



Global Atlantic and BEDC Celebrate Innovation and Entrepreneurial Talent at the Second Annual Wave of Opportunity Pitch Competition

HAMILTON, BERMUDA – 22 November 2024 – Global Atlantic Financial Group (“Global Atlantic”), a leading insurance company meeting the retirement and life insurance needs of individuals and institutions – in partnership with the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation (“BEDC”) – today announced the conclusion of the Second Annual Wave of Opportunity Pitch Competition. The co-sponsored event is designed to honor small business innovation and entrepreneurship in Bermuda.

Hosted by Dr. Teneika Eve on November 21st at the Hamilton Princess Hotel & Beach Club, the competition had more than 100 people in attendance, demonstrating strong support for the eight finalists—five in the main category and three in the youth category—who showcased their innovative business ideas to a distinguished panel of judges.

As part of an effort to expand local engagement, the event was also livestreamed for the first time on the BEDC’s YouTube channel, attracting an audience of 100 viewers. This enabled a wider audience to connect with the competition from home, enhancing accessibility and fostering community support for Bermuda’s emerging entrepreneurs.

The competition showcased some of Bermuda’s brightest small business innovators, with each finalist demonstrating creativity, passion and a clear vision for the future of their business as they pitched before the live panel. The judges for this year’s event were:

- Youth Category Judges
 - Lee Simmons, Deputy Chairman of the Board, BEDC & Senior Relationship Manager, HSBC; Hadleigh Farrer, C.O.O for the Ministry of Finance; Gavin Carter, Gavin's Butter, 2023 Pitch Competition Winner; Makeba Tucker, Senior Analyst, Global Atlantic; and Stephen Lister, VP Institutional Markets Business Strategy, Global Atlantic.
- Main Category Judges:
 - Daniel Woods, Estates Surveyor at The Government of Bermuda; Greg Maybury, Accounting Manager; Kisha Tyrrell, Enzuri Beauty & Wellness, 2023 Pitch Competition Winner; Hitesh Shah, VP, Lead Valuation Actuary, Global Atlantic; and Fortunate Mashiri, AVP, Reinsurance Risk Management, Global Atlantic.

After careful and thoughtful deliberation, the winners, who were each awarded \$25,000, were announced as:

- Youth Category Winner: Nico Bean, Flow by Nico - Unique acrylic paintings, handcrafted ornaments, and custom-printed notebooks and phone cases.
- Main Category Winners:
 - Dr. Adriene Berkeley, PsyNeu - A mental health practice offering cognitive skill development and emotional wellness services.

- Jekon Edness & Kian Butterfield, Bermuda Sports Radar - OTT sports media company offering live event coverage, highlights, and profiles for local sports fans.
- Ashleigh Simons, Sade Milan Skin - An all-natural intimate skincare brand focusing on self-care and feminine wellness.

In addition to the main awards, the People's Choice Award was announced, with nearly 400 votes cast by in-person attendees and livestream viewers. An award of \$25,000 was presented to Keely Trott of NBK School of Nails—an internationally accredited nail technician school providing comprehensive hands-on training. Her exceptional pitch earned her the community's top choice.

Darryl Herrick, Co-Head of Reinsurance at Global Atlantic and President of Global Atlantic Re Limited, reflected on the evening, stating, "Congratulations to all the participants, finalists and winners, whose ideation and innovative spirit embody the essence of the Wave of Opportunity Pitch Competition. It not only highlights the incredible talent of our emerging entrepreneurs but also fosters a sense of community and support throughout the island. I would also like to extend my thanks to the BEDC, and the volunteers, mentors and judges who made this event possible. Together, we are investing in the future of our economy and inspiring the next generation of leaders."

BEDC Chairman of the Board, Jache Adams, praised the competition, adding, "I am thrilled to see the community come together for this event, which highlights the incredible entrepreneurial spirit in Bermuda. Supporting our emerging entrepreneurs is essential for fostering innovation and economic growth, and I want to thank Global Atlantic and the BEDC for their efforts. This event not only showcases the talent of our community, but also strengthens our commitment to building a vibrant economy that benefits everyone."

Erica Smith, Executive Director of BEDC, reflected on the significance of the event and the multi-year partnership, commenting, "The level of talent and innovation at this year's competition was truly inspiring. Every entrepreneur who pitched showed creativity and a commitment to making a meaningful impact on Bermuda's economy. The multi-year partnership between BEDC and Global Atlantic underscores the importance of sustained support for Bermuda's small businesses. We are honored to be part of these entrepreneurs' journeys as they grow and evolve their ventures. Congratulations to all the finalists and winners—they are paving the way for Bermuda's future."

This competition continues to be a cornerstone of the multi-year partnership between BEDC and Global Atlantic, which aims to provide ongoing support to local businesses. Through this collaboration, both organizations are dedicated to fostering entrepreneurship in Bermuda by offering grants, resources and guidance to help small businesses succeed.

With the success of this year's event, BEDC is already looking forward to next year's Wave of Opportunity Pitch Competition. Entrepreneurs interested in applying for the 2025 competition should stay tuned to BEDC's website and social media channels for updates and announcements when applications open. For more information and to watch the entire competition, visit BEDC's YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/@bedcbda. Stay connected for future events and opportunities at www.bedc.bm.

About BEDC

Bermuda Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) is Bermuda's premier source of free, confidential business advice for entrepreneurs. The mission is to serve Bermuda's local business community with the highest degree of professionalism by providing authoritative business advice, counsel, and financial support. Bermuda Business Starts Here! For more information, visit www.bedc.bm.

About Global Atlantic

Global Atlantic Financial Group is a leading insurance company meeting the retirement and life insurance needs of individuals and institutions. With a strong financial foundation and risk and

investment management expertise, the company delivers tailored solutions to create more secure financial futures. The company's performance has been driven by its culture and core values focused on integrity, teamwork, and the importance of building long-term client relationships. Global Atlantic is a wholly owned subsidiary of KKR, a leading global investment firm. Through its relationship, the company leverages KKR's investment capabilities, scale and access to capital markets to enhance the value it offers clients. KKR's parent company is KKR & Co. Inc. (NYSE: KKR).

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Global Atlantic Financial Group (Global Atlantic) is the marketing name for The Global Atlantic Financial Group LLC and its subsidiaries. The Global Atlantic Re foundation is dedicated to the promotion of economic development, education and environmental sustainability initiatives throughout Bermuda.

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