

BAMSI Challenged to Meet the Demands of a Growing Market



SYMONETTE's tour BAMSI Farm:

Principals of one of the nation's largest grocery operators, Craig Symonette and his son Cameron, recently visited BAMSI to see first hand how the Institute would impact food sustainability in the Bahamas.

Pictured from left are Cameron Symonette, Craig Symonette (in yellow) principal of AML Foods and Lucayan Tropical Produce; President of BAMSI Godfrey Eneas and BAMSI Farm Manager Everton Parks.

WITH millions of dollars at stake, the Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) was recently urged by a sector operator to capitalize on the developing produce industry by focusing on improving its pre- and post-harvest quality management in a move that would see them delivering sought after produce on a year-round basis. Craig Symonette, principal of Lucayan Tropical Produce and a senior stakeholder in AML Foods Limited, said the Institute's ability to

service the sector on a consistent basis would allow it and its associate farmers to not just tap into the estimated \$20 million in sales experienced by AML Food's retail and wholesale operations, but also keep a larger portion of the funds spent throughout the industry within the national economy.

Speaking during a recent tour of BAMSI's North Andros farm and related facilities, including the North Andros Packing House, Mr. Symonette

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BAMSI Attends IICA Training Session

It was a distinct pleasure to participate in the “Train-the-Trainer in Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs)” workshop, held May 19-22. The training sessions were administered by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) as part of a regional sanitary and phytosanitary project sponsored by the European Union. The workshop consisted of an in-depth look at the foundational steps to implementing GAPs and GMPs in fresh produce farms, livestock farms, and packing/processing facilities.

Ms. Carol Thomas, an International Agricultural Health and Food Safety Specialist facilitated the training and shared a wealth of knowledge on the topic, relating it to our unique Caribbean perspective and circumstances. She was ably assisted by Shacara Lightbourne, National Technical Specialist for IICA in the Bahamas.

The goal of the workshop – to train technical personnel in improving food safety standards and minimizing risks to workers and consumers so that they can in turn disseminate the information to the wider community – was achieved. Managers, technicians, extension officers, and educators from the Ministry of Agriculture, Marine Resources, and Local Government; Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation, and the College of the Bahamas are now equipped with the knowledge and wherewithal to inform and address farmers, agri-business owners, and other industry players on ways to implement GAPs and GMPs so their products can receive access into foreign markets, and comply with stricter standards and regulations.

This work is integral in improving plant, animal, human, and environmental health, and progressing towards a more robust agriculture industry for the Bahamas and the region as a whole.



Assistant Farm Manager
Cameron Lightbourne
attended IICA's Train-the-
Trainer" Seminar.
Photo courtesy of Peter L.
Ramsay



BAMSI's Executive Director addresses the 3rd Abaco Agribusiness Expo

Supporting agricultural initiatives across the archipelago, BAMSI's Executive Director Dr. Raveenia Roberts-Hanna recently visited Abaco where she addressed the 3rd All Abaco Agricultural, Marine Resources & Agribusiness Expo.

Standing from left are Cephass Cooper, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources; Dr. Hanna, BAMSI's Executive Director and Preston Cunningham, Island Administrator for Abaco.

Which Island Will We Come To Next... Will It Be Yours?

