



## 4 FORECASTS, 4 THEMES & 4 REACTIONS for Transforming Puerto Rico

*As we share this issue of The Zenith Investor, I would like to first thank Francisco "Paco Pepe" Rodríguez Castro, President & CEO of Birling Capital for his valuable contributions to the Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce all these years with his collaboration and leadership in various successful investor conferences. This time, we have the opportunity to collaborate in a monthly financial publication. If you want to stay on top of the latest financial trends, as well as getting solid, long-term insight that you can use in your financial and investment planning efforts, reading The Zenith Investor on a regular basis can be a big help.*

*I take this opportunity to also invite you to have a deep and active reflexion about our role as business men and women, and encourage you to be well informed about our global competitive environment. Today, our country's context and global competitive position demands that we reinvent ourselves, rediscover new strengths and advantages, focusing more on our human capital; along with the financial and social capital. We are planning significant events for 2020 that will provide a timely and unparalleled opportunity for deep discussion that we hope will lead to the type of entrepreneurial solutions that will rekindle our economy and lead to sustained growth.*

*Jose E. Ledesma-Fuentes, CFA  
President and Chairman of the Board  
Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce*

*Business acumen ("business savvy" and "business sense" are often used as synonyms) is defined as the keenness and quickness in understanding and dealing with a "business situation" (risks and opportunities) in a manner that is likely to lead to a good outcome. Additionally, business acumen has emerged as a vehicle for improving financial performance and leadership development. Consequently, several different types of strategies have developed around improving business acumen.*

*Financial literacy is a comprehensive understanding of the drivers of growth, profitability, and cash flow; an organization's financial statements; key performance measures; and the implications of decisions on value creation. It entails the ability to take the knowledge of business fundamentals and use it to think strategically and then take appropriate action.*

*And while financial literacy is almost never a need for senior managers and high potentials; most already possess degrees in business, including MBAs, and many have also had experience in the business sides of their professional roles, we are privileged to count with the knowledge, experience, and business acumen of our collaborator, Francisco J. Rodríguez-Castro, to help us navigate these turbulent waters.*

*The need for managers will always be to understand how their actions and their behavior impact their financial decision-making and how this in turn affects financial outcomes at the unit and the corporate level.*

*Please enjoy this issue of our Zenith Investor.*

*Miguel L. Vargas-Jiménez  
Executive Director & CEO*

As we publish The Zenith Investor, February 2020 Issue, Transforming Puerto Rico, The world is facing a new pandemic, as the Coronavirus spreads to other parts of the world. In China, there are more than 14,500 people reported infected and there have been more than 304 in deaths as China is set to begin to celebrate the Year of the Rat. In the rest of the world there are 146 cases reported, 7 in the U.S. and 1 dead. China has had other episodes of viral outbreaks that had an effect on other cities worldwide. The U.S., Japan, Britain, Italy, and Russia have issued orders of **“Do Not Travel to China due to the coronavirus”**, all foreign nationals who had recently travelled to China will be barred from entering the U.S. the Trump administration stated. This development represents a severe blow to the Chinese economy and its impact to the world's economy will depend on how the virus is contained. and However, it is worth noting that the economic impact of this event may be as much as \$62 billion.

Moving on to Puerto Rico, we have measured the administration since the term of office began 36 months ago, and no one can dispute that the Governors inherited a Puerto Rico that filed for bankruptcy, with a ruined country, a Supervisory board and fiscal management, and an economy in contraction and no access to capital markets. The

measurement period was 1/2/17 to 1/27/2020.

**We see noticeable improvements in:**

- Unemployment at 8.40% shows a decrease of 28.21% in the last 36 months.
- In addition, our labor participation rate increased to 40.50%.
- There are 974,000 mm total employees.
- The average household income increased to \$20,078, an increase of 6.65%.
- GNP growth rate for 2019 1.70%, an increase of 136% during the period.
- General Fund revenue increased to \$11.3 billion for fiscal 2019, an increase of 21.51%.

Puerto Rico has all the tools necessary to realize its potential, grow our economy, and, at the same time, break with the fiscal recklessness that has hindered our economic evolution.

