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# Caystone

The Newsletter of Lyford Cay Foundations

## Preserving Heritage, Building Futures

### Bahamian Craftsmen Hone Skills in the UK with The King's Foundation

Far from home but deeply connected to it, eight Bahamian craftsmen are hard at work in workshops and heritage estates across the United Kingdom, chiselling and carving their way through an experience that's reshaping their understanding of craftsmanship and culture.

These men are the inaugural recipients of the Peter George Goulandris Heritage Scholarship, a partnership between Lyford Cay Foundations and The King's Foundation. The five-month programme is designed to preserve traditional building techniques, skills essential to protecting The Bahamas' historic architecture for generations to come.

The journey began at Dumfries House in Scotland, the headquarters of The King's Foundation, with a three-week Summer School exploring drawing, geometry, and the philosophy behind heritage craft. Participants then advanced into a 15-week technical phase focused on the conservation and repair of historic buildings in the traditional Bahamian style, from stonemasonry and timber restoration to plasterwork and roofing.

Their training includes a Live Build Project at Dumfries House in Scotland, offering first-hand experience working on an active heritage site. Now deep into their training, the scholars have been learning from master craftspeople in areas such as blacksmithing, thatching, and stained-glass work.

For Bjorn Munroe, who works with the Antiquities, Monuments and Museums Corporation (AMMC), the experience is already transformative.

*"I was hoping to improve my stonemasonry skills, now I'm building and repairing stone walls, learning thatch roofing and plaster moulding. It's more than I ever expected."*

Each lesson is building toward a greater goal: equipping these Bahamians to return home with the expertise to restore, protect, and celebrate the nation's architectural heritage. For the awardees, ranging in age from 22 to 40, it is both a personal achievement and a national opportunity. Their journey represents a bridge between past and future, one handcrafted detail at a time.



# Update

## FOCUS

### SUMMER SLAM EXPLORING THE FUTURE WITH AI

For six weeks this summer, FOCUS summer sessions were alive with energy as nearly 250 FOCUS students immersed themselves in discovery, creativity, and community during the 2025 Summer SLAM.

Centered on the theme of Artificial Intelligence (AI), students from Grades 5 through 9 were invited to explore one of the world's most exciting and rapidly changing fields. Guided by their teachers and mentors, they learned how AI powers everyday tools while also confronting the important questions it raises about ethics and responsibility.

Each grade explored the theme from a unique angle, focusing on different applications of AI in everyday use. Younger students, in Grades 5 and 6, investigated Smart Homes, imagining the ways AI can make everyday appliances more efficient, while students in Grade 7 created AI solutions to address environmental challenges like pollution and waste. Our 8th and 9th Graders, collected and analysed data, considering the future of transportation and how AI can aid with traffic congestion, more efficient traffic flow, and prevent accidents. In every case, lessons were hands-on, encouraging students to imagine, problem-solve, and innovate. Alongside their projects, students received over 60 hours of additional tutoring, which strengthened skills in math, science, and language.

FOCUS is about more than academics. Sports, performing arts, and life skills such as resume-building, financial literacy, and interviewing for a job, rounded out a truly holistic experience. Families also played a role, visiting the FOCUS sessions during Parents' Breakfasts, Open Houses, and Showcases. This allowed them to meet programme staff and engage in FOCUS activities. For parents, these are moments of celebration and pride.

Over the summer, students in Grades 10 to 12 focused on building transferable occupational skills, attending the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute, (BTVI), where they learned various trades. Students had the option to participate in courses on carpentry, beauty, and technology over the course of four weeks. At BTVI, students also gained certification in Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). This training equips them for meaningful contributions to the workforce.

For Programme Director Kendra Moss, these highlights speak to the heart of Lyford Cay Foundations' mission. "When we see the enthusiasm and attention our FOCUS students bring each day, we know these investments of time and resources are well worth it," she shared. "The skills and confidence they are building will serve not only their families, but the wider community well into the future."



