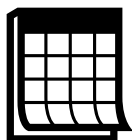


VOLUME 27
OCTOBER 2024



NEWSLETTER

The Official Monthly Newsletter of the Georgetown
Chamber of Commerce & Industry



OCTOBER IN
REVIEW



UPCOMING
EVENTS



NEW
MEMBERS



MEMBER OF
THE MONTH



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Readers,

As we approach the end of the year, the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) continues apace with its 2024 workplan, working assiduously to ensure that our members' interests are placed at the forefront of our activities, while also fulfilling our social responsibilities.

October was an eventful month, with several stakeholder engagements, including meetings with the diplomatic community. We discussed areas for collaboration with the Ambassador of Suriname, as well as the British and Canadian High Commissioners. As part of our continued focus on resolving pressing issues such as the labour shortage, the Chamber met with the Minister of Labour to initiate action to address this challenge that is facing our membership, and the country at large. The Chamber also established the Health and Wellness Sub-Committee, cognisant of the wellbeing of our membership and workforce.

Simultaneously, the Chamber continued its efforts at providing capacity-building as well as networking opportunities. Through a collaborative effort with the Jamaican Stock Exchange, we hosted the second Regional Capital Markets Conference in Guyana. This event was followed by the Technology Conference and the SAIPEM Vendor Forum.

Even as we were engaged in the implementation of the advocacy and capacity-building workplan, the Chamber hosted the Nadene Gilbert-Rambarran Cancer Awareness Fundraiser through which we raised funds to support the work of the Guyana Cancer Institute through the upgrading of their CT Scan facilities.

As we approach the end of the year, the Chamber continues to be steadfast to our goals, and we look forward to continued support and collaboration with our valued membership.

**Regards,
Kester Hutson
President – GCCI**



WELCOME TO THE GCCI

In October 2024, the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry embraced its newest cohort of members. We would like to take the opportunity to extend our warmest welcome to:

Steadfast Logistics	Gold Target Atlantic Villas
Lift Good Inc.	Paragon Property Management Solutions Inc.
Survival Systems Guyana Inc.	Atikali Learning Lab Inc.
FN Electrical & General Contracting	Luxury Laundromat
Internet World	

EVENTS

GCCI partners with JSE for Second Annual Regional Investments and Capital Markets Conference in Guyana



The second Annual Regional Investments and Capital Markets Conference in Guyana was held on October 8 and 9, at the Atlantic Ballroom at the Pegasus Corporate Suites. The event was the result of a collaboration between Jamaica Stock Exchange (JSE) and the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) and was held under the theme ‘Financing for success: Where passion, prosperity and people align.’

The two-day event was an important forum for discussing the direction of capital markets in the region. With keen focus on expanding access to equity capital and creating an environment where more people can participate in financial markets, the conference highlighted the importance of access to capital for business sustainability, and was underpinned by the view that strong, inclusive capital market will provide the answers for many problems that Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and other companies experience.

Among the information shared was an announcement by the GCCI that it is collaborating with the Jamaica Stock Exchange on the development of a Junior Stock Market in Guyana.

President of the GCCI, Mr. Kester Hutson participated in a panel discussion on ‘the Private Sector’s role in promoting sustainable wealth creation and prosperity’ during which he made the announcement. “SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) need to have access to capital so we are moving forward with that. The Chamber is excited about it, we need to expose our members to these opportunities. Jamaica Stock Exchange as a model that works,” he stated.

GCCI Councillors support Guyana Cancer Foundation's Annual Tree-wrapping exercise



On October 3, Councillors of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) attended the Guyana Cancer Foundation's Tree Wrapping Ceremony on Main Street, Georgetown, in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month which is being observed in October.

In attendance were Councillors, Mrs. Krista Ramlagan-Prescott, Ms. Mary Nagasar, Mr. Keon Howard, Mr. Paul Archer, Mr. Delmar Walcott, and Mr. Rayad Boyce.

The event saw breast cancer fighters, survivors and caregivers being honoured, while key information on detection and treatment was shared with attendees. This year, Breast Cancer Awareness Month is being observed under the theme "No one should face breast cancer alone."



Business Guyana Magazine 2024 officially launched



Under the theme, ‘Transforming Guyana’, the 2024 Business Guyana Magazine was on October 9 officially launched by the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI). The 14th edition of the publication was digitally released on the final day of the second Regional Investments and Capital Markets Conference in Guyana.

