



Five to Compete in Billion Dollar Dreams

The Central Bank of Barbados today announced the five finalists in the Billion Dollar Dreams Competition being held to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Sir Winston Scott Memorial Lecture.

The finalists are Delvin Howell, Ryan Belle, Gabriel Abed, Ryan Brathwaite (himself an athlete), and Khalil Bryan, owners of promising start ups, ranging from rear meat production to comics and mobile money.

They will benefit from a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to pitch their businesses to Nicholas Brathwaite, technologist, entrepreneur, co-founder of a two billion dollar private equity firm and the 2015 Sir Winston Scott Memorial Lecturer, in exchange for advice on how to become truly world class.

Local business people, John Williams, CEO, Cave Shepherd, Sara Odle, Marketing and Communications Consultant, Ian Knight, Entrepreneurship Consultant and Tutor, and Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Executive Director, Caribbean Export Development Agency, will also share their recipe for success with the contestants.

"We view this as a unique and exciting opportunity to be able to interact with an entrepreneur of Dr. Brathwaite's acclaim, and local business people who have excelled in their trade. Billion Dollar Dreams will definitely help us take our businesses to the next level. As entrepreneurs, it's always encouraging to hear from someone who has "been there and done that. Wow, what an experience this will be," the finalists commented, on hearing of their selection.

Here's a sneak peek into the five startups: Ryan Belle's business is 5 Rare Meats and he offers his customers high quality, well-presented, exotic meats, as the name of the business suggests, including rabbits, pheasants and quails.

Gabriel Abed, through BITT, connects merchants and consumers using frictionless mobile money. He offers a low cost international cash and virtual currency remittance service, and provides liquid digital currency to traditional currency trading markets, using the Bitt Exchange platform.

GB Geo Engineering Inc., owned by Ryan Brathwaite, aims to bring the region to a position where physical planning is enabled and facilitated by the availability of useful geo-spatial information.

Caribbean Transit Solutions Inc. aims to solve critical transportation problems in Barbados and the Caribbean by leveraging GPS, mobile data and internet technologies. Its location-based mobile transportation solutions provide real time information on the status and timing of PSVs and Taxis and an online portal that gives merchants innovative marketing options. Khalil Bryan is the CEO.

Delvin Howell's Beyond Publishing Caribbean is into entertainment. The producer of comics, Howell shows Caribbean stories and perspectives in ways that are fresh and unique. With each chapter, he says that he entertains his readers until the story sticks into their minds and they become rabid fans who are devoted, eager to see more, and anxious to spend their time and money.

“Billion Dollar Dreams will promote entrepreneurship in a meaningful and beneficial way by putting local startups in touch with a world class entrepreneur and Barbadian business experts. Dr. Brathwaite, a Caribbean man is a hugely successful entrepreneur, with vast experience in technology and private equity investment, so he's ideally placed to help our entrepreneurs really grow, develop and innovate. The Bank is certainly delighted that he has committed to deliver this year's lecture and to participate in the Billion Dollar Dreams Forum,” Novaline Brewster, Public Affairs Officer commented.

“The finalists and participants at the forum can expect sound advice on the use of technology, accessing capital, marketing, preparing for the export market and how to move from small to world class,” Ms. Brewster explained.

But advice is not all that they will receive. Each finalist will leave with a prize as well. The winner will receive \$10,000, compliments the Bank and a BIMAP scholarship, valued at \$6,100. The second prize is \$5,000, compliments First Citizens Bank and a scholarship from the Cave Hill School of Business worth \$2,500; the third prize is \$5,000; the fourth prizewinner gets \$2,000 compliments ICBL, and the fifth prize is \$1,000.

The forum, which comes off at the Frank Collymore Hall on November 24 at 1:00 p.m., is a learning opportunity for young entrepreneurs and those aspiring to own their businesses.

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