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THURSDAY - DECEMBER 20TH, 2018

75 CENTS

PHA AND CPSA REACH AGREEMENT

BY LEAH COOPER
 Journal Staff Writer

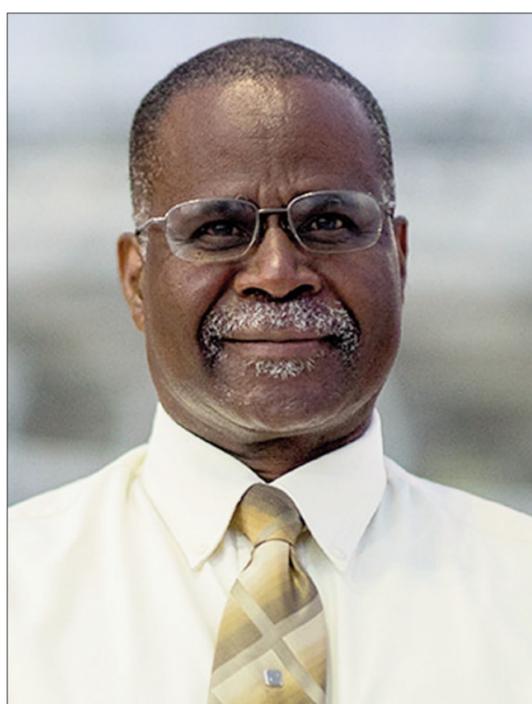
The Public Hospitals Authority (PHA) joined with the Consultant Physicians Staff Association (CPSA) to announce that both parties have agreed in principle to all aspects of the proposed industrial agreement.

The process to complete negotiations with respect to the agreement was completed this past Friday.

In a release, all parties said that they are satisfied that the agreement reflects the best interests of healthcare delivery and the Bahamian people.

The industrial agree-

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▶ CPSA President, Dr. Locksley Munroe (File photo)

Police Arrest Five In GB

BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

Five drug suspects were taken into custody in Grand Bahama in separate

incidents for possession of dangerous drugs and a large amount of currency.

Officers of the Drug Enforcement Unit were on mobile patrol in Grand

Bahama on Tuesday, shortly before 8pm, when they spotted and stopped a silver Chrysler Town and

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Local Organizations To Protest WTO

BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

A group of local organizations and activists are coming together to protest against The Bahamas' 2019 accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), while calling on the government to put forth a referendum on the issue.

The group calling themselves Bahamians Against WTO, said they will fight the government tooth and nail.

During a press confer-

ence yesterday, the group of persons, with spokeswoman, Maria Daxon, said the WTO amounts to nothing but "a surrender of our birthrights as Bahamians."

"We the inheritors of and successors to these family of islands, are here today to put the government of The Bahamas on notice."

"The goal and purpose being to halt and defeat this government's objectives of submitting the Commonwealth of The Bahamas to the World

Trade Organization.

"We contend that this nor any government of The Bahamas has the authority to surrender to any foreign body the power to govern our affairs without a mandate from the people to do so."

"We stand here united in our defense of our Bahamian sovereignty," Ms. Daxon said.

The group, which comprises of persons such as Kendal Colebrooke, of Grand Bahama and Omar Smith, said that there

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HOMICIDES DOWN

BY LEAH COOPER
 Journal Staff Writer

The country's homicide count reached a record-breaking low this year, being the first year under 100 since 2010, according to Police Commissioner Anthony Ferguson yesterday afternoon.

Mr. Ferguson assured the public that there is no need to be fearful, but also advised them to mind the company they keep.

He said, "the police know a lot of things, and they are not at liberty to come out and investigate some matters. We have some community mem-

bers that distribute information to the public in an effort to cause confusion."

He added, "As your commissioner, I assure you that you are not targeted."

According to the police statistics, the year 2011

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BAHAMAS AVIATION COUNCIL & MOTA MEETING



▶ The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism (MOTA) and the Bahamas Aviation Council met December 17, 2018 in the MOTA Conference Room. Group photo: Front row seated from left: Mike Zidziunas, SUN FUN and Bahamas Flying Ambassador; Rick Asper, Aviation Professional and Bahamas Aviation Council Chairman; the Hon. Dionisio D'Aguiar, Minister, MOTA; Charles Albury, Permanent Secretary, MOTA; Ellison 'Tommy' Thompson, Deputy Director General, MOTA. Standing center, Greg Rolle, Sr. Director, MOTA, USA, Sports & Vertical Markets. (File Photo)



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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

TWENTY-FOUR NEWLY CERTIFIED TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST MAKE HISTORY

Twenty-four audio visual professionals in The Bahamas became the first graduates of the Zamar Academy on December 14 after successfully completing an Avixa-led CTS (Certified Technology Specialist) course. It is the first time that global-level professional AV training has been made available in The Bahamas as opposed to either flying abroad or taking online classes to achieve this level of certification.

