

Biography***MARIO E. EBANKS******Inspiration for public service, and family background***

This results-oriented and experienced professional, team-builder, skilled problem-solver and strategic thinker has decided to suspend, and possibly sacrifice, his current career progression as well as leave the solace of a comfortable and peaceful home in the suburbs of West Bay to seek an opportunity for public service as an elected official. His main motivation for this is not fame or fortune, but simply to serve and to provide a “silver lining around some of the dark clouds which I see on the horizon”. His family has experienced first-hand the inconvenience and sadness of having to leave their birthplace due to poor government, and as Cayman has been so good to him, Mario is committed to doing his part so that little Caymanian boys and girls do not have to run away from their homeland because of bad government or because of preventable social or economic decay.

He is known for his ability to make decisions and handle responsibilities while under pressure, as well as possessing excellent verbal and written communication skills. He has traveled extensively (in fact throughout all Continents except Australia and Africa, to date); as a result he has an excellent understanding of international affairs, is open-minded, and is well oriented with protocol and public relations. He is analytical and detail oriented, neat, patient, and has excellent morals, a sound religious background and a long-standing fear of God.

Born in the Isle of Pines, Cuba on 13th December, 1963, Mr. Ebanks returned to Grand Cayman with his family in October 1968. The fifth son from the fifty-year union of his parents, Philip W. & Vinnette Ebanks, he grew up in a large family of four brothers and two sisters. He is the grandson of the late Philip and Mrytle Ebanks, and the late Edward Ebanks and Lina Ebanks (nee Rivers) of Bosun Bay, West Bay, Grand Cayman.

He grew up in West Bay, and prior to moving to his parents home in Mount Pleasant in the early 70's the family resided in different areas of West Bay including Bosun Bay, Central West Bay, and on Pond Road.

Academic and career highlights

He attended the John A. Cumber Primary School in West Bay where he enjoyed a good basic education and the foundation for further study and development. In 1975 he graduated from Primary School; it was also in that year that he was successful as the “Champion Boy” in the Inter-House Sports Day – where his house “Smith” was the overall winner in Track & Field.

Mr. Ebanks has remained a devoted supporter of John A. Cumber Primary School, and for the past twenty-seven (27) years he has presented “The Mario E. Ebanks Award” to one of the outstanding graduates at the annual School Leaving Ceremony.

During his tenure at the Cayman Islands High School he received various awards for sports, academics, perfect attendance, good behaviour; he also served as a Prefect. He graduated with the Class of 1980, with an outstanding collection of GCE & CSE passes.. During the period January 1981-Summer 1982 he attended the Community College of the Cayman Islands, where he took courses from the London Chamber of Commerce & Industry to qualify for Part I of the Associate of the Institute of Bankers examinations.

His first job was with BankAmerica Trust & Banking Corporation, whom he joined upon completing his final External exams in June 1980. He performed various roles while at BankAmerica, ranging from Banking (Paying, Receiving, Book-keeping, Roll-overs etc.) to Internal Audit, and also to Trust & Corporate Services where he rose to the level of Assistant Trust Officer.

Recognizing his potential, BankAmerica awarded him its first Scholarship in 1983 in the amount of CI\$40,000.00. This generous grant allowed Mr. Ebanks to attend the University of Miami from August 1983 to May 1986. He graduated from the University of Miami's School of Business Administration with a double Major in International Finance & Marketing, and a double Minor in Economics and Public Affairs.

During his time at University he was blessed with a number of sound academic achievements and honours, as well as a vast network of friends from across the globe which gave him a good insight into various cultures and points of view. During his University days he was involved in various organizations including: the Caribbean Students Association, the Latin American Students Association, the Council of International Students and Organizations, International Business Association, and Shepherds International (helping those in poor communities). He was also instrumental in initiating discussion on the formation of a support group for Caymanian college students, which later evolved into the Overseas Students Association.

Upon graduation from University he returned to BankAmerica, where he spent one year in the Mutual Funds Department. He remains extremely grateful for the generosity and encouragement given to him by BankAmerica, especially at a time when full scholarships in the private sector were scarce.

