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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BARBADOS HONOURS MEDIA FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM

The Hon. Kerrie Symmonds, Minister of Tourism and International Transport, thanked local and international media for their contribution to the success of destination Barbados at the Barbados Tourism Media Awards (BTMAs) on Wednesday. The celebratory affair hosted by the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre, recognised the top tourism stories about Barbados penned by media within the last year.

The awards, themed ‘Pride of Barbados,’ acknowledged the positive impact exceptional media coverage has on potential travellers, and also served as the official welcome to the 9th Barbados Food and Rum Festival, which kicks off in Oistins on Thursday.

The Standing O award – Best of the Best by the Judges of all Submissions went to American Lebewit Lily Girma of Sherman’s Travel, whose blog post dubbed, ‘Rediscovering Barbados on Two Wheels: A South Coast Bike Tour’ captured the award in the ‘Dear Diary’ – Best Story by a Blogger category. Ms. Girma stole the show as she also took home the ‘#NoFilter’ – Best Photo in Conjunction with a Feature Article category, with her article ‘Get cultured in Bridgetown: 8

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ways to explore Barbados' historic capital'.

Out of the 117 submitted entries from the UK, Canada, the USA, Europe, Barbados and Latin America, the UK copped the most top awards. Andrew Doherty who was present at the dinner won the category 'Bajan Passport' – Best Feature Article in a Trade Publication. Also present, Charanna Alexander Jean in 'How Can This Knot Be Love' – Best Story on Romance copped this award with her piece 'Caribbean Love – Barbados Destination Wedding'.

With a story entitled 'Island Time', Peter Stuart took home the award in 'Is That an Accent?' – Best Feature by a Foreign Journalist in Foreign Media; while Harriet Green from the UK came out on top in 'Nailed It' – Best Feature Article in a Consumer Publication with her 'Flipping Magic' article.

Freelance journalist, Edwin Smith who has appeared in the Telegraph, Guardian, Esquire among other publications won the category 'Platinum Coast' – Best Story in a Luxury Publication with a well written piece dubbed 'A Matter of Life and Depth' and Kim Honey the lone winner from Canada who was present won the 'Shaken Not Stirred' – Epicurean Excellence Media Award category with her entry 'Barbados makes its claim as the Culinary Capital of the Caribbean'. She mentioned in her acceptance video to "bring on the fishcakes!"

Barbadian Malou Morgan was also in winners' row, topping the category 'Home Drum Beat First' – Best Story by a Barbadian Journalist with a piece entitled, 'Island Diaries: Freediving and a Lionfish Hunt.' The judges Johnson JohnRose, Sara Odle and Carolyn Vaughan found Morgan's piece intriguing – they said she "took an otherwise troublesome issue and made it exciting." This entry scored high in content, structure and form, title and originality.

Alleyne Cops Lifetime Achievement Award

The elegant evening, complete with cocktails, a delectable Bajan-inspired dinner by chef Michael Hinds; sweet musical symphonies by the Barbados Community College Jazz

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Ensemble; and mood pumping entertainment by D.L. Smith Productions featuring Pastor John Yarde, Nikita and Philip 7, Mylon Clarke and dancers, climaxed with veteran Barbadian photographer, Willie Alleyne, being conferred with the Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by the Hon. Kerrie Symmonds.

In his remarks CEO of the BTMI, William Griffith recognized Alleyne's 69-year career in photography, much of which has been spent capturing the beauty of our island. Alleyne, joined The Advocate Newspaper in the early 50s as a photographic apprentice and then moved on to officially establishing Willie Alleyne Associates in the early 70s. He has been presented with the Barbados Centennial Honours and the Silver Crown of Merit and last night he added the Lifetime Achievement award to his collection.

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About Barbados

The island of Barbados offers the most authentic Caribbean experience with its exceptionally rich culture and history rooted in remarkable landscapes. Rated as one of the world's sexiest beaches in 2008 by Concierge.com; Barbados' Crane Beach in St. Philip stands as a premier destination for travellers. Barbados is also the first Zagat-rated Caribbean island and is known as the culinary capital of the Caribbean. Barbados has hosted several world class events including: The annual Barbados Food & Wine and Rum Festival; the 2006 PGA World Golf Championships-Barbados World Cup, the ICC Cricket World Cup Finals in 2007, the Sentebale Charity Polo match with Prince Harry of Wales in 2010, and the ICC Twenty20 Cricket Finals for 2010, and the Rihanna LOUD concert in 2012. Accommodations range from picturesque plantation houses and villas, to quaint bed and breakfasts and award-winning, five-star resorts. Grantley Adams International Airport offers even more non-stop and direct service from a growing number of U.S., making Barbados the true gateway to the Eastern Caribbean. Barbados was voted eighth in the World by Trip Advisor's "2008 Travelers' Choice Destination Awards" in its Top 100 Destinations category. For more information on travel to Barbados, visit www.visitbarbados.org, follow on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/VisitBarbados>, via Twitter @Barbados.