

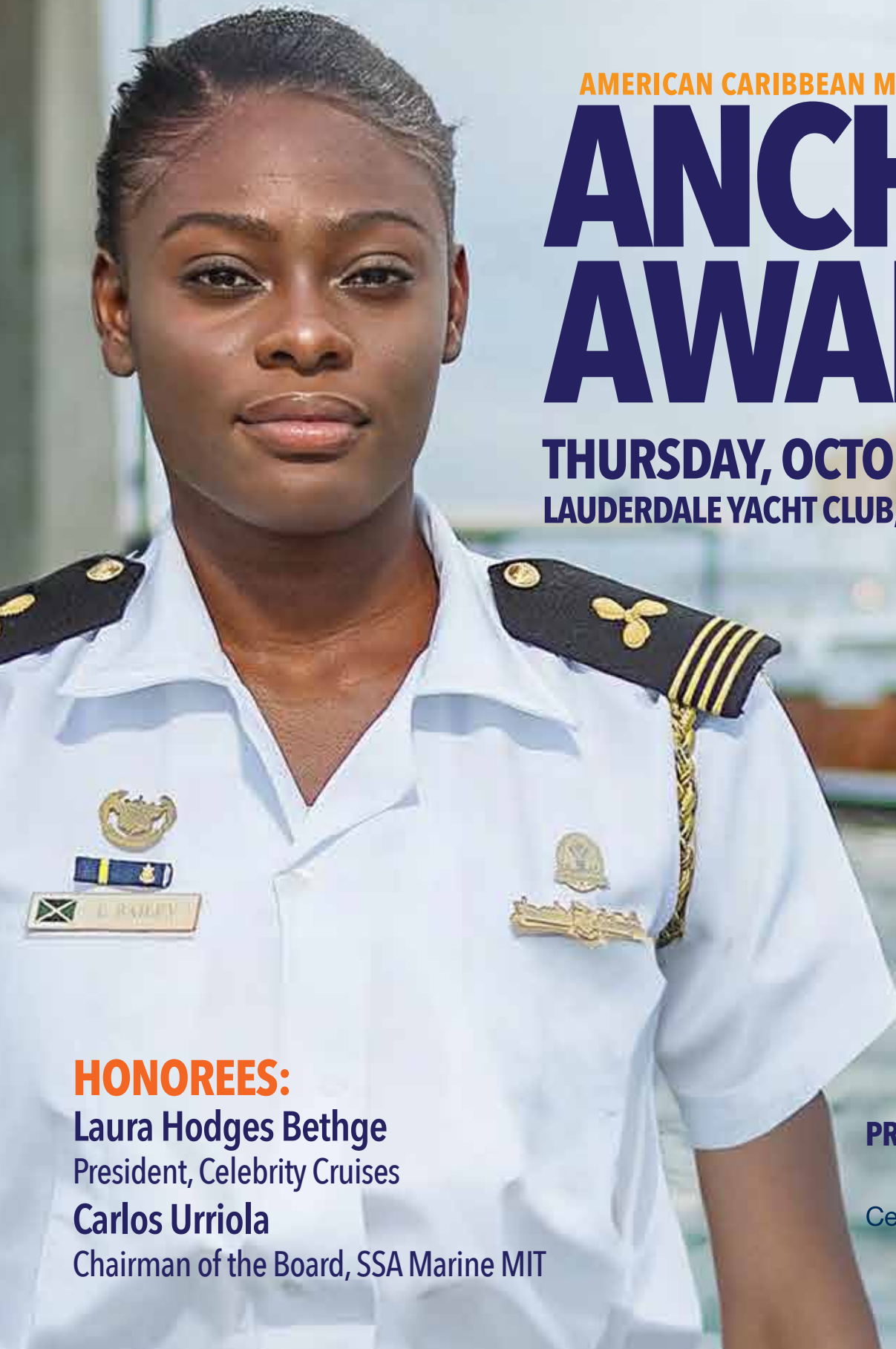
Talent in Your Backyard: Caribbean Excellence

2024

AMERICAN CARIBBEAN MARITIME FOUNDATION

ANCHOR AWARDS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2024
LAUDERDALE YACHT CLUB, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL



HONOREES:

Laura Hodges Bethge
President, Celebrity Cruises

Carlos Urriola
Chairman of the Board, SSA Marine MIT



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CONGRATULATIONS

2024 ACMF ANCHOR AWARD RECIPIENT

LAURA HODGES BETHGE

PRESIDENT, CELEBRITY CRUISES

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Program

HOST

MS. DONA REGIS-PROSPER
Secretary-General and Chief Executive Officer, Caribbean Tourism Organization

INVOCATION

Archdeacon Faye Somers

WELCOME

Gala Chairman Mr. Russell Benford
Vice President, Government Relations Americas, Royal Caribbean Group
ACMF President Geneive Brown Metzger, LLD Hon

