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NEWSLETTER

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



EVENTS

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY GREEN WALK 2025



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry participated in the World Environment Day Green Walk on June 1, organised by the Environmental Protection Agency.

GCCI COLLABORATES WITH EU GLOBAL GATEWAY AND EU DELEGATION TO FACILITATE INVESTMENT MISSION



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) continues to facilitate invaluable conversations between investors and local stakeholders to encourage investment and partnerships, and on June 2, a collaboration with the EU Global Gateway and EU Delegation in Guyana resulted in the execution of crucial discussions with EU companies in the health and pharmaceuticals industry and the local private sector.

This discourse was part of the 'Global Gateway Health and Pharma EU Investment Mission Guyana' and was hosted at the Guyana Marriott Hotel. It featured a panel discussion under the theme 'Guyana Private Sector: Business overview and opportunities,' that saw the participation of President of the GCCI, Mrs. Kathy Smith; Member of the Private Sector Commission, Dr. Surendra Persaud, and Guyana Manufacturing and Services Association Representative, Ms. Gina Arjoon. This session was moderated by Councillor and Executive Member of the Chamber, Mr. Richard Rambarran.

Mrs. Smith provided an overview of the business and investment landscape in Guyana, with insights into the country's economic growth and infrastructural development. She shared key information on the policies and regulations that guide business in Guyana, including the Local Content Act. "Our economic climate is very attractive for investment...We are poised to be one of the fastest-growing economies in the world...Guyana is ripe for investment," she stated, while encouraging investors to pursue their ventures in Guyana.

This initiative aims to enhance collaboration between European health and pharmaceutical companies and Guyanese stakeholders to support the development of the country's healthcare sector. Thirteen companies from EU member states, including Spain, Austria, France, Czech Republic, Portugal, Sweden, Italy, and Ireland, are participating in the mission which is scheduled to participate in business-to-business meetings and industry-focused seminars over the next two days.

UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA'S MONEY WEEK LAUNCHED “Make financial literacy part of our culture” - GCCI President



“Money is not just currency, it is a tool—a tool for empowerment, a tool for growth, a tool for change—yet too many of our people especially our youth and small business owners are left to navigate the financial world without a map. They face hard choices with little guidance, they are urged to succeed but are not often taught how to manage what they earn or how to multiply what they save.”

These were the sentiments of President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI), Mrs. Kathy Smith at the launch of the University of Guyana’s 2025 ‘Money Week’ at the Turkeyen Campus on June 3. Mrs. Smith, an entrepreneur in the construction sector, emphasised that that wealth, stability, and progress are not built overnight but rather “step-by-step, decision-by-decision, and dollar-by-dollar.”

She stressed that in the pursuit of success, it is pivotal that financial literacy becomes part of ingrained in people’s culture. “We must normalise conversations about budgeting, saving, investing and credit, not just in boardrooms or banks, but in classrooms, community centers and around the dinner table, and we must create financial systems that are inclusive,” Mrs. Smith stated.

Underscoring the importance of discipline, knowledge and courage in attaining financial success, the GCCI President commended the University of Guyana for facilitating access to the skills and knowledge needed to pursue financial empowerment, and expressed the Chamber’s support for this initiative.

Launched in 2017, ‘Money Week’ is dedicated to empowering students, faculty, alumni, and the wider public with essential knowledge and skills in financial literacy, with the aim of supporting the path to prosperity.

GLOBAL GATEWAY HEALTH AND PHARMA EU INVESTMENT MISSION GUYANA: B2B MEETING



Members of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) on June 5 engaged a number of European businesses in the health and pharmaceuticals industry during business-to-business (B2B) meetings facilitated by the Chamber in collaboration with the EU Global Gateway and EU Delegation in Guyana.

The B2B meetings were a part of the 'Global Gateway Health and Pharma EU Investment Mission Guyana' and was conducted at the Guyana Marriott Hotel. It saw the participation of companies from EU member states, including Spain, Austria, France, Czech Republic, Portugal, Sweden, Italy, and Ireland.

