

A young woman shares her message at a February 8 protest outside Parliament after the killing of Andrea Bharatt. The demonstration was organised by IGNITE, a student group under UWI's Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS). Trinidad and Tobago has been experiencing a moment of national grief and outrage following the terrible fate of Ms Bharatt, a 23-year-old law clerk and UWI graduate. She is just one of many women and girls to suffer violence and death due to gender-based violence (GBV). For decades, IGDS has been at the heart of feminist scholarship and activism to confront GBV, working alongside civil society and religious and public institutions. Yet women remain under threat. On March 8, one month after this protest, International Women's Day was celebrated around the world with the theme "Choose to Challenge". Perhaps the spirit of rage expressed by protestors because of this most recent tragedy will spur the transformation that IGDS and many others have worked to make real. PHOTO: MICHAEL JOSEPH

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL

The Alchemy of Tragedy



Marchers hitting the street (in pre-COVID times) on International Women's Day (IWD) in 2013. IWD was celebrated on March 8. PHOTO: COURTESY INSTITUTE FOR GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES.

It's been well over a month since the grim confirmation of the death of Andrea Bharatt and we are still grappling, as a people, with this tragedy. Ms Bharatt was one of our own, a young Trinbagonian woman, a graduate of UWI St Augustine, still at the beginning of young adulthood. The greatest tragedy of all is that she is one of many, women and girls forced to face exploitation, violence and ultimately, as in her case, even death.

In these times, in the aftermath of these senseless acts, we struggle to transmute our collective grief and anger into something positive and useful. In her International Women's Day message, President of the Republic, Her Excellency Paula Mae Weekes, spoke of the national anguish in response to the ever present and haunting spectre of gender-based violence. As Her Excellency noted "Over the years, a number of heart-rending murders moved the nation and provoked social agitation." I agree with Her Excellency. At The UWI St Augustine and across the other UWI Campuses at Mona and Cave Hill, the Institute of Gender and Development Studies (IGDS) has been at the forefront of advocacy against gender-based violence for many years, as have several other local civil society organisations. Sadly, the scourge of gender-based violence is not only found in our country.

In 1985, the Mighty Duke questioned "How many must more die?" While that song was penned to question, at that time, the atrocities associated with apartheid, the title also is apt for our conversation today, 36 years later. We can only hope that the atrocities associated with gender-based violence will serve as a tipping point for mass action. But for this to be the tipping point, we must all get the point.

For some years now, and certainly since I assumed as Campus Principal in 2016, I have posited that UWI should reassess its role and purpose in society. How can we be more efficient? How can The UWI have a greater impact? How can we contribute to building a better Caribbean society? The COVID-19 pandemic caused us to accelerate our institutional introspection. I am very proud of how we were able to work hand-in-hand with T&T and the region to navigate our way through the danger and disruption of the last year. We continue to work assiduously with our partners through COVID-19 and we are committed to finding solutions.

The stark reality is that now we have many more problems to face. How do we curb gender-based violence and achieve greater gender justice? How do we find effective and humane solutions for crime? How do we protect children from abuse and keep them on positive



paths to adulthood? How do we confront the hidden evil of corruption in both public and private offices? What can we do about persistent social maladaptation like tribalism, racism and other forms of bigotry that weigh us down? These questions all point to the role and function of a myriad of institutions that support our society and which contribute to making citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, and of the world.

I believe universities generally and The UWI in particular, play an important role in confronting and correcting such social ills. We have come a long way from the earliest universities of Asia, Africa and Medieval Europe that blended spiritual learning with scientific inquiry. We have advanced from pure research, rich with philosophical discourse, to a greater emphasis on applied research, while developing our teaching effectiveness to meet the growing needs of a more demanding public. Today, we provide to the public our graduates, our research and policy ideas, and even our faculty and staff members through outreach activities.

In this issue of UWI TODAY we look specifically at the work of our Faculty of Social Sciences, which leads in many areas that can address social ills. We also introduce our readers to the Working Group on Crime, a multi-disciplinary team that focuses on what has become one of T&T's most pervasive challenges. Of course, we highlight the work of IGDS, whose staff and students have been at the forefront of gender justice since the early 1990s, building on the efforts of Caribbean feminist scholarship and activism going back to the 1970s.

As we mourn the passing of too many victims of gender-based violence in our country, and recognise the larger systemic social and institutional failures that cost these women their lives, we will continue and intensify our labours in the public space, just as we did with the pandemic. Our university story is ever ongoing and ever evolving; the next chapter is one of partnership and collective effort with the wider society for positive change.

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CAMPUS NEWS

Socially Engaged and Solutions Oriented

The Faculty of Social Sciences applies teaching, research and outreach to the crises of today

BY DR ACOLLA LEWIS-CAMERON

We live on an island and in a region, a world that is constantly bombarded by crises that have disrupted the way we travel, the way we consume goods and services, the way we invest, and the way we live. It is a highly digitised, connected world that has disrupted the ways in which we access, process and share information. We live in a morally divisive world that has disrupted our thinking on what is right and wrong.

