



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

ST. AUGUSTINE, TRINIDAD & TOBAGO, WEST INDIES

OFFICE OF THE CAMPUS PRINCIPAL

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Launch of UWI SPEC International Half Marathon 2010

Office of the Campus Principal, UWI, St. Augustine

Wednesday August 25th 2010 10am

Salutations

- Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs, MP The Honourable Anil Roberts
- Director of the Sport and Physical Education Centre, Dr. Iva Gloudon
- Mr. Jason Julien, General Manager, Caribbean Money Market Brokers Limited
- Mr. Dexter Charles, Manager, Group Corporate Communications, First Citizens
- Mr. Raffique Shah, Technical Director, Media
- Members of Campus Management and Colleagues of the UWI St. Augustine Campus
- Specially Invited Guests
- Members of the Media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.

- It is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to the UWI St. Augustine Campus for the launch of the UWI SPEC International Half Marathon 2010; I must say a very special year for our Campus as we celebrate our golden 50th anniversary this year!
- Let me first take this opportunity to recognize and thank our corporate partner and sponsor for this signature event – First Citizens Bank – whose support we truly value, especially given the current financial and economic environment. Thank you First Citizens for your continued support of this event and for the St. Augustine Campus. I would also like to extend sincere thanks to the Director of the Sport and Physical Education Centre, Dr. Iva Gloudon and the rest of the team at SPEC for their steady work in organizing what has developed into one of the most popular events on St. Augustine's calendar and may I add, the national sporting calendar.
- Before I go any further please allow me to also recognize and give a special warm welcome to our Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs, MP the Honourable Anil Roberts. A warm welcome to you sir – this is the first time since your appointment that I have had the honour of addressing you. Welcome to the St. Augustine Campus of The University of the West Indies, we are indeed pleased

by your presence and support for our Campus and this event. We do look forward to working you and the government of Trinidad and Tobago as we deepen our partnership in the service of national and regional development. We see sport, both from an academic perspective as well as the recreational/competitor side of it as important offerings of our Campus and the full development of our students, staff and the community we serve, especially St. Augustine, Tunapuna and Curepe. We therefore need your support Honourable Minister.

- The UWI St. Augustine Campus gave birth to this marathon seven (7) years ago in 2004, which began with a total of 300 competitors. This event has now developed into what we have today – an International Half Marathon, with over 1,000 local, regional and international athletes from the Caribbean, USA, Latin America and Europe. It is the only traffic-free race in the region. Not only is this race recognized nationally as the official half marathon championship of the National Amateur Athletic Association (NAAA), but this event has also gained recognition internationally through accreditation by the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races and the International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF).

- The UWI SPEC International Half-Marathon we are launching today is however, not just about local and international recognition, it is about the social purpose of promoting a healthy life style through athleticism and exercise. As I am sure you are aware – **our health is our wealth!** I must emphasize that sport is not only important for personal and social recreation, but can also be a major enabler of economic empowerment and advancement. In fact, sport has always played a central role in the development of Caribbean societies. But we need to look more aggressively at the entrepreneurial side of sport and the substantial economic benefits that can accrue to our region, for example the hosting of the ICC Cricket World Cup in 2007 and the FIFA Under 17 Women’s World Cup carded for September this year right here in Trinidad and Tobago which is imminent.
- In this context, the UWI St. Augustine Campus will continue to promote areas such as sport that are certainly relevant to the overall development and advancement of Caribbean people. This is the essence of The University of the West Indies and one of the many ways in which we can contribute to the holistic development of our country and region. But in order to achieve this mandate we must continue to invest more heavily in physical sporting infrastructure and facilities that will serve to nurture and develop the talent of

our Caribbean youths. I am therefore appealing to both the public and private sectors to lend support in this area so that we can continue to partner to provide the environment necessary to develop our sporting students, athletes, professionals and coaches.

- Let me also say that as Campus Principal, I am particularly pleased that the St. Augustine Campus through this sporting event can provide a platform that encourages partnerships among our students, staff, alumni and persons in the wider community in the spirit of **fair competition** and **comradeship**. We must also seek to instill these core values at the heart of our communities, country and region.
- In closing, let me again thank our sponsors, First Citizens who have come here today as a show of support. Let me also congratulate and thank our organizing committee team at SPEC for consistently spearheading this event throughout the years and taking it to new levels of event management and professionalism. As Campus Principal, I hereby declare the 2010 UWI SPEC International Half-Marathon officially launched! I do indeed look forward to seeing you on October 31st for the start of the race!
- I thank you.