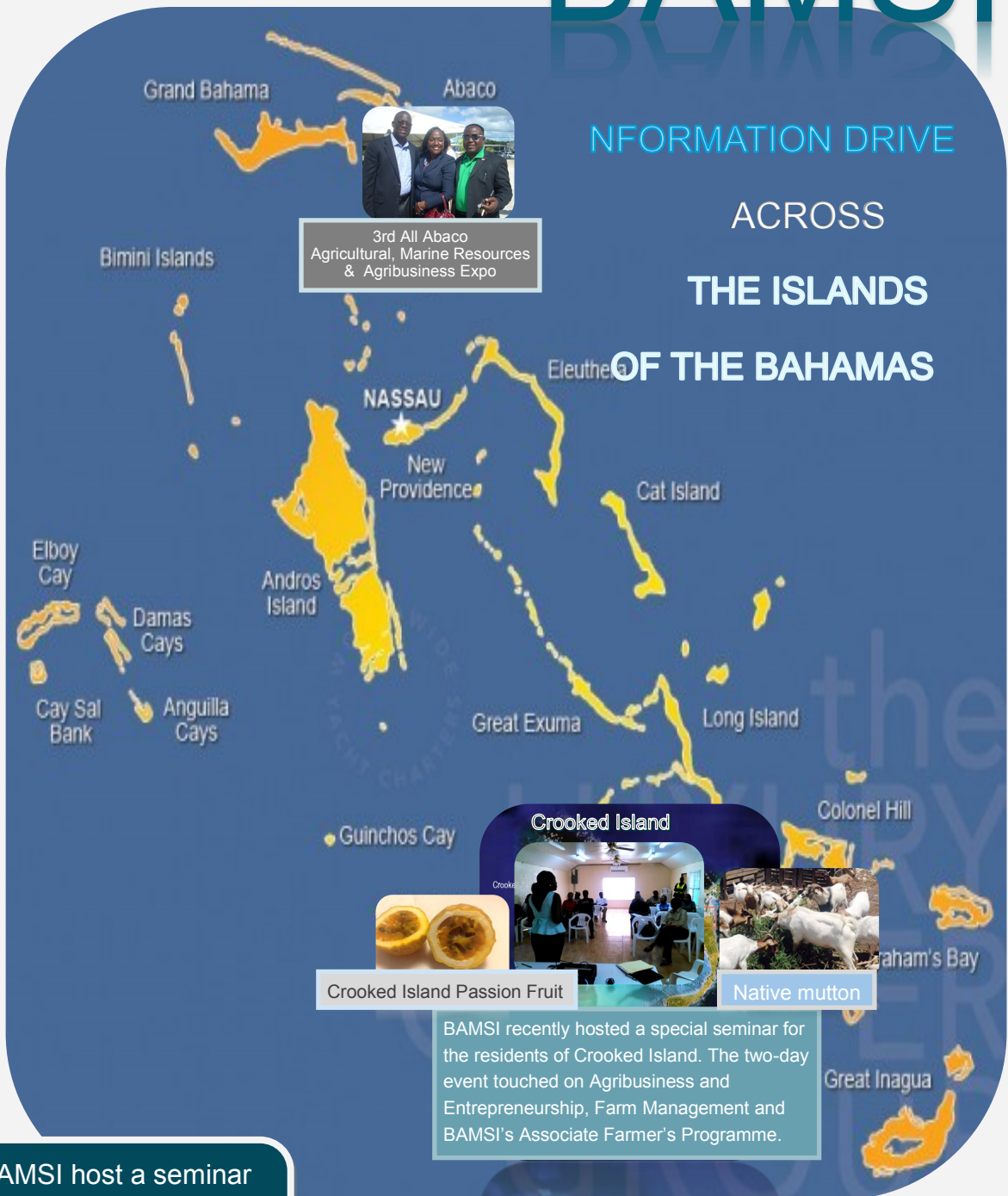
BAMSI

INFORMATION DRIVE

ACROSS

THE ISLANDS

OF THE BAHAMAS



To have BAMSI host a seminar on your island contact bamsipr.2014@gmail.com or call (242) 397.6580. Also check us out on Facebook: [bamsibahamas](https://www.facebook.com/bamsibahamas)

Emerging Leaders Series

BAMSI Students participate in Internship Opportunities



More than a dozen Bahamian companies – private sector agencies, environmental groups and charitable organisations – have agreed to provide internship opportunities for students of The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) as year one of the Institute's academic portfolio comes to a successful close, a senior BAMSI official said. The Institute's executive team, it was noted, is hopeful that the hands-on experience will help students develop a greater appreciation for and understanding of their chosen field of study, while also allowing students to see the breadth of career opportunities available to them upon graduation.

Dr Raveenia Roberts-Hanna, BAMSI's executive director, said many of the students, who currently follow one of three academic tracks; an Associate Degree in Agriculture, an Associate Degree in Marine Science or an Associate Degree in Aquaculture, were part of the inaugural class that saw BAMSI open its classroom doors some nine months ago amid tremendous fanfare. Now, with the end of the first academic year, students are preparing to transition into programme-specific internship opportunities, she explained, that have been organized with industry partners and agencies in both the agriculture and marine sectors.