GCCI FACILITATES 'DOING BUSINESS IN GUYANA' PRESENTATION FOR POTENTIAL JAMAICAN INVESTORS



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) on June 12 facilitated a 'Doing Business in Guyana' presentation for the visiting Jamaican business delegation that is being spearheaded by the Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO). The diverse group of businesses from Jamaica is currently in Guyana on a four-day 'Guyana Export and Ministerial Business Mission 2025' that is geared towards deepening commercial ties between the two countries by exploring trade and investment opportunities through targeted business-to-business (B2B) engagements.

The Mission—JAMPRO's fourth to Guyana thus far—is also aimed at building long-term relationships, seeking strategic partnerships, and exploring collaborations that are mutually beneficial. Accompanying the group is Jamaica's Minister of Industry, Investment, and Commerce, Senator, the Honourable Aubyn Hill.

Executive Member and Councillor of the GCCI, Mr. Richard Rambarran in his presentation to the group provided an economic overview and insights into Guyana's development trajectory. "Our economy has been on a pathway of rapid expansion. If one looks at the economic growth over the past 10 years for example, the non-oil sector has averaged approximately 10 percent," he stated, later adding, "You have stable and sustainable growth outside the oil and gas sector." He pointed to the country's low inflation rate, as well as the positive impact of the oil and gas sector, saying, "From the time we started oil production, the economy has been booming..."

Mr. Rambarran familiarised the contingent of Jamaican entrepreneurs with Guyana's Local Content Act, while also encouraging them to examine Guyana's Investment Act 2004 and the Income in Aid of Industry Act as he outlined the country's regulatory framework and legislative architecture that guides investment in Guyana. Members of the Chamber were also provided with the opportunity to meet with Jamaican companies that operate within their industries to network and scope out potential partnerships.

OVER 120 ENTREPRENEURS BENEFIT FROM GUIDANCE ON FINANCE AND BANKING AT GCCI'S BUSINESS BREAKFAST SEMINAR



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI), cognisant of the crucial nature of access to finance as it relates to the development of businesses, held the third iteration of its Business Breakfast Seminar on June 19 at the Guyana Marriott Hotel. This event, which was sponsored by the Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry (GBTI), saw over 120 attendees benefiting from invaluable information on navigating ‘Finance and Banking’ in Guyana’s evolving business landscape, with expert guidance from key stakeholders in the finance sector including Chairperson of the Guyana Association of Bankers Incorporated, Ms. Nafeeza Gaffoor; Executive Director of NewHayven Merchant Bank, Mr. Kurt Kisto, and Chief Executive Officer of the GBTI, Mr. Shawn Gurcharran. Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, Honourable Dr. Ashni Singh delivered the feature address.

President of the GCCI, Mrs. Kathy Smith in her opening remarks, highlighted the importance of this initiative, which was designed to ensure that businesses are equipped with the knowledge and resources needed to propel their operations. “Guyana is growing. Last year, over US\$743 million was spent on local content utilisation—that is contracts, employment, and capacity building for Guyanese businesses and employees. We now have 1,100 companies registered on the Local Content Register and the GCCI wants to see all its members at the forefront of these opportunities,” she stated.

Further, she emphasised that as the economy expands, the demand on businesses grows, and as such, the resources available to entrepreneurs, particularly capital, must align with this increased demand, adding, “This is critical for our MSMEs who make up over 70 percent of our membership.”

Underscoring the importance of credibility in accessing financing, Mrs. Smith stated, “I have noticed that some businesses are still doing business in an informal way, and this conduct is altering the confidence the bank has in you.” She urged entrepreneurs to ensure that they formalise their operations and maintain compliance, noting, “We have seen the significant intervention by the banks to ease the bureaucracy to access to finance and for that, I applaud the excellent work that they have been doing.”

