

NEWSLETTER 03 FALL | 2020



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Bahamian Manufacturers Here For You During Tough Times

BLIDC SHOOTS SECOND TV COMMERCIAL

In June 2020, the BLIDC released its second video commercial. This time, highlighting the fantastic contribution of our members in the wake of a global pandemic. The 30 second video features five members: Aquapure, Purity Bakery, Blanco Chemicals, Signarama and Cartwright's Bedding, all of which have gone above and beyond to best serve our community during this time. We were able to call attention to both the range and variety of manufacturing companies in The Bahamas. Thousands of hardworking Bahamians make up the local manufacturing industry. Employee testimonies reveal their level of dedication to their craft and the Bahamian people. Since release, the video has been viewed over 30,000 times. The ad ran on EyeWitness nightly news between June 18th and August 19th.

BOARD MAINTAINS CONSISTENT DIALOGUE WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES DURING COVID 19

2020 is a year many of us do not wish to see repeated in our lifetimes. When worldwide media outlets began covering news of a highly contagious respiratory infection in January, it is unlikely that anyone thought what has unfolded, would have. The business community in The Bahamas, much like the Government, has found itself in uncharted waters. Since the first restrictions were announced, the executive leadership of the BLIDC has been in regular contact with policy makers in order to, seek clarity on orders, and to request exemptions where appropriate. Some of our successes include:

- Attaining approval for curbside servicing for our alcohol producing members during first lockdown period
- Receiving authorization for special production hours for our members who service grocery stores during the August lockdown period

The BLIDC participated in the Ministry of Finance's Budget consultation in advance of the Budget communication in May.

The Board has also made presentation to the Economic Recovery Committee (ERC) subcommittee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Manufacturing. A list of 12 requests to further the advancement of the sector were formally submitted to the subcommittee. We are hopeful that these requests will be endorsed in the ERC Final Report and ultimately some, if not all, of the recommendations will be adopted by the Government.

BLIDC OBJECTION TO DISCRIMINATORY 'FRONT OF PACKAGE LABELLING' CARIBBEAN STANDARD

CROSQ, the Caribbean's standard setting body, is proposing food and beverage packaging labelling which is discriminatory in nature, and would be nearly impossible to administer in a predominantly importing country like The Bahamas. The Bahamas Bureau of Standards and Quality (BBSQ) is looking to adopt this standard as a voluntary standard, meaning companies would not be obligated to adhere to it's strict requirements. There remains the possibility of course that the voluntary standard can ultimately be recommended for mandatory enforcement. The BLIDC is in active discussions with the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce and Employers' Confederation (BCCEC) and the CARICOM Private Sector Organization (CPSO) to advance objection to this proposal. The CPSO is requesting a one year stay on the adoption of the proposal in order to conduct an economic impact study on the enforcement of the standard. They aim to recommend alternative packaging laws which help Governments reach their goal of reducing non-communicable diseases (NCDs) while ensuring manufacturing businesses are not discriminated against.

MEET... NASSAU PLASTICS



Nassau Plastics has been custom manufacturing plastic products in the Bahamas since 1957. Graham Lawrence took over the business in 1983 and his wife Christine joined him shortly after. At first, the business was focused on custom plastics manufacturing and many of their locally made products and signage can still be found all over the Bahamas. Eventually, the business expanded with the introduction of an awards and engraving department (The Trophy Case) and a signage department (The Sign Post). These additions significantly expanded their offering of custom manufactured products. A focus on quality, customer service and a "we can do it" attitude has produced countless satisfied customers and a reputation for being the best at what they do.

With the rise of the recent corona virus pandemic, the plastics division has been hard at work producing clear acrylic barriers to help slow the spread of the virus in businesses and offices. One of the largest jobs has been the recently completed construction and installation of barriers for the Lynden Pindling International Airport. As with everything else they do, quality of construction and an attention to detail sets their barriers apart from the competition's.

The Nassau Plastics family of companies is truly a family affair - both of Graham and Christine's sons (Matthew and Chris) as well as their daughter (Stephanie) and her husband work in the business. Even after almost 40 years, they are confident that the business they have built will continue to grow and produce top quality products - all manufactured right here in the Bahamas.

Each edition we will feature a different businessperson. Want to share your story? Let us know.

UPDATE ON PATRICK KNOWLES, RECIPIENT OF ONLY BLIDC HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP

In May 2019 the Board of the BLIDC became aware of a promising young man in Grand Bahama in need of a high school scholarship. Impressed by his poise and strong character, the Board approved a one-off high school scholarship for Patrick. In spite of first Hurricane Dorian, and later COVID19, Patrick has excelled this year and has maintained a 3.28 GPA. We wish Patrick all the academic success for the 2021/22 academic school year!



BLIDC BUYS LOCAL, WHILE SUPPORTING THE BAHAMAS FEEDING NETWORK

Karla Wells-Lisgaris, VP BLIDC, presenting Philip Smith, Executive Director of the Bahamas Feeding Network (BFN) with grits and pigeon peas purchased locally from Cat Island. BFN is one of the four charities administering the Government's COVID National Feeding Program.

BLIDC MEMBERS RESPOND TO COVID 19

The Bahamas Light Industries Development Council (BLIDC) could not initially predict what impact COVID-19 would have on many of its members. But, companies like Purity Bakery, Blanco Chemicals, Bahama Handprints, Chelseas Choice, Digipint, to name a few, quickly become an essential lifeline to communities.

The role of the medical, sanitation, law enforcement and other vital and highly visible sectors of the community was obvious, but there are many Bahamian businesses, small and large, who play an important role in fighting this virus. Manufacturers, bottlers and printers work extremely hard to ensure that Bahamians have everything they need. From producing bread, water, bleach and disinfectants, to making masks, fulfilling orders, ensuring that supermarket shelves stay stocked, and creating educational materials to help keep Bahamians informed and healthy - our members and their teams have an important, though many times unseen, role to play.

When most businesses shuttered close, many of BLIDC's members did not. Essential industry team members continued to work to ensure that there was no shortage of supplies, and relied on donning masks, hand sanitizer, disinfectants, and temperature checks to minimize the risks of working throughout a pandemic.

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