Zamar Group Companies Ltd., a leading major event, staging, audio visual and production management company in the Bahamas, decided to make this investment in their staff with the aim of increasing the technical knowledge and capacity of its team and providing them with the latest information in technology related to their field of work. The 24 staff members spent three complete days in intense theory and practical training, led by Avixa's Senior Staff Instructor Tom Kehr.

"In the few days that I have been able to spend with those that run Zamar group, to see them take this to this level - dedicating three days for over half of their staff - that is no minor investment," said Kehr.

"It's not just an invest-



► Pictured are the graduates along with members of Zamar Group of Companies. (File photo)

ment in the company; it is an investment in the people that work for them. They value them enough to send them for three days of training. These courses adhere to the ISO17'024 (accreditation) and we are the only ones who offer it. It certifies competency - it isn't here to make u a CTS, but to validate that you really are a CTS. It can bring quite a comfort factor to a knowledgeable client."

Avixa is the trade association representing the professional audio visual and information communication industries worldwide. As an audio visual integrated experience association, Kehr said, the logistics of technology space and content combine to bring the most professional presentations to clients.

"We go through a lot of

things in three days as students cover live events, permanent installs, looking at the set up in a classroom, board room, or conference room to the large-scale events that they work with at Zamar," he said.

"We cover everything from screen sizes to acoustics to lighting. We make sure we give them the tools to take it up a notch. When they are on site in front of a client, they can solve problems, they can deal with the space, and they can make it all work."

Zamar President & CEO Andrew Gardiner proudly spoke on the launch of the Zamar Academy, promising even more exciting courses and events to improve the performance of his team in 2019.

"Zamar Academy will

improve your technical skills, but it also offers a more holistic approach as we will offer training that covers areas such as work ethics, time management, conflict resolution and healthy eating, offering a complete look at your professional development," Mr. Gardiner said.

Senior Vice President Kay Gardiner said the decision to create the academy was intended to build the repertoire of the staff to a level that Zamar's clients could "see the difference".

Zamar's services include lighting, audio, video, rigging, stage design and development, audio-visual meeting support, and simultaneous translation equipment. Established in 1985, Zamar Group Companies Limited is a group of service-

related entities inclusive of Zamar Audio Visual and Productions (Zamar), Island Pearls International (IPI) and The Berry Company Ltd. The group of companies employs more than 55 full-time persons in New Providence with expertise in various areas from business administration to technical services.

The CTS graduates were presented with their certificates at Zamar's Pinnacle Awards Celebration at the Atlantis ballroom this past Friday. Kenya Wells, Human Resources, Training & Corporate Affairs Manager presented the company's first Zamar Academy awards.

The celebration was also a staff appreciation and end-of year event, in which outstanding staff

members were honored. They included: Employee of the Year Cristiano Burgos (Warehouse Maintenance Technician); Technician of the Year John Felix (Technician); and Manager of the Year Lubin Bernadin (Lighting Manager).

Although the end of year celebration is nothing new for Zamar, the event was deemed extra special this year because of the launch of the academy as well as the institution of the President's Award. Mr. Gardiner proudly presented Kendal Johnson, Senior Operations Manager with the award for providing stellar service and setting the standard all year round, and his contribution to the company for more than 15 years.

Zamar has serviced both local and international clients with both small and large meetings and events. International affiliates include Avixa, AV Alliance, the International Live Events Association, and Meeting Professionals International. As many of the company's clients are hotels, it is also a member of the Society for Incentive Travel Excellence and the Bahamas Hotel & Tourism Association.

PHA AND CPSA REACH AGREEMENT

Continued from / PAGE 1...

ment covers more than 130 consultant physicians engaged by the PHA and select clinics managed by the Department of Public Health.

The agreement is expected to be retroactive from July 1, 2016 until

June 30, 2021 given that it is approved formally by the PHA board.

CPSA President Dr. Locksley Munroe said, "The CPSA is pleased with our engagement with the PHA at this point in our negotiation process. We are committed to ensure that high quality

healthcare is delivered to the Bahamian public. The industrial proposal that we have worked through with the PHA seeks to ensure that this standard of care is not only sustainable but that it continues to improve in the future."