COUNCIL WALKABOUT - REGENT STREET



Continuing with efforts to meet local businesses and understand their challenges and support needed, Council members of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry—led by President, Mrs. Kathy Smith—on June 27 met with businesses on Regent Street, Georgetown during the third iteration of the ‘Council Walkabout’.

The Councillors visited businesses including Pressy’s Enterprise, Broadway Fashion, the Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry, Republic Bank, Caribbean Airlines, and Beepats. The Councillors also took the opportunity to meet with vendors and small businesses to determine how the Chamber can provide support to them in navigating their operations amidst any challenges they may be facing.

Among the issues raised were challenges with parking in the area, and irregular waste disposal pick-up schedules which lead to sanitation issues. Some businesses also indicated that they are examining how they can diversify their services to align with Guyana’s changing business landscape.

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.

GCCI PRESIDENT ENCOURAGES TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY OPERATORS TO EMBRACE FORMALISED SYSTEMS TO BUILD CREDIBILITY



As 22 entrepreneurs within the tourism and hospitality sector completed a 12-week ‘ElevateAll Programme’ conducted by the Centre for Local Business Development, they were urged by President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI), Mrs. Kathy Smith to formalise their operations in pursuit of credibility and trust.

Addressing the businesses during the Programme’s closing ceremony on June 13 at the Centre, Mrs. Smith emphasised the importance of determination and commitment in the journey of entrepreneurship. Moreso, she underscored the importance of formalising systems including accessibility at the physical location and separation of personal and business finances. “The bank should be able to locate your operation,” she stressed.

Mrs. Smith also pointed out the importance of regulatory compliance in operating in the business sector, such as the payment of taxes and National Insurance Scheme registration and payments. “Systems build credibility and trust...Systems save you time and make you scalable,” she told the Programme’s participants.

The capacity-building programme saw participants benefiting from training and mentorship, as well as business development support in areas such as gap identification, understanding the business structure, marketing, and pitch development.

GCCI SUPPORTS NATIONAL CLEANUP EXERCISE



President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) Mrs. Kathy Smith; Secretary, Mrs. Kristia Ramlagan-Prescott, and Councillors Mr. Delmar Walcott and Mr. Paul Archer today, June 8, supported the National Cleanup Exercise. The GCCI Officials aided in the removal of garbage along Waterloo Street and New Market Street.

GCCI SUPPORTS NATIONAL CLEANUP EXERCISE



On June 24, the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI), the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office, and the Global Compact Caribbean Network collaborated to host a Private Sector Sustainable Development Forum at the Grand Coastal Hotel. The forum sought to sensitise members on how their business operations and policies can be aligned to the Principles of the Global Compact, Women's Empowerment Principles, Children's Rights and Business Principles, Business and Human Rights Principles, and other international business principles and standards, while providing a platform for private sector partners to showcase their alignment and contributions to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in Guyana.

United Nations Resident Coordinator, Ms. Jean Kamau during the opening ceremony noted that the private sector is a crucial stakeholder in the achievement of the SDGs. "You as the Private Sector are working hand-in-hand, whether directly or indirectly, in fulfilling the obligations that are set out for us in the SDGs. Guyana has made remarkable, measurable strides in advancing the SDGs," she stated.

The UN Global Compact, the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative, calls on companies to align their operations with ten universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and to take all the action to advance societal goals. The UN Resident Coordinator commended the GCCI for its leadership in driving this agenda.

President of the GCCI, Mrs. Kathy Smith also brought to the fore, the efforts of Guyana's private sector to foster the advancement of the UNSDGs. "Almost two years ago, under the presidency of my predecessor and the leadership of the former UN Resident Coordinator in Guyana, Yeşim Oruç, the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the UN signed a Declaration of Intent to partner and foster the private sector's contribution to economic and social development," she stated.

The GCCI President noted that this collaboration was aimed at propelling private sector support for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. "Of particular interest to us at the GCCI was the alignment of local businesses' operations with global business standards, including the promotion of gender equality, non-discrimination, inclusion and diversity in the workplace as well as the adoption of inclusive policies. Today's engagement is as a result of this envisioned collaboration. We anticipate a meaningful discourse on how our businesses can align with global ethical standards—topics such as Human Rights, Child Labour and workplace inclusivity are not just check boxes, they are core values we must embody if we are to be globally competitive and socially responsible," she stated.

