



NEWSLETTER

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



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WELCOME TO THE GCCI

In November 2025, the Council of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry approved the applications of its newest cohort of members. We would like to take the opportunity to extend our warmest welcome to:

CKB Enterprise

Asian Sealand Offshore & Marine Inc.

Ideasgy Inc.

Professional Business Partner

Johnson's Green Seasonings

Dicks Seasoning Products

Angel's General Enterprise

Kendall and Forbes Enterprises

AMAZON GROUP INC

Saratoga Energy Resources S.A. Inc.

Love & Sunshine Destination Wedding

MC Group

EVENTS

Ministry of Housing launches consultation on Georgetown Drainage Improvement Project with GCCI



The Government of Guyana through a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Agriculture, and the National Drainage and Irrigation Authority (NDIA) will be undertaking a Georgetown Drainage Improvement Project that is geared towards improving the drainage infrastructure in the city to prevent flooding.

On November 7, Minister of Housing, Hon. Collin Croal; Chief Development Planner for the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA), Ms. Germene Stewart; Chairman of the NDIA, Mr. Lionel Wordsworth, and Chief Sea and River Defence Officer at the Ministry of Public Works, Mr. Kevin Samad along with representatives from related state agencies launched the consultations for the project with the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) at the Chamber Secretariat.

President of the GCCI, Mrs. Kathy S. Smith posited that given the size of the Chamber's membership, the launch of the consultation with the GCCI was appropriate. "The GCCI is on-board, and we are willing to work with the ministry on this project," she stated.

Minister Croal provided an overview of the project, which was commenced at the directive of His Excellency, President Mohamed Irfaan Ali, noting that the consultation is stage one. "It's reviewing what we have, what improvements can be done, what enhancements can be done, and then overall...the beautification of the city."

The Minister's team provided insights into the drainage structure and challenges being experienced in the city—noting that the pre-existing infrastructure cannot serve current needs. It was noted that existing studies were reviewed and data collected over the last 35 years shows that the city needs the capacity to drain at least eight inches of water in 24 hours. They also identified flood prone areas and challenges that restrict access to the sluices.

The GCCI was briefed on measures that will need to be taken to embark on this project and the private sector support that is needed.

GCCI President participates in Global Women in Management 75



President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) Mrs. Kathy Smith was among 18 women from 13 countries who participated in the Global Women in Management programme in September 2025 that was held in Washington, D.C.

Mrs. Smith underwent two weeks of targeted training in areas including 'Culture, Diversity, Power, and Inclusion', 'Leadership and Emotional Intelligence', 'Power and Empowerment', 'Confidence Building', 'Economic Advancement', and 'Artificial Intelligence and the Art of Leadership.'

This programme, which is funded by the ExxonMobil Foundation and executed by Counterpart International, provides women nonprofit sector or civil society with leadership, technical, and professional skills that help them strengthen organizations and impact their communities, with the broader aim of aiding them to fulfill their economic potential and become catalysts for change in their community.

GCCI participates in GuyExpo 2025



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) is a proud participant in GuyExpo 2025, with the Chamber's booth featuring several members across varying sectors. On Thursday, October 13, President of the GCCI, Mrs. Kathy Smith also participated in the opening ceremony of GuyExpo, addressing the hundreds of attendees at the Sophia Exhibition Centre.

Mrs. Smith highlighted the numerous close collaborations with the Government of Guyana for the development of the private sector. "It gives me great pleasure to be here and witness the government's dedication to creating platforms for Guyanese businesses to increase their visibility, market their products, and secure new customers. Platforms such as GuyExpo are highly beneficial—particularly for Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises," she stated. She noted that at the GCCI, at least 70 percent of the close to 1000 members are MSMEs, and over 40 percent are women-owned or women-led businesses, adding that membership continues to grow as Guyana's economy continues to transform. "With the rapid pace of development and government's commitment to infrastructural development in this beautiful country, the private sector has witnessed the mammoth increase in opportunities for businesses—as well as the growth in space for new entrepreneurs to occupy," she said.