REMARKS

Mr. William Brown, Vice President, Caribbean Shipping Association
Ms. Alyse Lisk
Senior Vice President, Technology and Operational Excellence, Tote LLC
Ms. Julien Alfred
2024 Gold Medal Olympian/Track

DINNER IS SERVED

TRIBUTE TO THE HONOREES

MR. CARLOS URRIOLA

Introduced by Mr. Juan Carlos Croston, Vice President, Marketing and Corporate Affairs
Manzanillo International Terminal—Panama

MS. LAURA HODGES BETHGE

Introduced by Mr. Mike Maura, Chairman, Arawak Port Development
and Chief Executive Officer, Nassau Cruise Port

VOTE OF THANKS

Mr. Rick Murrell
President and Chief Executive Officer, Saltchuk Logistics

GUEST ENTERTAINER

Jesse Hamilton, Singer



Message from the Gala Host

On behalf of the Caribbean Tourism Organization and our 2 member states, I am happy to extend sincerest congratulations to Carlos Urriola, Chairman of the Board, SSA Marine MIT, and Laura Hodges Bethge, President of Celebrity Cruises, for being honored with the ACMF 2024 Anchor Awards.

Their outstanding leadership and unwavering commitment have profoundly impacted our region's maritime and tourism industries. Their dedication to excellence and sustainable practices inspires us all.

It is a privilege to celebrate their achievements, and I look forward to their continued influence and contributions to the growth and development of Caribbean tourism.



Dona Regis-Prosper

**Secretary-General
& CEO
Caribbean Tourism
Organization**

Honoree

With a career spanning over two decades, Laura Hodges Bethge has become a prominent figure in the maritime industry, known for her strategic vision, commitment to exceptional customer experience, and dedication to empowering the next generation of leaders.

Born and raised in Miami, Laura's upbringing was shaped by growing up in a family of police officers. Her close bond with her grandfather, who was wheelchair-bound after being injured while serving our country, and the tragic loss of her father who was killed in the line of duty when she was 18 months old, profoundly influenced her perspective on resilience and leadership. It also instilled in her a passion for accessibility issues.



**Laura Hodges
Bethge**
President
Celebrity Cruises



It's fitting then that Laura's journey with Royal Caribbean Group began in 2000, leading the fleet accessibility program for Royal Caribbean and Celebrity Cruises on what was supposed to be a short project. Now, 24 years later, she is president of Celebrity Cruises, one of three best-in-class cruise brands owned by vacation industry leader, Royal Caribbean Group (NYSE: RCL), which also includes Royal Caribbean and Silversea. Under her leadership, Celebrity Cruises has continued to push boundaries, elevating every vacation detail on ships that feature the most inspiring spaces at sea, experiences not found anywhere else, and providing world-class service to its guests. As Laura likes to say, nothing comes close to Celebrity Cruises.

Prior to her role as president, Laura held various leadership positions across multiple facets of the business including hotel and marine operations, sales, marketing, product innovation, shared services and investor relations. She was also based in Shanghai as vice president of market development where she oversaw commercial operations for this strategic market.

In her role as Senior Vice President of Product Development for Royal Caribbean, Laura was instrumental in the creation and launch of some of the industry's most groundbreaking cruise experiences. Her contributions to projects like Royal Caribbean's Oasis and Icon Class ships, introducing several new game-changing cruise ship features, and the award-winning Perfect Day at CocoCay private island destination showcase her ability to fuse creativity with strategic insight, setting new standards for guest experiences.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Laura is deeply committed to giving back to her community. She serves on the board of Easterseals, a nonprofit dedicated to enriching the lives of people and families with disabilities, and actively supports the Police Officer Assistance Trust (POAT), a nonprofit organization that assists officers and their families in times of need.

Honoree

M

Mr. Carlos Urriola was President for SSA International. In this role, he was responsible for overseeing marketing and customer contracts for all SSA Marine's international containers operations. He was also responsible for regulatory affairs at SSA Marine MIT as his chairman of the board.

Mr. Urriola joined SSA Marine MIT in 1995 as Assistant Vice-President of Marketing. Mr. Urriola, who resides in Panama, was promoted in 1996 to Vice President of Marketing and was responsible for all customer relations for SSA Marine MIT's daily operations. In September of 2003 he was promoted to General Manager of SSA Marine MIT and on February 2011 was named SVP of SSA Marine and named member of Carrix's Executive Committee. He serves as chairman of the board of SSA Marine MIT since 2024 and represents SSA Marine on boards in Chile, Colombia and Vietnam.

