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**IMMIGRATION**  
C A Y M A N I S L A N D S  
Security • Stability • Prosperity

# Immigration Essay Competition 2008

## Why Immigration is Important to the Cayman Islands

A country without people is nothing more than an expanse of land, land that, though abundant in natural beauty, will never be more than just that, forever stagnant, with an absence of beneficial growth and development.

Indeed, it is the people of a country that essentially make it what it is. They are like painters, blessed with empty canvasses that can be anything they desire them to be. The citizens of a country determine its culture, its economic sustainability and its global reputation. They are, without a doubt, the most powerful force and the greatest weapon a nation possesses to shape its future.

These people are the individuals in whom immigration responsibilities lie; you and I, the individual walking down the street, the person working at a local store, the man, woman or child boarding a flight. It is these people that are the Cayman Islands' greatest asset and it is these people our Immigration [Department] seeks to protect and defend.

Like the greatest and noblest of persons, the seams in clothing, and even life itself, immigration is often overlooked and taken for granted. One thing all too many persons fail to note is that immigration is one of the most important areas within any given government and this fact is magnified here in our small nation.

The first point that needs clarifying is that immigration goes far beyond the obvious. It is not only the sector within our government that controls the entrance and exit of persons within the Cayman Islands and their activities whilst on our shores. This, however, is certainly a part of it, [a part that] protects our people and our reputation. Everything is not as simple and clear-cut as it would appear to be at first glance. Immigration goes to the core of the matter, to every aspect possible, to see to it that the Cayman we live in is the best it can be.

Immigration, though many fail to realize it, also plays a direct yet intricate role in the success of our country, a reality made even more apparent due to our relatively small size. It almost goes without saying that we, as a country, have much to be proud of. We are a booming economic centre, with over eight thousand companies registering every year within our minimal one hundred square miles. It is this sustainability, coupled with unrivalled natural beauty and one of the most ideal locations possible that make the prospect of calling Cayman "home" such an alluring one. It is one of the duties of [the] Immigration [Department] to permit those who desire to reside in our miniature paradise and make a positive impact, an opportunity to do so while ensuring that

privilege is not abused. By allowing skilled individuals into our Islands, we are better able to build on our own achievements and advance even further economically.

Imagine the chaos, the havoc, the disorder that would wreak our nation, were outside individuals free to do as they wished in our beloved Islands. Immigration acts as a control, ensuring that [such chaos] is not a predicament we are forced to reluctantly face. Immigration goes further by regulating that no individual who has served a prison term exceeding one year or is considered “dangerous” be permitted within our country, teaming up with INTERPOL, the International Criminal Police Organization, to prevent such an occurrence. It is, after all, better to prevent than cure and unnecessary detriment [a] impact on our society is duly avoided. But, then again, what else would you expect? Our Immigration [Department] prides itself on being more than just a step ahead.

Continuing to put our well-being first, while immigration [policies] most certainly, do in fact monitor those that come into our country and their purpose for doing so, they also enable the policies that protect our country and preserve our identity. The Cayman Islands, our country, is our most valuable possession. We belong to it and it belongs to us. There is a symbiotic relationship that transcends time or difficulty and it is our moral duty to act in the best interest of our country and the persons born of it, despite being met with objections or distaste. For if we fail to do so, who will explain to our children why unemployment is so high? Who would dare recall why the economy is suffering or why criminal activity abounds? Immigration ensures that in the years to come we hold our heads high and proud, not hanging [them] in shame, reliving the mistakes of the past.

From almost the first instant a person sets foot on our soil, the role of immigration is set in motion. Perhaps the most noticeable of all Immigration duties [is] the immigration officer [who] sits loyally at his or her desk, day in and day out, greeting visitors while diligently performing the task ahead of them, giving visitors their first impression of the Cayman Islands as they land. And first impressions, as we know, are usually the most lasting. Seeing warm, genuine smiles and hearing the soothing Caymanian accent, visitors [are] at ease knowing that they have entered a country that embraces them with arms wide open. Immigration officers are, in short, Cayman’s most common and effective ambassadors, welcoming those to our utopia while ensuring it remains worthy of this illustrious title.

Immigration is, without a shadow of doubt, of utmost importance to the Cayman Islands. Whether it is by protecting the people of our country by means of criminal awareness and maintaining our global reputation, or by contributing to our economic success by allowing those who would undoubtedly benefit us an opportunity to adequately do so; whether it is by making those who are Caymanian by birth their first priority and enabling policies that ensure that what our ancestors strived to protect is not lost, or by preserving our cultural identity in a hectic and constantly advancing world; or whether it is by acting as faithful ambassadors of our nation, the effect the Immigration [Department] has on the Cayman Islands is both undeniable and vast. An absence of immigration would mean the end of Cayman as we know it.

In the past, in the present and in the future we can rest secure, knowing that Immigration [staff] has the best interests of our beautiful Cayman Islands at heart. And nothing, not time, not difficulty, not objections, nothing fragmented by man or even the wildest of imaginations, no circumstance could ever, ever change that.