

**The CARIBBEAN INNOVATION CHALLENGE 2019 will be open to applications from small businesses in USVI until October 15th, 2019.**

**Press Release**

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Saint Thomas, USVI – The global humanitarian organization Mercy Corps and Bacardi Limited, the largest privately held spirits company in the world, are awarding 25 innovative local businesses up to \$5,000 USD each and access to free mentoring through Mercy Corps' MicroMentor initiative. MicroMentor is a social platform that enables the world's largest community of purpose-driven entrepreneurs and business mentors to create powerful connections, solve problems, and build successful businesses together,

The Caribbean Innovation Challenge is accepting submissions through October 15, 2019. Local entrepreneurs who have licensed businesses, are of legal age, and live in the territory can submit their applications through the Challenge website: <https://www.micromentor.org/blog/cic2019/>

Free access to the MicroMentor platform is available to all entrepreneurs from USVI who are seeking to strengthen their business strategies and improve their chances of winning through <https://micromentor.org/caribbean>. Studies have shown that entrepreneurs who received mentoring on MicroMentor go on to create an average of two new jobs. Mentored entrepreneurs experienced nearly a 40% increase in revenue, as well as a significantly higher survival rate for their businesses beyond the first year of operations.

The Caribbean Innovation Challenge is part of a larger initiative between Mercy Corps and Bacardi to support recovery and rebuilding efforts in the region, seeking to impact 300 small businesses in the USVI. The Caribbean Innovation Challenge is also supported by West Indies Company, Bacardi's distributor partner in the USVI.

**About Bacardi Limited:**

Bacardi Limited, the largest privately held spirits company in the world, produces and markets internationally recognized spirits and wines. The Bacardi Limited brand portfolio comprises more than 200 brands and labels, including BACARDÍ® rum, GREY GOOSE® vodka, PATRÓN® tequila, DEWAR'S® Blended Scotch whisky, BOMBAY SAPPHIRE® gin, MARTINI® vermouth and sparkling wines, CAZADORES® 100% blue agave tequila, and other leading and emerging brands including WILLIAM LAWSON'S® Scotch whisky, ST-GERMAIN® elderflower liqueur, and ERISTOFF® vodka. Founded more than 157 years ago in Santiago de Cuba, family-owned Bacardi Limited currently employs more than 7,000, operates more than 20 production facilities in 11 countries, and sells its brands in more than 170 countries. Bacardi Limited refers to the Bacardi group of companies, including Bacardi International Limited. Visit [www.bacardilimited.com](http://www.bacardilimited.com) or follow us on Twitter [@BacardiLimited](https://twitter.com/BacardiLimited) or Instagram [@BacardiLimited1862](https://www.instagram.com/BacardiLimited1862).

**About Mercy Corps:**

Mercy Corps is a leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In disaster, in hardship, in more than 40 countries around the world, Mercy Corps partners put bold solutions into action—helping people triumph over adversity and build stronger communities from within. Visit <https://www.mercycorps.org/> or follow us on [Twitter @mercycorps](https://twitter.com/mercycorps), [Facebook @mercycorps](https://www.facebook.com/mercycorps) or [Instagram @mercycorps](https://www.instagram.com/mercycorps).

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