseas suppliers and having goods delivered to customers directly from the port. Ossie, ever forward thinking, spearheaded the acquisition of a warehouse: it was the company’s first step towards becoming a full-fledged distributor.

In the 1960s, understanding that his own success was inextricably linked to the advancement of others, Ossie flew in an American expert to show local groceries how to upgrade from ‘counter’ to ‘self-serve’ operations. He also led the charge towards computerisation; Hand Arnold was IBM Trinidad’s second customer.

Passionate about helping people fulfil their potential, Ossie was active in Rotary International, where he became District Governor. An avid golfer, he was past president of the St. Andrew’s Golf Club, but a large part of his heart was in the steelband movement. Hand Arnold sponsored the Catelli All Stars for decades, and Ossie was their biggest fan! Once he put his heart into something, Ossie would, in his quiet way, help build it into something better.

He took challenges in his stride. Heavy looting after the 1990 attempted coup rendered Hand Arnold insolvent – but thanks to the relationships that Ossie had built, suppliers continued shipping to the company on full credit. While Hand Arnold was forced to sell assets and cut costs – including the heartbreaking decision to give up its sponsorship of All Stars – it managed to right itself without any retrenchment of regular staff, reclaiming its position as a top local distributor.

Ossie Hale spent close to 40 years at Hand Arnold – as salesman, Chief Executive Officer and Chair – retaining his chairmanship until 1994, when he passed away, leaving a legacy of empathy and excellence.

The Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce (host of the Champions of Business Awards) and Guardian Life of the Caribbean Limited (Sponsor of the Business Hall of Fame category) is honoured to have (posthumously) inducted Mr. Osmond C. Hale to the Business Hall of Fame on November 15, 2019.



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