President of the GCCCI, Mr. Kester Hutson in providing an overview of the magazine stated, “This is something that is very dear to the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and we continue to add value to not just our members but the wider community as it relates to the private sector.”

He noted that the magazine serves as a vital resource for providing insights into current market trends, success stories, and expert advice tailored for entrepreneurs and business leaders, and aligns with the Chamber’s vision to empower local businesses, particularly in light of the evolving economic landscape in Guyana.

The 2024 Business Guyana Magazine features contributions from industry experts, highlighting best practices and strategies that will help navigate the complexities of doing business today, with several focal areas including E-Commerce, Digitalisation, Financing, Improving standards and quality, Compliance, and Marketing.

Read BGM 2024 here: <https://gccci.gy/business-guyana-2024-transforming-guyana/>

GCCI and International Centre for Trade Transparency sign MoU on access to trade rules and regulations for members



On October 2, the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the International Centre for Trade Transparency Limited (ICTTM) out of London, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to provide members of the Chamber with priority access to ICTTM's ADAMftd software system.

The MoU was signed by President of the GCCI, Mr. Kester Hutson in the presence of Councillor and Chairperson of the Trade and Investment Committee, Mr. Devon Seeram.

The ADAMftd software system, which is in its final stages of development, is a revolutionary tool aimed at enhancing transparency and compliance in international trade. Access to this software will enhance the economic activity of Guyanese companies by ensuring their compliance with international trade rules and regulations, and assisting them in identifying new international markets.

The company will be providing training for members of the Chamber and will build their capacity to fully utilise the platform.

Saipem collaborates with GCCI to engage businesses at Vendor Forum



Saipem Guyana, ExxonMobil's prime contractor that specialises in subsea systems for the offshore energy industry, on October 17 hosted a Vendor Forum through a collaborative effort with the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI).

Country Manager, Mr. Della Rosa Gianluigi; Senior Buyer, Mr. Akil Gittens, and Local Content Coordinator and Subcontract Administrator, Ms. Bindya Deokaran engaged members of the GCCI in a presentation on the company's local footprint, upcoming opportunities, local content efforts, and their procurement process. The event was held in the Chamber's Boardroom and hosted by Senior Vice President and Chairperson of the Petroleum Committee, Mrs. Kathy Smith.

The Saipem Guyana team also spoke of plans to increase the local workforce from the current 120 persons to about 150 by the end of the year, as well as plans to expand their operations, including a new storage area for project materials and increased fabrication of more complex subsea structures.

Key discussions also included the company's vendor registration process, with emphasis on the need to provide necessary documentation to expedite the process. The GCCI will continue to collaborate with companies such as Saipem to increase members' access to information related opportunities in the oil and gas sector.

SMALL BUSINESS TIP

Customer Feedback: As a business owner, you know your customers should be your top priority. If you aren't meeting their needs, your success—and the future of your business—will be jeopardised. And what's the best way to find out if your business is delivering what your customers are looking for? It's simple—ask them. To find out what your customers really want, it's important to have a process in place for collecting feedback and, more importantly, putting it into action.

GCCI participates in Local Content Forum



With keen focus on improving the quality of service being provided by local companies and reminding Guyanese businesses of the importance of capacity building, the Private Sector Commission's second annual Local Content Forum saw the attendance of President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI), Mr. Kester Hutson; Senior Vice President, Mrs. Kathy Smith, and Councillor, Mr. Delmar Walcott, as well as members of the Chamber.

The event was held at the Guyana Marriott on October 25 and received the GCCI's support as it is aligned with the objectives of the Chamber, particularly as it relates to ensuring Guyanese companies benefit from the extraction of the country's natural resources.

The keynote address was delivered by Minister of Natural Resources, Hon. Vickram Bharrat, who stressed the importance of Guyanese companies working towards achieving globally acceptable standards of service delivery. He also underscored the need for local companies and entrepreneurs to examine the market and the gaps that exist in terms of the goods and services needed and determine how best they can provide those goods and services in order to ensure local content utilisation.



GCCI's capacity-building session benefits Essequibo farmers



On October 24, the 'Agriculture Capacity Building Workshop' was held in the boardroom of the Regional Democratic Council Boardroom, in Anna Regina, Region Two, where over 20 farmers benefitted from training in 'Farming as a business', 'Access to Finance', 'Access to Market', 'Good Agricultural Practices', 'Climate-smart innovations', and 'the importance of nutrients in agriculture.'