He added, "The proposal addresses some two

hundred clauses which, by in large, we were able to agree to with the PHA rather smoothly. We have also now agreed to the financial clauses that were a point of contention however, we appreciate the economic climate of our country at this time and note that

this was by no means the main objective of our industrial agreement."

"We expect that this agreement will allow senior physicians to have a more vital role in delivering healthcare, partnering with the PHA in the decision-making processes of our healthcare sys-

tem," he said.

Lyrone Burrows, Deputy Managing Director and lead Negotiator for the PHA indicated they continue to maintain an open dialogue with the CPSA and all other unions with whom they work with.

Local Organizations To Protest WTO

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must be a clearer understanding of what the WTO will do or not do for Bahamians.

"Here's a question we need to ask the government: If the WTO is so good, how is it this is not in their Manifesto, how is it that they didn't talk about this on their campaign trail?" Mr. Colebrooke said.

Omar Smith added that Bahamians should look closely at the cause and effects of The Bahamas becoming a part of the WTO.

"The government of

The Bahamas is intent on taking this country into the WTO. Which average Bahamian knows what are the implications of us joining this organization?"

"They are out everywhere talking about the positives of this particular organization and us joining; what are the negatives? Why are they promoting this?"

"Did they run on this campaign? Did they run on this mandate? I say if they are so confident that this is so good, and the Bahamian people want it; then put it to the Bahamian people, let us decide.

Because once we join, there is no turning back," Mr. Smith said.

Attorney Paul Moss and Samuel Strachan, along with the other group members are calling on the government to put the issue to a referendum.

"The advent of the WTO will so fundamentally change every aspect of this country that it is imperative the government puts to the people a referendum on this issue.

"We say that because we believe that this country is a democracy and the majority will rule. If the majority votes that that's what they want, then we'll

have to go along with it.

"But right now, this is not their mandate, they have no mandate to do this; this is what they are doing of their own and we say that it ought to be put to a referendum and that's what we are going to hold them to," Mr. Moss said.

Mr. Strachan suggested that the Free National Movement government is in breach of the contract that it was elected on.

"There was a contract put forward by the FNM called Manifesto, and the majority of persons agreed to that; so, we have a contract. There is no mention in that Manifesto on the

aggressive accession to the WTO.

"That means you are breaking your contract. What we're asking the administration to do is, if you are going to vary in terms of the contract, return to the negotiation table, put your position forward, we discuss, we agree again or we disagree and we move forward.

"You cannot, single handedly change or vary the terms of a contract without breaching that contract. You have breached your contract. Either you return to the negotiation table or we expect your resignation

forthwith," Mr. Strachan said.

The new year will see the group, who also made a clarion call to all Bahamians, march in protest on January 10, 2019.

Pastor Glendon Rolle of the Peoples Foundation also made a clarion call to all pastors and churches to join in the march.

The Bahamas reactivated and accelerated its accession to the World Trade Organization process in the latter part of 2017 after a six year break.

Tentative accession to the WTO is set for December 2019.

Police Arrest Five In GB

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Country van with two men.

Once they made a search of the van, officers discovered \$15,000 in U.S. and Bahamian currency. According to police the suspects could not give a satisfactory reason for the money and were

subsequently arrested.

In another incident, a man was arrested at a home on John Rutt Lane, Hudson Estates after officers executed a search warrant at the resident and discovered a quantity of suspected marijuana.

He was subsequently arrested and taken into police custody.

Then in two other inci-

dents, DEU officers, while on Adventurers Way, arrested two males in separate incidents, for possession of a quantity of suspected marijuana.

Investigations are ongoing in all matters.

Police are also investigating a shooting incident that left an adult male with non-life threatening injuries.

According to police press liaison Assistant Superintendent Shanta Knowles, shortly after 9pm Tuesday, a male presented himself to the Princess Margaret Hospital and reported that he had been shot.

The male stated that shortly after 8pm, he was at Tayoo Close and Marshall Road, when he

HOMICIDES DOWN

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saw some 127 homicides, 2012 had 111, 2013 saw 119, 2014 had 122, 2016 recorded 111, 2017 had 122, and this year with just two more weeks to go the count stands at 89.

got into an argument with another man, who shot him before getting into a dark coloured vehicle and speeding away.

The male is listed in stable condition at a PMH.

Investigation are ongoing.