Mrs. Smith lauded the government's commitment to the development of business in Guyana, underscoring, "This is a time of unprecedented growth and opportunity. It is a time where opportunities are ripe for the picking—where entrepreneurship is thriving. The private sector continues to benefit from the government's development policies and strategic investments. Whether it is a small contractor who has access to contracts, or a budding entrepreneur who is benefiting from business development training and grants—this government has been a catalyst for opportunities and the success of entrepreneurship."

The GCCI's members were thrilled to engage members of the public about their products and services on Day One of GuyExpo 2025. President Smith, Junior Vice President, Mr. Brian Edwards, and Councillors Mr. Paul Archer and Mr. Delmar Walcott also took the opportunity to visit our members' booths.

Members of the public are invited to stop by at the One Guyana Auditorium, Booths 3-5, and visit Dynotech Construction Chemical Inc., Nextech Inc., Oxford Medical Centre, Tropical Shipping Guyana, Newrest Guyana, B.M Enterprise Inc., and JR Construction.

GCCI Executes fifth Business Development Forum with keen focus on MSMEs



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (GCCI) Business Development Forum (BDF) 2025 was successfully executed on November 13 and 14 at the Pegasus Suites and Corporate Centre, with keen attention being paid to the advancement of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSME).

The two-day event featured an expert line-up of presenters and panelists who delved into areas such as Environmental and Social Governance (ESG), Sustainability, Diversification, Finance and Investment, and Export Readiness.

In her welcome remarks on Day One, President of the GCCI, Mrs. Kathy Smith reflected on the origin of the Forum, sharing, "When the Business Development Forum was first envisioned, the objective was to create a platform to allow entrepreneurs in Guyana to access invaluable knowledge on establishing their business and growing their businesses, while also nurturing networking and knowledge-sharing."

She noted that in developing the framework for this year's event, special consideration was given for MSMEs, as well as the understanding that Guyana's business landscape continues to evolve alongside the economy and in order for businesses to survive and thrive, they would need the knowledge and guidance on navigating planning for their businesses' development and sustainability.

"Guyana's rapid pace of development is unmatched. The government continues to roll out developmental projects and initiatives, while streamlining systems for increased efficiency and a diversified economy—and the private sector as the beating heart of the economy must keep up. We need to not only match the speed and energy, but also maintain momentum. As the economy evolves, our businesses must reflect this in how we meet the rising demands, and how we fine-tune our products and services to grow with the country. Sustainability is important and planning is key," she iterated.

Executive Chairman of Demerara Distillers Limited (DDL), Mr. Komal Samaroo—who delivered the keynote address on Day One reflected on the history of DDL and how the company diversified its product offering based on careful contemplation of efficiency and waste minimalization and monetisation. In his address to entrepreneurs, he emphasised the importance of prudent business management—particularly as it relates to finances. "If you have a business and you don't have financial statements, you don't have a business. The business is not you...the business is a separate entity," he stated, adding, "I believe that very often, the financial considerations of what you do and the decisions you make are not factored in and given the right weight in overall decision-making process." Further, he stressed the importance of understanding the market in which you operate as an entrepreneur, as well as the regime and regulations that guide it.



Minister of Tourism, Industry, and Commerce, Hon. Susan Rodrigues in her session keynote address on Day Two reflected on the government’s commitment to value-creation and bolstering the tourism sector.

“For too long, we have been talking about adding value. It is time for us to utilise and put into practice whatever has to be done for us to realise the true value of our raw materials and local products,” she posited. She added that the country needs to transition from just being a product-based economy to being a service-based economy. She reiterated the importance of improving the service industry to advance the tourism sector, sharing that the government is undertaking several initiatives in this regard. “We have to build the resilience of our economy,” she underscored.

