



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Media Release

LOCAL COMPANIES RECEIVE GRANT FUNDING

25 August, 2020:- Minister of Trade and Industry, Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon is today underscoring the commitment of the Government to provide support for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). She said ***“the government will continue to provide support to improve capacity building and technology advancement in the manufacturing and creative industries, among others amidst the unprecedented times being experienced as a result of the Novel Coronavirus”***. Speaking at a Grant Distribution Ceremony on Tuesday 25 August, 2020, Minister Gopee-Scoon identified the Grant Fund Facility as one such initiative that provides funding to companies to improve productivity and competitiveness in some of our most viable sectors.

Trinibakes Limited, a small manufacturer in the food and beverage sector received funding in the amount of **\$176,351.49**. The Company produces specialty frozen flour-based products such as bread and pastry doughs for both retail and wholesale distribution. Minister Gopee-Scoon commended the company on their use of predominantly locally sourced ingredients such as flour, pumpkin, beetroot, coconut, ginger, and spinach which has created supply linkages with domestic farmers and flour manufacturers. The company intends to purchase new machinery and equipment for its manufacturing process which will allow for greater efficiency and increased production capacity to expand locally and regionally.

Ms. Kathleen Joseph, Director, Trinibakes Limited in her remarks said ***“Trinibakes is truly Trini. We work closely with our farmers to ensure the supply of local produce in our products”***. ***“We have done in-depth market research and have tested several markets and are confident that this grant will allow us to realise our plans and expand our reach locally and regionally.”*** said Ms Joseph.



The Steelpan Manufacturing Grant Fund Facility (SMGFF) disbursed a total of \$250,000.00 to Panland Trinidad and Tobago, the second recipient of the fund. The Trade and Industry Minister underscored that the Government recognises both the cultural significance and the economic potential of the steelpan industry. The SMGFF provides support to assist steelpan manufacturers and tuners in the acquisition of machinery, equipment, software, tools, raw material and training, in tranches of up to \$250,000.00 and not exceeding \$1,000,000.00 per entity. Panland has been in operations for over twenty-five (25) years and offers a wide range of products and services which include all sizes of conventional steelpans, accessories such as sticks, stands, cases etc and services such as tuning, blending and powder coating. Minister Gopee-Scoon commended Panland for being able to establish a presence on Amazon and is hopeful that the financial support will give the company the assistance needed to boost its production capacity and re-position itself in the international marketplace in this ever-changing economic climate.

Mr. Michael Cooper expressed gratitude for the significant tangible support to the steelpan sector. He said ***“The steelpan industry is ripe with possibility and potential and this funding will assist in rebuilding the industry.”*** Mr Cooper applauded the SMGFF initiative which he anticipates will bear tremendous fruit for the industry in terms of employment, career development and generation of foreign exchange.

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