29TH SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS PARTY



► Saturday, December 15th was an exciting day for hundreds of senior citizens as Mt. Olive Baptist Church hosted the 29th Annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Party for seniors, held at Town Square, Meadow and Augusta Streets, Bain Town. Co-sponsored by the Rotary Club of West Nassau, the program included Carol singing, a sumptuous Lunch, and entertainment by many groups, including Woodcock Primary School Choir, the Royal Bahamas Police Force Pop Band, Ms. Bodine Johnson and the Region Bells. A Christmas gift was also presented to each Senior Citizen. A meal and gift were also delivered to the home-bound seniors. Mrs. Alfreda Cleare of Eneas Street received the Senior Citizen of the year Award. **File Photos show some of the activities**

Mississippi State University introduces new Master's programme to Bahamian Educators



► Dr. Christy Lee at the Piano during The Bahamas National Youth Choir's Christmas Concert
(Photo Credit: Donald Knowles)

Even after 35 years of existence, The Bahamas National Youth Choir, currently under the direction of Dexter Fernander continues to serve as an incubator for upcoming Bahamian Musicians. In the words of current choristers "the choir provides the opportunity to not only perform, but to learn and grow."

In preparation for their 10th Annual Christmas Concert held December 18th at Trinity Methodist Church, the choir welcomed Dr. Christy Lee, an Assistant Professor at Mississippi State University. Dr. Lee, a long-time friend of the Bahamas National Youth Choir says she is always impressed with how the young people of the choir present their culture and their music. "The biggest thing that impresses me is that you (the choir) would do so many styles. Most choirs will do one

thing really well, the classical or their folk music. But from the first concert I saw, you (the choir) did everything, and you (the choir) did everything equally well and is what represents you guys (the choir) so beautifully" Dr. Lee said.

Dr. Lee, who flew in to accompany the choir at their Christmas concert, noted that her favorite pieces presented this year were 'Feliz Navidad' arranged by Jose Feliciano and 'We are Christmas' arranged by Kevin Johnson and Sarah Stephens. Additionally, Dr. Lee is pleased to announce that she is in The Bahamas doing recruitment for both Undergraduate and Graduate level degrees at Mississippi State University.

"At the undergraduate level, we have a Bachelor of Music Education and a Bachelor of Arts in

music, much like those at the University of The Bahamas. We also have a new program that's a Master of Music Education" said Dr. Lee. "The program has three tracks, there's instrumental for band directors, choral for choir directors and then elementary music for those who want to teach younger children. It's designed to be taken over three summers so that if you're employed or already teaching, you don't have to leave your job to do the program" she continued.

The Master of Music is a hybrid program designed to support music professionals in the advancement of both their pedagogical and musical skills. Included in the degree is performance practice, conducting, pedagogy, curriculum, music theory, history, and the essentials of research in music educa-

tion.

Choir Director Dexter Fernander is especially happy about this amazing opportunity for Bahamians. "It is crucial to both individual growth as well as the improvement of the choir. It gives this institution a benchmark for international standards and also current industry trends" said Fernander.

When asked "why Mississippi State?", he responded, "Mississippi state University is becoming a 'trend setter' for music education as most of their faculty yearly present at international music conferences."

The Bahamas National Youth Choir looks forward to a working relationship Mississippi State University for the advancement and enhancement of Bahamian Artists.

Scholarship Awarded to Young Eleuthera Resident

"You always give more than you take." These are words that Jeff Moore lived by and became one of the many lessons he imparted to his children. Jeff was a family man and resident of Liberty, Missouri. He became a board member of Bahamas Methodist Habitat and began visiting Eleuthera in 2004, forming lasting bonds with its residents. He and his wife, Rae traveled to the island every chance they got and also invited their Eleuthera

friends to visit their family in Missouri. Jeff realized a kindness and potential in the people of James Cistern, Eleuthera in particular and aspired to provide opportunities to help them improve their lives. His relationship with the residents of Eleuthera endured and remains through The Jeff and Rae Moore Scholarship Fund (TJRMSF). The fund, something he passionately spoke of during his visits to the island, was established by his family and

friends after his passing in 2016. The intent of the fund is to provide financial aid to young residents of James Cistern who are interested in further education and training. Because of Jeff's support and confidence in the One Eleuthera Foundation (OEF), it was decided to name OEF as the managing organization of the scholarship fund.

Micah Bethel, age 21, of James Cistern, is the first scholarship recipient. He has been accepted to East Mississippi

Community College for January 2019. Micah plans to pursue a career in engineering and hopes to pursue his passion of playing baseball. He dreams of one day playing in the Major League. Micah was presented with his scholarship on December 12, 2018 at the One Eleuthera Foundation's office in Rock Sound. He was elated when the scholarship announcement was made. "I feel good and excited. This will help me get closer to my dreams. I'm very

grateful for it", expressed Micah. His mother, Avis Bethel, added, "I really want to encourage persons out there that are desiring to further their education and are having issues with finances to please don't give up. A big thank you to The Jeff and Rae Moore Scholarship Fund and also to the One Eleuthera Foundation for making this possible for Micah."