GCCI HOSTS LOCAL CONTENT SECRETARIAT DIRECTOR FOR UPDATE SESSION WITH MEMBERS



Local Content development and utilisation remain key focal points of the Guyanese business community, and as such, the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) is committed to continually advocating in this regard.

On June 26, the Chamber hosted Director of the Local Content Secretariat, Dr. Martin Pertab, who fielded questions from members as it relates to local content development and spend, opportunities, policy direction, and the updating of the Local Content Schedule.

This meeting was organised by the Chamber’s Petroleum and Local Content Committee, which is chaired by Councillor, Mr. Richard Rambarran. Noting the change in the committee’s name, Mr. Rambarran disclosed, “The Committee’s name has been altered to reflect the dynamic and evolving nature of the Guyanese economy. As local content has become a more important and a more prominent pillar within the economy, we have renamed the ‘Petroleum Committee’ to ‘Petroleum and Local Content Committee’. Aligned with the meeting, he stated that the Committee will continue to have regular discussions and honed-in focus on local content development and advocacy.

President of the GCCI, Mrs. Kathy Smith also emphasised the importance of local companies being integrated into the oil and gas sector.

She stated, “As our country continues to grow, particularly through the opportunities that are emerging from the oil and gas industry, local content has become an important pillar—not just for national development but for economic inclusion as it relates to local businesses and members being able to participate in the industry.” Mrs. Smith underscored the Chamber’s commitment to fostering the development and advancement of its membership and said that the GCCI will continue to create the space and opportunities for these important discussions.

MEETINGS

JSE OFFICIALS PAY COURTESY CALL ON GCCI EXECUTIVES



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) has shared a collaborative relationship with the Jamaica Stock Exchange (JSE) which has seen the two organisations partnering for the hosting of the Regional Capital Markets Conference in Guyana over the past two years. On June 5, officials of JSE paid a courtesy call on Executive Members of the GCCI at the Chamber's Secretariat, during which several areas for further collaborations were discussed.

President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mrs. Kathy Smith; Junior Vice President, Mr. Brian Edwards; Treasurer, Mrs. Melisa McRae-George; Councillor and Executive Member, Mr. Richard Rambarran, and Immediate Past President and Executive Member, Mr. Kester Hutson met with JSE's Managing Director, Dr. Marlene Street Forrest; Manager, Marketing and Communications, Mr. Neville Ellis; Manager, Group Business Development, Mr. Andre Gooden; Principal, e-Campus, Mr. Kevin Powell; Deputy Business Development Manager, Michael Johnson; Administrator, e-Campus, Ms. Alafia Dally, and JSE's local support personnel, Mr. Rawle Nelson.

The JSE team was provided with an overview of the GCCI, its role, history, membership, and focal areas. The GCCI Executives also shared insights into the Micro and Women Entrepreneur Learning Centre that is being developed at the GCCI's Secretariat. Discussions also delved into potential collaborations for certified training programmes for the benefit of GCCI members and plans for the 2025 Regional Capital Markets Conference in Guyana.

GCCI AND DRCHAM DISCUSS AREAS FOR CLOSER COLLABORATIONS



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) and the Dominican Republic Chamber of Commerce in Guyana (DRChamGuyana) on June 13 met at the GCCI's Secretariat to discuss areas for closer collaboration.

Vice President of DRChamGuyana, Mr. Khishan Singh and Executive Director, Ms. Leonida Minalla Foo met with GCCI's President, Mrs. Kathy Smith; Junior Vice President, Mr. Brian Edwards; Councillor and Chairperson of the Trade and Investment Committee, Mr. Eusi Evelyn; Councillor and Executive Member, Mr. Richard Rambarran, and Trade and Investment Consultant, Ms. Jessica Campbell.