Mr. Urriola has served on numerous national and international trade and shipping organizations. He was President of the Maritime Chamber of Panama for the period 2001-2002 and was reelected for a second term. He was President of the American Chamber of Commerce of Panama in 2006-2007 and also President of Junior Achievement for the period 2006-2007. From 2006-2009 he was Vice President of the Caribbean Shipping Association. President of the Caribbean Shipping Association in 2009-2012.



Carlos Urriola
Chairman of the Board
SSA Marine MIT



Message from the President

On behalf of our Board of Directors, Gala Chairman, and Dinner Committee, I extend a warm welcome to our 7th Annual Anchor Awards. We are delighted to be honoring two incredible leaders, Laura Hodges Bethge, President of Celebrity Cruises; and Carlos Urriola, Chairman of the Board, SSA Marine MIT.



**Geneive Brown
Metzger, LLD Hon.**

President and
Executive Director
American Caribbean
Maritime Foundation



“TALENT IN YOUR BACKYARD” is at the forefront of our narrative as we develop important collaborations with the shipping industry to drive home the point that the Caribbean is a rich source of world-class, passionate and committed shipping professionals.

Just seven years ago, we lighted on the idea of a foundation to fund the training of aspiring maritime professionals in the Caribbean. We began with five scholarships. Today, two hundred and seventy-nine scholarships and grants to nationals in nine Caribbean nations attending five academic partners throughout the region, partnerships with industry, have been made possible by your support.

Each year, we witness a soaring sense of possibility among our youth who are eager to build careers in the shipping industry; and we are fueled by their boundless energy and optimism.

Sincerest thanks to our Host, Dona Regis-Prosper, Secretary-General and Chief Executive Officer of Caribbean Tourism Organization; Celebrity Cruises—the Presenting Sponsor; and to all the sponsors who made this event possible. Thank you for recognizing the amazing “Talent in Your Backyard”.

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Geneive Brown Metzger,
LLD Hon

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Michelle Otero Valdés

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Gala Chair

Russell Benford
Vice President, Government
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Dinner Committee Chair

Jennifer Nugent Hill
Tropical Shipping USA, LLC

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Roger Blum
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CONTACT

executivedirector@acmfdn.org
Website: www.acmfdn.org
Jobs board: www.acmf-carex.org



Message from the Gala Chair

Welcome to the 2024 Anchor Awards! It's my honor to serve as this year's Gala Chair and celebrate our shared dedication to transforming lives within the maritime community.

A heartfelt thank you to our board, supporters, students, and friends. The American Caribbean Maritime Foundation (ACMF) is driven by a mission to create opportunities through education and mentorship. Your generous support enables us to provide scholarships and essential resources, lighting the way for the next generation of maritime professionals. Together, we're steering toward a more sustainable and inclusive future for our industry.

Tonight, we're thrilled to recognize individuals whose unwavering commitment to excellence and innovation propels our industry forward. Their remarkable achievements and leadership inspire and pave the way for the next generation of maritime professionals.

Thank you for your continued support and for being a part of this special celebration. Here's to navigating new horizons together!



Russell Benford

Vice President,
Government Relations,
Americas
Royal Caribbean Group



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Academic Partner

Caribbean Maritime University



**Professor
Andrew Spencer**

President
Caribbean Maritime
University



As the President of the Caribbean Maritime University, it is with great pride and gratitude that I extend our heartfelt appreciation to the American Caribbean Maritime Foundation (ACMF) for their unwavering support and generosity. The ACMF has been instrumental in transforming the lives of countless students through its scholarship program, empowering them to pursue their dreams and contribute meaningfully to the maritime industry.

Our partnership with the ACMF not only epitomizes a shared vision for maritime education and development but also strengthens our collective commitment to fostering innovation, sustainability, and excellence within the Caribbean maritime sector.

We are honored to celebrate the achievements of this remarkable organization at the 2024 Anchor Awards Gala and look forward to continuing our collaboration in shaping a brighter future for our students and the maritime community.

Thank you for your invaluable contributions.

Academic Partner

University of Trinidad and Tobago

On behalf of The University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT), I extend my profound gratitude to the American Caribbean Maritime Foundation (ACMF) for its unwavering commitment to supporting students in their pursuit of maritime careers. Your dedication to fostering talent and encouraging young minds to explore the vast opportunities within the maritime sector is truly invaluable.

At UTT, home of the Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre-Caribbean, we are committed to advancing a sustainable maritime industry. Our curriculum for both the seafaring and shore-based programmes reflects this commitment. Internationally esteemed faculty promote understanding of contemporary maritime issues and facilitate collaboration to develop industry-led solutions.

Global trade dynamics, environmental sustainability, and technological advancements are reshaping the landscape of shipping and maritime industries, placing maritime professionals at the forefront of this transition. To the scholarship recipients, I encourage you to be mindful of your responsibility to the oceans and climate change mitigation. Your contributions will impact the future of maritime affairs.



