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ASSOCIATION

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Contact: Lorraine Ortiz-Valcárcel, [lortiz@caribbeanhotelassociation.com](mailto:lortiz@caribbeanhotelassociation.com)  
Melissa A. Rivera, [mrivera@caribbeanhotelassociation.com](mailto:mrivera@caribbeanhotelassociation.com)  
Tel 787 725 9139/Fax 787 725 9108

**WILLEM "BILLY" JONCKHEER NAMED  
2007 CHA ALLIED MEMBER OF THE YEAR**

MIAMI, Florida (June 17, 2007) – The 2007 CHA Allied Member of the Year was presented to Curaçaoan entrepreneur Willem "Billy" Jonckheer, board member of the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) and vice president of the Curaçao Hospitality and Tourism Association (CHATA) at the Salute to the Stars of the Industry, during the Opening Ceremony of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Conference (CHTC 2007), in Miami. "Billy is a go-getter; his outspoken enthusiasm is a constant reminder of his commitment to the region's tourism industry and CHA," said Dianelys Rodríguez, VP Destination Business Development, Establishment Services International, American Express.

Born to an old island family in 1960, Billy went to school and college in the United States before joining the airline and travel industry working with ALM in Miami. "I studied aviation in Florida and found the tourism sector very intriguing. Eventually I ended up working at Maduro Travel, which allowed me to stay connected to home," explained Jonckheer once.

In 1998, he returned to his native island to join his father's newspaper business and later started his own advertising agency, Jonckheer Advertising and Marketing Consultants, in 1992. Soon after, he became involved in the local hotel association, which ultimately led to the Caribbean Hotel Association and its Board of Directors, to which he was appointed in representation of CHA's allied members based in the Caribbean.

Most recently, Jonckheer was largely responsible for successfully securing the venue of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Investment Conference 2007 for Curaçao. The event registered the largest number of delegates since its inception in 1997.

Billy Jonckheer has also represented Curaçao's national hotel association on the board of various organizations, such as a foundation to keep Curaçao clean, the local Chamber of Commerce, as well as in collaborative discussion with industry and social partners.

### **Criteria**

Nominees for the "CHA Allied of the Year" award are evaluated taking into consideration their efforts in the following key areas: volunteer work with CHA; membership development; fundraising activities; advocacy activities on behalf of CHA; motivation of others, work with national hotel associations, and involvement in regional tourism activities, among others.

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**Note to the editor :**

Interviews with the winner, an American Express spokesperson and/or a CHA officer can be arranged by request.