Aimed at increasing increased bilateral trade and engagement between Guyana and the Dominican Republic, the discussion delved into potential trade missions and partnering for joint capacity-building initiatives.

GCCI AND FAO EXPLORES POTENTIAL COLLABORATIONS TO BUILD CAPACITY OF FARMERS



Over the last several years, the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI), through its Agriculture Committee, has been supporting the development of farmers across the country via the Agriculture Outreach programme.

The agriculture sector is also one of the key sectors to be targeted by programmes that will be executed by the Chamber's Micro and Women Entrepreneur Learning Centre, and recently, the GCCCI met with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Representative in Guyana, Dr. Gillian Smith to discuss potential collaborations between the two organisations to execute these programmes.

On June 19, President of the GCCCI, Mrs. Kathy Smith and Junior Vice President and Chairperson of the Agriculture Committee, Mr. Brian Edwards met with Dr. Smith to explore areas for potential collaboration. The GCCCI President shared an overview of the GCCCI and its committees, as well as a cursory view of the membership. Mrs. Smith stated, "We have noticed a growth in women-owned and women-led businesses...The Agriculture Committee has been supporting the work of women in agriculture, providing technical advice."

She also highlighted the objectives of the Learning Centre as it relates to farmers, particularly the goal of shifting them away from the traditional 'buy and sell' mode of operation into a standardised operation with the potential to export their products. As part of this initiative, training will be provided in a number of areas including marketing, branding, packaging, financial literacy, and the development of a sustainable business, she explained. The Agriculture Committee Chairperson also noted that the Chamber is seeking to work with organisations to build out the Agriculture Outreach Programme that has been executed over the last two years across the country.

The FAO Representative provided insight into a number of similar initiatives undertaken by the organisation, particularly on developing the capacity of government agencies in the agriculture sector. The two parties discussed areas for synergy and committed to furthering this discussion on collaboration.

INTERNATIONAL IDEA UPDATES GCCI ON INITIATIVES FOR VOTER EDUCATION AND SUPPORTING ELECTORAL INTEGRITY



On June 25, President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI), Mrs. Kathy Smith met with officials from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), the organisation that is executing a programme funded by the European Union to support electoral integrity as Guyana approaches the 2025 General and Regional Elections.

International IDEA's Programme Manager, Ambassador Marcelo Varela-Erasheva, and Programme Officer, Mr. Junior Paul Chanderpaul met with Mrs. Smith in the GCCI's boardroom and provided an update on the execution of the programme as well as outlined some planned initiatives for voter education.

Voter education handbooks and videos have been produced which also cater to persons with hearing and visual challenges, while training sessions for Observers and journalists are in the pipeline. The materials being produced, the Ambassador shared, are all being reviewed and approved by the Guyana Elections Commission.

Mrs. Smith also updated the International IDEA team on the Chamber's progress in establishing its Observer Group, and the two officials discussed collaborating to train the observers. She reinforced the Chamber's desire for a free, fair and transparent election that respects the rule of law and tenets of democracy, as well as the expectation for timely results.

STATEMENTS



Georgetown Chamber of Commerce & Industry

“Serving Guyana through Commerce and Industry since 1889”

President: Mrs. Kathy Smith

June 4, 2025

Statement *by*

The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce & Industry *in support of*
National Cleanup Exercise

-START-

The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) is encouraging the business community to support the upcoming National Cleanup Exercise on Sunday, June 8. Respect and care for the environment is of utmost importance, particularly as Guyana is currently experiencing the rainy season, and impact of clogged drainage channels and waterways during inclement weather.

There are several mobilisation points in Georgetown and across the country, as listed in the attached graphic. The Chamber is also urging businesses to ensure that they engage in proper waste disposal to prevent the accumulation of garbage along roadways and in the drainage systems.

The GCCCI underscores the importance of good environmental stewardship, particularly in pursuit of the health and wellbeing of our people.

-END-

GREETINGS



GREETINGS



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