Need His Name

Need His Title



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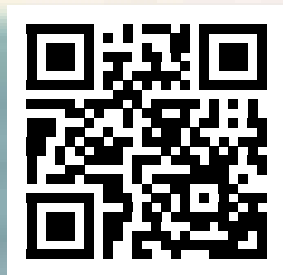


American Caribbean Maritime Foundation

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ACMF Free Jobs Board: ACMF-CAREX.org



Academic Partner

LJM Maritime Academy



**Dr. Brendamae
Cleare**

President
LJM Maritime Academy



Warm greetings from the President of LJM Maritime Academy!

The LJM Maritime Academy is proud to be a part this year's Anchor Awards Gala, honoring Laura Hodges Bethge (President of Celebrity Cruises) and Carlos Urriola (Chairman of the Board, SSA Marine MIT) which underscores the vital role of maritime development in the Caribbean.

The LJM Maritime Academy and Caribbean continues to reap the transformative benefits of The American Caribbean Foundation through scholarships and grants. Our student recipients of the ACMF scholarship grants continue to make waves in the maritime sector with the wind in their sails.

As we chart our course into the future, our commitment to world-class maritime education remains steadfast. Your support is invaluable.

Fair winds and following seas.

Academic Partner

Matpal Marine Institute

The American Caribbean Maritime Foundation's (ACMF) endorsement of MATPAL Marine Institute Inc.'s programs and its support for students, exemplify a powerful partnership.

This collaboration not only uplifts individual Cadets but also propels educational and professional advancement in the maritime and oil and gas sectors.

Gratefully recognizing ACMF's commitment and the steadfast backing from Corporate Sponsors, aspiring maritime professionals in Guyana have a beacon of hope and opportunity.

As we celebrate "Talent in Your Backyard: Caribbean Excellence," we extend our heartfelt gratitude to The American Caribbean Maritime Foundation. Their dedication is vital in continuing to develop competent Deck and Engineering Ship Officers, who are crucial for the maritime and oil and gas industry's growth and sustainability over past years and continues to redound in 2024.



Coleen Abrams,
BSc, MBA, SHRM

Chief Executive Officer
MATPAL Marine
Institute Inc.



Academic Partner

Atlantic Alliance and Off-Shore Training Institute



Miranda Thakur-Deen
Executive Chairman
Atlantic Alliance Maritime &
Offshore Training Institute
Guyana, Inc.



The Caribbean has always been a region full of incredible potential, especially in the maritime and offshore sectors. AA Maritime & Offshore Training Institute (AAMOTI) is dedicated to unlocking this potential through strategic partnerships. Collaborating with American Caribbean Maritime Foundation (ACMF), AAMOTI enhances maritime education, creating opportunities for Caribbean students. This partnership has expanded scholarship access and introduced new training pathways.

AAMOTI continues to collaborate with Guyana's First Lady, Mrs. Arya Ali, to educate 200 indigenous women, demonstrating its commitment to inclusivity. Additionally, the institute is currently training 150 cadets through the Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL) initiative, further strengthening capacity building in Guyana and the region. These efforts underscore AAMOTI's mission to empower the next generation of maritime professionals, ensuring that Caribbean talent thrives globally.

With much appreciation and heartfelt gratitude, AAMOTI thanks ACMF for its transformative role as a catalyst for Maritime and Offshore sector development.

Message from the President of the Caribbean Shipping Association

The Caribbean holds immense potential. To fully realize this potential, we must invest in our human capital. The American Caribbean Maritime Foundation (ACMF) is at the forefront of this endeavor, empowering young people through maritime education. By providing opportunities for disadvantaged youth to enter this vibrant industry, we are not only building careers but also fostering a skilled workforce that can drive our region's economic growth.

As we honor Carlos Urriola, who served remarkably as CSA president from 2009-2012, and Laura Hodges Bethge, we celebrate individuals who embody the spirit of maritime excellence. Their achievements serve as an inspiration to us all.

The ACMF's partnership with respected institutions such as the Caribbean Maritime University, the University of Trinidad and Tobago, the LJM Maritime Academy, the MatPal Marine Institute, and Atlantic Alliance Off-Shore Marine Institute is central to this mission. Together, we are creating pathways to success for countless young lives.

The Caribbean Shipping Association is proud to partner with the ACMF to create a thriving Caribbean region where our devotion to empowering the youth through maritime education contributes to sustainable development and economic prosperity.



Marc Sampson
President
Caribbean Shipping
Association





Proud to Serve Our Community

As a proud sponsor of the seventh annual Anchor Awards Gala, we are honored to support and celebrate the exceptional talent of our community.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the honorees and to the scholarship and grant recipients who are embarking on their maritime journeys with the support of the American Caribbean Maritime Foundation. Your achievements highlight the transformative power of education.

