

Ross Webber, CEO, BDA
Bermuda Principles: Impact on Splicing
Welcome & Premier Intro
7:10 pm, Wednesday, February 21, 2018
Fairmont Southampton, Bermuda

Good evening, science boffins, eggheads, lab geeks and mad geniuses... oh, hang on... that was my first draft—apologies...

Erm—good evening, distinguished guests and venerable members of the science community!

It's my pleasure, on behalf of the BDA, to extend a very warm welcome to this second edition of "Bermuda Principles."

I understand we have attendees from the UK, the United States, from Australia and Denmark, Switzerland and South Africa. Welcome, all of you, to Bermuda!

The BDA is proud to support this event for many reasons. A big part of our mission is diversifying our economy—leveraging science and technology.

Bermuda is already attracting great minds and innovative thinking in both those sectors. It is leading to new types of business that can create opportunities not only for Bermuda and Bermudians, but also for those who choose our island as a base for their projects. Real business in cutting-edge fields is happening here—and we're excited to be part of driving this evolution.

This event demonstrates how those seeds for growth are sewn. It's about the big ideas and wide-ranging impact a small, yet unique, jurisdiction like Bermuda can wield on the world.

We have a long legacy of innovation—including the scientific variety. Dr William Beebe's pioneering bathysphere adventure, and the rediscovery of the cahow, or Bermuda petrel, are two examples. Our island played a key role in some of NASA's most historic manned space flights. Our involvement in the Human Genome Project is yet another example.

Innovators see Bermuda as an exemplary base for global projects because it offers a winning combination. Ideal location. World-class expertise. Sophisticated infrastructure and a blue-chip reputation.

We're proud of a century-long association with institutions such as Harvard and New York Universities, whose scientists helped establish our Bermuda Aquarium and the Bermuda Biological Station for Research—today known as the Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences.

Along with the pure science it has won world attention for, BIOS has also succeeded in marrying two distinct worlds—the realm of climate research with that of Bermuda's major industry...insurance and reinsurance. The Risk Prediction Initiative, or RPI 2.0, at BIOS connects key expertise from both fields to benefit both corporate and scientific goals—a merger perfectly suited to Bermuda's strengths.

Likewise, this conference is particularly well-thought-out. It not only merges science and business—and we look forward to seeing what breakthroughs it generates on both fronts—but it also reaches out to the related arenas of healthcare and education.

We applaud Bermuda's very own Dr Carika Weldon for achieving all this through her great energy, determination and vision. Carika recognised these synergies and brought them all together this week, inspiring absolutely everyone—whether they be scientists or students.

Before I close, I have to articulate another reason why I am so excited, thrilled, proud and invested to have this conference here in Bermuda. The issue of teaching the sciences and getting students to understand the massive value and varied applications to the real world is critical.

To survive in the modern world, we need to develop talent that is inspired and motivated by the sciences, technology, programming, calculus, maths and engineering.

Last November, Carika and her group of mentors from De Montfort University in Leicester staged a high-school science competition at Bermuda College. The challenge was to solve a forensic whodunit through lab work and presentations. It was an engaging, inspiring and educational experience. I know this because a replica of the trophy sits at my home. My 17-year-old daughter, Alys, was a member of the winning team. The Amino Lab first prize is at her school.

When I say it was inspiring, I mean it. It made Alys even more determined to pursue her goal of achieving a Bachelor of Science degree in Forensics. She's had offers from Cardiff, Keele, South Wales and... De Montfort.

This is the gift Carika is giving back to Bermuda, and especially to its young people. Sharing her passion for science education, she and this bold brainchild of a conference will achieve great things that can prepare Bermuda's next generation for a global economy where science, technology—and matching venture capital—can unite. Not only to help change our island, but also to change our world.

Thank you, Dr Weldon...

Now, with all that said – I'll get on with what I was brought up here to do!

It is my privilege to introduce someone who shares this conference's ilk of drive, ambition—and vision. A tech-savvy leader who last Friday read one of the most progressive and thoughtful budget statements I've heard for quite some time. With the West Ham-versus-Liverpool game fast approaching at the weekend... as a Liverpool supporter, it gives me great pleasure to introduce a West Ham supporter. The leader of our country, Minister of Finance and Premier of Bermuda, the Honourable David Burt.

Mr Premier...