"This initiative is one that is aimed at improving and standardising agricultural practices in Guyana to ensure that the produce being provided to consumers are high-quality. Simultaneously, our objective is to inculcate an entrepreneurial mindset into all farmers, where they see their operations as a business, and implement practices such as record-keeping and the separation of finances. These practices are geared towards providing the opportunity for the business to grow and access capital from financial institutions, if needed," stated Chairperson of the GCCI's Agriculture Committee, Mr. Brian Edwards.

This project has been ongoing over the last two years, in partnership with the World University Services of Canada with funding from Global Affairs Canada. It is the first public-private partnership to see collaboration with a large number of government agencies through the Ministry of Agriculture, including the National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute, the Guyana Food Safety Authority, the New Guyana Marketing Corporation, the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Board, and the Small Business Bureau, as well as the Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry (GBTI). These organisations all have representatives at these activities who share information with participants and field queries that may arise.

Technology Conference successfully concluded



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Private Sector Commission (GMSA) and the Guyana Manufacturing and Services Association (GMSA) partnered to host the second annual Technology Conference on October 24-25, at the Pegasus Corporate Suites, which was held under the theme “Cyber Strong with AI”.

The free two-day event focused on addressing the unique challenges and opportunities that are associated with integrating Artificial Technology and Information Communication Technology (ICT) into business operations, with key insights into cybersecurity strategies, technological advancements, and AI-driven innovations.

Attendees also received crucial information on the strategic impact of AI and its role in transforming leadership decisions in the digital age. With unanimous agreement from presenters over the cyber threat target risks due to increased activity by multinational corporations in Guyana within the oil and gas industry, participants benefited from practical strategies for protecting their business against cyber threats, securing sensitive data, and building resilient systems in today’s ever-evolving digital landscape.

GCCI hosts fundraiser to support upgrading of CT scan facilities at Guyana Cancer Institute



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) on October 29 hosted the Nadene Gilbert-Rambarran Cancer Awareness Fundraiser with the objective of upgrading the CT scan facilities at the Guyana Cancer Institute.

The event was held at Palm Court through the support of Shaws Media, Palm Court, Dapper Technology, Dynotech, Western Logistics, BK Group of Companies, Panthera Energy Solutions, and Lodestar.

President of the Chamber, Mr. Kester Hutson in his address to the gathering noted that the most recent statistics on cancer in Guyana indicated that in 2022, there were 1,125 new cases with 612 deaths, with a total of 2,775 prevalent cases across a five-year period.

“While the figures appear small on the surface level, when we examine Guyana’s population against these numbers, the figures are alarming. We are optimistic about the attention that cancer awareness is receiving, both at the government level and within the private sector,” he stated.

The president noted that over the years, the GCCI has consistently supported this cause. “This cause is especially near and dear to us as at the GCCI we have lost close friends and family to cancer. At this moment, I wish to reflect on former GCCI Councillor and Secretary, Mrs. Allison Butters-Grant; Ms. Bryony Shewraj who was an employee of the Chamber for 22 years, and most recently, Councillor, Mrs. Nadene Gilbert-Rambarran,” he shared.

The GCCI will continue its commitment to raising awareness and supporting patients through a collaborative effort.*

MEETINGS

GCCI discusses CET and ROO at NACEN Technical Working Groups meeting



On October 2, the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) participated in a meeting of the National Advisory Committee on External Negotiations (NACEN) Technical Working Groups (TWGs), where issues related to the Common External Tariff (CET) and Rules of Origin (ROO) for the Caricom region was discussed.

Councillor and Chairperson of the GCCI's Trade and Investment Committee, Mr. Devon Seeram, and Councillor and Chairman of the Agriculture Committee, Mr. Brian Edwards represented the Chamber at the meeting which was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

Discussions delved into a review of the CET and adjustments that may be needed, as well as regulations linked to Rules of Origin, special treatment as digital products, the policy on the use of technical specifications in the Suspension and Safeguards procedures, and examination of the Conditional Duty Exemption Regime.

GCCI and THAG discuss issues affecting tourism industry and potential collaboration

On October 24, officials of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) met with a team from the Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana (THAG) to discuss potential collaborations to address issues affecting the tourism sector.

President, Mr. Kester Hutson; Senior Vice President, Mrs. Kathy Smith; Junior Vice President, Mr. Gavin Ramsoondar, and Chairperson of the Green Economy Committee, Mr. Delmar Walcott met with the THAG team comprising President, Ms. Omodelle George; Committee Member, Ms. Carla Vantull, and Executive Director, Mrs. Oslyn Kirton.