**Government Execution & Credibility Suffering**

As the government faced yet another credibility crisis and with most Puerto Ricans angry about the lack of adequate management of emergency resources, an outcry began against the government. The anger resulted in a protest this past Wednesday, Jan. 22; the rally was headed by pop star Ricky Martín; reguetón star René Pérez, aka

Residente; and baseball great Yadier Molina. The principal purpose of the protest was to demand Gov. Wanda Vázquez’s resignation because of the poor management of relief efforts.

- **Economic Front: U.S. Primary Indicators Calendar: Jan.20 to February 2, 2020:**
- **U.S. existing-home sales: Existing-home sales** were reported increased to 5.54 million in December 2019 from 5.34 million in November 2019, or a 3.55 percent increase.
- **U.S. initial jobless claims:** On Jan. 23, initial jobless claims were 211,000 versus 205,000 during the previous week or a 2.92 percent increase.
- **30-year mortgage rate:** The fixed interest rate U.S. homebuyers would pay if they were to take out a 30-year loan rose to 3.65 percent from 3.64 percent.
- **U.S. New Single: Family Houses Sold:** on January 27, it was reported that 694,000 new houses were sold, this compares with 697,000 in December 19.
- **U.S. Durable Goods New Orders YoY:** On January 28, the new orders Year over Year was reported to have fallen to -3.66%, this compared favorably with the previous month that was -4.61%.
- **U.S. Initial Jobless Claims:** was published on Jan. 30 was less than expected to 216,000 versus 220,000 the past week.
- **U.S. Real GDP Growth:** was reported at 2.10% and

Benchmarks for Puerto Rico			
Governor Vazquez	Jan/27/2020	Jan/02/17	Change
Price Per Liter Regular Gasoline	\$0.830	\$0.65	27.89%
Cement Sales	1,097,000	848,700	29.26%
Unemployment	8.40%	11.70%	-28.21%
Birling Puerto Rico Stock Index	1,925.88	1237.35	55.65%
General Fund Revenue	\$11,300,000.00	\$9,300,000.00	21.51%
Real Terms GNP Growth Rate	1.70%	-4.70%	136%
Labor-force participation rate	40.50%	40.60%	-0.25%
Home ownership rate	63.90%	62.90%	1.59%
Median household income	\$20,873.80	\$18,826.00	10.88%
National debt	\$69 Billiones +	\$69 Billion+Interest	Unchanged
Credit Ratings	D	D	Default
Access to markets	No access	No Access	Unchanged

remained at the same rate as the last quarter.

- **U.S. Personal Savings Rate:** the personal savings rate was reported on Jan. 30 at 7.70%, a slight decrease from the 7.80% reported last quarter.

### **Forecast 1: Transforming Puerto Rico: Be the change you want in the world.**

The Ease of Doing Business 2020 Study shows most developing economies have been making strides to rise in the ranks and reduce the gap between developed economies in the area of the ease of doing business. However, tremendous the paces, the differences remain wide in developing countries, and including Puerto Rico because our ranking continues to suffer from the inaction of all local constituents, from the government to the private sector.

#### **The Top 10 countries: 2020**

1. **New Zealand**
2. **Singapore**
3. **Hong Kong SAR, China**
4. **Denmark**
5. **Korea, Rep.**
6. **United States**
7. **Georgia**
8. **United Kingdom**
9. **Norway**
10. **Sweden**

#### **65. Puerto Rico**

Puerto Rico rank is #65; however, in 2009, Puerto Rico was ranked #35, and in 2006 was ranked #22 in 15-years, we lost 43 spots.

#### **So let's revise our worst metrics:**

- **Starting a business**, our rank is #59
- **Dealing with construction permits**, our rank is #143
- **Trading across borders**, our rank is #70

- **Getting Electricity**, our rank is #92
- **Registering Property**, our rank is #161
- **Paying taxes**, our rank is #163

The reports further found that Latin America and the Caribbean, lag in terms of reform development and implementation, and impact. Moreover, not a single economy in our region ranks among the top 50 for the ease of doing business, once Puerto Rico was among the top 35.

The private sector should lead the way to Be the change you want in the world with the single goal of improving Puerto Rico's ranking within three years and at least regain our position within the top 35 in Ease of Doing Business.