At Nassau Cruise Port, we believe that educating and empowering our youth is one of the keys to uplifting our community. We are delighted to partner with the ACMF as they continue to chart a course for the future, transforming lives and fostering the growth of the Caribbean maritime industry, one student at a time.





Arawak Port Development Ltd., owner and operator of Nassau Container Port since 2012, is proud to serve as a grand sponsor of the 7th Annual Anchor Awards Gala.

With over 1,300 Bahamians directly involved with Nassau Container Port every day, our success relies on having highly qualified and passionate maritime professionals on board. The American Caribbean Maritime Foundation plays a crucial role in this by training Caribbean students to the highest standards, ensuring that companies like ours—key partners in the national and regional supply chain—can operate with efficiency, excellence, and pride.

While our corporate social responsibility investments, including clean energy programs, port modernization, and waste management initiatives, are significant, none are as vital to our progress as our investments in people.

As we come together to celebrate the exceptional achievements of the ACMF, its award recipients, and beneficiaries, we take immense pride in knowing that the future of our industry is in very capable hands.

CONGRATULATIONS!

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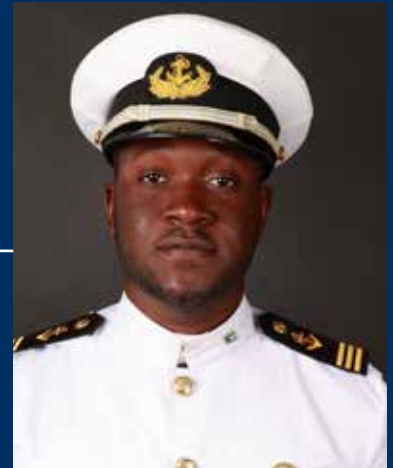
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2nd Officer
Royal Caribbean International
Anthem of the Seas



Trevon Ferguson
2nd Officer
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Ovation of the Seas



Shante Pearson
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X-Press Feeders

Congratulates

Carlos Urriola

Chairman of the Board, SSA Marine MIT

_____ on receiving the _____
ACMF Anchor Award



Menu

Cocktails & Amuse Bouche on the Veranda

Music by Baby B Strings

Dinner

Mesclun Greens

Grilled Filet Mignon
and Fresh Crab Cakes

Grilled Pencil Asparagus
and Garlic Smashed Potatoes

Fresh Rolls and Sweet Butter

Dessert

Chocolate Decadence

Coffee and Tea

Wines

Domaine Carneros Brut vintage

St Francis Cabernet Sauvignon

St. Francis Chardonnay

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Salutes

OUR PAST PRESIDENT

Carlos Urriola



ON BEING HONORED BY THE



American Caribbean
Maritime Foundation

FOR SERVICE
TO THE MARITIME INDUSTRY



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ROLAND AND LORETTA MALINS-SMITH

CONGRATULATE

THE ESTEEMED 2024 ANCHOR AWARDS HONOREES

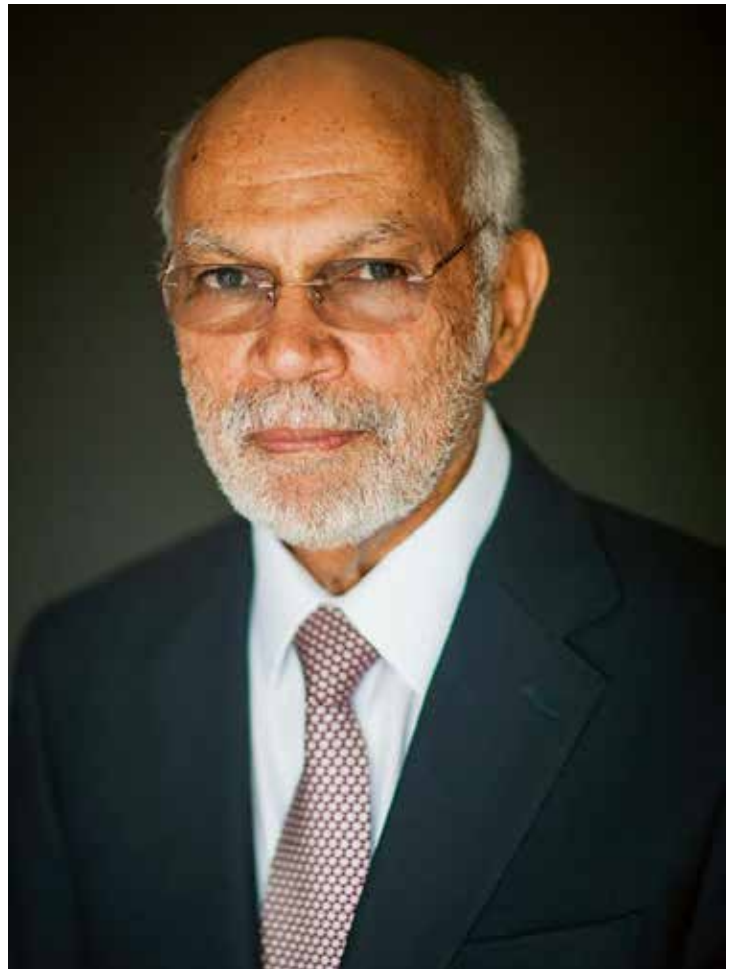
LAURA HODGES BETHGE
PRESIDENT, CELEBRITY CRUISES

CARLOS URRIOLA
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, SSA MARINE MIT

Reflections on 54 years in the Industry

and a note to the next generation

By Roland Malins-Smith LLD Hon.



