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PBN EDITORIALS

Prosperity can grow where the sun shines

Two weeks ago, the R.I. Economic Development Corporation and R.I. National Guard took a handful of local businessmen on a joint trade mission to the Bahamas. Such trips – and more important, the mindset they represent – should become more common as Rhode Island businesses raise their sights to look for new opportunities, no matter where they are.

Far from just an excuse to get some tropical sun, the mission was a concrete first step toward developing new markets for the state's services and products. Such trips – and more important, the mindset they represent – should become more common as Rhode Island businesses raise their sights to look for new opportunities, no matter where they are.

Some headway was made in the Bahamas, as reported by Providence Business News' Natalie Myers.

But ultimately, there is something more important than whether Newport Vineyards sells wine, or Newport Collaborative Architects turns some historic properties into B&Bs, or whether Sea Fresh USA sells squid and skate to the Atlantis resort.

The mere act of traveling to the Bahamas shows that the leaders of those companies understand that they must look outside themselves and outside their usual customer base to create more healthy and vibrant enterprises. By doing so, these forward-looking entrepreneurs are helping to immunize their companies against the vagaries of global competition and creating value for generations to come.

Coincidentally, the trade mission concluded just a week before Bryant University hosted its 22nd annual World Trade Day at the school's Smithfield campus, and the messages could not have dovetailed better: To compete, you must understand and seek advantage within the global marketplace, and you must recognize and utilize talent all over world.

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