The Transforming Puerto Rico Initiative will lead the way to implement, promote and preserve changes to our current economic situation, that dialogue would then apply a set of goals, and we call them "**Supra National Goals for Puerto Rico.**"

The range of issues that will be discussed include:

- **Puerto Rico's Economic Recovery**
- **Job Creation**
- **The Fiscal Situation and National Debt**
- **Puerto Rico's Competitiveness**
- **What is the Leadership we need in Puerto Rico**
- **The Implementation of a set of Supra National Goals**

Doing so requires a set of goals that will stand the test of time, that will be protected and preserved, no matter which party, ideology or government is in power, these goals are the goals of the people.

#### **The Supra National Goals:**

- Transform Puerto Rico with robust economic development and sustained the growth of 4% over the next four years
- Have an industrial structure in which employment in activities related to the knowledge bases economy with not less than 25% of GNP within ten years.
- Create 300,000 new jobs in the private sector in the next six years.
- Increase the labor participation rate to 55% in six years.
- Reduce the unemployment rate to 5% in six years.
- Reduce the government apparatus by transferring to the private sector any corporation, operation, or service that the private sector can perform more efficiently.
- Increase median household income by 30%, from the current \$20,873.80.
- Transform the educational system from primary to university level into one focused on entrepreneurship, trades, and transformation.

As we adopt the Transforming Puerto Rico initiative, we become the change agents we want in the world and Puerto Rico.

#### **Forecast 2: Puerto Rico's 2020 Economic Outlook**

The year 2019 turned out to be a positive year for the Puerto Rico Economy reaching 1.7% GDP growth for the first time in a decade, this is an improvement of 276% considering that 2018 ended with minus -4.7% GDP. We must concentrate our focus on the new year. Birling Capital's 2020 Economic Outlook:

## P.R. 2020 Economic Forecasts

- Gross National Product 1.9%
- Personal Consumption 1.3%
- Government Expenses 1.1%
- Gross Domestic Investment 11.5%
- Construction 24.90%
- Exports 2.10%
- Imports 2.90%
- Population 3,100 million
- Unemployment at 7.0%
- Labor force at 1,100 mm
- Labor participation rate increases to 41.0%

## Forecast 3: U.S. Bank holding Company Earnings Lead the way

Some in Corporate America have claimed that President Donald Trump has been the best thing that happened to them, other elite business people believe that his presidency is hurting the country, with budgets out our control and borrowing at increased levels. For these reasons, we decided to embark on an analytical study of the Top U.S. Banking Sector. This past week three of the top U.S. Bank holding companies reported their fourth-quarter earnings, and they mostly beat their estimates.

### •JP Morgan Chase & Co.

- Ticker Symbol: JPM
- Stock Price 1.1.19: \$100.69
- Stock Price on 1.15.20: \$138.20
- Stock Price Increase: \$37.51
- Q4 2019 Revenue: \$28.33 Billion
- Q4 2019 Net Income: \$8.52 Billion
- Total Return for 2019 42.80%

### •Citigroup Inc.:

- Ticker Symbol: C
- Stock Price 1.1.19: \$55.13

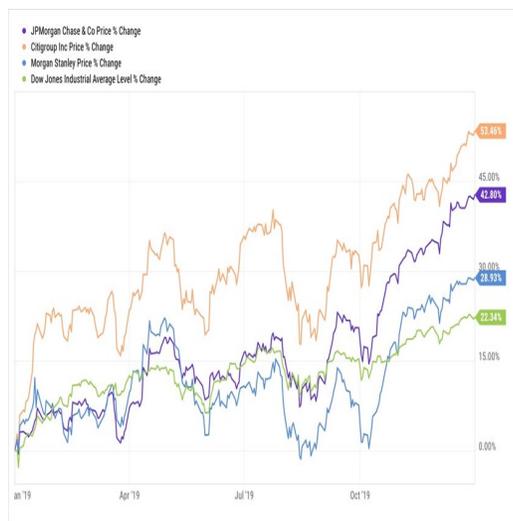
- Stock Price on 1.15.20: \$81.12
- Stock Price Increase or Loss: \$25.82
- Q4 2019 Revenue: \$18.38 Billion
- Q4 2019 Net Income: \$4.97 Billion
- Total Return for 2019 53.46%

### •Morgan Stanley:

- Ticker Symbol: MS
- Stock Price 1.1.19: \$40.40
- Stock Price on 1.15.20: \$57.51
- Stock Price Increase or Loss: \$17.11
- Q4 2019 Revenue: \$28.33 Billion
- Q4 2019 Net Income: \$8.52 Billion
- Total Return for 2019 28.93%

When compared with the return of the Dow Jones Industrial Average of 22.34%, we note that the three banks beat the Dow Jones handsomely:

- Citigroup Inc with a performance of 53.46%,
- JP Morgan Chase & Co. with a performance of 42.80%,
- Morgan Stanley with a return of 28.93%.