The English philosopher John Stewart Mill is said to have described the West Indies as “the place where England finds it convenient to carry on the production of sugar, coffee, and a few other tropical commodities”. Our history as plantation economies records a high dependence on external trade, as all production inputs including labor were imported by ship, and all of the product was exported by ship.

The limited size of our states further reinforces this dependence on external trade and shipping. As Caribbean economist William Demas noted, for any degree of development attained, a small country is likely to possess a more specialized structure of production and a correspondingly higher dependence on external trade than a large continental size economy.

Our historical experience and geography both dictate a strong dependence on maritime activity. The question we must ask ourselves as Caribbean natives is whether we are sufficiently engaged in this maritime

activity, whether a significant proportion of our young people find work at sea, how much do we participate in the various related fields of shipbuilding, drydocking, ship-repair, logistics, crewing, agency representation, IT, cyber security, port management, port state control, international regulation, maritime legal services, ship brokerage, ship operation, and ultimately ship ownership. Our people migrate in droves in part because of high unemployment rates and a relative lack of local opportunity. This is a reminder that there is a world of shipping out there which is crying out for talent. BIMCO, the International Chamber of Shipping and maritime consultants Drewry have all warned of a severe shortage of seafarers and officers in the coming years.

Tradition

Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Venezuela and Colombia have a tradition of naval training.

Jamaica, Trinidad, Guyana and The Bahamas have all emphasized and provided maritime education opportunities for their young people in recent years and are making progress in securing employment for their graduates on tankers, cruise ships and container ships. The governments of the Eastern Caribbean islands need to be made aware of these opportunities, encourage their high school students to take an interest in the maritime sphere, and support such tuition where it is available.

I would expect that more than 90% of the goods we consume, or export are carried by sea. Since maritime is obviously so critical to our economic well-being, the other question we should ask ourselves is whether the services available to us are adequate and cost-effective, and what should be our long-term strategy for participation.

carriers involved in the trade, the right of independent action of each carrier, the bargaining strength of cargo interests and the ubiquity of shipper contracts all make for a very competitive external trade, and competition keeps profit margins to a minimum. In my own experience, consistent profitability is a challenge for most if not all of these operators.

Recently we have heard of initiatives, both private and government, to promote a cargo/passenger ferry service in the eastern Caribbean and Guianas. This appears to be an important pursuit for a few reasons.

The international container ship operators and even the specialized feeder operators typically take inter-port business if it is consistent with their overall scheduling objectives, which objectives prioritize transit time to key southbound ports, frequency, and day of arrival. Empty containers need to be evacuated and



Cargo liner services

My days of working with Caricom left me with the impression that the cargo liner services plying the Caribbean were expensive and fell short of our needs. My subsequent experience operating ships in the trade from Florida to the Caribbean has changed my views 180 degrees. One can argue that there are unmet inter-island shipping needs in the Eastern Caribbean, but there is little doubt that the network of extra-regional services provided to Caribbean ports from Europe, North America and the Far East is frequent, comprehensive and competitive. Weekly container connections exist on every sector. Rate agreements among carriers do exist, but their impact is only felt during times of vessel shortage, a global risk. The number of

returned to the home port, and the cost of doing so is happily offset if export business is available. Taking the container to a third and fourth port however involves an analysis of marginal cost and revenue and is often not worth the effort if overall service objectives could be compromised. Simply put, inter-port service on its own is not a priority.

Yet there is a real need to support regional trade, particularly in foodstuffs, perishables and light consumer goods. This has always been a Caricom concern, and is attracting attention again at a time when inter-island air travel services are less frequent and rather more expensive. A modern ro-ro ferry service can move passengers, containers and cars among the ports to meet this perceived need. It could also help train our marine cadets.

There are however some ideas which should govern an approach to such services, and these suggestions are not altogether mine, no pride of ownership here.

