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## Hummingbird Furnishings Represents Belize in Jamaica as a Pioneer of Prosperity

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Written by Shane D. Williams  
Thursday, 17 September 2009 14:55

Pioneers of Prosperity is a global awards program that seeks to "inspire a new generation of entrepreneurs in emerging economies by identifying, rewarding and promoting outstanding businesses who serve as role models to their peers."

Ten Pioneers of Prosperity were named from seven Caribbean countries and there were four honourable mentions. Each national winner received US\$40,000 to help further develop their business. There is a four step process that an entrepreneur must complete in order to be named a Pioneer of Prosperity. The first step is to apply. Applicants must be for-profit companies that earn between US\$100,000 - US\$500,000 per year in revenue. After the application process is completed the second round is a series of follow up questions; if the applicant makes it through those questions they will then partake in a phone interview with a Pioneers of Prosperity Representative. The final round in the selection process is an in depth investigation into the company. The investigation includes meetings with the staff; clients and customers; and a look at the business opportunities and its potential to create prosperity in the community.



Caribbean Pioneers of Prosperity

The Pioneer of Prosperity for Belize was announced on July 27 and it was Robert Lopez of Hummingbird Furnishings. Lopez traveled to Jamaica to showcase his company in the regional round of the program. He had the opportunity to win US\$60,000 more for further development of his business. Hummingbird Furnishings employs over 50 individuals plus ten students part time. Their main clients are owners of resorts and hotels. Hummingbird also provides furnishings for many people in the United States. Lopez said that he will use the US\$40,000 to develop a sustainable harvesting system for the production of bamboo furniture.

However, Lopez was not named as the Pioneer of Prosperity for the Caribbean. That title went to Howard Bulkan of Guyana. Bulkan owns a firm that makes building materials for homes from locally harvested woods, and then recycles the sawdust by giving it away to chicken farmers. The winner was announced on Friday, September 11 at a ceremony in Montego Bay, Jamaica. The Prime Minister of Jamaica was present at the awards ceremony.

The seven countries that were represented in Jamaica are Belize, Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. There were two Pioneers each for Haiti, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. The other four countries each had an honourable mention. The honourable mention for Belize was the Lodge at Chaa Creek.

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