

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **The Bermuda Tourism Authority Announces Board Transition in 2022**

*Brand guru & international stylist to the stars - Shiona Turini, Hotelier - Bushara K. Bushara, and former NYC advertising executive - Carol Blaser set to join the BTA Board in January*

**Hamilton, Bermuda (January 6, 2021)** – The Bermuda Tourism Authority (BTA) today announced three new board members for 2022 and hailed the contributions of the departing board members whose terms have just ended. Jessica Mello, Philip Barnett, and Stephen Todd were thanked for their dedicated service to Bermuda through their directorship at the BTA. Shiona Turini, Bushara K. Bushara and Carol Blaser will serve as first-time board directors of the island’s destination marketing organisation starting January 2022.

Premier David Burt said, “We salute Jessica Mello, Philip Barnett and Stephen Todd for their service to the island and join Bermuda in thanking them. They have played an invaluable role contributing to the strategic aims of the organisation over the years. We are particularly grateful for their leadership during the challenges brought on by the pandemic. There is no doubt that the entire board will continue to work together to realise greater success for Bermuda’s tourism.”

Chairman Wayne Caines, MP, said, “We welcome these three dynamic board members who each deliver a distinct perspective that will support our mission as the organisation seeks to revive tourism after twenty months of pandemic induced losses for the sector. Shiona brings unique media insight, brand expertise and insider access, while Bushara brings significant local and regional industry intelligence, as well as a demonstrated history of service to the sector and we expect that the BTA will benefit from their know-how. Our third new appointee, Carol Blaser comes with decades of advertising and media experience that will help support our strategic marketing efforts. We thank original board members Jessica and Philip who have given yeoman’s service to the organisation since its inception in 2013 and likewise commend Stephen for his invaluable contributions and keen tourism focus since he joined the board. We wish them all the best and look forward to working alongside them in their various roles in the industry.”

### **Outgoing Board Members**

**Jessica Mello** has played an integral role in the Bermuda Tourism Authority since its inception in 2013 and has been the longest-serving director to date. She has leveraged her experience working as an economist for high profile tourism projects such as the London Eye, Dubai’s Palm Islands and the

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Formula 1 circuit to elevate Bermuda's tourism marketing strategy. Moreover, Jessica has been a tireless advocate for the environment, serving as an advisor for the Bermuda Ocean Prosperity Programme (BOPP) advocating for Blue Tourism. She will continue to further Bermuda's sustainable tourism aims through ongoing work with BOPP and remains supportive of Bermuda's tourism sector.

Similarly, **Philip Barnett** has been a part of the foundation of the Bermuda Tourism Authority, with his tenure as a two-term director beginning in 2013. His contributions to Bermuda's hospitality sector have been far-reaching with entrepreneurial successes through his business, the Island Restaurant Group, his leadership at the Bermuda Chamber of Commerce and a solid directorship of the BTA as Chairman of the Human Resources Sub Committee. His insight and guidance have been critical to the development of our National Tourism Plan. And he has shown his commitment to developing and empowering leadership capabilities within the organisation and the industry.

**Stephen Todd** joined the BTA Board with decades of distinguished experience in the financial sector and key leadership positions in Bermuda. In his role as CEO of the Bermuda Hotel Association, he enjoys an unmatched network across the island's hotel landscape and the Authority has benefitted greatly from his contributions. His leadership was highlighted through his contributions to the Bermuda Hospitality Recruitment Drive this week. In alignment with the organisation's values, Todd is passionate about Bermuda and its visitors and has lent his expertise to the strategic growth of Bermuda's critical tourism sector.

### 2022 BTA Board Appointees

**Shiona Turini** is a brand consultant, costume designer, as well as a celebrity, commercial and editorial stylist. In her fifteen-year long career in entertainment, fashion, and publishing, Shiona has solidified herself as one of the industry's leading experts and has been commended for her work both behind and in front of the camera.

Turini has been a high-profile ambassador for her island home and leveraged professional and personal relationships in service of the island's tourism ambitions. She has partnered with the BTA to elevate the island's profile by engaging A-list celebrities for on-island experiences which they amplified on social channels to their millions of followers around the world.

She is a highly regarded thought-leader in the world of fashion, design and celebrity culture. As costume designer on HBO's *Insecure* and a nominee for the 2020 Costume Designers Guild Award for her work on Universal Pictures' *Queen & Slim*, she is a major player in media, music and fashion.

Her roots in media include fashion editor roles in some of the leading international fashion magazines such as *Cosmopolitan*, *CR Fashion Book*, *Teen Vogue* and *W Magazine*. More recently, as an independent consultant she has been tapped to style covers for *Elle Magazine*, *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*. She has also been engaged to provide brand consultation services for premier brands such as *Barbie*, *Christian Dior*, and *Free People*.

**Bushara K. Bushara** joins the board of directors with more than two decades in Bermuda's hospitality industry. He is currently General Manager of *Newstead Belmont Hills*.

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Bushara serves as Chairman of the Bermuda Hotel Association having previously held the post of President. Additionally, he is on the board of the Caribbean Hotel Association and is Vice President of the Hotel Employers of Bermuda (HEB). Prior to working in Bermuda, Bushara worked in Public Affairs in the U.S. Embassy, Doha, Qatar.

Bushara has demonstrated his commitment to the industry through dedicated service in key appointments in the community. He formerly served on the board of the Bermuda Department of Tourism (BDOT), the Board of Directors for the Chamber of Commerce, the Medical Tourism Committee, the Monitor G

**Carol Blaser** has been named to the board of directors having retired from an auspicious 35-year career in advertising in New York. She served in many key roles at Grey Advertising Agency, ABC and CBS Networks, Select Media, and finally at ITN Networks. At ITN she maintained an exciting and successful career reaching the Executive Vice President and Head of Sales position. During her time at ITN networks she was recognized for increasing revenues by over 300% to \$350 million.

Carol is known to be an astute, resourceful, detail-oriented problem solver motivated to fulfill high expectations with an entrepreneurial spirit. ITN executives characterized Carol as a mission-driven professional with the ability to work independently and collaboratively to achieve objectives. Blaser is a retiree living full time in Bermuda since 2006. She is passionate about adding value to the community and has dedicated significant time to Bermudian causes including Relay for Life, SCARS and the Friends of Bermuda Railway Trail.

### **About Bermuda Tourism Authority (BTA)**

The Bermuda Tourism Authority (BTA) is an award-winning, accredited destination marketing organisation that promotes Bermuda internationally and works to empower our tourism industry stakeholders. Explore Bermuda's National Tourism Plan at [BermudaNTP.com](http://BermudaNTP.com).