

## **FIU grants young Jamaicans top award for business excellence**

MONIQUE-HAMATY-SIMMONDS, chief executive officer and president of Tortuga Rum Cake Company/Tortuga Imports, Inc, was honoured by the Florida International University (FIU) Alumni Association recently.

Hamaty-Simmond received the the Charles E. Perry Young Alumni Visionary award, presented at the 10th annual Torch Awards Gala, held on March 19, at JW Marriott Marquis Miami, Florida.

The Young Visionary Award annually recognises a FIU graduate who has made significant contributions to their field of endeavour early in their career. Another distinguished alumni honoured at the gala was fellow Jamaican Adam Stewart, CEO of Sandals Resorts International.

"I am very grateful to Florida International University for honouring me with The Charles Perry Young Alumni Visionary Award. I also want to thank my family, friends and staff for all of their support," said Hamaty-Simmonds. "It was a pleasant surprise to discover that Adam Stewart was also being honoured. Jamaicans are making headlines! I hope we inspire many more people to have a vision and drive to succeed."

A 1996 FIU graduate in business administration, Hamaty-Simmonds is a second-generation entrepreneur. Her father, Robert Hamaty, and his wife, Carlene, started the Tortuga Rum Company in Grand Cayman, in 1984 and later introduced the Tortuga Rum Cake baked from a generations-old family recipe.

As a teenager and throughout college, she learned the business working with her father in his office during holiday breaks and school vacations. In 1997, she and her husband Marcus Simmonds opened Tortuga Imports, also known as the Tortuga Rum Cake Company, in Miami, to bring Tortuga's taste of the islands to the American market.



Adam Stewart, CEO of Sandals Resorts International, and Monique Hamaty-Simmonds, CEO of Tortuga Rum Cake Company

At age 39, Hamaty-Simmonds heads a thriving import business and international gourmet food company. In 2002, she and Marcus, the chief financial officer for Tortuga Imports, were recognised by Gourmet News with the prestigious, biennial '20 Under-40 Award'.