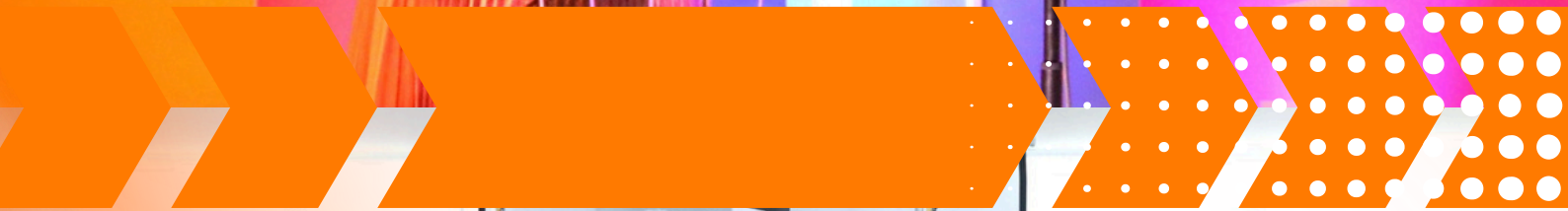


VOLUME 35
JULY 2025



NEWSLETTER

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



EVENTS

ANNUAL BBQ AND MIXER 2025



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) extends its sincere appreciation to everyone who supported its annual barbeque and mixer on Monday, July 8 at Palm Court, Main Street. The event provided an opportunity for members to network in a relaxed and jovial atmosphere.

GCCI PRESIDENT ENCOURAGES YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS TO REMAIN COMMITTED AND RESILIENT IN BUILDING THEIR BUSINESSES FOR GUYANA'S EVOLVING ECONOMY



President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI), Mrs. Kathy Smith on Saturday, July 5, urged young entrepreneurs and those desirous of entering the business arena to remain committed to their goals and pursue their idea with resilience as she delivered remarks at the 2025 ECONOME Business Conference and Mixer at the Guyana Marriott Hotel.

Mrs. Smith in her address highlighted the organiser, Matthew Gaul, as an example of dedication to a pursuit, saying, “This is a young man who had an idea—an idea he believed could change lives. Not just any lives—but the lives of young Guyanese across this country.” She told attendees that Guyana’s oil and gas industry has brought numerous opportunities to the country’s shores, and this is a pivotal time for Guyanese to capitalise on these opportunities. “The policies that are now in place are designed to ensure Guyanese benefit first. But don’t wait to be handed anything—step up and claim your space.”

She also pointed to the growth in the GCCI’s membership over the years—now, at almost 1000 members, and stated that over 70 percent are micro, small, and medium enterprises. “Our membership growth over the last five years tells a powerful story. It tells us that there are opportunities out there. And it tells us that entrepreneurs are ready and eager to meet the growing demands of our population,” she said.

The GCCI President posited that there is an entrepreneurial drive that is evident among Guyanese and urged those in attendance to navigate the complexities of business with determination. “There are many opportunities, yes—but there are just as many challenges. What makes the difference is commitment, determination, and getting things done...Business requires commitment. It demands fortitude. And your mental resilience needs to be strong. Challenges will come. Ideas may fail. But you must stay focused, refine your skills, and try again. Success may not come overnight—but it will come, if you continue to invest in your dreams—not just in dollars and cents, but in effort, growth, and belief,” she emphasised.

GCCI PRESIDENT ENCOURAGES MORGAN'S LEARNING CENTRE GRADUATES TO PURSUE THEIR AMBITIONS WITH RESILIENCE AND TENACITY



Along with their High School Diplomas, the Grade Ten graduating class of Morgan's Learning Centre on July 4 received sage words of guidance from the President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI), Mrs. Kathy Smith at their graduation ceremony.

Mrs. Smith, who delivered the feature address at the ceremony that was held in the school's auditorium, provided the students with insights into her journey—not just as a businesswoman, but a child who navigated life's challenges with determination, amidst obstacles and failures.

"You don't have to be perfect to be powerful. You just have to show up, believe, and serve," she stated, adding, "You are not your failures. You are not your grades. You are not the labels others try to place on you. You are a story in motion. You are resilience in action. You are proof that rising is not just possible—it is inevitable when you commit to growth." She implored the graduates to approach life with determination, telling them that leadership is not about titles but about tenacity. "Success is not about perfection—it's about persistence. Legacy is not about applause—it's about impact," she emphasised.

In her final sentiments, she underscored the importance of resilience in their journey beyond the school walls, urging the students, "When life tests you—and it will—I want you to stand tall and remind the world: Still, I rise. Still we rise. Still you rise."

FARMER-TO-BUSINESS SYMPOSIUM HELD IN BERBICE



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) in collaboration with the World University Services of Canada (WUSC) with funding from Global Affairs Canada, on July 9 held a 'Farmer-to-Business Symposium' at the Woodley Park Resource Centre, West Coast Berbice that saw farmers, and representatives of restaurants, supermarkets, and other businesses within the agriculture supply chain being able to network while accessing invaluable information.