## Forecast 4: Phase One Trade Deal to be delayed, for Coronavirus

The official implementation date of the US-China trade agreement known as "Phase One" trade deal is scheduled to commence on February 14, 2020. However, with the Coronavirus pandemic, we expect that some parts of the agreement to be delayed. We should also expect Chinese purchases of U.S. products to be also delayed as China is focused on the more public health issues impacting the nation. As the world's media is covering the coronavirus pandemic and with Chinese officials devoting all their time to the problem, the trade deal becomes a secondary issue. It will further delay its implementation for at least the next few weeks. As for the "Phase Two" negotiations, they would be further delayed.

## What does signing the "Phase One" Trade Deal Include?

China commits to increase purchases of goods and services by \$200 billion over two years. The breakdown includes \$78 billion of manufactured goods, \$52 billion in energy, \$32 billion of agricultural products, and \$38 billion in services during the "Phase One" agreement relieves some of the pressure. However, until the "Phase Two" deal in signed trade matters with China will likely remain a source of market volatility for 2020.

## Theme 1: Major indices continue hovering near all-time highs as Coronavirus takes the stage:

The stock market picked up in 2020, exactly where it left off in 2019, even rising with a strange mix of geopolitical issues and rosy economic reports. The way the market is behaving is signaling its

likely chronicle for 2020. As the year takes shape, four vectors are likely to have an impact on investor behavior:

- **Vector 1:** As an election year, 2020 will be affected by political risks and policy shifts.
- **Vector 2:** The global, U.S. and Puerto Rico economic performance will be affected.
- **Vector 3:** The U.S. presidential impeachment and election processes will take their toll.
- **Vector 4:** How to sustain current market growth?

### Global Economic Outlook Forecasts

We expect global GDP to be 3.3%, as the slowdown that began during the latter part of 2018 subsides. Below are our forecasts for the specific nations:

- U.S. 2.2%
- Puerto Rico 1.9%
- Euro Zone 1.2%
- Japan 0.3%
- UK 1.0%
- China 5.7%
- India 6.8%
- Russia 2.0%
- Brazil 2.0%

### Theme 2: Month in Markets, Coronavirus & Global Growth Hit Markets

The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed January at 28,256.03 for a loss of 282.41 points, or -0.99% percent return. Besides, the S&P 500 closed January at 3,225.52, for

a loss of 5.26, a return of -0.15 percent. The Nasdaq closed January at 9,150.94 for an increase of 178.34 and a 1.99 percent return. The Birling Capital Puerto Rico Stock Index closed January at 1,920.05 or a loss of 117.84, and a yield of -5.78 percent. Meanwhile, the U.S. Treasury's 10-year note lost, closing at 1.51 percent, or a decrease of -21.35 percent. The U.S. Treasury's 2-year note fell to close at 1.41 percent, a return of minus -15.82 percent.

### Theme 3: Birling Capital Puerto Rico Stock Index

Another metric to compare Puerto Rico's economic advancement is to evaluate the stock index of the Birling Capital Puerto Rico Stock Index that achieved 56.91% growth against the Dow Jones Industrial Average which grew by 44.39%, and we have used the period since 2 January 2017 to January 27, 2020, the results are as follows:

- **Evertec, Inc. (EVTC)** achieved a total performance of 91.89% that surpassed both the Birling Puerto Rico Stock Index and the Dow Jones Industrial Average.
- **OFG Bancorp. (OFG)** achieved a total return of 55.73% outperforming the Birling Puerto Rico Stock Index as well as the Dow Jones Industrial Average.
- **First Bancorp. (FBP)** achieved a total return of 49.32% that surpassed both the Birling Puerto Rico Stock

Index and the Dow Jones Industrial Average.

