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***VISION ON MISSION Wins Prestigious
JB Fernandes Award for NGO Excellence
at the Trinidad & Tobago NGO Professionals Conference***

Port of Spain, Trinidad - WEDNESDAY, 16 MAY 2012 – Over 100 local non-profits, government dignitaries and members of the JB Fernandes family gathered on Friday, May 11th at the Hyatt Regency Trinidad to bestow the inaugural *JB Fernandes Award for NGO Excellence in Trinidad & Tobago* on a local non-profit, **Vision on Mission**.

Vision on Mission achieved this recognition for their comprehensive rehabilitation efforts and restorative programs aimed at ex-inmates in Trinidad and Tobago.

The award presentation was held during the *2012 T&T NGO Professionals Conference*, sponsored by the JB Fernandes Memorial Trust and convened by the Institute of International Education (IIE) in partnership with Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (RPA) on May 11-12, 2012 at the Hyatt Regency Trinidad.

The *JB Fernandes Award for NGO Excellence in Trinidad & Tobago* celebrates non-profit organisations that are national models of excellence, improving communities and utilizing best practices in non-profit management. The award is funded by the JB Fernandes Memorial Trust through RPA, and is administered by IIE.

A judging panel of local and international foundations and non-profits selected Vision on Mission as the 2012 award recipient and five special recognition honorees – Adult Literacy Tutors Association (ALTA), The Cotton Tree Foundation, Mamatoto Resource and Birth Centre, Roxborough Police Youth Club and SERVOL.

"Receiving this award from such a highly respected organisation further validates Vision on Mission's work and in particular the clients we serve," said Wayne Chance, the organisation's CEO. "We hope that winning the JB Fernandes Award for NGO Excellence will help raise the visibility of Vision on Mission as well as the pressing needs of ex-prisoners, at-risk youth and socially displaced members of society in Trinidad and Tobago."

Dedicated to ex-inmate rehabilitation, re-education and re-integration, Vision on Mission was founded by Mr. Chance during his incarceration at a Port of Spain prison. His goal was to create an organisation that allowed newly released inmates to successfully re-enter the larger society, secure gainful employment and access housing in Trinidad and Tobago.

In addition, Vision on Mission also serves as advocacy body, raising public awareness and working with government ministries and other stakeholders on issues that affect incarcerated individuals and ex-inmates. As the winning organisation, Vision on Mission received a \$5,000 US monetary donation and was honoured on Friday's welcome dinner at the 2012 T&T NGO Professionals Conference.

"We are firm in our conviction that civil society organisations can play a pivotal role in creating new models for social change in Trinidad and Tobago," stated Luisa Fernandes Chapman of the JB Fernandes Memorial Trust. "Therefore, we are committed to helping our local NGO sector improve its management, financial, and programming capacity. This conference and tonight's award are symbols of that commitment."

The benefit of receiving the *JB Fernandes Award for NGO Excellence* will truly be felt throughout the organisation, given its plans for the \$5,000 donation. Although Vision on Mission was started 12 years ago, it is a young, vibrant organisation still working toward achieving sustainability and committed to growing its client programs.

Today, Vision on Mission is focused on completing a 53-acre agricultural facility that will provide employment for nearly 100 clients, many of whom have limited job opportunities. With the award's financial donation, Vision on Mission will continue to develop the farming facility, which currently involves socially displaced men in farming agricultural crops, animal husbandry and tilapia aqua-farming.

These products are sold to hospitals, restaurants and other institutions, helping Vision on Mission achieve sustainable employment opportunities for clients. In the next five years, the organisation hopes to transition to growing organic produce and expand of the animal husbandry program.

Visions on Mission's future plans also include establishing new facilities to serve young juveniles and young women through work programs (as an alternative to prison) and rehabilitation opportunities respectively.

Please visit <http://www.visiononmission.org> for additional information on Vision on Mission and <http://www.iie.org/ttnngoaward> for more information on the *JB Fernandes Award for NGO Excellence in Trinidad & Tobago*.

About the JB Fernandes Memorial Trust

The JB Fernandes Memorial Trust, is a philanthropic organisation established by the late Trinidadian business leader, Joseph Bento Fernandes. The Trust supports initiatives to increase access to education, improve health conditions, and alleviate poverty. Its activities are focused in his home country of Trinidad and Tobago; the country of his parents' origin, Portugal; and selected Portuguese communities in North America. Since 1998, the Trust has distributed nearly 1000 grants totaling more than US\$40 million.

Among the many initiatives supported in Trinidad & Tobago are:

- A comprehensive campaign to strengthen the capacity of the local non-profit sector
- Programs to expand volunteer-led literacy programs throughout the country
- Investments in community health care organisations serving expectant mothers
- Empowerment projects designed to improve skills and prospects for employment

About the Institute of International Education (IIE)

Founded in 1919, the Institute of International Education is dedicated to increasing the capacity of people to think and work on a global and intercultural basis. To accomplish its mission, IIE provides services in four key areas:

- Building leadership skills and enhancing the capacity of individuals and organisations to address local and global challenges.
- Promoting closer educational relations between the people of the United States and those of other countries.
- Rescuing threatened scholars and advancing academic freedom.
- Strengthening and linking institutions of higher learning globally.

IIE partners with educational institutions, governments, foundations, and corporations to develop and implement educational exchange and training programs that serve students, scholars and professionals in more than 175 countries. IIE-administered programs include the prestigious Fulbright and Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowships, administered by IIE on behalf of the U.S. Department of State, as well as more than 250 other initiatives that benefit over 24,000 men and women from 175 countries each year. Our organisation employs a staff of 630 at its New York headquarters and in 32 offices plus representatives around the globe. Sponsors range from large organisations and foundations like the International Monetary Fund, the International Labor Organisation, and the Ford, Rockefeller and Packard Foundations to private-sector companies such as ExxonMobil Corporation and GE Foundation. www.iie.org

About the Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (RPA)

Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors is a nonprofit organisation that currently advises on and manages more than \$200 million in annual giving. Headquartered in New York City, with offices in Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco, it traces its antecedents to John D. Rockefeller Sr., who in 1891 began to professionally manage his philanthropy "as if it were a business." With thoughtful and effective philanthropy as its one and only mission, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors has grown into one of the world's largest philanthropic service organisations, having overseen more than \$3 billion to date in grantmaking across the globe.

Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors provides research and counsel on charitable giving, develops philanthropic programs and offers complete program, administrative and management services for foundations and trusts. It also operates a Charitable Giving Fund, through which clients can make gifts outside the United States, participate in funding consortia and operate nonprofit initiatives. www.rockpa.org