Regarded as an incremental step in the Government's long term vision to develop this nation's agriculture industry and support Bahamians committed to working in the field, the 2015 Internship Programme has created an avenue for every BAMSI student to accelerate their learning curve. Having been immersed in the theoretical framework that underpins the study of agriculture and marine science for the past nine months, the internship programme, which is part of a broader package that will see the government subsidize the students entrepreneurial efforts upon graduation, will support the practical exploration of their field of study, allowing students to witness what the classroom experience has helped them to be cognitively aware of.

The creation of the internship programme, which will pair students with such companies as Atlantis, Goodfellow Farms and the Department of Forestry, further underscores the Institute's intention and commitment to educate, prepare and develop capable, passionate and bright young minds who are ready to engage the agricultural sector in a meaningful and tangible way over the long term.

The internship opportunities are available to all students, both from New Providence and the Family Islands. Leading the way is BAMSI, which will bring on a number of students to train part of its agriculture team, and also in the marine science department. Dr Hanna expressed her gratitude to all of the businesses who have so generously committed their time and resources to the development of young Bahamian agriculturalist and marine scientists.

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BAMSI Visits Crooked Island

WITH the mandate to meet the needs of Bahamian farmers across the archipelago, BAMSI set out this summer to visit a number of communities in the Southern Bahamas. First on the list was the great jewel of the south, Crooked Island. Spearheading the visit were BAMSI's Assistant Farm Manager Constantina Hamilton and Agribusiness Lecturer Alaasis Braynen. The two-day event focused on Farm Management, BAMSI's Associate Farmer's Program and Agribusiness and Entrepreneurship.

One of the priorities of the event was to share the Associate Farmer's Program. Local farmers learned that as members of the program BAMSI provides support and consultancy in a number of areas including land preparation, soil preparation, seedling production and production counselling.

Participants also learned about farm management, including budget analysis and business organization. The agribusiness and entrepreneurship segment received a significant attention as attendees learned the major elements in the agribusiness environment, understood forms of business ownership and looked at the competition in the domestic and international markets. They also looked at management of human and financial resources.



Reared in the sandy soils of Crooked Island. Passion fruit (bottom left), corn and goats.

Faces of Crooked Island Agriculture



(Above) Timothy Thompson's goat farm has approximately 30 animals including four mature males, one being the dominant African Boer which has the physiological constituents to be bred for meat.



Derick Ingraham's farm (above) boasts some 30 goats.



Elvin Scavella's (above) farm includes sweet potato, sugar bananas and fruit trees, corn and coconuts grown in sandy soil near the beach.

Symonette's Visit
Continued from pg. 1

said Cost Rite and Solomon's experience sales of produce to the tune of some \$20 million in annual produce sales,



From left: BAMSI Consultant Ronald Thompson, Craig Symonette and Cameron Symonette

nearly twenty per cent of an estimated overall intake of \$135 million total grocery sales. Pointing to the banana industry as an example of BAMSI's ability to take over a product that has traditionally been imported, Everton Parks, BAMSI's farm manager, noted that despite some initial challenges, they were looking to expand the production of bananas in the short term from some 20 acres to 100 and then move to 200 acres of production all in an effort to meet the year-round needs of quality produce for the Bahamian market.

President of BAMSI Godfrey Eneas underscored also that BAMSI's ability to supply the market did not end at fresh

produce, but also included the value added segment that would see the item transformed into an array of secondary products – from banana chips to baby food to daiquiri mix and baked goods. Toward that end, Dr. Eneas noted that BAMSI's future includes the operation of a processing plant – a move that would enable the Institute to produce contracted private labels. It was further revealed that an effective pre- and post-harvest quality management protocol is already being implemented with the position that these clear mechanisms of production will provide the highest consistency of year round production.

Executive Director Dr. Raveenia Roberts-Hanna also addressed the need for strategic partnerships across the sector. She pointed to BAMSI's ability to impact not just the production, condition and consistency of crops, but the quality of the labour force as well.