- **Popular, Inc. (BPOP)** achieved a total return of 32.61%, which is below both indices.
- **Triple S Management (GTS)** achieved a total performance of -11.80, which falls below both indices.



### Theme 4: The Worlds Markets slide as fears spread of coronavirus impact on growth

We note that the U.S. stock markets erased their year to date gains, on January 31, following the Euro Zone as the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic rises. The Dow Jones Industrial Average had lost more than 530 points, the S&P 500 had lost more than 45 points and the Nasdaq had lost 110 points. Additionally, some economists are predicting that the impact on Gross Domestic Product could be as high as 0.4% for the first quarter of 2020.

The 30-year Treasury bond yield fell below 2%, the lowest since September 2019 as the Coronavirus pandemic adds volatility to the market.

Monthly Market Close Comparison	1/31/2020	12/31/2019	Change
Dow Jones Industrial Average	28,256.03	28,538.44	-0.99%
Standard & Poor's 500	3,225.52	3,230.78	-0.16%
Nasdaq	9,150.94	8,972.60	1.99%
Birling Puerto Rico Stock Index	1,920.05	2,037.89	-5.78%
U.S. Treasury 10-Year Note	1.51%	1.920%	-21.35%
U.S. Treasury 2-Year Note	1.33%	1.580%	-15.82%



## **TWCFR – Say What?**

**by CPA Cesar Hernández-Monagas, Principal Birling Capital**

Cash is the soul of a company. For a business that is in financial distress, maintaining control, and a firm grip on its liquidity is paramount. A handy tool for executives to take control of their cash is the 13-Week Cash Flow Report (TWCFR). A well-prepared TWCFR serves as a reality check for executives and gives them a clear route to drive their business forward.

The TWCFR, compared to other financial reports, offers the best way to see how money comes in and out of a business. This report helps to impose fiscal discipline, which is extremely important when business is in a financial predicament.

### **What is a TWCFR?**

TWCFR is a method of projecting a company's cash needs. The report provides a big picture of how much cash it's going to take to keep the business running. At the same time, the report can be used as a tool to add pressure on collections and to generate additional sales.

### **What information does it take to create a TWCFR?**

There is a famous saying that says "Garbage in... Garbage out." That is why the necessary information for the preparation of this report must come from reliable sources. The following information is critical before you start preparing a TWCFR:

1. Beginning cash balances
2. Estimated cash inflows/receipts
3. Estimated payroll and related expenses
4. Estimated operating expenses
5. Loans, leases and notes payments
6. Payments on old A/P

We must ensure that the collected data is valid and verifiable, as the integrity of the report will depend on this. Once the information is collected, we proceed to enter the same into the spreadsheet created for this purpose. The data must be recorded in the correct periods; we must caution the exactness during the data entry process. The complexity of the business will impact the amount of detail that is maintained in the report. The more detail that can be reported, the easier the subsequent monitoring will be.

First, all the cash receipts are detailed, and then the same is done with cash disbursements, ie. Payroll, Loans, suppliers, among others. As the weeks go by, the previous weeks are updated with the current information, and a variance report is prepared. This will help validate the past projections and make the necessary adjustments so that the next forecasts are more adjusted to reality. When reviewing the data weekly, assumptions should be appropriately documented to facilitate future reviews.

### **What does my TWCFR tell me?**

Once the projections for the next 13 weeks are completed, it is crucial to evaluate the results. The fact that the report ends with a positive cash balance does not mean that the work is finished or that it was done correctly. If the balance is positive at the end of each week, we need to check sales projections and receivables collections to make sure they are realistic, not optimistic.

If the balance is negative, management must determine what measures to implement to increase cash inflows. Among the actions to be taken are – borrowing money, selling inventory or assets that are not in use at a discount, postpone expenses, among others. If these options are not an alternative and the cash position continues negative, then management should think of more drastic measures such as the liquidation of the business. It should also be analyzed whether the negative cash flow is due to the company operating in a cyclical industry, such as a golf resort located in a place where it snows in the winter.

