



**Address by
The Honourable T. Desmond Bannister, M.P.
Minister of Education**

On the Occasion

of the

**Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute
Appreciation Dinner**

**Thursday, 21st January, 2010
British Colonial Hilton**

**West Bay Street
6:00 pm**

SALUTATIONS:

Mrs. Elma Garraway, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education;

Dr. Iva Dahl; Manager/Consultant, Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute;

Dr. Charles Carroll - Senior V.P., Planning, Development and Institutional Effectiveness

Dr. Theodore Sofianos - Director of International Operations, Center for Business & Industry and Economic Development

Distinguished guests and partners of BTVI

Good evening.

It is my distinct pleasure to be here this evening to share in this dinner with the executives and staff of the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute and their partners and supporters.

This occasion presents all of the stakeholders with an opportunity to celebrate and assess the success of the BTVI's component of the Bahamas Support Programme for Transforming Education and Training.

On behalf of the Ministry of Education, I would like to express sincere gratitude to Daytona State College for its role in advancing this project which has tremendous benefits for the citizens of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

You have (and over the course of the next three years) greatly assisted us in answering the call of the business industry for an increased and technically-trained workforce who are equipped to fulfill their needs. You are also enabling us to empower citizens

to become entrepreneurs; thus being the masters of their own destiny through business ownership.

I understand that the past two years of this project has been dedicated to the restructuring of BTVI to upgrade its programme offerings as well as to align its curricula with that of our high schoolers to ensure a seamless transition for the high schooler who want to take their high school technical and vocational training to the next level.

I visited BTVI, just last week to see first-hand the campus and speak with students and staff about the BTVI experience. I am truly impressed by what I saw and feel certain that BTVI is moving in the right direction.

The right direction for BTVI is the achievement of accreditation status so that students can feel confident that the training they receive at BTVI meets

international standards and which can take them anywhere in the world.

I also wish to express our gratitude to the Industry Partners who have offered motivational talks and advice to the students. This level of support is very important because students will see the worth in pursuing and being committed to their studies knowing that opportunities exist for them to secure employment or create it for others.

I daresay that there is always room for one more mechanic, computer technician or masseur in this country. The fact is that we have not nearly saturated these areas and therefore we must train more and more persons in these fields.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are just about at the halfway mark of this programme and ought to feel pride in what has been accomplished and I wish to commend all persons being recognized for their

contributions to this effort during the past three years. I am very optimistic that we achieve the remainder of the goals and in the process make BTVI into a world-class institution and simultaneously, attain our national objective of empowering our citizens to meet the demands of labour and contribute to the development of The Bahamas.

Once again, thank you and we at the Ministry of Education forward to this continued partnership for all concerned.

