

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bermuda Institute student wins *Spirit* voyage scholarship

Hamilton, Bermuda, July 12, 2017—A 14-year-old Bermuda Institute student is taking part in a week-long sail-training voyage around the island aboard *Spirit of Bermuda* after winning a new scholarship from the Bermuda International Shipping Association (BISA).

Indio Francis was awarded the first Charlotte Watlington Student Voyage Scholarship, a partnership between BISA and the Bermuda Sloop Foundation offering offshore sailing experiences to local high-schoolers aboard the 112-foot sail-training vessel. The annual \$1,500 scholarship, named for avid Bermudian sailor Charlotte who died in 2013, is given to deserving teenagers aged 14 and older to attend the foundation's Girls Coastal Skiller Voyages.

"BISA is honoured to offer this scholarship to Indio Francis," said BISA Deputy Chair Angelique Burgess, "and we wish her a successful sailing experience."

BISA, established in 1995 and re-launched in 2013, brings together maritime-related shipping interests on the island to promote Bermuda as a global shipping jurisdiction and provide support for local students planning to enter the field. One of its key focus areas is education and scholarship projects. The group supports students in the maritime field through mentor programmes such as the Bermuda Sloop Foundation and the Bermuda Sea Cadets Corps, and awards scholarships to those pursuing shipping-related courses and careers.

"My wife and I are honoured that BISA has chosen to remember my daughter Charlotte, who was a keen sailor and represented Bermuda in the Youth Worlds Sailing Championships," said James Watlington, Charlotte's father and a BISA Director. "It's our hope that Indio will take full advantage and learn as much as she can on *Spirit of Bermuda*."

Indio's first experience on *Spirit* was this past March, when she participated in a week-long voyage through her school. While on board, she enjoyed learning about sailing, as well as skills such as team-building, and topics like weather patterns and the importance of recycling.

"I'm interested in sailing and willing to learn how to sail a large vessel," she said, adding the *Spirit* course helped her build self-confidence and make new friends. "I am also interested in navigation and astronomy and this summer course seems like the perfect venue to hone my skills these two areas."

More summer courses are being offered to young people, including a co-ed Overseas Voyage with tall ships for students 16-plus (July 20 to August 20), and a Boys Coastal Skiller Voyage (August 28 to September 1) for students 14-plus. For more information, contact education.manager@bermudasloop.org.



Scholarship winner Indio Francis with, from left, her mother Latoya Francis, BISA Director James Watlington, and father Karim Francis



MEDIA CONTACT:

Rosemary Jones

Head of Communications & Marketing

rosemary@bda.bm

441 278-6558

441 337-4696

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