Discussions touched on the need for the city of Georgetown to be restored and maintained, as this impacts the tourism sector. The parties also discussed the importance of educational initiatives to promote a culture of cleanliness, including campaigns aimed at educating children, as well as the need for collaborative efforts in addressing community issues such as accumulation of waste.

GCCI and Labour Ministry discuss collaboration to address labour shortage and increasing technical workforce, among other areas



On October 14, a delegation from the GCCI met with Minister of Labour, Hon. Joseph Hamilton and a team from his ministry, including Chief Labour Officer, Mr. Dhaneshwar Deonarine; Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Consultant, Ms. Gweneth King; Chief Executive Officer of the Board of Industrial Training (BIT), Mr. Richard Maughn; Chief Co-operatives Development Officer, Mr. Janaknauth Panchu; Assistant Chief Recruitment and Manpower Officer, Ms. Shaundell Glasgow, and Legal Officers Ms. Alyea Williams and Ms. Janelle Thomas.

The GCCI's team included President and Chairperson of the Advocacy Committee, Mr. Kester Hutson; Senior Vice President and Chairperson of the Petroleum Committee, Mrs. Kathy Smith; Secretary and Chairperson of the Human Resource Management and Capacity-building Committee, Mrs. Melisa McRae-George; Councillor and Executive Member, Mr. Richard Rambarran; Councillor and Chairperson of the Security and Governance Committee, Mr. Paul Archer; Councillor, Mr. Keon Howard, and Councillor and Chairperson of the Green Committee, Mr. Delmar Walcott.

Among the issues addressed were the labour deficit that exists in the country and the need for this to be addressed frontally through increased training, as well as the worrying statistics as it relates to workplace accidents and fatalities. The Minister noted that over the last four years, over 12,700 persons benefitted from technical and vocational training through BIT, while there has been an uptake in the number of females trained in non-traditional jobs.

As it relates to HSSE, Minister Hamilton stated that the number of persons harmed in work-related accidents so far this year is “frightening” as he invited private sector collaboration to address this challenge.

The discussions also touched on the need for systems to be put in place for decent accommodation for migrant labour in addressing the shortage, the need for legislation to govern recruitment services, and clear regulations as it relates to workers who are not guided by traditional hours and periods of employment, such as offshore workers.

The GCCI and Ministry of Labour will be engaging in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that will guide their partnership in addressing these issues.

Canadian High Commissioner pays courtesy call on GCCI



On October 15, Canada's High Commissioner to Guyana, His Excellency, Sebastien Sigouin, who officially commenced his duty in-country in September, paid a courtesy call on the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI).

H.E. Sigouin met with President of the GCCI, Mr. Kester Hutson; Senior Vice President, Mrs. Kathy Smith; Councillor and Junior Vice President, Mr. Gavin Ramsoondar; Councillor and Secretary, Mrs. Melisa McRae-George; Councillor and Executive Member, Mr. Richard Rambarran; Councillor and Executive Member, Mr. Timothy Tucker, and Councillor and Treasurer, Mr. Brian Edwards.

The High Commissioner was provided with an overview of the Chamber's history and function, as well as its achievements over the years. Executive Member, Mr. Rambarran in the discourse extended the GCCI's gratitude to the government of Canada for its continued support for Guyana's development, particularly in the preservation of democracy, order, and the rule of law in Guyana.

The GCCI team highlighted the Chamber's longstanding relationship both with the former High Commissioners as well as Canadian businesses, pointing to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed with the Newfoundland & Labrador Oil and Gas Industries Association (NOIA) as part of a mutual effort to promote the development of projects and trade in sectors of common interest related to the oil and gas industry. In fact, the Chamber noted that this agreement was the impetus of local content efforts in Guyana.

While speaking to the desire to see increased trade relations between Guyana and Canada, the GCCI's officials advocated for VISA-free travel to Canada for Guyanese, while also speaking to the need for an easier VISA application process in the interim. The Chamber also provided an overview of investment opportunities in the country for Canadian businesses and broached partnering to promote Guyana as an investment destination. The talks also touched on raising awareness among Guyanese about the educational opportunities available in Canada and how those can be utilised to build Guyana's workforce.

GCCI and British High Commissioner discuss increased bilateral trade between Guyana and U.K



On October 15, Councillors of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) paid a courtesy call on British High Commissioner, Her Excellency, Jane Miller OBE.

