

Challenge answered by gifted youth

by Sandra Sealy

Under the canopy of a sleek jet, ambitious teens were lauded on Saturday evening at **The Concorde Experience** for meeting the fifth Barbados Enterprise Foundation's (BEF) challenge of successful business start-ups with just \$20.

The **BEF Flow \$20 Challenge Awards** programme aims "to help build a culture of entrepreneurship among high school students, before they enter the world of work". In addition, the enterprising youth were encouraged to be "social entrepreneurs" — by giving back at least part of their profits to charities that resonated with them personally. The business project seems to be wholeheartedly endorsed by corporate Barbados, with attractive prizes of tablets, internships and more being readily donated.

After a buffet dinner sponsored by Goddard Catering Group, emcee Tracy Moore of the BEF, announced that the absence of a featured speaker was deliberate; the BEF wanted to ensure more time was used to focus on the young awardees. A multimedia presentation showcasing each winner's business, preceded each finalist being recognized onstage.

2014 Overall Champion Britney Sealy's introduction was telling. Britney's pitch for Lemon Rush, her lemonade drink company, was so dynamic last year, that when approached by various companies about employment, she politely declined, preferring to put her energies into growing her own enterprise.

Britney also presented awards to Best Entries in the schools not represented in the finals.

This year, two businesses emerged as **Joint Overall Champions** — awarded for **Outstanding Excellence** in all areas: Aurora-Rain Rose's **Seaweed Solutions** — Codrington International School and Sierra Hamblin's **Touch Of Class** — Harrison College.

Aurora-Rain made use of sargassum weed to create her products and donated 100 per cent of her profits to spread environmental awareness. Sierra's unique business, which also incorporated recycling, made use of wine bottles and involved an impressive amount of research.

Some of the teens, like **Most Dynamic Business** winners Tashanna Holdipp, Taryn Holdipp and Anna Springer, of Harrison College, grasped the opportunity to again make their pitch about their company **Ashta Charmz Jewellers** and their products to the approximately 200 supporters and guests in attendance.

Other categories in which the teen businesses were recognized were:

Award For Perseverance.

Kreative Gems — Jassia Norville and Angelina Walters (St Winifred's School).

Award For Resourcefulness.

Daniera's Creations — Keira Robertson and Daniella Headley (Unique High School).

Award For Enterprise.

Eazy Freezy — Ravel Reid and Derreco Drakes (The St Michael School).

Best Team Work.

BGLTRD — Ronisha Barrow, Nadira Dottin, Alitha Griffith, Jamie-Lee Richards, Kadijah Leacock and Leah Taylor (Harrison College).

Best Niche Market Business.

Sunkissed — Helena Povey and Giselle Allan (St Winifred's School).

Best Creative Industries Business.

AX Exquisite — Brianna Alexander, Teron Agard, Shavon Archer, Davin Denny and Rashad Elcock (The Alexandra School).

Excellent Branding & Packaging.

Era Scrubs — Emily Netherland, Radha Zeiwinger and Abbie Green (Codrington International School).

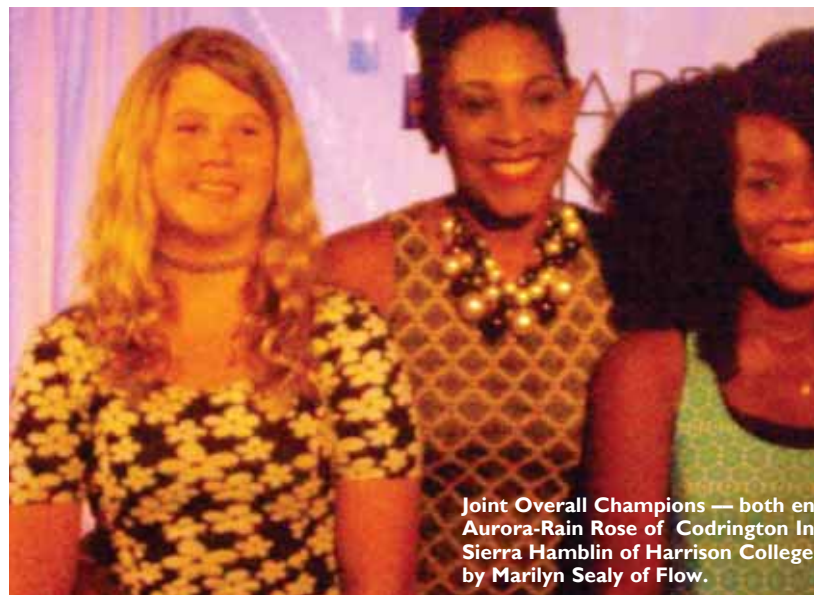
Excellent Use Of Recycled Material.