## Other Factors to consider:

The following factors play a crucial role in the success of the TWCFR:

- 1. C-level commitment:** Despite the primary responsibility for the preparation of the report rests with the finance department, the involvement of all senior executives (CEOs, COOs and CFOs) is vital for the success of the project. Finance needs input from all executives to ensure that projections have a base that goes hand in hand with what's happening in the operation. For example, problems with manufacturing equipment have a direct impact on sales, which in turn affects the cash expected in the coming months. Finance should have this information immediately so that cash receipts are adjusted to reflect the new reality of the business. Constant communication between all departments will ensure the success of the TWCFR.
- 2. Accuracy controls:** Developing the variance analysis mentioned above is key in maintaining the accuracy of the report. By comparing the current versus the projected, we can validate how good or bad our forecasts are and what adjustments are needed to make the projections approach reality. This mechanism also helps senior executives to be more involved in the process. By reviewing the variance report will force the executives to provide suggestions on how projections can be improved.
- 3. Actionable insights:** A well-prepared TWCFR will give us the basis for the actions to be taken in the short-term. By understanding how cash goes up and down, management can prepare in advance and avoid situations that could cripple operations, such as not paying the debt on time or failing a payment to a critical supplier. As it brings us back to the company's top managers having to be involved in the process so that as a group, they make the right decisions to keep the business afloat.

A well-developed and monitored TWCFR weekly, provides a short-term view of the probability that a company will survive a financial crisis, and that is why this is a standard tool used by Birling Capital, for all our clients. It is important to remember that projections should be realistic, not optimistic. At Birling Capital we don't have a crystal ball to know your company's future, but we can help you prepare your TWCFR and give you the tools to improve your company's cash flow.

☒	Jan-Wk1	Jan-Wk2	Jan-Wk3	Jan-Wk4	Feb-Wk1	Feb-Wk3	Feb-Wk4	Mar 2014	Apr 2014	Total
▶ OPENING BALANCE	145,285	152,203	163,842	160,533	139,000	119,579	98,408	92,407	91,953	145,285
<b>RECEIPTS</b>										
▶ A/R Trade	19,578	22,998	22,880	18,289	13,000					187,454
▶ Intercompany	0	0	0	0		18,954	15,658	15,284	21,549	0
▶ VAT	6,630	6,322	8,776	5,312	4,160	0	0	0	0	68,795
▶ Intercompany Funding	2,788	3,007	8,490	4,288	2,347					34,066
▶ Corporate Tax	21,724	15,772	15,516	15,010	9,472	7,292	5,581	9,868	8,990	149,018
▶ FX	19,615	18,481	15,971	12,316	14,961	2,521	2,346	2,245	2,000	144,179
▶ External Interest	15,938	12,019	18,971	19,979	7,636	9,000	10,017	19,277		114,839
▶ Debt Factoring	5,798	3,783	7,283	12,639	3,595	8,260			11,552	76,407
▶ Special Projects	13,636	7,632	8,267	10,559	5,231	9,060	11,967	11,070	20,792	95,214
▶ Foreign Exchange	7,832	12,422	11,801	8,292	2,422	5,505	4,426	7,309	2,864	67,801
▶ Intercompany Trading	0	0	0	1,470	0	0	0	0	0	1,470
▶ TOTAL RECEIPTS	113,538	102,436	117,954	108,153	63,007	84,771	81,225	74,636	99,060	939,243
<b>PAYMENTS</b>										
▶ AP Trade Invoices	14,552	15,312	24,602	20,704	12,786	15,933	20,918	14,951	18,831	178,355
▶ Payroll	10,377	5,491	6,487	6,034	3,150	3,157	7,958	2,835	4,550	55,890
▶ VAT	5,123	1,096	5,033	3,824	2,155	4,134	4,526	2,669	4,807	36,087
▶ Intercompany Funding	14,141	9,520	12,500	11,730	12,527	13,530	6,142	8,524	10,838	110,075
▶ Investment Cap-Ex	13,586	9,778	18,032	13,912	10,071	9,655	11,956	8,890	12,150	122,473
▶ Maintenance Cap-ex	8,500	12,725	16,838	19,329	14,424	17,072	14,820	16,942	12,054	143,286

# The Final Word: Perseverance & Optimism Drive Puerto Rico as the 'P.R. Conference 2020: Empowering Investment' approaches