It is in this context that at the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSS) we have re-aligned our focus within recent times to become more socially engaged and solutions oriented. We understand that in serving our constituents, the FSS must now respond to the uncertain future more than we ever have in the past. As such, while we encourage students to focus on academic excellence, we also strive to continue to produce wholesome individuals who are deep thinkers and innovators of solutions. Our bank of highly competent researchers, educators and administrators continue to work with industry stakeholders to tackle the myriad of socio-economic issues through various initiatives which have positively impacted the lives of many.

One of the greatest strengths of the FSS is our multi-disciplinary nature which is of tremendous value to both staff and students, and by extension, the wider community. FSS' programme offerings span a range of disciplines that include 18 undergraduate and 20 postgraduate programmes across four departments and 12 units, centres and institutes. Students have the option to either deepen their knowledge in a specific discipline (for example, Insurance and Risk Management, Economics or Social Work) or broaden their scope by pursuing two disciplines in one programme, such as the BSc Public Sector Management with Law for the Social Sciences. In response to a request from our constituents for more focus on leadership and innovation skills, the latest addition to the faculty's offerings is the MSc in Strategic Leadership and Innovation. Moreover, underpinning the wide range of programme offerings is an emphasis on developing entrepreneurial thinking among students as they prepare to better navigate the world of work.

As our main constituent, the Faculty has been focusing on strengthening civic-mindedness among our students through opportunities for volunteerism, service learning



Students participate in the Youth Economic Forum.



Dr Acolla Lewis-Cameron, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

The academic pursuit of a social science is a rewarding experience because the social scientist offers practical insights and solutions on critical matters

such as the economy, legislation, crime, the family and our psychological nature. The social sciences provide insight into how science and innovation work – in effect, it is the science of science.

and projects requiring community engagement. One such example is the UWI Farm Road (Curepe) Collaborative Project which involved the placement of Social Work students in the Farm Road community to engage with community members in specific areas. These included a vacation camp for children, homework/life skills support, and open air movie evenings for families. Another project is the At-Risk School in Laventille Project 2018-2020, where current FSS students and FSS alumni serve as peer-mentors/speakers. Economics students engage in an annual Youth Economic Forum as part of the Conference on the Economy, where they share their views on the annual Budget with government representatives.

In addition to nurturing students, FSS scholars have been at the forefront of knowledge-sharing through public displays and lectures; leadership through community conversations; and influencing public discourse on contemporary issues with editorials and social media campaigns. We have been leading the conversation on anti-bullying strategies for school-aged children, human trafficking, gang-based crime, and sport administration, to name a few.

More recently, our social scientists have been addressing concerns arising from the COVID-19 pandemic through a series of webinars such as "COVID-Mania – coping in the times of COVID-19" and "Loneliness and isolation in COVID times". Alongside these webinars is the Faculty's partnership with the Ministry of Health and the Faculty of Medical Sciences in preparing local communities for the roll out of a national vaccination campaign. Further, our scholars are frequently called upon by the various media houses to share their expert opinion on socio-economic and political issues. Most noteworthy is the thought leadership of our political scientists during the local and national elections.

The academic pursuit of a social science is a rewarding experience because the social scientist offers practical insights and solutions on critical matters such as the economy, legislation, crime, the family and our psychological nature. The social sciences provide insight into how science and innovation work – in effect, it is the science of science. It is connected to everyday life and has a profound effect on every facet of society. In the Faculty of Social Sciences, there is a community committed to ensuring that through teaching, scholarship and service, students and scholars are socially engaged and solutions oriented.



Children from the Farm Rd community interacting with a member of the UWI Social Work Unit.

■ CAMPUS NEWS

In a virtual media conference on Monday March 1, Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles outlined the challenges that the university has faced following the COVID-19 pandemic, and broke down its response to this uncertain climate.

“We have been tested in the last year in a way that we have never been tested before,” said Sir Hilary, in a presentation entitled “Facing The UWI’s Financial Future”. He noted that the university dismissed the option of closure in favour of transitioning into an “online teaching culture” and ensuring that students were able to complete their classes and graduate despite the pandemic.

In breaking down the changes that The UWI has made to ensure its financial security, the Vice-Chancellor highlighted ten steps that would allow the university to recover from the crisis. The plan, he said, leverages the institution’s reputation as its primary asset, emphasising its “reputation revolution” over the past four years.

The first step in this strategy focuses on “reducing expenditure”. The Vice-Chancellor addressed the challenges with public funding and the campus-to-government framework. Governments across the region are the university’s principle investors, but with the current financial climate there have been challenges to meet these obligations.

“Our philosophy in the financial management of the university is that we are in close, intimate conversation with our governments. We understand the challenge that our governments are facing,” the Vice-Chancellor noted, but also pointed to signs of progress in governmental debt, which has been reduced from US\$115,486,500 in 2015 to US\$51,788,536 in 2020.

Within expenditure reduction, he also highlighted the “digital transformation” that has allowed the university to reduce inter-campus duplication and enable students from any campus to have access to digital learning from across the region.

The Vice-Chancellor then delved into the idea of the “global campus” and the initiatives that are currently underway to take The UWI’s content to the world and encourage international engagement. These include collaboration with the State University of New York (SUNY) on The UWI Centre for Leadership and Sustainable Development, and the ongoing conversation with Guyana and other regional bodies to share data and learning coming out of UWI.

