



**Local PR contact:**

**Aprille Thomas**

**Corporate Communications & PR Specialist**

**[aprillet@visitbarbados.org](mailto:aprillet@visitbarbados.org)**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**HAILEY MAHY IS THE NEW 2019 JUNIOR MINISTER OF TOURISM**

The Ursuline Convent walked away with bragging rights as Hailey Mahy was announced and declared the 2019 Junior Minister of Tourism of Barbados with the informative presentation titled, “**Making Excellence a Habit in Caribbean Tourism.**”

This year, six schools vied for the prestigious title at the annually recognized **Barbados Tourism Youth Congress**. Those students were: Ashanti Jaunai from The Alexandra School, Soraya Headley representing the Deighton Griffith School, Jermessa Khan from the Ellerslie School, Hannah Sealey from the St. Michael School, Noah Fagan the lone male student hailing from The Lester Vaughan School and Modena Byer-Fraser and Hailey Mahy from The Ursuline Convent.

They presented to the Minister of Tourism and International Transport, Hon. Kerrie Symmonds, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism and International Transport, Mrs. Donna Cadogan, tourism partners, the judging panel, students, teachers, family and friends at the

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Sandals Royal Barbados. Each student presented on one of the topics, **“Towards Smart Travel Experiences within the Caribbean Region”**, **“Equipping our Youth to Thrive in a Changing Tourism Environment”**, and **“Making Excellence a Habit in Caribbean Tourism”**.

The competition then added a suspense flare as the students were allocated one minute to present on the Mystery Question – *“As Junior Minister of Tourism, recommend (2) ways in which we can encourage community tourism across our island.”* Each student made the effort to answer this question and all performed well under pressure. Second place awardee, Ms. Jermessa Khan suggested that, “One way we can help encourage community tourism is to educate the upcoming generation about the current product and activities on the island. Make everyone feel inclusive; make them feel like tourism is ours - I am tourism, you are tourism, we are tourism. This is what needs to be enforced.” Third place was given to Ms. Modena Byer-Fraser from The Ursuline Convent.

Hailey Mahy walked away ecstatic as she will now represent Barbados at the Caribbean Tourism Organization’s (CTO) regional annual Youth Congress in October. This competition takes a similar format where students between the ages of 14 and 17 discuss tourism related issues in a simulated Board Meeting.

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### **About the Barbados Tourism Youth Congress**

Barbados Tourism Youth Congress is a youth forum/competition open to students from age 14 to 17 attending private and public educational institutions across the island with the aim to develop students' knowledge of tourism issues. The Youth Congress is the forum used to select its Junior Minister of Tourism 2019. The 2019 Youth Congress takes the form of a simulated CTO Board of Directors meetings.

### **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 & 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. cities, 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](http://www.visitbarbados.org), follow on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/VisitBarbados>, via Twitter @Barbados.