In July 1987 he joined a small Dutch merchant Bank, Pierson Heldring & Pierson (now a larger firm - MeesPierson / Fortis), for a more challenging position as Operations Manager. During his time with Pierson Heldring & Pierson he was able to assist with the implementation of a number of systems, procedures, and controls, including reporting relationships, and the Trust accounting system. He was also privileged to initiate the upward mobility of conscientious Caymanians in the organization, two of whom were there for many years and filling key roles. He served in that capacity for one year before being enticed to join the Chamber of Commerce on what was thought would be a short secondment of two years.

In July 1988, just two weeks after his marriage to Lovina (nee Miller - a North Sider and former Miss Cayman), he became the youngest Manager of a Chamber of Commerce in the Caribbean and Latin America. He served with dignity, maturity, and was blessed with

unprecedented achievements in what was initially intended to be a 2-year secondment. At the end of the initial secondment period the Chamber of Commerce was able to negotiate a further year extension of service from Pierson Heldring and Pierson.

During his three years at the Chamber he was able to witness a number of milestones in the organization's growth, ranging from administrative, image, financial, membership growth, volunteerism, regional trade & business initiatives, and recognition by and partnership with the Government of the day. During his three-year period of service the following commercial and social initiatives were launched:

- ❑ The Training programme (short courses) was re-launched;
- ❑ The Candidates Forum;
- ❑ The Career Awareness Visits, Job Shadowing, and career mentoring;
- ❑ The Employee Assistance Programme;
- ❑ The Better Business Council;
- ❑ Business After Hours
- ❑ The Business Expo (Steering Committee);
- ❑ The re-launch of the Buy Caymanian Campaign and economic diversification and trade initiatives;
- ❑ The re-launch of the annual Tourism Awareness Weeks;
- ❑ Various surveys/questionnaires and forum on various important issues;
- ❑ The expansion of the local and international Chamber discount programme;
- ❑ The curtailing of "Select List" publication by Cruise Directors, and the development of a Coupon Booklet for waterfront businesses catering to cruise ship tourists, to counter the Select Lists;
- ❑ Acceptance of Chamber of Commerce representatives on several statutory Boards.
- ❑ Increased staff, facilities, and services to members.

At the conclusion of his self-imposed three year tour of duty with the Chamber (in July 1991) he was able to leave the Chamber as an organization which was again respected, and was also able to attract another qualified Caymanian as his successor.

For the period August 1991 to February 1994 Mr. Ebanks served in two management positions at Esso Standard Oil. He was based at the Jackson Point Terminal, and also undertook management development assignments in Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and Coral Gables in Florida. He rose to the position of Country Manager in August 1992, and resigned in February 1994.

During his tenure with Esso he was fortunate to lead the team which saw significant gains in fuel sales Market Share, which resulted in unprecedented financial profitability for the Cayman operation; he also presided over some notable improvements and new construction within the company's chain of retail outlets. In West Bay for example he played a pivotal role in the rebuilding of Hell Service Station, as well as the formulation of plans for the rebuilding of 4-Winds Esso. This was also a time when the company enjoyed tranquil relations with all independent retail Dealers, featuring many promotions and incentives, as well as excellent team work. On the operational side the company sought to intensify the local and regional cooperation in regard to Oil Spill Recovery equipment and planning/readiness, as well as various improvements to systems and equipment together with purchasing additional land at the Terminal. The company also

won a number of safety and operational awards during his tenure. Mr. Ebanks was very proud of the company's re-dedication to community affairs during his service, with many cultural, social, and sporting organizations enjoying financial sponsorships. He is also proud to have been instrumental in the development and launch of the company's first scholarship; in 1992 a full 4-year scholarship was awarded to Miss Tina Christian (now Harris) who attended Clemson University and was later successful in her CPA examinations.