Another aspect of the university’s efforts to tackle the financial challenges ahead is its engagement with international donor organisations such as the Caribbean



Vice-Chancellor gives presentation on UWI’S FINANCIAL FUTURE

UWI’s Ten Point Plan

1. Looking Inward - Expenditure Containment
2. One-UWI Initiative
3. Open to Global
4. The Southern Strategy: Guyana and Suriname
5. The Northern Strategy: SUNY and Brock
6. Donor Partnerships
7. Anchoring Multilateral Investment in Caribbean Development
8. Taking UWI to the Private Capital Market
9. The Entrepreneurial UWI
10. Corporate Growth Group

Development Bank, CARICOM, UN agencies and the World Bank.

“We are building up relationships and developing a base to attract resources to do [policy-driven] research for this region,” said the Vice-Chancellor.

The UWI has been partnering with some of these multilateral agencies to anchor investment into Caribbean development through the university, he explained, adding that “the future of the Caribbean is tied up with the capacity of The UWI to deliver on issues facing the region”.

Within the new financial model being recommended to increase the university’s viability, the Vice-Chancellor said that “each campus was told to bring forward a bankable project, because we are going to market.”

In taking the university to the private capital market, several projects are being discussed in collaboration with governmental bodies, Sir Hilary revealed. The first is a partnership with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to establish the Global School of Medicine. The goal is to raise a \$60 million bond. This is part of the new “entrepreneurial UWI”, working with development entrepreneurs to be less dependent on the state but also deeply embedded in the state.

According to the Vice-Chancellor, the final piece of the puzzle is the Corporate Growth Group, “where [business leaders] Earl Jarrett of the Jamaica National Group, Gerry Brooks of ANSA McAL, Jeff Cobham of National Commercial Bank Jamaica, and Dodridge Miller of Sagcor have constituted the first core of the corporate growth committee, the committed private sector. These men have said, we will sit with you and figure out a financial road map for the university.”

Under this new financial model, if governments can consolidate a minimum of 50 percent (which has decreased over time from its initial output of 90 percent), with 20 percent coming from the private sector (including the university’s own private sector element), 15 percent coming from international engagements and the final 15 percent from tuition fees, the university will have a solid financial strategy to weather the ongoing crisis and beyond.

The Vice-Chancellor ended his presentation with a call that, “Everyone be safe. This is a rough time for our region, but I am proud of The UWI.”

The entire presentation, “Facing The UWI’s Financial Future”, can be viewed at the UWI St Augustine and UWI TV Facebook pages.



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■ ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Chocolate Inc

Cocoa Research Centre is guiding an industry from farm to factory to foreign-exchange earning delights

BY DIXIE-ANN BELLE

Several decades after the decline of cocoa farming in Trinidad and Tobago, the world is once more becoming aware of T&T's superior brand of cocoa. This movement is championed by the UWI Cocoa Research Centre (CRC).

"Trinidad is like a phoenix rising from the ashes. We are now trying to establish a sort of dynamic equilibrium where we can achieve sustainable economy," explains Dr Darin Sukha, Research Fellow and Food Technologist, CRC. The Centre's staff is exploring the potential of cocoa to diversify the local economy and economies across the region.

Farmers are the foundation of the cocoa value chain. Professor Pathmanathan Umaharan, Director of the CRC, explains that the country's trees are old and farming practices are outdated, but there are farmers willing to learn and to invest. The CRC's model cocoa orchard serves as a teaching tool for new methods.

"The overall objective is really to build a niche, high-value industry for Trinidad and Tobago so that farmers get better value for the cocoa they produce," he states.

The CRC also provides support to chocolate makers and entrepreneurs. "We want to leverage [the] private sector to be able to invest and develop new products which they can market locally, regionally and internationally," says Prof Umaharan.

The CRC has trained over 275 people locally through chocolate courses. Graduates of these courses have gone on to open their own chocolate-based businesses. In addition, the Centre has extended essential support to several countries in the region whose cocoa quality and production systems are lagging. Prof Umaharan notes that their value-added industry is very small, and growth would afford them opportunities to build markets.

Establishing a connection between farmers and entrepreneurs is vital. According to Dr Sukha, "We want to bring together all of the key elements of the value chain, so we can use it to show the connectivity, demonstrate how we can all work together, and how they all feed into each other, and how we can use this as a tool for training."

The inception of the International Fine Cocoa Innovation Centre (IFCIC) will be instrumental in realising this vision. A chocolate factory is in the works which will provide three scales of chocolate-making facilities. It will



produce cocoa nibs, cocoa liquor, cocoa butter, chocolate and couverture. It will also be a space for creating awareness about cocoa and its delightful link to chocolate through cocoa and chocolate-based cuisine and chocolate products. The facilities should draw visitors and tourists to indulge in the menu and purchase specialties chocolate lovers dream about like the CRC's Chocolate Rum Crème, which is made of cocoa from the International Cocoa Genebank Trinidad that is curated by the CRC. The projects are meant to be run as a public/private sector collaboration.

The work of the CRC in value addition also opens the doorway to Trinidad and Tobago leaving a larger mark in the world cocoa industry.

"We haven't really developed the reputation for the products that are derived from the cocoa beans like chocolates and beverages," says Prof Umaharan. "The cocoa beans that we sell only take up about six percent of the entire value chain, so if you produce value added products, you can harness the greater part of the cocoa value chain."

