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GOVERNMENT & PRIVATE SECTOR STEP UP TO SUPPORT ANTI- CORRUPTION CONFERENCE

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The fourth conference in the biennial series, the largest and the best supported-ever, kicks off next Wednesday (19 March) with a reception and keynote address that are open to the Cayman public. The entire conference is made possible by the support of government and commerce in the Cayman Islands.

The three latest top-tier sponsors are the National Building Society of Cayman (NBSC), RBC Royal Bank (RBC), EY (Ernst & Young). Other top-tier sponsors announced earlier include CONCACAF (the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football) and the Cayman Islands Government (specifically the Portfolio of the Civil Service and the Ministry of Education).

The aim of the conference is to raise awareness of the potential for corruption, the decline in ethical standards across various sectors of society, and the damaging effect of corruption on economies and social harmony.

The conference will focus on strategies of various regional governments and organisations, public and private, to raise sensitivity to these threats and how to curb and eliminate them.

Conference chair Livingston Smith is encouraged by the sponsors' support and the difference it could make to the Cayman Islands: "We have tackled an important subject for the Cayman Islands and the region. To ensure a holistic approach, we have assembled the most eminent thinkers – and doers – in this field of knowledge locally and regionally -- from many perspectives."

This non-profit venture by UCCI was financially challenging to execute, Smith acknowledged, especially in these difficult economic times. But it is such an important contribution to Cayman and the region. "Undoubtedly, this conference is due to the financial support of many people, particularly those who have come aboard at the highest sponsorship levels," he said. "The Cayman Islands Government has been a stalwart supporter. Moreover, the level at which our financial sector has seen fit to support us is extraordinary."

Financial services providers RBC Royal Bank, National Building Society of Cayman and EY, as top-tier sponsors, are joined by these gold sponsors: the Compliance Association of the Cayman Islands; Cayman National Bank, Radio Cayman, DART Enterprises, Carleton University, GIS and the Ministry of Tourism.

Commenting on the importance of this conference and why they contributed, Mr. Michael Munnings, Area Vice President and Country Manager for RBC Royal Bank said, "RBC is pleased to support this initiative that will facilitate national and regional discourse on a topic that is essential to the good governance, growth and development of not only the Cayman Islands but the entire Caribbean region. We congratulate the University College of the Cayman Islands for creating this forum where the perspectives of a range of impressive international thought leaders will be shared."

The NBSC returns a third time to sponsor the Wednesday, March 19 reception which is open to the public.

Mrs. Wanica Purkiss, General Manager of the NBSC, stated, "The conference is a good platform to dialogue and exchange ideas on ways in which we can strengthen our fight against corruption as a country and a region, and it fits naturally into the values of "mutuality," which support the concept of the Jamaica National Building Society and the principles of the NBSC."

She added, "We see this as an opportunity to promote measures that guard the integrity of our financial sectors in The Cayman Islands and across the Caribbean in order to encourage economic growth through the maintenance and oversight of robust systems of accountability, transparency and the promotion of ethical values and morals to maintain good citizenship and civic responsibility."

EY's Cayman Managing Partner, Mr. Dan Scott, will speak on the critical role the private sector must play in combating corruption. "At EY, we are committed to building a better working world. This means helping the private sector collaborate with government to increase trust and confidence in business," Mr. Scott said. "This is especially important in Cayman, because the world looks to us to continually strengthen our position as a sound, stable and transparent market for financial services and investments."

For the Cayman Islands Government, sponsorship was particularly challenging, given its role in ensuring that the people's funds are well spent. As part of the sponsorship, the Portfolio of the Civil Service is enabling some civil servants who may not otherwise have had an opportunity to attend the conference to do so.

Deputy Governor Hon. Franz Manderson said, "Good Governance, indeed the very foundation of democracy, rests on the trust reposed by the people in their government. As servants of the public we must exercise continued vigilance to ensure that their faith and trust is well founded. By raising awareness within our civil service of the various forms of corruption I hope we can strengthen that vigilance which every good democracy requires to maintain its integrity."

The Ministry of Education's sponsorship will go towards enabling attendance on a complimentary basis, that is, at no charge, of all local school children, teachers, and seniors over the age of 65.

Minister Tara Rivers, who is speaking at the conference on the role of education in imparting ethics and values to our young people, spoke on the importance of the conference: “It is important for our professional and educational community to come together at conferences such as this to discuss topical issues such as anti-corruption, and teaching values and morals. My Ministry fully supports this conference; I thank UCCI for hosting it and for providing a platform to discuss these important issues.”

The UCCI conference opens on 19 March with keynote speaker Dr. Huguette Labelle, chair of the board of Transparency International, an organisation that rates governments and their business sectors on perceptions of ethics and trust.

Dr. Labelle will be joined for the three-day conference by regional and local heads of states (prime ministers and premiers), ministers of government, directors of anti-corruption agencies, and academicians and representatives of various organisations seeking to raise awareness about the need for transparency. They will be sharing ideas on how corruption can be reduced and eliminated from all sectors of communities across the region.

UCCI President Roy Bodden said, “Each year since its inception, the UCCI Conference has grown significantly. This year’s conference sees the University College once more collaborating with external partners to produce a world-class informative event.”

Mr. Bodden expressed his support saying, “As President of the University College of the Cayman Islands, I am proud to wholeheartedly support these efforts to inform, edify and enlighten the Caymanian and the wider Caribbean community on these challenges. In hosting such events, the University College is fulfilling one of its most important mandates – that of being a leader in facilitating dialogue and discussion of important societal issues. My commendations to all the contributors of this momentous event.”

Visit www.UCCIconference.ky for further information.



Deputy Governor Hon. Franz Manderson



RBC Area Vice President and Country Manager Michael Munnings



EY's Managing Partner Dan Scott (right) and Conference Co-Chair Ms Pat Ebanks



The NBSC team led by General Manager Wanica Purkiss (third from left) presents the sponsorship cheque to Conference Chair, Dr. Livingston Smith (extreme right)



Councillor Winston Connolly of the Ministry of Education is flanked by UCCI's Stephanie Scott (left) and Allison Anglin

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For further information, please contact Kristel Sanchez, Director of Marketing, Public Relations and Alumni by email, ksanchez@ucci.edu.ky or at 623-0561.