In May 1994 he was appointed Senior Assistant Secretary to the Ministry of Community Development, Sports, Youth Affairs & Culture. Working with the then Minister and three Permanent Secretaries through to December 1997 he was instrumental in bringing about the following initiatives and programmes:

- ❖ The review and comprehensive updating of the Labour Law, 1987; which essentially provided more benefits for employees but was also clarified in respect to the rights and responsibilities of both employees and employers;
- ❖ The formation of a broad-based Manpower Development Advisory Committee and the production of a comprehensive report making recommendations for long-range training and career development for Caymanians. He served as Secretary/Chief administrative officer to the Committee;
- ❖ The development and successful operation of the Guaranteed Home Mortgage Scheme;
- ❖ The review of the AIDB Student Loan Scheme with the Caribbean Development Bank, and the launch of a new and improved Guaranteed Student Loan Scheme;
- ❖ The formation of a broad-based National Pensions Law Advisory Committee, and the subsequent development and acceptance of landmark legislation which brought a national pensions system into effect, after twenty years of attempting to do so. He served as Secretary/Chief administrative officer to the Committee;
- ❖ The development and launch of the Hospitality Training Initiative with the Community College;
- ❖ The development and launch of "Project Prepare" (job placement and social reintegration programme) for ex-convicts at H.M. Northward Prison;
- ❖ On a number of occasions he acted as Permanent Secretary, and on these and other occasions he also worked closely with the management and staff at the Water Authority, Housing Development Corporation, Agricultural & Industrial Development Board (AIDB), Sports Department, Museum, Cultural Foundation, Social Services Department, the Labour Department, National Library, and the National Archive;
- ❖ He was a member of the Ministry's Reinvention of Government team, and assisted with improved team-building and objective-setting amongst the Ministry and related Departments staff.

In 1998 he focused his attention on streamlining his own commercial interests. He spent some time at his family-owned business, Heritage Craft Ltd. Where he acted as Managing Director (and still serves as Chairman of the Board). This retail store is located on Harbour Drive in George Town, and specializes in Souvenirs, Gifts, Arts & Crafts; the

company has 7 long serving employees, all of whom are Caymanian or have Caymanian Status.

He also formed and launched his own consulting company, Quality Personnel Managers & Consultants Ltd.

He joined the premier professional services firm, Deloitte & Touche in January 1999 as a Consultant in charge of the Human Resource Division. In this capacity he served as an internal and external consultant and his responsibility for Human Resources (HR) and HR Solutions, Executive Recruitment, Marketing Services, and Public Relations. He has thoroughly enjoyed the culture, professionalism, and challenge of Deloitte & Touche, and was desirous of maintaining a mutually agreed long-term professional relationship with the firm, but the relationship broke down in 2003 as a result of Mario's public outrage (Letters to the Editor of the Compass) with the UDP's Cabinet (then led by Mr. McKeever Bush) ridiculous issuance of Caymanian Status to thousands of people without going through the proper checks and balances and awarding it to many people who were not fit or eligible to receive it.

Community Service and Activities

Member of the Church of God (Chapel) in West Bay. He served as Treasurer of the Church from January to July 1983 (prior to leaving for University), served as the Vice Chairman of the Church Council for two years (1998 and 1999), as well as Chairman of the Capital Fund Campaign from 1998. He also served as an associate Teacher of the Senior High Sunday School class;

He was a founding Member of the West Bay Progressive Youth Club in 1986. During this time the planning for the development of a Softball Diamond in the District commenced, as well as hosting District clean-ups, indoor sports (badminton, table tennis, dominoes etc.) in the Town Hall. He was a Director of the Club for many years;

A member of the West Bay Heritage Committee from 1986;

He is a Founding Member and first elected President of the Overseas Students Association. He served as President for two terms, from 1986 to 1988. During his time as President the following membership benefits and initiatives were introduced:

- ◆ Discounts on Cayman Airways (CAL) for 25% on airfare for members who were students at overseas institutions;
- ◆ Financial Subsidies for students in need were offered in the form of a grant in the range of \$500 - \$1,000.00;
- ◆ To facilitate greater communication and support for students overseas, upper level student members were appointed as Liaisons in various geographic areas where Caymanian students were numerous;
- ◆ The annual Summer Cruise was inaugurated.
- ◆ A Newsletter was introduced.

