



THE INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS OF BARBADOS

## Press Release

### **Students exposed to career path advice through Accountancy Week**

**Bridgetown, Barbados, November 23, 2009:** Dozens of accounting and business students from the Barbados Community College had their eyes opened to the promises and the pitfalls of pursuing a career in accounting when the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Barbados (ICAB) held an outreach event at the Howells Road, St Michael institution recently.

As part of this year's Accountants Week activities, the Barbados Community College students were given the special opportunity to hear first-hand perspectives on entering and succeeding in the profession from Brian Robinson, partner with PricewaterhouseCoopers; Phillip McKeever, Business Development Manager at Cave Shepherd; and David Simpson, ICAB treasurer and Managing Director of Prestige Accounting. In a candid two-hour presentation, the three ICAB members advised the students on how to approach studying for their professional qualifications, how to make themselves attractive candidates for future employers, and the various career pathways open to them beyond pure accounting once they were qualified.

In a wide-ranging presentation, Robinson took the students through the history of accounting (including the origins of the term "bean counters") and reminded them that as accountants they would form an integral part of any business transaction – bringing balance and a sense of trust to all the parties involved.

Simpson followed with an overview of professional accounting as a career, pointing out to students that they required a solid secondary education and a good first degree (either an associate or bachelors degree) before they could pursue a chartered accountant designation. However, he did note that there was no requirement for the first degree to be in accounting, but it was helpful, especially since they were required to also have practical experience as they pursued their certificates.

McKeever illustrated how he was a good example of Simpson's point by revealing to students that his first degree was in Chemistry. He also reminded the students that "the world was open" to them once they had an accounting qualification as he outlined possible careers for them in public practice, government, commerce, industry, education, and consulting.

During the question-and-answer segment, the three presenters also advised the students to be as well-rounded as possible since they, as managers, looked not simply for “straight A” students, but ones who proved that they could relate well to clients and function well as members of a team.

The Accountants Week of celebration was held from November 15 to 21 under the theme: “Surviving the Recession, Laying the Foundation for Growth” as an opportunity for members of the profession to improve their knowledge, network, socialize and engage in community service activities.