"BAMSI is able to partner with a cross section of providers from the farmers on the ground to whole sale operators and retailers - like Lucayan Tropical, like your AML Foods, like your Super Value - to educate and train their employees in international best practices and standards in agriculture, production, manufacturing and even at the point

of sale in retail operations".

Mr. Symonette was accompanied on the BAMSI tour by his son Cameron Symonette, a senior executive with Lucayan Tropical. The two toured the BAMSI farm and were able to see firsthand the extensive banana and papaya fields and also a significant pineapple field with some 23,000 slips currently in the ground and another 60,000 expected shortly. The pineapples were heralded as an important addition to the Bahamian produce sector



With the pineapple fields as a backdrop, BAMSI consultant Ronald Thompson discusses the Institute's future. Also pictured are Everton Parks, BAMSI Farm Manager and Craig and Cameron Symonette.

because the variant was spineless, which makes it easier and quicker to harvest. The two also had the opportunity to see BAMSI's livestock. With the recent import of a number of additional sheep and goat, BAMSI will now be the largest mutton producer in the country.

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Summer 2015!

SEEDS: Summer Education Enrichment Discovery Programme Learning, Living and Exploring #Islandlife

June 21— 26, 2015

Registration Fee \$500

Soft hands dig in the soil
Turning over the cool, brown earth
As it slips through the fingers
Millions of grains brush against the flesh like a waterfall
As it splashes back to the ground.

BAMSI is offering an exciting weeklong programme for high school students who enjoy being in nature, are curious about the tangible things of the earth and have an interest and heart for agriculture, animals and all manner of marine life and the nation's rich ecosystems.

For more information contact bamsipr.2014@gmail.com or call 242.376.6905 or visit us on Facebook: Bamsibahamas

BAMSI Prepares for its Let's Go Crabbin' Weekend



BAMSI's leadership team leads the way! Bravely holding the crab is Dr. Vallierre Deleveaux; Dr. Raveenia Roberts-Hanna looks on eagerly and in cap is Dr. Joseph Lindsay.



Staff enjoy the late-night expedition.



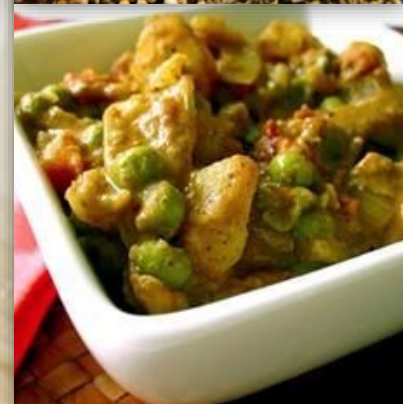
BAMSI Counsellor Philip Campbell shows the team how Androsians "catch de crab!"

- The 18th Annual Crab Fest will be celebrated June 12 & 13 in Fresh Creek, Central Andros.
- All Andros and Berry Island Regatta July 9—11.

in my
Community

Chef's Corner

by Chef Dentry McKinney, BAMSI



Vegetable Curry with Brown Rice Pilaf

Yield : 10 servings

Ingredients

2 teaspoons vegetable or peanut oil
1 large onion, sliced
3 cloves garlic, mashed to a paste
3 stalks of celery, bias cut
4 medium potatoes, small dice
1/2 pound green beans, blanched
2 scallions, bias cut
3 tablespoons curry powder
1 tablespoon cumin, ground
2 cups vegetable stock
Tomato Concasse
Salt to taste / Pepper, to taste
Cooked Brown Rice Pilaf
1/2 pound garden peas, shelled blanched

Method:

1. Heat the oil over high heat. Add the onions and garlic and saute until well browned.
2. Add the celery, potatoes, and green beans. Saute, stirring frequently, until the green beans are blistered.
3. Add the scallions, curry powder, cumin, and coriander. Saute briefly
4. Add the vegetable stock and bring it to a simmer. Stew the ingredients until they are all very tender and the liquid is thickened. Adjust the seasoning to taste with salt and pepper.
5. Add the green peas to the pilaf. Make a ring of pilaf and serve the curry in the center.

Internship
Cont'd from pg. 4.