Investment and support are essential to ensure that the commercialisation of local cocoa can flourish. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago (GoRTT) has been a constant ally in this regard. Having already purchased equipment for a chocolate factory from a European Union funded project, the Centre is in active dialogue with GoRTT for funding to complete the factory building. This could mean considerable growth in the manufacture of chocolate products which would have global appeal.

As Damian Wilson, Secretary/Project Assistant at CRC notes, "Our efforts are about expanding to markets regionally and internationally." This, of course, would bring in much needed foreign exchange. All these efforts dovetail nicely with the current economic diversification thrust and economic recovery roadmap.

Private sector investment is also indispensable. Dr Sukha observes, "The UWI is transitioning from a pure teaching and research institution to one where we are trying to be more applied in our research. We are trying to seek partnerships through a sort of triple helix model involving the university/government/private sector."

He adds, "We are forging ahead along with The University of the West Indies in realising that vision. We are engaging industry. We are engaging government and bringing everybody together where The UWI is providing the technical back-stopping and support." All this, he notes, will help the Centre generate some of its own revenue to become more self-sufficient.

Though it can never go back to the old days of the industry, the Trinidad and Tobago cocoa brand has the potential to re-emerge as one of most sought-after treasures in the global quest for exceptional cocoa and cocoa products for exclusive markets.



Gender JUSTICE

#ChooseToChallenge #IWD2021

A society where CARE AND PEACE have more value than AUTHORITY AND VIOLENCE

An interview with Dr Gabrielle Hosein, Head of Department and Senior Lecturer at IGDS

BY OMEGA FRANCIS

The recent occurrences of violence against women in Trinidad and Tobago have brought the topic of gender-based violence once again to the forefront. Many of us have been calling for change from those in power, however the Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS) has been putting in the work to educate and change the landscape when it comes to gender-based violence. This week, UWI Today got a chance to sit down and chat with Dr Gabrielle Hosein, Head of Department and Senior Lecturer at IGDS, about how the institute has been facing this issue.

What is the mandate of the IGDS, and how does it connect with the issue of gender-based violence?

The mandate of the IGDS for the past 28 years, and for the future, is to provide knowledge that transforms gender relations in the Caribbean and support the UWI's impact on regional development. Our multi- and cross-disciplinary research, teaching and outreach, includes attention to advocacy, policymaking, social justice movement-building, and provision of technical expertise to a wide range of international, regional and grassroots partners. Our extensive involvement in activism provides a knowledge base for our research and teaching, and vice versa. Gender-based violence is only one example of gender injustice, which we both theorise and aim to transform through mainstreaming critical attention to gendered power relations throughout both the UWI and the region.

What has been some of the work the Institute has put in within the past few years that focuses on violence against women specifically?

The Institute produced a qualitative national study on gender-based violence in 2018 and chaired the Research Steering Committee for the Women's Health Survey which provided prevalence data on violence against women and girls for the first time. Following this, we called for a private sector strategy to address intimate partner violence, which led to the TT Chamber of Commerce and the Coalition Against Domestic Violence developing the first workplace policy on domestic violence in TT. We are part of the Alliance for State Action to End Gender-based Violence, a coalition of feminist and other CSOs, which called for and engaged reforms related to the Domestic Violence Act, and will continue to work on other legislative protections. The IGDS project, a Sexual Culture of Justice, has tackled gender-based bullying in schools, trained teachers and guidance counsellors, and created the viral #pullupuhbredren hashtag following its work with men on GBV. In relation to youth, the Break the Silence Campaign, the nation's longest running campaign to end child sexual abuse and incest, continues with production of a bilingual, migrant-centred toolkit, and we are integrating a focus on GBV into the health and family life (HFLE) curriculum for primary and secondary schools. Our undergraduate mentorship programme, IGDS Ignite, also led to establishment of the student group #catcallsofUWI which documents experiences of sexual harassment on campus, and in the wider society, and organises around GBV prevention in collaboration with the [UWI St. Augustine Student] Guild and student groups.

Can you tell us about the type of collaborative efforts that the IGDS has undertaken that have borne fruit when it comes to this pertinent issue?

Gender-based violence is not going to stop tomorrow. It is founded on a highly resilient patriarchal organisation of our society which gives status to violence, devalues the labour and value of care, and normalises gender and other inequalities, ultimately harming both women and men. We consider gang violence to be gender-based violence as much as we consider intimate partner violence, women's unequal power over national decision-making, and homophobia to all be forms of gender-based violence. All change to such systemic inequality will be incremental and must be sustainable. In that context, many of our activities and outputs have 'borne fruit'. Our partnerships have expanded and strengthened, the analysis we bring is becoming better and more widely understood, there's a younger generation that we are mentoring for leadership every step of the way, and we can see shifts in social norms and gender sensitivity because of our coalition involvement and advocacy. We successfully introduce and complete projects that can have long term impact. Given that this is a long struggle, these are ways we think about our collaborative approach bearing fruit.

In your professional experience, is there one main reason why those who assault women are motivated to do so? What are the main factors that can predict this?