#### 2025 FOCUS FAST FACTS:

- **264 Students** from under-resourced communities served
- **8 Primary Schools** participating
- **46 New Students** entering in 2025
- **85% Attendance Rate** for Summer SLAM
- **100% Participation** in Project Based Learning

## You Are Building A Smarter Bahamas

You empower Students to create innovative solutions

# FAMILY ISLAND LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

## Inspiring Future Leaders from All Islands



This July, 49 rising Grade 11 students from across The Bahamas left their Family Island communities and gathered in New Providence for a week that many will never forget. Now in its second year, Lyford Cay Foundations' Family Island Leadership Programme (FILP) provided an immersive residential experience that combined academic preparation, career exploration, leadership development, and personal growth to help students chart a path beyond high school.

Hosted at Breezes Resort Bahamas, with sessions at the University of The Bahamas (UB) and The Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI), the programme introduced students to the realities of pursuing post-secondary education while also building the resilience and leadership skills needed for success. Workshops ranged from mastering the college essay to honing public speaking, while a standout panel on "Creativity in

Leadership" encouraged participants to think boldly about their futures.

Beyond the classroom, FILP offered hands-on exposure to career opportunities through site visits to Jet Nassau, Bluefield Farms, and V&M Art Gallery. Along the way, students built friendships with peers from other islands, and heard candid insights from national leaders on topics such as ethical decision-making, communication, and integrity.

"FILP reflects our belief that every young person should have access to the skills, knowledge, and networks they need to thrive," said Dr. Nicola Virgill-Rolle, Executive Director of Lyford Cay Foundations. "We are deeply grateful to our donors, institutional partners, and community leaders for helping create a space where Family Island students can dream bigger and step confidently into their futures."

**SCAN QR CODE HERE**

Open your camera to scan code.



**TO SEE OUR NEW FAMILY ISLAND LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME VIDEO**



# Spotlight ON OUR SCHOLARS

## MEET THE INAUGURAL HERITAGE SCHOLARS

Eight young men have been awarded the inaugural Peter George Goulandris Heritage Scholarship, selected from a competitive pool of applicants. Their journeys and aspirations are as diverse as their skills, but they share a commitment to advancing The Bahamas' cultural heritage upon return from a five month programme abroad.



### Bernardo Francis

With over twenty years in general construction, Bernardo specialises in masonry. He hopes to share his new skills with younger Bahamians.



### Dion Desamours

One of the youngest scholars, Dion is a BTVI graduate who dreams of launching a heritage restoration company to revitalise Bahamian historic sites.



### Ivan Fox

A former AMMC maintenance team member with IT and mechanic training, Ivan is eager to train and mentor others upon his return.



### Delvontae Roberts

A carpenter inspired by Hurricane Dorian's aftermath, Delvontae is determined to contribute to rebuilding efforts while caring for the environment.



### Stephen Johnson

Raised in a family construction business, Stephen plans to one day build homeless shelters and pass on his skills to others.



### Camren Rahming

A carpenter passionate about furniture making, Camren is driven to keep traditional building skills alive while blending craftsmanship with technology.



### Bjorn Munroe

Currently Maintenance Manager at AMMC, Bjorn looks forward to applying his training to projects like the restoration of Collins House.



### Wentist King

Experienced in carpentry and masonry, Wentist aspires to start his own business and play a role in safeguarding Bahamian heritage sites.

Together, these scholars embody the spirit of the programme: to equip Bahamians with the expertise needed to conserve the nation's most treasured places.

## 2025 TOTAL SCHOLARSHIPS

- **41** New Scholars Awarded
- **\$1.2+** Million Invested
- **44%** First Generation Students
- **27%** Public School Students
- **32%** from Family Islands

# You Are Building A Stronger Bahamas

You create unique learning opportunities for Scholars

# DONOR SPOTLIGHT:

## MUNA ISSA: INVESTING IN PEOPLE, BUILDING A STRONGER BAHAMAS



**"Breezes believes in human development and the importance of investing in young people. They're our future. Supporting the Lyford Cay Foundations aligns perfectly with what we value."**

**- Muna Issa, Managing Director, Breezes Resort**



Guided by values instilled by her parents early in life, Muna Issa's leadership is grounded in service, compassion, and community. From opening the doors of Breezes Resort to families in need after Hurricane Dorian, to transforming part of the property into a hospital during the pandemic, her generosity has always reflected a deeply held belief in people, compassion, and shared responsibility, principles that guide both her personal leadership and her approach to service.