Participating organisations in New Providence include Atlantis, Paradise Fisheries, Heritage Seafood, Lucayan Tropical Produce, the Bahamas Agriculture Industrial Corporation (BAIC – also their sub-offices in Long Island and Exuma) and Goodfellow Farms. Across the Family Islands participating businesses, agencies and charitable organisations include Edrin Seymour of Applehole Farms in Eleuthera, Wayne Hall of Halls Organic Farm in Grand Bahama, the Bahamas National Trust (in Andros and Eleuthera), Friends of the Environment in Abaco and the Department of Forestry in Andros.

Earlier this year Minister of Agriculture and Marine Resources Alfred Gray, while addressing the 2015 North Andros Agricultural & Marine Resources Agri-Business Expo, pledged the Government's full financial support

to BAMSI students who looked to pursue their passion in the agricultural arena upon graduation. This strategic sponsorship, Minister Gray indicated, was viewed by the Government as an integral part of its commitment to spur economic growth, particularly in the Family Islands, and also as a foundational element in the country's push to build a sustainable food supply while reducing the amount of food imports entering the nation's borders.

*Organisations, agencies and environmental groups throughout the Bahamas that are interested in participating in the internship programme or lend any other assistance are asked to call the BAMSI office in the Island Trader's Building, East Bay Street at (242) 397.6580, email bamsipr.2014@gmail.com or bamsiinternship@gmail.com for more information.



BAMSI student Romeo Josey had the opportunity to work with the Department of Forestry (Andros location). Pictured above is Romeo helping with restoration efforts at Staniard Creek, Andros. He is removing foreign debris and litter that could potentially pollute the creek, damaging the surrounding ecosystem. The Forestry Unit is also mandated to protect mangrove forests, as they are vital to marine species and ecosystems, thus our Fishing industries.

Symonette Visit
Cont'd from pg. 6

The Symonette's were also invited to partner with BAMSI's research and educational arm to assist Lucayan Tropical and other related agencies within the industry with on the ground training in post-harvest techniques, an area that BAMSI sees as critical to the success and continued development of the food industry. Along with the challenge to provide local retailers and wholesalers with



year-round sought after produce, BAMSI's recent partnering with Super Value, the country's largest food store chain, are credible steps being taken to increase the economic intake of Bahamian



farmers through its Associate Farmer's Programme, reduce total food imports and provide Bahamian families with locally grown, high quality produce.

Professional Development Summer Series 2015

June 25th, 2015

Western Air Conference Centre

Registration Fee \$20

The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute is pleased to announce its first professional development certificate course. The seminar will cover:

- ♦ Health and Safety in the workplace
- ♦ Conflict Resolution
- ♦ Personal Money Management
- ♦ Effective Communication Skills
- ♦ The Importance of a Tertiary Level Education

NEW CERTIFICATE COURSES 2015

The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute is pleased to announce a slate of new certificate courses offered this September:

- ♦ Agribusiness
- ♦ Farm Skills

NEW FOR FALL 2015: Calling all lifelong learners!

Under the umbrella of **Continuing Education and Enrichment Programmes**, BAMSI invites the public to explore new interests, develop new skills, and enrich their lives. Students of all ages will enjoy unique learning experiences year-round through classes, online learning, festivals and conferences, educational travel, and more. Available programmes include:

- ♦ Academic Upgrading (Preparation for college-level degrees)
 - A. College Prep Math
 - B. College Prep English
 - C. College Prep Biology
- ♦ Professional and paraprofessional development (Certification programmes)
- ♦ Personal Development (Non-credit courses and programmes)
- ♦ Family Island and Distance Education

BAMSI IN THE NEWS!

♦ **AML, Lucayan exec says BAMSI could tap \$20M produce market**

A little over a week after signing a deal with Super Value, officials at the Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute appear to be courting AML Foods Ltd, hosting AML stakeholder and principal...

<http://www.thenassauguardian.com/bahamas-business/40-bahamas-business/56598-aml-lucayan-exec-says-bamsicould-tap-20mproduce-market>

♦ **\$14M allocated for capital works at BAMSI**

The Christie administration has allocated \$21m in the upcoming fiscal year for the Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute in North Andros, according to the e2015/2016 draft budget estimates.