Based on all global evidence, male violence against women is rooted in ideas that normalise and naturalise men's power and domination over women's bodies, sexuality and choices. We see these ideas reproduced in religion, in media, in politics, in the labour market, in state law, and in the family. They become more dangerous in situations of economic hardship and vulnerability. Sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls takes place in homes, in schools, in taxis, in workplaces and on the streets. It happens to girls under three years old and to women in their 70s, regardless of what women or girls do. It happens when women are in relationships and when they try to leave. It happens to girls by men of all ages. It does not only happen in interpersonal relationships or as partner violence (and indeed women can be violent partners also). It also happens to a greater extent to those women and girls who are most vulnerable – young women, poor women, migrant women, sex workers, disabled women, and girls. Transforming these beliefs, because they are the main factors, should be our goal, keeping in mind that there is also no single, immediate, or simple fix.

What are some governmental policies that the IGDS has championed, or has supported that will/may have a positive impact on gender-based violence in Trinidad and Tobago?

Focusing on the future, IGDS is involved in collaborating with many of our partners to amend the Sexual Offences Act and the Children's Act. We have long been calling for approval and resourcing of a national strategic plan to end gender-based violence and continue to call for sexual harassment legislation. We are calling for a gender-sensitive national transportation policy. Finally, the Sexual Culture of Justice project has led three years of advocacy for amendments to the Equal Opportunity Act. For us, however, ending gender-based violence isn't simply about legislation, but is also about effective implementation and administration of justice across social support systems, policing and the Judiciary.

What are some research-based, or evidence-based practices a society can undertake to turn the tide of gender-based violence; specifically, violence against women?

We need to end the extreme violence that children grow up witnessing or experiencing; the roots of gender-based violence (including violence among men and boys) become embedded through such early trauma. The work to end male perpetration of violence involves transforming how we socialise boys, ending the impunity with which crimes against women are committed (given low numbers of charges and convictions), and far better integration of gender equality goals across all state policy and practice. Addressing violence overall in our society is also necessary. Transformation of the administration of justice, including rehabilitation programmes for prisoners and perpetrators, and a genuine commitment to the sustained community-level work that equality and justice require is key to an impact. The IGDS aims for a society in which your sex, gender or sexuality isn't more important than whether or not you are a good human being, and where your value, inclusion and rights are not determined by whether or not you meet masculine or feminine ideals. We strive for a society in which care, and peace have more value than authority and violence. However our society pursues this, the evidence suggests that this vision is what is needed.

■ For more details on IGDS' Advocacy and Activism work, visit the IGDS Instagram page.

Gender JUSTICE



Protest messages written in chalk outside the Parliament.



W
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The violent deaths of **Andrea Bharatt** and **Ashanti Riley** within recent months have brought about an upsurge of protests, mass vigils and an outcry from citizens of all ages across the country pleading to lawmakers for more to be done to protect our women and children. But these crimes are not new to the country, as the issue of violence against women has been plaguing the nation for years. The frightening increase in gender-based violence and specifically violence against females recently have reignited much needed conversations and call for action to finally protect our most vulnerable in society.

Making a difference, however, does not lie solely in the hands of lawmakers but in all institutions across the country, including education. At the University of the West Indies, through teaching, learning, research and community outreach, the work towards a safer society continues as the university's mandate includes tackling social issues affecting the Caribbean. It is well known that the Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS) has done extensive work and been heavily involved in strategising against gender-based violence. IGDS has had multiple campaigns addressing the issue and continues to engage in social and community-based activism.

Shining light on other departments, UWI Today reached out to several scholars to get their feedback on what's being done at the St Augustine Campus to deal with the scourge of violence against women in the country.

Lecturer and Practicum Co-coordinator at the Social Work Unit in the Department of Behavioral Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, Dr Cheryl Ann Boodram said, "Our primary task of teaching and learning draws people together to start eliminating all forms of violence against women. That is promoted in our curriculum, so we can say in the Social Work curriculum for instance, domestic violence and violence against women are significant parts of what our students are exposed to."

"But it's not only within the Social Work discipline that teaching, learning and promotion of a culture of respect takes place. It's rooted in the courses offered in IGDS that are taken by students campus-wide, and the social activism

by students teaching other students about healthy gender relations," she added.

Activism against social issues can be seen in groups like UWE Speak where spoken word poetry is used to advocate for protecting women. Additionally, there are special projects executed by students in neighboring communities and vacation camps that focus on violence against women.

She said gender justice was one of the strong pillars [and core values] at UWI and the aim is to graduate students from different communities where gender-based violence and violence against women may occur, by educating them so they can then transfer those lessons and behaviours back into their communities and families.

Dr Boodram said research also gives an understanding of what's happening within the communities and by understanding the sources of where the problem arise, social change can occur. As such, there are many ongoing research projects that focus on gender-based violence, intimate partner violence, domestic violence and violence against women.

Sociologist and Head of the Department of Behavioral Sciences Dr Talia Esnard said one such initiative is called the Mentoring and Research Cluster (MARC) project. She explained that MARC is centred on building positive spaces for the mutual engagement of both staff and students. It seeks to foster a culture of mentorship through research, offering a collaborative space for exploring diverse perspectives and insights within the examination of social phenomena. Focusing on intimate partner violence, which many researchers observe as where most of the violence against women occurs, the project aims to gather multiple sources then use it to revisit, reframe and re-educate people.

Speaking of other projects within the campus, Dr Esnard said, "We have a number of PhD and Master's students doing research and trying to address those issues. One student, for example, is looking at breaking the silence around domestic violence. And one of the things she tries to do, and is part of a broader agenda for other researchers in the Department doing this kind of work as well, is to broaden persons' understanding of violence."