President, Mr. Kester Hutson; Senior Vice President, Mrs. Kathy Smith; Councillor and Junior Vice President, Mr. Gavin Ramsoondar; Councillor and Secretary, Mrs. Melisa McRae-George; Councillor and Executive Member, Mr. Richard Rambarran, and Chairperson of the Trade and Investment Committee, Mr. Devon Seeram engaged the High Commissioner as well as Country Director for Trade and Investment within the Department for Business and Trade at the British High Commission, Mr. Sherwyn Naughton.

Among the key areas of discussion were trade and ease of doing business, with pertinent discussions on the need for more flights to the United Kingdom, fielding incoming and outgoing trade missions, and banking sector support, as well as collaborating on the issue of access to finance in Guyana.

The GCCI also advocated for a collaborative effort in connecting local businesses with U.K firms in a bid to increase bilateral trade. The upcoming General and Regional Elections, slated for 2025, were also discussed, including plans for voter education initiatives.

GCCI Executives discuss collaboration with Suriname's Ambassador to Guyana



Executive Members of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) on October 23 paid a courtesy call on the Ambassador of Suriname to Guyana, H.E. Liselle Remelda Blankendal, during which the two parties discussed strengthening their relationship and collaborating to facilitate Guyanese businesses expanding operations into Suriname.

President, Mr. Kester Hutson; Junior Vice President, Mr. Gavin Ramsoondar; Secretary, Mrs. Melisa McRae-George, and Treasurer, Mr. Brian Edwards met with the Ambassador as well as the Ambassador's Secretary, Mrs. Lucill Starke-Esajas, and provided them with an overview of the GCCI's history, role, and initiatives.

The Ambassador, during the discourse, spoke of shared interests between Guyana and Suriname, noting that like Guyana, Suriname is facing a significant labour shortage. She indicated that the country is examining the development of a migration policy as it navigates the need to import labour. H.E Blankendal also shared that Suriname looks forward to collaborating with Guyana in the areas of agriculture, hospitality, and renewable energy, while expressing optimism over the positive impacts that a bridge connecting the two countries would result in.

Expressing the desire for closer collaborations with the GCCI, particularly in the interest of increasing bilateral business relations, the Ambassador also encouraged the organising of trade missions between the GCCI and its Surinamese counterparts.

OCTOBER 2024: MEMBER OF THE MONTH

GXMEDIA



With 17 years of experience in the Information and Communication Technology Industry, GxMedia is the number one website design and development company in Guyana.

In July 2007, the company was established, offering services including software and web application development, website design and development, web server maintenance, website repairs, and electronic publishing. In 2020, the company shifted its focus to exclusively offer website design and development services. It has since expanded its footprint into the Caribbean and North America.

With proven excellence in website design, the company's portfolio includes most news websites in Guyana. The company also services the banking and finance, legal, education, security, government, shipping and logistics, hospitality and tourism, manufacturing and retail, and services sectors. Clients include the Financial Intelligent Unit (Guyana), GuyAm Bank, Demerara Bank Ltd., the Guyana Council of Organisations for Persons with Disabilities, Power Producers and Distributors Inc., Ragiv Gandhi University, Comfort Sleep Inc., Monarch Insurance Brokers, Nayelli Salon and Spa, and Swiss Machinery. In 2023, the company enhanced its web server maintenance capabilities by investing in state-of-the-art website security and disaster recovery systems to meet its clients' needs more effectively. Recently, the company has extended its range of services to include customised application development.

At the helm of this company is Chief Executive Officer Dr. Girendra Persaud, who is also a lecturer at the University of Guyana within the Department of Computer Science. Dr. Persaud earned a PhD in Innovation and Global Development from Arizona State University as well as a Master of Business Administration from the Australian Institute of Business, and a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science from the University of Guyana. Dr. Persaud is committed to his company's aim of creating effective web solutions and providing efficient support services to enable his clients to leverage the power of the internet, while embodying the values of speed, efficiency, effectiveness, value, quality, performance, commitment, clarity, and integrity. More information can be found on their website <https://gxmediagy.com>.

MESSAGES



MESSAGES



UPCOMING EVENTS*November*

**Finland Economic Mission
November 5th - 7th**

**UK Mission
November 11th - 13th**

**Business Development Forum
November 14th - 15th**

**EU Investment Mission
November 26th - 28th**

December

**GCCI's Annual Awards Presentation
& Gala Dinner-
December 12th**