<http://www.tribune242.com/news/2015/may/29/14m-allocated-unspecified-capital-works-bamsi/>

♦ **BAMSI to repay govt investment in commercial operation**

The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) intends to repay the government "every single cent" it spent on establishing the commercial arm of the institute, according to BAMSI Project...

<http://www.thenassauguardian.com/bahamas-business/40-bahamas-business/56372-bamsito-repay-govt-investment-in-commercial-operation>

♦ **BAMSI, Super Value ink deal**

The leadership of the Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) is trumpeting an agreement for the institute and its associated farmers to supply a range of fruits and vegetables to Super...

www.thenassauguardian.com/bahamas-business/40-bahamas-business/56326-bamsi-super-value-ink-deal

♦ **BAMSI offers Internship Scheme to Students**

Students enrolled at the Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute will take part in a six week, paid internship programme after officials at the institution secured agreements with more than a dozen companies around the country.

<http://www.tribune242.com/news/2015/may/15/bamsi-offers-internship-scheme-students/>

♦ **BAMSI 'making great strides'**

The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute is continuing to make strides towards creating an environment of self-sufficiency for The Bahamas and promoting agriculture and fisheries to competitive global levels, according to a spokesman for the project. hopeful...

<http://www.tribune242.com/news/2015/apr/23/bamsi-making-great-strides/>

Interested in creating your own Aquaponics system?

July 15—17, 2015
Registration Fee: \$200

“From the gate to the plate” takes on an even more sustainable dynamic when we consider the aquaponics system. This system combines the raising of fish and other sea creatures with the cultivation of plants in the same enclosed environment.

The BAMSI three-day program will help beginners and those already with a working knowledge of science-based aquaponics systems by providing the training and support to construct and operate a backyard system that will assist in satisfying the demands of family, community and nation.

The Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute

Backyard Farming: Aquaponics 101

Presented by the MARINE SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

Participants will experience:

- ♦ A theoretical overview of Aquaponics
- ♦ A tour of BAMSI
- ♦ Practical work: constructing a backyard system
- ♦ Materials included: Construction Manual

Registration fee includes meals and transportation

Attendees will receive a Certificate of Participation at completion of session.

For more information on the seminar contact: (242) 376.6913 or
Email: bamsipr.2014@gmail.com or bamsiadmissions@gmail.com
Follow us on Facebook: BamsiBahamas

BAMSI 2015 Summer Series



Personal Success and Professional Development Course

Western Air Conference Centre

June 25th, 2015

Registration Fee: \$20

5:30pm — 7:30pm

♦ Occupational Health and Safety

Highlights the creation of a safe working environment and encourages the adoption of practices that will minimize accidents in the workplace and in the home.

♦ Conflict Management

How do we manage conflict at work or in our personal lives? Learn techniques to resolve workplace conflicts and general principles to help guide you through your daily lives peacefully and successfully.

♦ Importance of a Tertiary Education

Can higher education improve the quality of my life? Will it help me secure a better job or change careers? Understand how a tertiary education can positively impact every aspect of your life.

♦ Effective Communication in a Global Environment

An important part of the road to success is your ability to communicate clearly, effectively and objectively with others. Learn your personal communication style and how you can build on that for success.

♦ Personal Money Management

Do you have a plan for home ownership? Should you be saving for your children's college education? Retirement is so far away, why should you think about it now? Learn how to plan for a secure financial future and position your family for success.

Attendees will receive a Certificate of Participation at completion of session.

For more information on the seminar contact: (242) 376. 6905

or email: bamsipr.2014@gmail.com

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Ready, Set, Go!

Let's Go Crabbin'

We catchin' crab in da Big Yard from we reach
Learning how to de-claw and fatten' up da crab
Cookin' up a feast of crab

BAMSI Presents:

The First ANNUAL **CRAB-CENTRIC** Weekend Getaway!
June 12 — 14, 2015

Registration Fee: \$195

Adults Only

(includes a tour of BAMSI, meals, crab bio class and transportation)

Bring ya cooler, flashlight and walking boots

For more information contact bamsipr.2014@gmail.com or call 242.397.6580



The Blue Hole Bulletin:

Brought to you by BAMSI's Office of Communications

For more information or to submit community events/stories

email us at bamsipr.2014@gmail.com or call us at (242) 376.6905