



Champions of Business Media Launch – June 10, 2025

10.00am

President's Remarks

Ms. Sonji Pierre-Chase

Good Morning Ladies and gentlemen and thank you for joining us this morning.

The Champions of Business Awards celebrate excellence and capture a spectrum of achievements in business that encompasses awarding entrepreneurs in the Small and Medium (SME) Sector who have exhibited unique business development, creativity, innovation and technology development. The COB Awards also recognizes businesses that have made a significant mark on achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by promoting a green agenda. The Awards also recognizes manufacturers who have placed Trinidad and Tobago on the global map by penetrating international markets. Each category of the CoB awards is hinged on both business acumen and corporate social responsibility. The Award categories are tailored to individuals and companies and are open to all of Trinidad and Tobago businesses, whether they are members of the T&T Chamber or non-members. These Awards are truly aligned to the ethos and vision of the T&T Chamber and our partner sponsors who all have taken the opportunity to honour the outstanding individuals and corporations shaping our nation's pride.



Now in its 20th year, Champions of Business has grown from the original Business Hall of Fame to encompassing seven categories which represent the business spectrum, from entrepreneurship through lifetime achievement.

And now for the formal unveiling of our 2025 Champions of Business Theme:

Our theme for 2025 is ‘Building Legacies’, we would embark on an extraordinary journey of innovation at the highly anticipated Champions of Business 2025 event. Join us in honouring the visionaries who are revolutionizing our nation’s business landscape and continue to build legacies to inspire new and upcoming businesses.

Unveil the winners across diverse categories at the Gala Awards Finale, including the Breakthrough Exporter of the Year, Entrepreneurship, Green Agenda, Innovation, Internationally Known... T&T Owned Company of the Year, SME Award categories and the Business Hall of Fame.

The goals of the program are:

- To recognize the role and contributions of outstanding businesses towards the nation and the economy.
- To encourage local enterprises to continue developing and elevating their businesses.
- To motivate and inspire home-grown businesses to aim for excellence in their products and services; and to encourage local businesses to promote and showcase their products and services to the world, and



- To celebrate and highlight the achievements of local enterprises that have contributed to the environment and growth of the community.

In collaboration with sponsors, we will present awards in the following seven categories:

- Business Hall of Fame, sponsored by KallCO Ltd.
- Green Agenda , sponsored by Proman
- Internationally Known...T&T Owned Company of the Year sponsored by the Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism
- Breakthrough Exporter of the Year sponsored by Eximbank Trinidad and Tobago Limited
- Entrepreneurship sponsored by Republic Bank
- SME Awards (small & medium) sponsored by Republic Bank
- And the Innovation Award

We are privileged to have such leading organisations as our Signature Sponsors to support Champions of Business and we thank all of them for seeing value in the T&T Chamber's work of connecting businesses and people across many industries.

The alignment could not be more harmonious.

The Business Hall of Fame is where it all began and today remains the culmination of the Champions program. In 2005, the founder of the T&T



Chamber, Joseph Leon Agostini, became the first inductee. Twenty years and 44 inductees later, we look forward to announcing this year's outstanding inductees, whose lifetime achievements in business and public life can unquestionably raise the bar. **KallCo Ltd.** joins us as the sponsor of this prestigious award category. Inductees are selected from nominees and announced prior to the induction, which is presented at the Gala Finale.

Proman joins us this year to sponsor the **Green Agenda Award** category. With the growing importance of sustainability in a world threatened by environmental challenges, this award recognizes that corporate T&T has a part to play in doing what is right for the environment, our planet and future generations. There are no finalists in this category. One winner will be selected and announced at the Gala Awards in November.

Champions of Business are selected by nomination and ALL of the award categories are open to anyone, meaning that you don't have to be a T&T Chamber member to nominate someone, nor do you have to be a member to be nominated.

EXIM Bank Trinidad and Tobago Limited joins us for another year as the gold sponsor for the **Breakthrough Exporter of the Year**. Eximbank has supported us over the years and continue to do so by sponsoring this category. Do you know who was the first recipient of this award? It was Karibbean Flavors. This year's Breakthrough Exporter will be announced at the Gala Awards Finale.



Internationally Known...T&T Owned Company of the Year was introduced in 2014. We are delighted to have the **Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism** sponsor this award category for a 3rd year running. This year's Award recipient will be announced at the Gala Awards Finale.

Republic Bank joins us for a 3rd year to sponsor the **Entrepreneurship award** category. This Award is presented to an individual or business that has been founded within the last 5 years and which has been experiencing strong growth. The award aims to celebrate the spirit of entrepreneurship, empowering visionary leaders while also building brand recognition within the entrepreneurial community. Republic Bank is also sponsoring the **SME (small and medium) award** category for a 2nd year, the SME Award recognises the significant contribution of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) to the economy of Trinidad and Tobago. It acknowledges enterprises that have demonstrated consistent growth, strong financial performance, customer understanding, effective leadership, utilisation of technology/digital media, and ongoing innovation to support future growth. The recipients of these awards will be announced at the Gala Finale

Finally, the **Innovation award** recognizes that business efficiency and innovation are often synonymous with technology. WiPay was awarded the first Business Technology (title now changed to Innovation). We will continue to observe the growth and evolution of these awardees in the future. The winner of this award is selected from amongst three finalists and revealed at the Gala Finale.



I now invite Vashti back to the podium to introduce our sponsors to share a few words. Thank you!