



**PRESS RELEASE  
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**22 September 2024**

**Minister Glover-Rolle meets with scholarship agency and university representatives on workforce development**

On Friday, 20 September 2024, Minister of Labour and the Public Service, Hon. Pia Glover Rolle, met with Charlotte Knowles-Thompson, founder of the Charlotte Knowles-Thompson Agency, and 22 representatives from US-based universities and colleges to discuss the creation of effective local programmes and the availability of scholarship opportunities for Bahamian students, workers, and public servants.

The group discussed strategies to empower the local workforce, including training programmes to fill identified gaps in the labour market, scholarship and grant opportunities for Bahamians, accredited courses for public servants, and ways to mitigate “brain drain” by encouraging students to return home after completing their studies.

The university representatives present also expressed their desire to increase the number of Bahamian students attending their institutions, highlighting available resources, including scholarships, that are available for Bahamian nationals.

In addition to Minister Glover-Rolle, other senior Labour officials at the meeting included Director of Labour, Howard Thompson; Executive Director of Training, Nicola Watson; Executive Chair of the National Apprenticeship Program, Michelle Malcolm; and the Executive Chair of the National Training Agency, Agatha Marcelle.

Minister Glover-Rolle stated that the plans discussed at this meeting were aligned with the Davis administration's focus on providing training, upskilling, and professional development opportunities through the University of The Bahamas and the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute, as well as other local and international partners.

“Since day one, we have advocated for Bahamians to take advantage of opportunities for further education and training. We have been hard at work introducing improved courses at the National Training Agency and the upcoming National Apprenticeship Programme to strengthen our workforce. Through this meeting, we are discussing ways we can collaborate to further our workforce readiness agenda.”

Minister Glover-Rolle also spoke of the great need for training and education to further lower the unemployment rate given the issues with unemployability faced by many people in the country.

“There is a segment of Bahamians, especially within youth populations, who may have educational, soft skills, and technical skills gaps that are preventing them from getting a job or keeping a job. By developing targeted programmes and policies that prepare students for the job market, we can empower the local workforce, fill labour gaps, and improve productivity.”

Regarding the public service, Minister Glover-Rolle said that the government would continue promoting lifelong learning and continuous skills development to ensure that public servants can meet the demands of a 21st century labour environment and develop leadership skills.

“When we audited the public service, we discovered a ‘hollow middle’ that we will fill through regularly scheduled promotions. To qualify public servants for these promotions, general training and education, as well as accredited leadership courses, will be vital in helping us with succession planning and leadership development. This will enable us to end the practice of bringing back retired leaders for their expertise and institutional knowledge.”

Over the past three years, Minister Glover-Rolle has overseen the development of strategic plans for the Ministry, which have included training, education, upskilling, and updated labour laws and policies as part of a comprehensive plan to reimagine Labour and the Public Service.

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