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## **Natalie Briffa Farrugia wins inaugural Malta Businesswoman of the Year Award**

Natalie Briffa Farrugia is the winner of the first edition of the Malta Businesswoman of the Year Award, capping a remarkable journey from teaching primary students to tending to the vulnerable in Ethiopia and Guatemala to leading one of Malta's largest elderly home service providers, CareMalta Group Ltd.

Amanda Xuereb scooped up the Young Businesswoman Award during a ceremony that saw a line-up of inspirational business leaders and pioneers descend at the Verdala Palace to celebrate the spirit of female entrepreneurship.

The Company Award for Excellence was presented to Tigne' Mall plc for demonstrating a passion for inspiring, engaging, empowering, and furthering the success of women within its company and in the community.

Isabella Mifsud received a special mention for her inspiring commitment and for acting as a role model for others.

Natalie Briffa Farrugia said: "I am honoured to be the recipient of this prestigious award. Heartfelt thanks goes to HSBC Malta and H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca. My aim in life was always to make a difference in people's lives and I am blessed that my work allows me to do just that. If I were to share one message it would be this: look into yourself to find your uniqueness. I hope this initiative leads the way for more women to reach their full potential and be given a chance to contribute at high levels in society's platforms.'

With Natalie at the helm of CareMalta, the business has been transformed from six homes, with 437 employees in 2008, to nine state-of-the-art facilities, with over 1,000 employees and nearly €27 million in turnover as of 2017. When not busy implementing high-care standards at work, Natalie gets involved in the lives of her two young girls, contributes to Living Waters Mission, and prepares for her next marathon run.

The Malta Businesswoman of the Year Awards were launched last year through a partnership between HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c and the Office of the President of Malta, with the aim of highlighting outstanding female leaders in the business and economic world.

The President of Malta, Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, who is patron of the awards, conveyed her heartfelt congratulations to the winners and all the nominees of the Malta Businesswoman of the Year Awards, and said that "through these awards, we are not only celebrating the achievements of these remarkable women, but I am sure that we are also empowering our young women and girls to take up leadership roles across all strata of society."

Women-owned and run businesses are the fastest growing economic segment in some countries, including the United States, however in Malta, the agenda to advance women's entrepreneurship lacks momentum. In fact, 60% of graduates from the University of Malta are female but only 8.5% of all Board positions in Malta's listed companies are held by women – the lowest in the EU.

Andrew Beane, CEO of HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c, said: “With the Malta Businesswoman of the Year Awards we are thrilled to shine a spotlight on the achievements of women and celebrate their many contributions to the business world and beyond. I hope the amazing women who have won this year’s awards inspire others to follow in their footsteps.”

Chair of the Judging Panel, Sonia Hernandez said: “I am proud of Vodafone for contributing remarkably to this relevant women empowerment agenda, and I am personally committed to make an impact and help more woman be successful in Malta. I encourage Maltese business leaders to consider diversity part of their companies’ strategy and our powerful woman to take the risk and give it a try. I would love to see much more nominees next year and big congratulations to the winners this year. It has been a great privilege and honour to work together with our judges for the first time in this fabulous event and want to thank Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca and HSBC Bank Malta for making it possible.”

More information about the awards and future events can be had on [www.mbwya.com.mt](http://www.mbwya.com.mt)



**(From left to right) Amanda Xuereb – Winner of the Young Businesswoman Award; Edwin Borg, CEO Tigne Mall p.l.c. – Company Award for Excellence in the Promotion of Women; Natalie Briffa Farrugia – Winner of the Malta Businesswoman of the Year 2018; H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca; Ylenia Mifsud (on behalf of Isabella Mifsud) – Inspiring Role Model Award; Andrew Beane – CEO HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c.; Sonia Hernandez – Chair of Judging Panel**