## Perseverance & Optimism Drive Puerto Rico

As the date on January 31, 2020, was fast approaching, the Puerto Rican positive spirit decided that January was a broken month because of the 2,000 earthquakes that have hit Puerto Rico and largely destroyed the towns of Guanica, Yauco, Guayanilla, Peñuelas, Ponce and several other cities. After establishing this reality, the citizens in every town decided to throw a New Year's Eve party to say goodbye to the broken month of January 2020 and welcome February 2020 as the real new year. All through Puerto Rico, you could go to New Year's Eve parties, with fireworks and all the trimmings. This favorable attitude decision of the citizens of Puerto Rico, not only shows the enthused optimism towards the future, but It also shows how Puerto Ricans can persevere under any circumstances and shows a positive face toward the future. This is why I love our culture, stamina, environment, attitude, and positive outlook of the people. Being Puerto Rican means that you always look to the positive side of things, and you expect that the Sun will shine bright in the new day ahead. These are the reasons why Perseverance and Optimism Drive Puerto Rico.

## P.R. Conference 2020: Empowering Investment

As founder & chair of "The Puerto Rico Conference," it is my pleasure to guide this leading macro-economic and investor event since it was founded in 2006. The Puerto Rico Conference is taking place Feb. 26, at the Sheraton Convention Center. On this occasion, Puerto Rico finds itself in one of the most critical moments in its history from an economic and social standpoint.

Today, our country's context and the global competitive environment lead us to reinvent ourselves, but also to rediscover new strengths and advantages, focusing more on our human capital, along with the financial and social capital. We have assumed the leadership in presenting the "Puerto Rico Conference 2020: Empowering Investment." As a tool to Transform Puerto Rico.

The collage consists of several promotional cards for the Puerto Rico Conference 2020. Each card features the event's logo, the date (February 26, 2020), and the location (Sheraton Puerto Rico Hotel & Casino). The cards highlight various speakers and topics:

- Keynote Luncheon:** Leading Change in Times of Crisis and Beyond by Dr. Scott S. Cowen, President Emeritus and Distinguished University Chair, Johns Hopkins.
- Ignacio Alvarez, Esq.:** President & CEO, Popular, Inc. Presenting: Access to Capital: Puerto Rico's Home-Grown Banks Lead the Way.
- James R. O'Drobinak:** Chief Executive Officer of Medical Card System, Inc. Presenting: Top Entrepreneurial Sectors: HealthCare.
- Manuel Cidre:** Founder of Los Cidrems, Former Chair PRMA, Productos de PR & Statesman. Moderator for the Panel: Reinventing the Family Business in Puerto Rico.
- Carlos López-Lay:** President & CEO of Bella Group. Presenting: Betting on Puerto Rico's Future: #Yonomequito.
- Zoimé Alvarez, Esq.:** Executive Vice President, Puerto Rico Bankers Association. Presenting: Access to Capital: Puerto Rico's Home-Grown Banks Lead the Way.

Each card includes a "REGISTER TODAY" button with the URL <https://argo.page.link/E7a5n> and the hashtag #PRconference2020.



**We present The Seven Reasons why you should sign up to attend today for the upcoming Puerto Rico Conference 2020 February 26, 2020.**

1. Learn from the Best
2. Make Connections
3. Learn About Your Industry
4. Get Some Inspiration
5. Want to get ahead of the heard
6. Make your business thrive
7. Transform Puerto Rico

For any investor or interested new residents, one can learn in a single day all that is going on in Puerto Rico.

We hope that you have enjoyed this issue of The Zenith Investor ©, and we very much welcome your comments, thoughts, and ideas; you may reach us at [frc@birlingcapital.com](mailto:frc@birlingcapital.com) or 787-247-2500.

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**About Birling Capital**

Birling Capital is a corporate advisory & consulting firm that offers broad corporate finance & advisory services to institutional, government, corporate, middle-market companies, family corporations, and their owners in identifying and resolving organizational finance-related issues. We use a holistic approach to both assets and liabilities sides with integrated business, personal, family needs, and objectives. Over the past two decades, our firm's principals have advised on more than hundreds of transactions in the corporate, healthcare, retail, education, insurance, banking, and government markets.

**You have particular problems... We provide long term solutions. Doing the right thing at the right time.**

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