



PRESS RELEASE

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## **Achievements mark IoD's 30th Anniversary**

The Bermuda branch of the Institute of Directors (IoD) is celebrating 30 years as the Island's leading resource for professionalism and excellence in boardrooms across all sectors of the economy.

Three important achievements in 2021 helped mark the milestone year, with Cora Lee Starzomski and James O'Shaughnessy attaining their chartered director designations and Rochelle Simons being awarded a Fellowship from the main branch of the organisation.

Since 1991, IoD Bermuda has been delivering a professional development programme, as well as informal training and networking, for the people who run businesses and non-profits, large and small, both locally and internationally.

"The programmes IoD provides encourage successful entrepreneurial activity while also promoting governance best practices that benefit the business community and society as a whole," said IoD Bermuda Co-Chair, Michelle Cardwell. "This is reinforced by the commendable achievements of our new chartered directors and, of course, the recognition of Rochelle's invaluable contributions to IoD."

IoD Fellowship status is achieved by invitation and granted through a qualification process considering several criteria. Ms Simons is largely credited with revitalising the IoD Bermuda branch in the mid-2000s and served in various board capacities, including chairwoman, from 2012 to 2020. Her Fellowship recognises these efforts and she is the first Bermudian woman to be awarded Fellow status outside of the chartered director designation.

"I am grateful to my IoD London colleagues who nominated me and am honoured to have been awarded Fellow status," she said.

Ms Simons also recognised Roger Gillett, who joined IoD Bermuda in 2012 as chairman, for his role in the regeneration of the organisation.

"Roger was well known and respected in the captive insurance industry, and he sat on a number of company boards," she says. "As chairman, Roger had an important influence on the board's style of leadership, the balance of volunteer director appointments and the performance of the board."

Chartered director designation is the highest of the three designations offered through IoD. Ms Starzomski praised the level of instruction and support provided by IoD Bermuda and pointed to the board simulation exercises as an example of the comprehensive training.

"It was great practice to hone boardroom skills in both executive and non-executive director roles while benchmarking my knowledge and skills against that of my peers," she said.



Mr O'Shaughnessy noted the value of access to local resources and networking through IoD Bermuda while acknowledging Ms Simons' role in his achievement.

"She was an excellent source of support and encouragement throughout the process," he said. "The courses were enjoyable and the presenters were engaging and shared many practical examples which I applied in my day-to-day role as a director."

IoD's 30th year in Bermuda was typically busy and productive with the organisation conducting 16 sessions attended by 265 participants. These sessions included a range of courses, such as *Leading in a Crisis* and *Strategic Decision Making*, and ongoing workshops in topics like *Risk, Resilience and Change*.

"At the core of the organisation is professional development of the highest standards," said IoD Bermuda Co-Chair, Sara Schroter. "The team has covered a diverse and important set of topics for the certificate and diploma programmes as well as the professional development sessions and we're very happy with the high level of participation and engagement."

This year also saw another important first for IoD with the hiring of Danielle Riviere as Executive Director. Ms Riviere has more than 20 years' experience in programme and nonprofit management and a focus on organisational and strategic development.

"Bringing Danielle onto the team is an important step for IoD," said Ms Cardwell. "Having a full-time executive director will help open up more opportunities for the organisation and, importantly, our members. Thirty years is an important milestone for IoD Bermuda and we are excited about our plans and initiatives for 2022 and beyond."

### END ###

### **About Institute of Directors Bermuda Branch**

IoD Bermuda was formed as a branch of the United Kingdom's Institute of Directors (IoD) in 1991. Through the IoD Chartered Director programme, IoD Bermuda delivers a professional development programme and informal CPD training by providing current and aspiring directors access to the knowledge, skills and mind-set training via topical seminars led by subject matter experts and networking events which stimulate thinking and encourage debate on governance issues facing businesses and nonprofits in Bermuda. Our members represent diverse professionals from international and local, listed and unlisted, large and small, and for-profit and not-for-profit companies.

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