Session keynote speakers at the event also included: Country Representative (Guyana) of the Inter-American Development Bank, Lorena Solórzano Salazar; Deputy Secretary General, CARICOM Secretariat, Dr Armstrong Alexis, and Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the Board of Caribbean Container Inc., Ms. Patricia Bacchus.

The presenter and panelist line-up included Chief Investment Officer and Head of the Guyana Office for Investment, Dr. Peter Ramsaroop, MP; Director of the Local Content Secretariat, Mr. Michael Munroe; Managing Director of Guyana Americas Merchant Bank, Mr. Richard Isava; Chief Executive Officer of EveryData (Guyana) Inc., Mr. Lenard McRae; Sustainability Lead at SBM Offshore Guyana, Ms. Gwenetta Fordyce; Executive Director of the Guyana National Bureau of Standards, Mr. Trevor Bassoo; Assistant Vice President & General Manager of Massy Stores (Guyana) Inc., Mr. Christpen Bobb-Semple; Managing Director of NSA McAL Distribution Ltd., Mr. Troy Cadogan; President of Guyana Customs House Brokers and Clerks Association, Mr. Colin Moore; Founder of Shaws Media, Mr. Gregory Shaw; Founder/Owner of Ride Along GY, Ms. Cherry-Ann Greene; Senior Advisor, Communications, Strategy & Development, at Conservation International Guyana, Mr. Damian Fernandes, and Chairperson of the GCCI’s Green Economy and Tourism Committee, Mr. Delmar Walcott.

The event also received support from the Managing Director of Integrated Marketing Communications Inc., Mrs. Martina McDonald-Johnson, who served as the Mistress of Ceremonies, as well as session moderators—Chief Executive Officer of Sagacity Inc., Mr. Christopher Chapwanya; Managing Director of Cerulean Inc., Mrs. Lyndell Danzie-Black; CEO of Lodestar Inc., Ms. Kristia Ramlagan-Prescott, and Senior Vice President of the GCCI, Mr. Gavin Ramsoondar.

'From Local to Global: Guyana on the World Stage' **Business Guyana 2025 Magazine cover unveiled-GCCI honours Kathy S. Smith for fierce and steadfast leadership**



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) unveiled the cover of its Business Guyana 2025 Magazine on Friday, November 14 during the Business Development Forum at the Pegasus Suites and Corporate Centre.

President of the GCCI, Mrs. Kathy S. Smith, who is being honoured by this year's edition of the magazine for her fierce and steadfast leadership of the Chamber since being elected to office, was unaware of this homage and in for a pleasant surprise at the unveiling.

The magazine will focus keenly on Guyana's development trajectory, investor interest, and expanding foreign market and business opportunities as a result of the country's economic growth.

GCCI hosts meeting with Local Content Secretariat -Amendments to schedule and legislation discussed



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) continues to advocate for Guyanese businesses to benefit from the oil and gas sector. The Chamber, the proponent of the Local Content Act, on November 19, hosted a meeting with the Local Content Secretariat and its members to discuss crucial matters related to the legislation and its implementation.

Director of the Secretariat, Mr. Michael Munroe and his team attended the engagement with President of the Chamber, Mrs. Kathy Smith; Chairperson of the Petroleum and Local Content Secretariat, Mr. Richard Rambarran, Councillors, and Members of the GCCI.

President Smith in her opening remarks noted the importance of Guyanese participation in the oil and gas value chain. She reflected on the many businesses that have emerged as a result of the opportunities that arose from the sector, as well as those businesses that expanded their services and operations.

Mr. Rambarran highlighted the Chamber's role in the intellectual genesis of local content in Guyana, adding that the country is in the 'second wave' of local content. "We are at the juncture where we have moved from just base value of in-country retention—which is really what local content at its core aims for—to the point where we are advancing the private sector development, growing consistently, being able to enter into new spheres of services," he stated.