A member of the National Trust since 1989, and also involved with the West Bay District Committee;

He has been a member of Cayman Against Substance Abuse (CASA) from 1988;

He has always had a strong affiliation with Rotary. He joined the Rotaract Club in 1982. In 1993 he was inducted as a Member of the Rotary Club of Grand Cayman Central. He served on various committees and projects within the Club, including the Bus Shelter Installation and Advertising Committee. He was elected to Board in 1995.

In 1995-96 he served as Director of Vocational Service; in 1996-97 he served as Vice President; in 1997-98 he served as President-Elect; and in 1998-99 he was President. As President of the Club he and his Board strengthened many of the ongoing programmes such as: Junior Achievement, Take-A-Kid-Fishing, the Handicapped Picnics, Literacy awareness, Inter-Schools Debating, as well as vocational awareness and scholarships.

As President he spearheaded the following initiatives:

- A Youth Symposium (with other Youth & Community organizations) which focused on positive leaving, substance abuse prevention, teenage pregnancy prevention, conflict resolution, and leadership development;
- Small community projects to help the children, the elderly, and the poor in our communities;
- The formalization of the Club's Community Reserve Fund (for disasters in Cayman);
- Hurricane Relief Assistance to Haiti, Bay Islands of Honduras, and Nicaragua;
- Donations of CI\$35,000.00 to other worthy community organizations and projects;
- For years he represented his Club at Rotary International Conventions in Indianapolis, Singapore, and Buenos Aires, and attended other Rotary International Conventions in San Antonio USA, Birmingham UK, Barcelona Spain, Salt Lake City USA, and Hamburg Germany;
- During his year as President of Rotary Club Central the Club received recognition and awards: The Districts Governor's Award; the Rotary International Presidential Citation; the District public relations award; and recognition as from the Rotary Foundation as the Number 1 Club in the District in annual Contributions to the Foundation;
- During his year as President he heavily emphasized the "Golden Rule" amongst Rotarians and also promoted and enforced the "4-Way-Test" (IS IT THE TRUTH?, IS IT FAIR TO ALL CONCERNED?, WILL IT BUILD GOODWILL AND BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?, WILL IT BE BENEFICIAL TO ALL CONCERNED?)

In 1998 he became the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Links Football Club;

He became a Notary Public in 1999;

He has served on the National Hurricane Committee, and is presently a District Representative on the Essential Relief Services committee.

As a volunteer over the years he has also served on a number of Chamber of Commerce committees, including: as a Councilor in 1993-94; Chairman of the Economic

Development and Diversification Committee; and a member of the Immigration/Labour Task Force.

Appointments

- Member of the Education Council from January 1989 to December 1992;
- Member of the Community College Board of Governors, January 1989 to June 1994;
- Member of the Tourism Advisory Council, November 1990 to December 1991;
- Member of the Grand Cayman Roads Improvement Plan Committee, Jan.81- Dec. 92;
- Member of Coordination Committee for the 5-Year Agricultural Development Plan, March 1991 – June 1993;

[SEE CV ADDENDUM FOR ADDITIONAL INFO]

Special Achievements

- ✓ Youngest Chamber of Commerce Manager in the Caribbean Region;
- ✓ Youngest Country Manager within Esso Caribbean and Central America;
- ✓ Recipient of the Newstar Magazine “Outstanding Achievement Award” for 1990;
- ✓ Elected to the Board of the Network of Caribbean Executives (NETCOE) in December 1990;
- ✓ Guest columnist of Caymanian Pilot newspaper, Caymanian Compass, Newstar Magazine, and the New Caymanian newspaper;
- ✓ Participated as a Panelist in various Radio and TV Talk Shows such as Open Line and Issues 27; also a Founder and acted a moderator for ViewPoint on CITN channel 27;
- ✓ Selected as Rotarian of the Year in Grand Cayman for 1996.

[SEE CV ADDENDUM FOR ADDITIONAL]