

Two Jamaican Businesses up for Prestigious Regional Award

KINGSTON (JIS):

Thursday, September 03, 2009

Local companies, Spatial Innovision and Totally Male, are among 10 regional entities vying for a \$5.3 million (US\$60,000) grand prize in the inaugural Pioneers of Prosperity Caribbean Award.

The winner of the prestigious award will be named at a ceremony scheduled for the Half Moon Conference Centre in Montego Bay, St. James, on September 11.

The ceremony, to be hosted by Prime Minister, the Hon. Bruce Golding, will mark the culmination of several months of meticulous and stringent evaluations of entrants in the Caribbean Pioneers of Prosperity programme.

An initiative of the Multilateral Investment Fund of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the John Templeton Foundation and the Social Equity Venture Fund (S.E.VEN Fund), the Pioneers of Prosperity programme seeks to inspire and mobilise a new generation of entrepreneurs in emerging economies by identifying, rewarding and promoting outstanding small and medium-sized enterprises to serve as role models to their peers.

The Government's investment promotion agency, Jamaica Trade and Invest (JTI), was integrally involved in the programme's implementation locally.

The other entities vying for the award are: Analytical Technologies and Scaba Cosmetics from Trinidad and Tobago; Alternative Insurance Company and Solutions SA, Haiti; Hummingbird Group Limited, Belize; Bulkan Timber Works Inc., Guyana; Caribbean Civil Group, Bahamas; and Trinity Homes, Barbados.

The 10 finalists, who were selected from some 580 entrants from each of the participating territories, each received a \$3.5 million (US\$40,000) country-level grants towards investment in training and enhancement of the technical infrastructure of their businesses.

Jamaica's Hotel Mockingbird is among five entities shortlisted for honourable mention, which will each receive an \$890,000 (US\$10,000) grant.

Totally Male, which has been in operation for 15 years, retails clothing and accessories and offers fashion consultancy, grooming and spa services exclusively for men. Last December, the entity, which has a staff complement of 12, was assisted by the Government in securing funding totaling \$1 million from the European Union-funded (EU) Private sector Development Programme (PSDP), to enhance its competitiveness of the operations.

"We were able to use the funding to implement customer service training, formalise our documentation, expand the facilities and upgrade equipment. This definitely put us in superb condition to enter the Pioneers of Prosperity programme," Managing Director of Totally Male, Sandra Samuels informed.

Spatial Innovision, which has been in operation for the past 11 years, provides vendor, consulting and implementation services related to land mapping technology. The company was part of a JTI-led contingent to the Centrum der Büro-und Informationstechnik (German

for "Centre of Office and Information Technology" - CeBIT) trade fair in Germany earlier this year.

President and Chief Executive Officer, Silburn Clarke, said his organisation "already felt like a winner" by virtue of "being in the top two per cent of the businesses assessed across the region. He also welcomed the exposure, which the entity would gain by participating in Pioneers of Prosperity.

"The opportunity to meet the other nine finalists and share knowledge is a big benefit. I am looking forward to networking with technical experts, potential investors and like-minded entrepreneurs in the region and beyond," he said.

Managing Director of the OTF Group, the international competitiveness consulting firm responsible for implementing the Pioneers of Prosperity programme, Ken Haynes, described the 10 finalists as fine examples of the region's entrepreneurial spirit.

"The dynamism and commercial success of these small to medium-size enterprises sends a strong message to their peers in the business community and to potential investors that all is not doom and gloom in the Caribbean. There are great companies in the region that can compete with anyone in the world. That's the message that the Pioneers of Prosperity Programme wants to send," Mr. Haynes stated.



PRINT THIS



CLOSE WINDOW

Copyright ©1996 - 2003, **Jamaica Information Service**, All rights reserved.
Tel: (876) 926-3590-8/926-3740-8 Fax: (876) 926-6715 e-mail: jis@jis.gov.jm