# 'Pioneering' company reinvests 3% of revenue in developing workers

**By CHESTER ROBARDS Business Reporter** 

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An engineering firm, CARIBBEAN Civil Group (CCG), has been chosen as the Bahamian winner of Pioneers of Prosperity's (PoP) entrepreneurial award, receiving a \$40,000 grant and the chance to compete with other Caribbean companies for up to \$60,000 more, it was revealed yesterday.

Coordinator for the programme, Abby Noble, said CCG was chosen from among 110 other Bahamian businesses, including several other engineering firms, in a highly competitive contest. She added that CCG was chosen primarily because of its reinvesting in its employees through training.

"We look for things like role model potential, how they can inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs, how they are investing in the workers and creating a higher level of human capital, how they're investing in the community through mentoring other young business leaders or doing something that's good for the environment," she said.

Principal of CCG, Ray McKenzie, said the competition involved a rigorous process, but he expressed his elation at having been chosen as this year's country winner for the Bahamas.

"We are quite honored and humbled quite frankly. It was an exhausting process, so we're quite pleased to be representing the Bahamas going forward," he said.

#### Ceremony

Mr McKenzie will join nine other country winners from throughout the Caribbean in Jamaica on September 11 for the regional award ceremony.

CCG is a transportation/traffic and civil engineering consulting firm which has done work with Baha Mar, Kerzner International and the Ministry of Public Works, and has completed projects in the Turks and Caicos and Guyana.

Our core expertise is public works, major infrastructural works and major development on the private side in terms of engineering and construction aspects of those developments," said Mr McKenzie.

He said his company's most important resource is human capital, in which 3 per cent of total revenue is reinvested through constant

'We firmly recognise that our number one resource is our people, and we are in a knowledge based profession, so we invest heavily in our people," Mr McKenzie said.

"We do the lion's share of training offshore, but we would like to see that change such that there is credible training engineers can get onshore. We invest heavily in that."

CCG also visits 10 schools per year to speak to students about the engineering field and steer those adept at maths and science towards civil engineering.

"We won't be here forever," said Mr McKenzie.

His company, with five employees, competes in a global market, but especially against foreign firms who enter the Bahamas on the heel of big developers.

"We would like to see local firms get a greater percentage of the local project," he said. "As developers come in, they tend to bring their team who they've had relationships with, firms from previous projects, and that's always a challenge."

Mr McKenzie said finding the capital to begin his business was difficult, but after having his plan scrutinised by a scholarly body at the College of the Bahamas, he was able to secure a loan with a Bahamian bank.

"Business was challenged from the beginning," he

Now, Mr McKenzie said he would like to see the regulators of the engineering sector step up to the plate and help it grow.

He said opportunities arising from the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union will help the sector to get on its feet and think globally.

"We (CCG) stay on the cutting edge because we compete globally," said Mr McKenzie.

The PoP is a global awards program that "seeks to inspire a new generation of entrepreneurs in emerging economies", and with sponsorship from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and John Templeton Foundation, aims to uplift and promote small and medium-sized business

in this region. According to a PoP release: "Unlike other award programs PoP does not end with the distribution of the award. Rather, the award is just the beginning.

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The Authority is a statutory Government-owned corporation, supervised by a Board whose Members are appointed by the Government, and which reports to the responsible Minister.

Day-to-day management of the Authority rests with its Director, who is its chief executive. He or she oversees all of the Authority's dealings with shipowners, with the IMO, and with classification societies, independent inspectors and the legal and financial communities. The Authority's main office is presently in London, where the Director has been based, but it also has offices in Nassau and New York, with other locations forthcoming.

Candidates must be able to demonstrate a successful track record in a senior position working in or with the shipping industry. They should have leadership qualities, experience in directing and developing personnel, and success in team-building. They should also have experience in financial management. They should be holders of a university degree and/or a class 1 ship's officer certificate. An appropriate salary will be offered to the preferred candidate.

Applicants are invited to write, enclosing a copy of their C/V, and with the details of their current salary to: Mr. Peter John Goulandris, Deputy Chairman, The Bahamas Maritime Authority, Consulate General of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas, 231 East 46th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017, USA.

Closing date for receipt of applications is August 31st, 2009. All applications will be acknowledged.