The Director of the Local Content Secretariat provided an overview of the agency's duties and responsibilities, and fielded questions from attendees.

"Fall seven times, get up eight" -GCCCI President underscores the importance of determination and resilience to Golden Grove Secondary School graduates



It was a full-circle, nostalgic, and heart-warming moment on November 13, when President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI), Mrs. Kathy Smith returned to the stage of her alma mater Golden Grove Secondary School and addressed the graduating class of 2025.

Mrs. Smith reflected on her childhood journey, challenges, and the struggles she endured to overcome the life of poverty she was born into. In sharing her story with the graduates, Mrs. Smith emphasised the power of resilience, determination, and grit.

In a candid address, Mrs. Smith told the student about the first time she wrote the Caribbean Examination Council Examinations and did not meet her own expectations. This, she said, prompted her to rewrite the examinations a year later. This was a turning point, one which saw her succeed and earn the position of the best graduating student.

Mrs. Smith underscored the importance of commitment, determination, and self-awareness. She shared insights into her journey as an entrepreneur and the hurdles she faced with her first partnership. "Fall seven times, get up eight," she reiterated to the students several times, highlighting the value of being prepared for each opportunity that they encounter.

GCCI supports launch of Gender Equality & Empowerment Seal



As Guyana observes '16 Day of Activism to End Gender-based Violence', the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) recognises the importance of safe working environments for women as well as equal opportunities for employment as a means of empowerment. As such, the Chamber was pleased to participate in the launch of the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security 'Gender Equality & Empowerment Seal' on November 26 at the Roraima Duke Lodge.

This Gender Equality and Empowerment Seal initiative promotes safe, inclusive, and discrimination-free workplaces across the country, targeting issues such as sexual harassment, workplace safety, empowerment, and conduct.

Secretary of the GCCI, Mrs. Kristia Ramlagan-Prescott, in her remarks at the launch, described the initiative as pivotal to positively impacting the lives of women. Noting that gender-based violence remains a deep concern, she highlighted the vulnerability of women who are dependent on their partners in an abuse dynamic. She stated that the GCCI believes that creating employment opportunities and support mechanisms are crucial in empowering women in escaping abusive relationships and preserving their well-being as it removes that vulnerability due to absolute dependence. She commended the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security for taking strategic measures to provide much-needed resources in this regard.

This initiative comes on the heels of the Ministry's Day and Night Care Programme that was launched at the GCCI Secretariat by Hon. Dr. Vindhya Persaud. Through that programme, members of the Chamber committed to providing child care facilities at their offices to allow working parents to have after-school and daycare options at their place of work. By creating an avenue for women in particular to have a safe place for their children to have supervised care while they work, GCCI members are equipping them with the ability to support themselves and their families. She underscored that employment is empowerment— and employment with support and resources paves the way for independence.

The GCCI Secretary noted that as an organisation where close to 50 percent of its membership are either women-owned or women-led businesses, the GCCI workplan heavily focuses on the development of women entrepreneurs. She highlighted the Micro and Women Entrepreneur Learning Centre that aims to support the advancement of women in business. She reiterated the GCCI's support for this initiative and the journey ahead in its implementation.

MEETINGS

GCCI and Ministry of Public Service, Government Efficiency, and Implementation to launch Skills Connect App



Among the challenges faced by the private sector is a shortage of skilled labour as well as unskilled labour as a result of the unprecedented growth in the construction sector. On November 4, the Minister of Public Service, Government Efficiency, and Implementation, Hon. Zulfikar Ally partnered with the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) to launch the Ministry's online SkillsConnect Application that is geared towards connecting service providers and tradesmen to clients. The launch was held in the GCCI's boardroom and attended by members of the Chamber both in-person and online.

President of the GCCI, Mrs. Kathy S. Smith declared the platform a game-changer. She noted the challenges experienced locally by both businesses and citizens in accessing services—particularly those related to the construction sector. “It is a privilege to partner with the Government of Guyana to ensure that the information for this platform gets out there,” she stated to the attendees.