Rae Moore continues her husband's work on the island and expressed her joy at Micah's award, "It

makes my heart happy that Jeff is living on earth while doing other great things in heaven! I know he is overjoyed that he is making a difference in his beloved Eleuthera."

Applicants are invited who have been accepted into a tertiary education programme and who reside in James Cistern, Eleuthera. For further information on scholarship eligibility or to contribute to the fund please email grants@oneeleuthera.org or call (242) 334-4700.

ROYAL CARIBBEAN EXECUTIVES MAKE COURTESY CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER



► Royal Caribbean executives paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister, Dr. the Most Hon. Hubert Minnis today at the Office of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is pictured centre right, with Royal Caribbean President and CEO Michael Bayley, centre left; also present was Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister, Grand Bahama, Senator the Hon. Kwasi Thompson, second left, among other executives in the delegation. (BIS Photo/Yontalay Bowe)

The Islands Of The Bahamas Snags Two Top Best Caribbean Awards

The Islands Of The Bahamas continues to dominate tourism in the Caribbean. So says Caribbean Journal which bestowed on the destination two key awards in its Caribbean Travel Awards 2018: Best Caribbean Destination and Best Caribbean Tourism Minister. Caribbean Journal is the world's largest website covering Caribbean travel and tourism.

Editor and Publisher of Caribbean Journal Alexander Britnell said, "The region's tourism offering has never been more diverse or more ener-

getic. It's a message to the world that the Caribbean isn't just back — it's better than ever."

But it is better in The Bahamas, and according to officials, the destination had the most impressive growth in the region.

"While several destinations have had particularly strong growth in 2018, none has been more impressive — or more broadly impactful — than The Bahamas," officials said on the destination's website.

"That's because while the destination has seen surging airlift growth (and a powerful increase in arrivals, thanks to the full-

fledged debut of the Baha Mar mega resort), this year has seen something unique for the destination: universal growth. That means growth that has been felt beyond the traditional pole of Nassau and New Providence. Indeed, islands across the Out Islands (and, crucially, Grand Bahama) are seeing strong growth — a clear sign that The Bahamas' tourism growth is being realized across 700 islands and cays. And that's a very powerful thing."

Just recently, Ministry of Tourism and Aviation officials reported that stopover arrivals have

soared by some 18 percent from January to October 2018. Expedia travel has also reported that room night sales have grown by 30 percent and forward bookings are up by 9.2 percent.

The Caribbean Journal says part of this success is due to Minister of Tourism and Aviation Dionisio D'Aguilar.

"While The Bahamas' impressive growth has come from myriad sources, the destination's surge has been expertly stewarded by Tourism Minister Dionisio D'Aguilar, who took over in the role in 2017,"

officials said.

"From adding new hotels to helping to secure crucial new flights to, importantly, making a concerted effort to give The Bahamas an active regional presence in the Caribbean, both at the public and private sector levels, D'Aguilar has been at the heart of the country's impressive growth."

Minister D'Aguilar said that new and refurbished hotel offerings are the key to the success The Islands Of The Bahamas has had over the past year.

"We will continue to work to reach millennials

as well as repeat visitors looking for authentic, unique Bahamian experiences through the natural beauty of all of our islands, strategic partnerships and promotions, media relations and attractive programs for travelers," he said.

"Our priority will be to continue to position The Islands Of The Bahamas as a premier travel destination."

These latest awards come on the heels of The Islands Of The Bahamas being awarded the World Travel Awards' World's Leading Luxury Island Destination and the World's Leading Wedding Destination.

THE BAHAMAS
Sun, Sand, Sea and the
The Bahama Journal

NO BETTER READING

The advertisement features a collage of newspaper headlines from 'The Bahama Journal'. The main headline on the cover is 'Four Bodies Claimed' with a sub-headline 'Haitian Burials Imminent'. Other headlines include 'Brush Fire Scorches Acres of Land', '22ND MURDER VICTIM Identified', 'Alleged Election Fraudster A No-Show In Court', and 'Debris Hinders Business For Ferry Operators'. There are also several classified ads for plumbing and building supplies. The background of the advertisement is a scenic view of a beach with waves crashing on the shore.