PHOTOS: COURTESY THE INSTITUTE FOR GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES.

Behavioural Science causes and solutions for

BY KAY - M A R



Taking part in an International Women's Day march at the Queen's Park Savannah in 2017.



#PowerInAction
#IAmGenerationEquality
#IWDTT2020

E d an OCIETY roach

#ChooseToChallenge #IWD2021



A student shares her message at "Chalk Back" a 2019 event hosted by Catcalls of UWI, a project of IGDS Ignite.



scholars delve into the dangers women face

KAY-MARIE FLETCHER

"Not just at the level of gender, but also at the level of the household and to look at the broader issue of domestic violence as it occurs across different individuals, not just across partners but also across siblings, across mothers and fathers, or children and parents, children and children, and to raise awareness of the wider scope of the issue, of the various levels at which violence occurs in the society, and to really trouble the silence and taken-for-granted notions for violence that takes place in society," she added.

Also part of the MARC project, Psychology lecturer, Dr Christine Descartes spoke of discussions within her classroom where she and her students tried to understand why and how people become perpetrators. She said conversations like these are examples of how through the curriculum, the issues of violence against women are addressed.

Research and conversations like these lead to finding both solutions and causes of such issues.

So what are some of the solutions?

Dr Descartes said socialising and re-socialising of our males needs to take place; teaching males how to deal with rejection; teaching both boys and girls how to interact, understand each other, and resolve conflict. There needs to be collaborative efficacy for change to occur. She said the protection of our girls and women needs to become everyone's business.

Additionally, Dr Boodram believes that engaging with civil society is another solution that can bring an end to violence against women. Dr Boodram said, "We need to have an all of society approach where all of the government ministries, NGOs and all of the interested community-based organisations, including religious organisations, come together to look at this social issue as a public health issue... where each organisation includes mainstream programming about gender-based violence as part of the normal work that they do. And the university can be an integral part of drawing all of those partners together."

But the million-dollar question remains, why?

Why do people commit crimes against women in Trinidad and Tobago? What are the causes?

Dr Boodram said research showed that violence against women in the Caribbean is historically rooted in culture. She added that some of the narratives presented in our current music, videos and film suggest that individuals involved in these cultures have developed social norms where music promotes violence against women and unhealthy relationships, such as glorifying harsh and violent sexual intimacy.

Dr Descartes said, "A lot of our problems starts in the home. It starts with how we treat our children and what we teach our children – the norms, the values – that all starts at home."

Giving her perspective, Dr Esnard pointed out that "part of addressing the issue of violence in our society is dealing frontally with how we think about conflict and how we resolve it. In many cases, we see that people default to violence. Some of this remains embedded in how we are socialised. The question is, how do we shift the understanding of conflict and the behaviours that follow? This requires us to re-examine how we relate to each other, the sources and triggers of conflict, and how we work towards resolution and peacebuilding. There is certainly a lot to be done. What is clear is that this type of cultural and structural transformation calls for national and collective efforts."

Those efforts are needed more than ever. In 2020, 47 women were killed—21 of them as a result of domestic violence -- representing around 13 percent of homicides that year. The Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) also reported that of 745 people reported missing for 2020, 416 were women and girls.

How many more will disappear or die before there is change?

Kay-Marie Fletcher is an author, journalist, blogger and voice talent.



Self-defence training at a campus gender-based violence workshop.

Gender JUSTICE

Taking back what has been lost

UWI forms 'Crime Group' to find real solutions

BY JOEL HENRY

Gender-based violence is only one aspect of lawlessness in a society that has struggled with crime over the last several decades. And though measures to curb crime have had some positive effects, criminality remains one of Trinidad and Tobago's most persistent issues, hurting the economy, damaging T&T's international reputation, and causing fear and anger among its people.

Recognising the urgency of this issue, UWI St Augustine has established a working group on crime to help Government – and the society itself – find answers.

"We want to identify the problems and find solutions," says Dr Wendell C Wallace, Chair of the "Crime Group".

Dr Wallace, a lecturer in the Criminology and Criminal Justice Unit of the Faculty of Social Sciences, says the group has several goals.

"We will conduct research as is needed, either individually or collectively as a working group, or in conjunction with the Government. We also aim to disseminate research findings widely. Another purpose is to provide assistance in developing intervention strategies."

But most importantly, he stresses, their work is about solving problems, not just identifying them.

The Crime Group was born from a directive by UWI St Augustine Campus Principal Brian Copeland in a 2019 meeting of the campus' Finance and General Purposes Committee. The group was to be campus-wide and multi-disciplinary.

The group consists of faculty members from the Criminology and Criminal Justice Unit, the Social Work Unit, the Department of Economics, the Department of Geomatics Engineering and Land Management, the Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS), and a postgraduate student from the Department of Department of Behavioural Sciences. Most recently, a new member from the Faculty of Science and Technology has joined.

"We are broad-based, encompassing individuals from different faculties and disciplines," says Dr Wallace.