Political

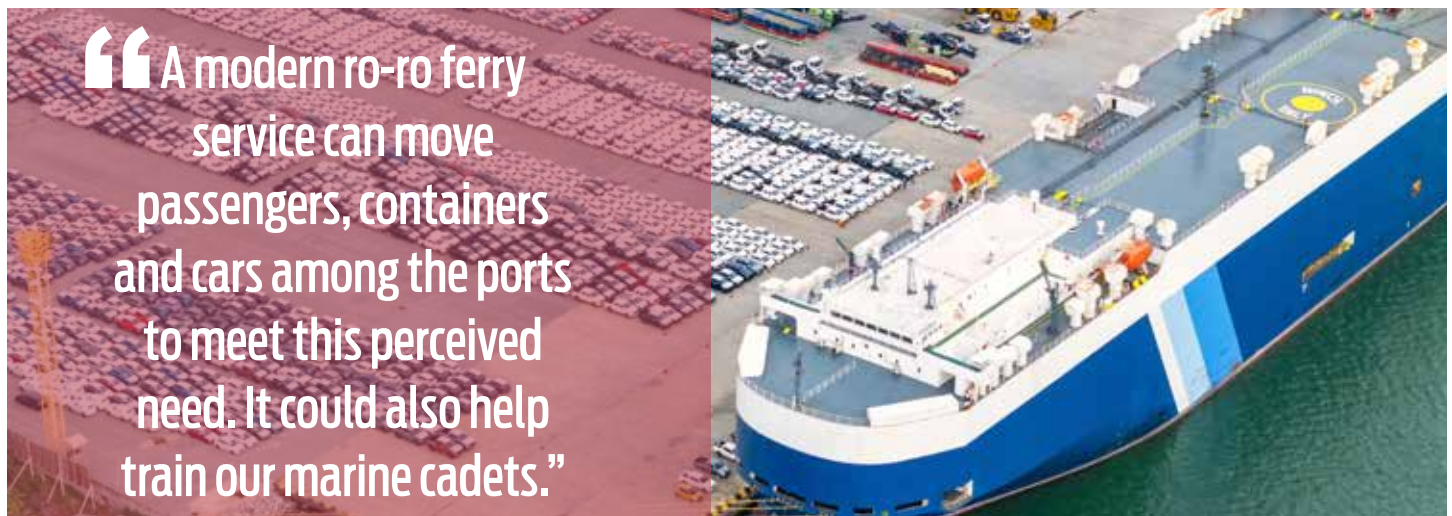
Government ownership and operation of shipping services is not recommended. We have gone this way before with West Indies Shipping Corporation (Wisco), with political decisions at regional and board level which make little commercial sense, and with unpaid subsidies. Shipping services must be run on a commercial basis, owned and operated by the private sector, geared to profit. Caribbean governments' role would be to provide where needed suitable port infrastructure, and to publish regulations to facilitate the movement of cars, trucks and wheeled containers on the roads of each state to allow for movement of traffic after a reasonable

en our Port State Control bodies to police the ships which enter our waters to help hold polluters accountable. We need to remove wrecks which threaten navigation, many of which still contain fuel. In the absence of these mundane and unglamorous steps by our governments we remain exposed to a major marine disaster and pollution incident which can do painful damage to our tourism sector. We had one recently off Tobago.

And so, there is a need for young people, enthusiastic and motivated people, to help us as maritime lawyers, as surveyors, as marine engineers, as salvors, as pilots, as captains, as entrepreneurs. We may even have innovators among us, as the industry searches for the next clean fuel.

Humble beginnings

Many of the captains of our global shipping industry



“A modern ro-ro ferry service can move passengers, containers and cars among the ports to meet this perceived need. It could also help train our marine cadets.”

time for formalities and inspection upon discharge. Importantly, Caricom members should adopt a common corporate tax holiday policy on shipping investment by nationals of member countries to promote shipping investment as part of a long-term strategy to develop the shipping sector.

We also need to preserve and protect our environment. Our natural Caribbean beauty is worthy of preservation even without mentioning its tremendous commercial value. The world regards Caribbean tourism as our comparative advantage. Our region gave birth to cruise shipping and still control 38% of global activity. We need to be more pro-active in implementing the MARPOL Convention to discourage pollution of our waters and to legally hold and fine those responsible for incidents of pollution. We need to continue to strength-

had humble beginnings. Malcom McLean, the man credited with starting the container revolution, was a trucker who never went to college. Gianluigi Apon-te, who founded MSC, was a ferry boat captain who bought a small breakbulk vessel with US\$5,000 of his own money, now controls 645 ships, some of the largest in the world. I always remember the small picture of a 500-ton coaster vessel on the office wall of Ted Arison, the founder of Carnival Cruise. The caption below it read “Arison Bahamas Line”. I had the privilege of working for him. A positive, hugely successful and charming man, he was an inspiration to me. That picture was his reminder of his humble beginning in the shipping business. A great journey begins with one step, and the courage to take it, always believing in your dream. ■

Congrats

LAURA HODGES BETHGE

ON BEHALF OF CORNSQUEALIUS AND THE REST OF US AT AGS



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CONGRATULATIONS TO 2 RUDDERS OF THE INDUSTRY



Carlos Urriola

President
Manzanillo International Terminal



Laura Hodges Bethge

President
Celebrity Cruises

Congratulations to Carlos Urriola and Laura Hodges Bethge for being honored at the **2024 American Caribbean Maritime Foundation Anchor Awards**. Their leadership and contributions to the maritime industry are recognized both regionally and globally.