That same belief is at the heart of Muna's long-standing partnership with Lyford Cay Foundations. Under her guidance, Breezes has become a welcoming home for many of the Foundations' hallmark events, including the Heritage Scholars launch, FOCUS graduation, and the Family Island Leadership Programme. These gatherings are meaningful not because of the venue itself, but because of Muna's commitment to creating spaces where educational milestones can be celebrated and young people can feel seen and supported.

"Breezes believes in human development and the importance of investing in young people. They're our

future," says Managing Director, Muna Issa. "A country can't progress without an educated population, so supporting Lyford Cay Foundations aligns perfectly with what we value."

For Muna, community involvement is not a corporate strategy, it is a personal calling. She takes pride in ensuring that young Bahamians are trained, mentored, and given opportunities to begin their careers, often offering first-time jobs to those eager to learn. As she likes to say, "When our community grows and thrives, so do we."

Through her leadership and partnership with Lyford Cay Foundations, Muna helps open doors to education and personal growth, empowering the next generation to reach their full potential. It is, as she describes, "a true win-win partnership" rooted in shared values and a shared vision: a Bahamas where every young person has the opportunity to learn, achieve, and build a better tomorrow.

# Update

## SUMMER GRANTS

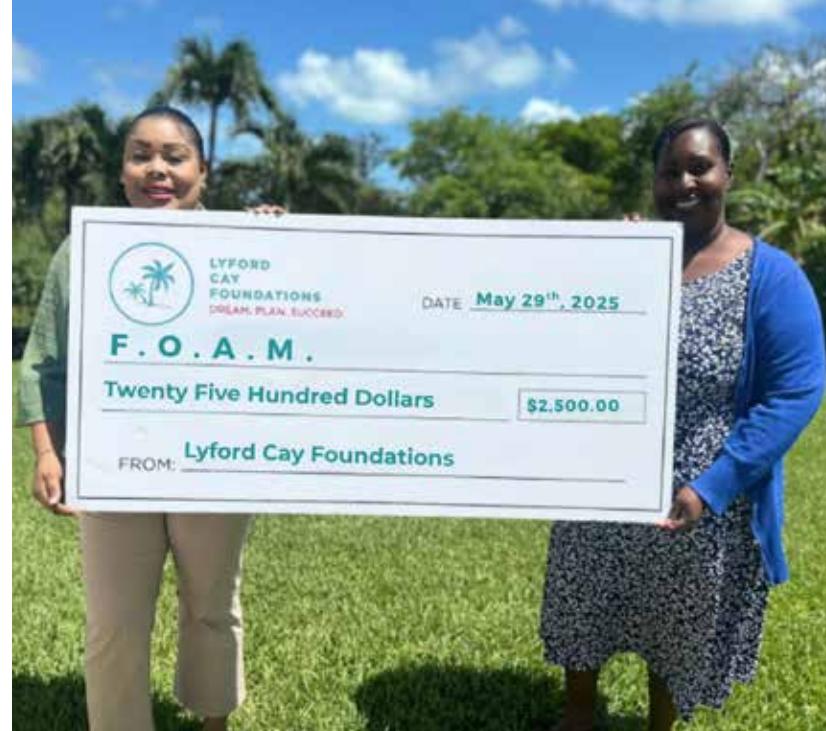
### INVESTING IN SAFER COMMUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE

Every summer, community organisations across The Bahamas step forward with creative programmes designed to uplift, educate, and inspire. Through a comprehensive Grants programme, Lyford Cay Foundations helps bring these initiatives to life, ensuring that young people and vulnerable groups have access to safe spaces, new skills, and transformative opportunities.

As one of the few grant-making organisations in the country, the Foundations view this investment as an essential part of building stronger communities. The most recent award cycle supported five diverse programmes ranging from music and mentorship to vocational training and special needs education. Collectively, they represent a vision of a Bahamas where learning comes in many forms, and where every individual, no matter their circumstances, has the chance to thrive.

For some, this meant the power of music to teach discipline and teamwork. For others, it meant creating pathways into meaningful work, or offering guidance to families facing grief. In every case, the funding provided not only resources but also the encouragement that someone believes in their potential.