Unquote Signs — Danielle Valdez (Harrison College).

Excellent Marketing.

Dream Lights — Chara Antrobus, Fayloa Wetzels and Amaya Emmanuel (Codrington International School).

Excellent Research & Product Development (Scotia Bank).



Joint Overall Champions — both en Aurora-Rain Rose of Codrington International School and Sierra Hamblin of Harrison College by Marilyn Sealy of Flow.

Per Dio — Sharyn Ward-Gittens and Antonia Wood (Harrison College).

The young participants seized the opportunity to sell and take orders for their products during the **Mix 'N' Mingle** before and after the formal proceedings.

Mentor and **\$20 Challenge** leader Keith Miller applauded the sponsors who stepped up to ensure the annual ceremony was in keeping with the growth of the programme and increase in profile. Miller also announced the launch of the **Trident Angels' Network**, designed to invite selected candidates to apply for funding the growth of their businesses.

The veteran publisher concluded: "I implore you to spread the word about the value of the \$20 challenge . . . It should be a normal part of the schools' calendar."

I echo Miller's sentiments about having this excellent programme not just spread more widely within our schools, but integrated into the curriculum.

More information about the Barbados Enterprise Foundation may be found at the website www.barbadosentrepreneurshipfoundation.org.

(Sandra Sealy is a freelance writer, copywriter, content consultant and award-winning literary artist, with a passion for culture and the Arts. Visit www.seawomancreativemedia.com)



BEF Flow \$20 Challenge awardees being celebrated in fine style at The Concorde Experience.



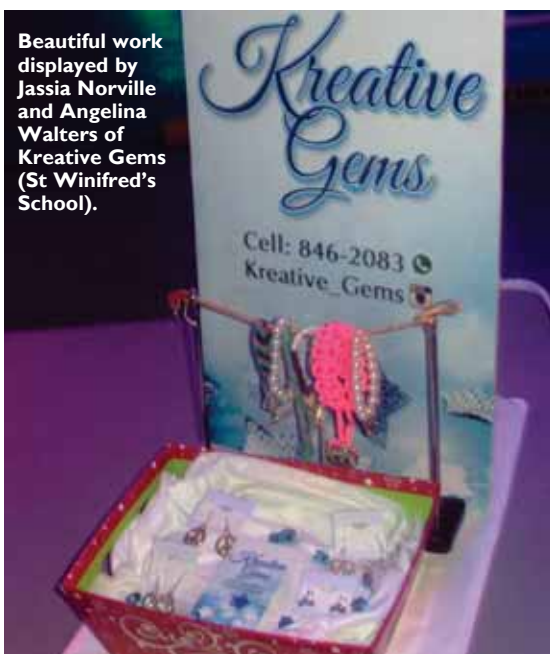
Environmentally friendly—
ternational School and
being presented awards



The evening's BEF
programme.



Taryn Holdipp arranging chain
piece on Anna Springer
as partner Tashanna Holdipp
of Ashta Charmz Jewellers, Most
Dynamic Business (Harrison
College) looks on.



Beautiful work
displayed by
Jassia Norville
and Angelina
Walters of
Kreative Gems
(St Winifred's
School).



Ravel Reid and Derreco
Drakes of Eazy Freezy
(The St Michael School)
recognized for enterprise
by Lisa Carter of
Scotiabank.



\$20 Challenge leader Keith
Miller wants to see the
programme integrated in all
secondary schools.



It was easy to see why Era Scrubs won
Excellent Branding & Packaging —
through Emily Netherland, Radha
Zeiwinger and Abbie Green of
Codrington International School.