The group is not the first UWI initiative to focus on crime. In 1996, the UWI Working Group in Caribbean Criminology delivered a "National Action Plan Against Crime" to the Government. Likewise, there are several individual researchers and groups within the campus involved in research, policy and outreach. Dr Wallace himself focuses on policing, gangs, violence (domestic and school), and other related areas in his academic work. One of the main strengths of this new initiative is its inclusion of disciplines outside of the social sciences, which has traditionally been seen as the resource for scholarship on crime.



Dr Wendell C Wallace

"We can look to fields like geomatics for example to bring their expertise in areas such as global positioning systems (GPS), a technology that is being used in anti-crime strategies," says Dr Wallace.

Another feature of the Crime Group is its emphasis on student participation.

"We want more student members. It is important to have their perspective," says Dr Wallace, who is also the Faculty of Social Sciences' Deputy Dean for Marketing, Distance Education and Outreach. "We are going to include at least two more students. A great part of my work [as Deputy Dean] is getting students involved. We want to hear their voices, as well as their representative body, the Guild of Students."

PANDEMIC SLOW DOWN

The Crime Group is still in its formative stages. Dr Wallace says progress has been slow because of COVID-19 and its impact on teaching and work in general. However, there has been some progress over 2020 into today.

"Thus far we have collected a host of data from the Crime and Problem Analysis Branch (CAPA) of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS), which is being analysed for trends," says Dr Wallace.

The plan, he says, is to focus on the two most prevalent areas of crime. This, however, does not prevent members of the team from conducting research in their own areas of specialisation. The Crime Group is also collecting existing research from within the campus. Dr Wallace says

the intention "is to disseminate research that has been published" to agencies such as the Ministry of National Security, the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, the TTPS and others.

"In quite a few instances, research has been published by academics at UWI and sometimes you only find it if you are conducting research in that area. We have a good bit of research emanating from the university that remains untapped and even unknown," he explains.

Teams like the UWI St Augustine Police Research Group (UWISA-PRG) and the Research Group on Domestic Violence are already doing great work in crime-related areas. The latter in particular is researching aspects of gender-based violence specifically through intimate partner homicide (IPH) and men as victims of domestic violence, an area that has been given little research attention in T&T, Dr Wallace says.

"We as academics need to understand that domestic violence is not a gender issue. It is a people issue. Men are also victims of abuse in intimate relationships and we need to fix all sides," he explains.

SOLUTIONS AND INTERVENTIONS

Presently, the Crime Group is focusing on finding at least two areas of concentrated criminality and developing solutions and interventions for these areas to provide to Government. They also plan on working directly with communities in T&T.

"We intend to put more focus on outreach," says Dr Wallace. "We want to make sure that the research meets its intended targets. This will include community programmes, lectures, informal 'sit and chats', etc, anything to reach the communities in a tangible way. It could be something as simple as helping them to interact better with the police or teaching safety procedures when leaving and entering their homes."

However, lasting change will require more than just the work of UWI or even the Government, Dr Wallace says. It requires change from the society itself.

"Every citizen has a vested interest in T&T, and we have a responsibility to ensure that crime is managed," he says. "Quite often, parenting is lacking. I want to ask that we start policing from the home. I tell people that the first police officer I knew was my mother. She would check my school bags. If I came home with something that didn't belong to me, I had to carry it back."

He adds, "Let us start from our churches, our mosques, our temples. Let us start at the schools. There is a role for the community. We need the community. We need to take back what has been lost."



UWI St Augustine Guild of Students Council President Warren Anderson (second from right) and Postgraduate President Matthew Sealy (right) at the February 8 protest.



■ CAMPUS NEWS

The first T&T “Backyard” Bioblitz

*Searching for silver linings
in a pandemic*

BY DR AMY DEACON



A blue-gray tanager.
PHOTO: KEVIN FOSTER



Mike Rutherford

A bioblitz is an event where experts and members of the public join forces to find and identify as many different species as possible within a defined area during 24 hours. The purpose is twofold: to document and learn more about the biodiversity in an area, and to engage the public with their local biodiversity.

The first Trinidad and Tobago Bioblitz took place back in 2012, in Tucker Valley, Chaguaramas. It was the brainchild of Mike Rutherford, who at the time was the Curator of UWI St Augustine's Zoology Museum. The event was co-organised by the T&T Field Naturalists' Club (TTFNC) and the Department of Life Sciences (DLS).

It was an unprecedented success, bringing together more than 100 scientists, wildlife enthusiasts, students and interested members of the public to see how many different species of plants and animals could be recorded in a 24 hour period in the area. The answer: a lot! More than 600 species were found that weekend, and every bioblitz in the 8 years since the first has exceeded this total. In Charlottesville, Tobago in 2015, the total exceeded 1000 species. Other locations have included the Arima Valley, Nariva Swamp, Icos, Toco, Tabaquite and Port-of-Spain.

This year the organising committee (consisting of members of the DLS and the TTFNC — all UWI DLS staff or alumni) were faced with a daunting task — planning an event in a pandemic with much uncertainty about what would be safe or permitted. However, rather than postponing the event or risking cancellation, we decided to embrace the limitations and turn the 9th T&T Bioblitz into a “Backyard” Bioblitz, that people could take part in from the safety of their own home and garden.