SSA MarineMIT



Talent in Your Backyard



Our cruise and cargo partners have helped us fund training for 279 aspiring maritime professionals so they can work in the shipping industry. Here are the 2024 awardees—all hundred and five of them:

Lydea Alert

Matpal Marine Institute (Guyana)

Tyreese Alexander

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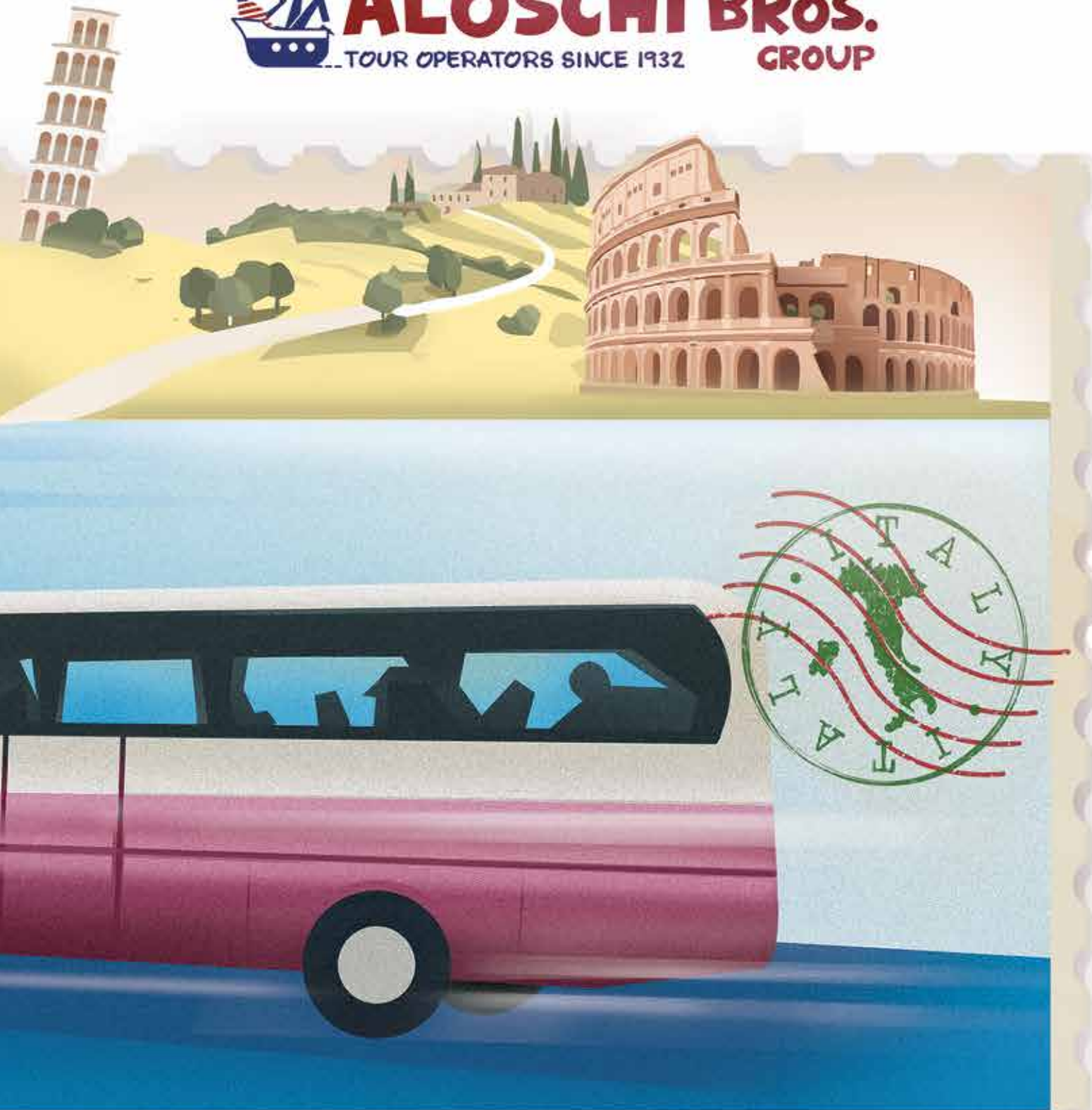
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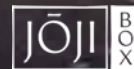
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