Meanwhile, as he provided an overview of the app, Minister Ally reflected on the importance of customer service evolving to international standards and implementing best practices. “The aim of SkillsConnect is to have small businesses on a platform showcasing the services that they have and to have Guyanese going on that platform requesting those services...We are launching this app to connect everyone together. We want to connect Guyanese to other Guyanese who have skills and services to offer,” he stated.

Minister Ally assured users that the platform is safe and under the supervision of the National Data Management Authority. Furthermore, he noted that additional systems will be put in place such as requiring users to register using their national Identification Cards and will be subject to reviews and ratings by both service providers and clients.

The Minister underscored the importance of advancing efficiency and ease of doing business in the country, saying, “As Guyana progresses, as we move from a middle-income to a high-income country, our attitudes and service to the people must also change—but more importantly, businesses have to reform the way they think and the way they deliver service.”

GCCI Executives discuss collaboration for business development and capacity building with Minister of Public Service, Gov't Efficiency, and Implementation



With focus on collaborating to build the capacity of local businesses—including in areas such as customer service and communication—Executive Members of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) on November 6 discussed areas of support for businesses in Guyana, particularly Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises, with Minister of Public Service, Government Efficiency, and Implementation, Hon. Zulfikar Ally.

President of the GCCI, Mrs. Kathy Smith, and Executive Member and Past President, Mr. Timothy Tucker paid a courtesy visit to the minister at his office during which they discussed a range of potential collaborations for upskilling of employees and entrepreneurs, as well as increasing efficiency in operations.

GCCI meets with Massy Guyana Leadership team



A key focal area in the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) work plan is increased collaboration with the business community for the advancement of the country's economy and business landscape. Crucial to the accomplishment of this objective is having active engagements with companies operating in Guyana, and on November 19, President of the GCCI, Mrs. Kathy Smith led a team of Executive Members and Councillors of the GCCI in a meeting with the leadership team of Massy Guyana.

The President along with Senior Vice President, Mr. Gavin Ramsoondar; Executive Member and Immediate Past President, Mr. Kester Hutson, and Councillors Mr. Devon Seeram, Ms. Mary Nagasar, Mr. Keon Howard, and Mr. Delmar Walcott engaged in the meeting at the Massy Ruimveldt location.

The Massy Guyana team comprised Assistant Vice President and General Manager of Massy Stores, Mr. Christpen Bobb-Semple; Senior Vice President and Chief Executive Officer for IRP, Mr. Troy Beharry; Chief Executive Officer of Massy Gas, Mr. Augustus Harris; Vice President and Chief Executive Officer of Massy Motors, Mr. Rohit Coonjah; Vice President (Commercial) of Massy Gas, Mr. Hekima Paul, and Head of Regional IT and Guyana Operations for Massy Remittances, Mr. Norrhan Parboo. They provided an overview of the company's rich history in Guyana and its current operations that employs a workforce of over 1000 Guyanese.

The two parties discussed areas of concern and closer collaboration to address challenges, as well as capacity-building for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises in Guyana.

GREETINGS



STATEMENT



Georgetown Chamber of Commerce & Industry

"Serving Guyana through Commerce and Industry since 1889"

President: Mrs. Kathy S. Smith

November 25, 2025

Statement *by*

The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce & Industry on
Welcoming updated processing time by Local Content Secretariat

-START-

The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) commends the Local Content Secretariat (LCS) on the move to improve its processing time for local content certificates. This initiative, which focuses on efficiency, provides guided timelines and allows businesses to access this crucial document on a timely basis.

The GCCI has been in continuous discussions with the secretariat on matters affecting local businesses, including its transaction processing time and the updating of the Local Content Act Schedule of Services.

The GCCI looks forward to continued dialogue with the LCS, and the effective implementation of this decision which is anticipated to improve the ease of doing business in Guyana.

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