This symposium is the second in 2025 and aims to develop a sustainable and robust agriculture market system that promotes food security, boosts productivity, and drives economic prosperity for farmers by enhancing competitiveness, sustainability, and inclusivity through commercialisation and modernisation.

Farmers were able to share their challenges and issues related to access to agricultural innovations, inputs, and finance, while being provided with the necessary knowledge and skills to adapt to a changing agricultural landscape and thrive in the market. The 'speed dating for stakeholders' session was once again featured at the event, and saw farmers and businesses interacting in order to develop a supply chain connection.

This symposium also brought together stakeholders from key agencies such as the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Agriculture Research Extension Institute (NAREI), the New Guyana Marketing Corporation, the Guyana Food Safety Authority, the Small Business Bureau, the Food and Drug Administration, the Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana, the Pesticide and Toxic Chemicals Control Board and Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry.

This symposium aligns with the GCCCI's efforts to support farmers over the last two years. The Chamber, through a partnership with a number of agriculture agencies and financial institutions, has engaged farmers across the regions on sustainable agriculture and business practices through its outreach programme.

GCCI ADVOCATES FOR INVESTMENT INCENTIVES AND CAPACITY-BUILDING SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AT PPP/C'S MANIFESTO CONSULTATION MEETING



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) has over the last several months sought engagements with the political parties contesting in the 2025 General and Regional Elections to discuss their strategies for economic development and private sector advancement.

Today, July 16, Executive Members, Councillors, and Members of the GCCI participated in the Manifesto Consultations held by the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) at the Ramada Hotel, Providence, East Bank Demerara.

President of the GCCI, Mrs. Kathy Smith took the opportunity to advocate for support for the business community in several areas. The issues she raised included grants and tax write-off programmes for private sector investment in high-yield sustainable agriculture and agro-processing; tailored tax and financial incentives for registered consortia investing in national priority sectors; five-year tax incentives for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises that become publicly listed on Guyana's Stock Exchange; Simplification of tax systems; removal of VAT on environmental services, and support for women entrepreneurs in meeting compliance requirements and business development.

Mrs. Smith also highlighted the updating of the Local Content Act and the amendment of the schedule of services as a priority area.

This was the second such engagement with political parties and follows a meeting with the Alliance For Change. The Chamber will continue meeting with the contesting parties to discuss their development strategies.

GCCI PRESIDENT EMPHASISES NEED FOR WOMEN TO BE EMPOWERED FOR INCLUSION



On July 18, President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mrs. Kathy Smith attended a National Stakeholder Consultation by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) in collaboration with the Office of the Resident Coordinator, the British High Commission and the Women and Gender Equality Commission. This event was hosted under the theme “30 Years of Action, 5 Years to Deliver: Advancing Gender Equality for a Just Future” at the British High Commissioner’s residence.

This event was geared towards fostering conversations on gender equality and women’s rights and providing a strategic platform to highlight and strengthen women’s roles in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and resilience-building.

Mrs. Smith, in contributing to the discourse, spoke of the evolving economy and the opportunities for women—both in employment and entrepreneurship. She highlighted that close to 50 percent of the Chamber’s members are women-owned and women-led businesses while pointing out developments in the sector that benefit these businesses such as invoice factoring for financing.

Mrs. Smith spoke of the need for businesses to be more structured. “If you want to be sustainable and enjoy longevity, you have to put yourself out there,” she stated, adding that standards of operation and service, as well as marketing are important aspects for consideration.

She added that women need to be resilient in pursuing opportunities and empowered to take their seat at the table. “We are one of the fastest growing economies in the world and we cannot run from that. We need to continue conversations like this so that we can ensure that Guyanese can continue to benefit,” she iterated.

GCCI PRESIDENT EMPHASISES NEED FOR STRENGTHENED PRIVATE-PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS IN BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENCE



On July 22, President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI), Mrs. Kathy Smith attended a roundtable discussion hosted by the High Commissioner of Belize to Guyana, Her Excellency Gale Miller Garnett, on the topic, “From the peaks of our Maya Mountains to the depth of our mystical Blue Hole: Harnessing Belize’s natural wealth to build climate resilience in the vulnerable Caribbean” at the World Trade Centre in Georgetown.

This discussion saw a presentation from Minister of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Solid Waste Management of Belize, Honourable Orlando Habet who gave an overview of his country’s efforts at biodiversity preservation and climate resilience.

During an open discussion in this regard, the GCCI President highlighted the importance of public-private partnership, particularly as it relates to protecting and preserving the environment. She pointed out that in Guyana, the government and private sector collaborate to undertake such initiatives, highlighting continuous efforts to clean and maintain the environment countrywide. Mrs. Smith posited that such partnerships need to be strengthened for the effective execution of initiatives geared towards environmental protection.

GCCI PRESIDENT UNDERSCORES NEED FOR PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IN NAVIGATING DISASTER MANAGEMENT



President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) Mrs. Kathy Smith recently addressed stakeholders, including those from government agencies and the private sector, on the importance of collaboration—particularly in the areas of disaster preparedness and management.