"Lyford Cay Foundations is pleased to expand its reach across The Bahamas through its grants programme," said Kendra Moss, Director of Programmes. "These grants reflect the generosity of our donors and the ingenuity of local organisations who are meeting needs in their communities with creativity and care. Together, we are opening doors of opportunity and investing in a brighter future."



### GRANTS 2025-2026

Creating access to education is at the heart of everything we do.

- **11 Family Islands** with afterschool programming
- **16 Community Grants** awarded to clubs and organisations
- **1,000 Young People** engaged in safe, enriching activities
- **\$84,500 Impact Investment** beyond the classroom

## You Are Building A Better Bahamas

You create access for summer programming

## SUMMER GRANT RECIPIENTS 2025

This year's five grantees each offered unique opportunities for learning and growth.

**1. FOAM Bahamas** – \$2,500 to expand coaching, counselling, and art sessions for inner-city youth.

"The programme is open to all inner-city youth in need of mentorship and guidance when dealing with grief," said Founder Khandi Gibson.

**2. Sunset Pilot Club of Grand Bahama** – \$5,000 to deliver a one-week summer programme for older students with special needs.

"We plan to partner with the Beacon School to ensure students receive tailored support," explained Executive Member Keira Cox.

**3. Urban Renewal Marching Band of The Bahamas** – \$5,000 to provide instruments, materials, and transport for young musicians.

"The band not only nurtures musical talent but also transforms lives, reducing crime and building safer communities," shared Coordinator Janice Minnis-Green.

**4. Training Centre for the Disabled** – \$5,000 to cover uniforms, supplies, and equipment for vocational training.

"It's all about ability, not disability," said President Rivianna Smith, noting the Centre's focus on independence for students.

**5. REACH** – \$5,000 to run a vocational and self-help programme for young adults with autism, open to applicants across The Bahamas.

"The programme builds confidence and personal growth through hands-on experience," said Speech Language Pathologist Nafeesa Arafat.



# Partnerships

## HONOURING A LEGACY

### THE PETER GEORGE GOULANDRIS HERITAGE SCHOLARSHIP

The Peter George Goulandris Heritage Scholarship was established earlier this year to honour the memory of Peter George Goulandris, a long-serving board member of the Lyford Cay Foundations who cared deeply about education and had a particular love for building crafts.

"This groundbreaking scholarship bears my late father's name," said Mr. Basil P. Goulandris, Chairman of Lyford Cay Foundation, Inc. "He truly believed in our vision that every Bahamian be empowered to reach his or her full potential. I am certain he would be proud to see this programme carrying his legacy forward."

Developed in partnership with The King's Foundation, the scholarship provides a unique opportunity for Bahamian tradesmen to develop advanced skills in the conservation and restoration of historic buildings. Covering all tuition, travel, and living expenses, it ensures that recipients can fully dedicate themselves to training abroad and return equipped to make an impact at home.

Support from the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI) and the Antiquities, Monuments and Museums Corporation (AMMC) has been central in preparing the apprentices for this step. With their foundation of skills now set to be honed by world-class training, the scholars will join the growing international network of craftspeople dedicated to heritage preservation.

The scholarship is not only a tribute to one man's legacy but also a forward-looking investment: ensuring that The Bahamas' unique cultural and architectural traditions are preserved for generations to come.

### ABOUT US

Lyford Cay Foundations comprises two distinct philanthropic legal entities. Lyford Cay Foundation, Inc., a United States registered public charity (Federal I.D. #23-7025275) and The Canadian Lyford Cay Foundation, a Canadian registered public charity (CRA BN/ Registration # 11921 9301 RR0001).

Lyford Cay Foundations have deep roots in the Bahamian community and believe that increasing educational attainment across the country is key to the development of a prosperous, healthy and peaceful Bahamas.

### DONATE TODAY

Generous friends like you help bright young Bahamians in their pursuit of educational excellence and assist with community building.

Without you, these life-changing opportunities would not be possible.

To make a gift, please visit [lyfordcayfoundations.org/donate-online/](http://lyfordcayfoundations.org/donate-online/) or call us at 242-362-4910

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Email us at [info@lyfordcayfoundations.org](mailto:info@lyfordcayfoundations.org) to join our monthly e-newsletter mailing list!

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