At the Disaster Management Workshop, organised by Tropical Shipping in collaboration with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency on June 18 at the Guyana Marriott Hotel, Mrs. Smith reminded participants of the region’s climate vulnerabilities and Guyana’s experience with floods.

“2005 is a stark reminder of the impact of natural disasters. The country, particularly the coastland, suffered significant floods. Beyond everyday life, businesses and infrastructure were direly impacted. The agriculture industry also faced grave impacts. What did this teach us? Disaster preparedness is everyone’s business, and we need to not just prepare for disaster management but also preventative measures. And this is where collaboration comes in,” she stated.

Mrs. Smith stated that for the business community, natural disasters have far-reaching implications. Natural disasters are accompanied by potential damage to infrastructure and breaks in operations as a result of disruption to supply chains, and even negative impacts on demand for services.

“This is why preparation is key—not just in ensuring our offices are flood resistant, but by having contingency plans in place. And this is where public-private partnerships are needed...We, as businesses, also need to look at collaborating to equip ourselves with the knowledge and tools to prepare for disasters and mitigate negative impacts. The Private Sector also needs to be able to access data and information on navigating our vulnerabilities to these disasters,” she said candidly.

Further, she said that the private sector can also support with faster disaster response efforts—not just domestically, but within the region as has been seen when Guyana’s private sector mobilised disaster relief for its Caricom neighbours when disasters struck in the past.

TEENTERNSHIP 2025 LAUNCHED



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) is pleased to announce that the 2025 ‘Teenternship Programme’—which is a key component of Chamber’s National Small Business Week (NSBW)—was launched on Friday, July 25 at the GCCI’s Waterloo Street, Georgetown Secretariat.

This two-week programme will see 15 Grades 10 and 11 students from School of the Nations and Camille’s Academy benefiting from practical work experience, with keen focus on leadership, teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and management during their attachment at 14 member companies of the GCCI.

In a message conveyed to the students at the launch, Councillor and Chairperson of the GCCI’s Entrepreneurship and Small Business Committee, Mr. Orson Ferguson stated that this initiative offers an immersive experience for the next batch of young entrepreneurs. He noted that the programme is also aimed at creating opportunities and nurturing innovation, while investing in the future of entrepreneurship in Guyana. “The Teenternship Programme is not just any internship, it is a chance for you—our bright young minds—to step into the world of business, to learn, to contribute, and to be inspired,” he stated.

Secretary of the GCCI, Mrs. Kristia Ramlagan-Prescott in addressing the interns also urged them to fully utilise the opportunity that they are benefiting from. “I am happy that this is coming to fruition this year. I charge you to make memories and build relationships. Soak in everything that you learn, we are eager to hear your testimonials and success stories in the next two weeks.”

Meanwhile, President of the GCCI, Mrs. Kathy Smith, in addressing the students, encouraged them to use the internship to explore their potential and identity. “As you explore, figure out your gifts, figure out your talents, this is the right time for you to do that. And it’s easy to do that—ask yourself what is it that you love to do,” she stated. Furthermore, she also advised the companies hosting the students to capitalise on the opportunity to nurture the future members of the workforce. “Don’t just see them as interns who require instructions, see them as someone who can, in the next five years, be entrusted with the task of negotiating on behalf of your company. They are coming to you with the perspective that you are an expert in what you do—show them that you are genuine in what you are teaching them,” she implored.

This programme is the first of a series of events and activities for National Small Business Week 2025, which will feature seminars, workshops and an exposition. NSBW is an annual event that is geared towards building the capacity of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in order to improve their operations and optimise their performance, while providing the skills and developing the networks needed to meet the demands of the evolving business landscape in Guyana.

STATEMENTS



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry
is saddened to learn of the passing of



Mrs. Lyla Kisson

Her entrepreneurial and visionary leadership leaves a lasting legacy within the Guyanese business community. The GCCI extends heartfelt condolences to her family and loved ones at their time of grief.



GREETINGS



HAPPY CARICOM DAY 2025

GCCI's Calendar of Events 2025



MAR
19

**135TH ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING**

MAY
5-8

**OFFSHORE
TECHNOLOGY
CONFERENCE**

JUN
18

**BUSINESS
BREAKFAST
SEMINAR**

JUL
7

**CARICOM DAY
BARBECUE**

JUL
18-27

**NATIONAL
SMALL
BUSINESS
WEEK**

SEP
24

**ENERGY LUNCHEON
& LAUNCH OF THE
BUSINESS GUYANA
MAGAZINE**

OCT
23

**NADENE GILBERT-
RAMBARRAN
CANCER
AWARENESS &
FUNDRAISING
MIXER**

NOV
18-19

**BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT
FORUM**

DEC
11

**136TH ANNUAL
AWARDS
PRESENTATION
& GALA DINNER**

DATES ARE TENTATIVE & SUBJECT TO CHANGE