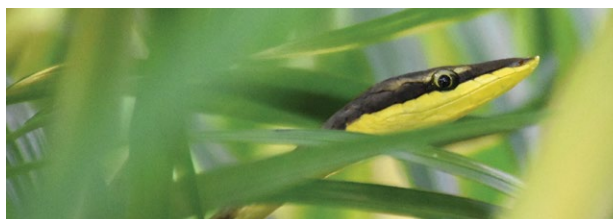
The virtual nature of the event was made possible thanks to the brilliant free app – iNaturalist. By simply uploading a photo of a plant, bird, insect etc, the app's algorithm gives its users as close a match as possible to what type of organism they have found, then local and international experts chip in to help get it down to a species with more confidence. For the T&T Backyard Bioblitz, the DLS created a project page



A Trinidad small-resin bee gathering nectar in a backyard in South Trinidad.
PHOTO: ANAADI POORAN



An exceptionally well-camouflaged praying mantis seen in Central Trinidad.
PHOTO: ROSSIE DOOKIE



A Rutherford's vine snake, named after Mike Rutherford. PHOTO: AMY DEACON



A bananaquit. PHOTO: BRIAN D'ABREAU



A green-rumped parrotlet.
PHOTO: ANUSHKA SEEMUNGAL, FAYARD MOHAMMED



A Surinam warrior wasp feeding on a guava fruit. PHOTO: RYAN MANNETTE

within the app to gather all observations from the event in one place so that participants had only to install the app and take photos of all the living things in their backyard – from kiskadees to bachacs to chadon beni.

On the very rainy weekend of November 21, more than 200 people across T&T ventured into their backyards and started uploading photos. Within a few hours, there were hundreds of observations accumulating on the project and, by the end of the 24hrs, there were nearly 7000 uploads, representing an estimated 1,400 species – the highest total ever recorded in the 9 years of T&T Bioblitz.

More unusual sightings included several species of snakes (including *Oxybelis rutherfordi*, the vine snake recently renamed after T&T Bioblitz founder Mike Rutherford), a capuchin monkey, and the endemic Trinidad stream frog. It also highlighted the abundance of invasive and exotic species in our backyards, such as the African giant snail and the Lesser Antillean whistling frog – both of which appeared in the top 50 species seen. More work is needed to identify less well-known species and come up with final totals, so the most interesting findings may be yet to come.

In addition to the usual naturalists and interested members of the public taking part, many schools incorporated the T&T Backyard Bioblitz into their virtual lessons. Countless current and former UWI students also joined in. All participants received complimentary stickers, courtesy of Mr Mitchel De Silva, and those meeting targets in certain categories received laminated field guides as prizes, courtesy of TTFNC.

While the hope is to resume “on location” bioblitzes as soon as it is safe to do so, the success of the virtual event paves the way for additional Backyard Bioblitz events to be held in T&T, even once restrictions ease. Amidst the shutdowns and stay-at-home orders brought by the global pandemic, members of the public were able to appreciate and learn more about the biodiversity right on their doorsteps, showing enthusiasm and curiosity for the life that coexists with them.

TOP 10

MOST COMMONLY
SIGHTED SPECIES AT
THE BACKYARD BIOBLITZ



1. Cane toad or crapaud
2. Bronze anole lizard
3. Ruddy ground dove
4. Great kiskadee
5. Blue-grey tanager
6. Streak lizard/striped gecko
7. Red peacock butterfly
8. Palm tanager
9. Tropical mockingbird
10. Coconut palm

■ OUR PEOPLE

DR ARIANNE BROWN JORDAN

Serving T&T through science



BY KANISHA VINCENT

Dr Arianne Brown Jordan, member of UWI St Augustine's graduating class of 2020, has been interested in the sciences since her secondary school days. Even though the field of virology had not been her dream then, she pursued her general studies with a passion to excel. Today, however, she has found herself at the centre of molecular based testing for SARS-CoV-2 in Trinidad and Tobago. Dr Brown Jordan is a member of the Ministry of Health team in the fight against the pandemic, where she is a critical member of the national molecular testing response team.

"I consider myself a molecular virologist and a laboratory specialist with the knowledge that has really benefited my colleagues and the institutions and clients we serve," she says.

Molecular based testing, of which polymerase chain reaction (PCR) is a principal method, detects the presence of a virus in an individual. It is currently considered the most accurate test for diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection. During the height of the pandemic, Dr Brown Jordan and her team were able to outfit and man the UWI lab that launched SARS-CoV-2 PCR diagnostics in T&T, to meet the initial demand for reliable test results. This was critical to support national policies such as tracking, efficient isolation, and quarantine.

It was a challenging time, but Brown Jordan made it work, both through her own internal resources as well as the training and support from UWI.



She entered the institution at the PhD level in 2013 to pursue her degree in Veterinary Microbiology. Originally, Brown Jordan sought to be part of a Molecular Genetics programme under the Department of Pre-Clinical Sciences in the Faculty of Medical Sciences, spurred on by her love for viruses and molecular biology. Previously graduating with a Bachelor's degree in Life Sciences from the School of Arts and Sciences at St George's University in Grenada, she describes this as the pivotal experience that led her academic direction.

"I sat in the microbiology class... and I just fell in love with viruses," she says, describing the moment during her final year of study in a virology lecture by Professor Joanna Rayner.

As for veterinary microbiology, the fates aligned when she came across the call for PhD students by then newly minted UWI Professor Christopher Oura. She saw it as an opportunity to expand her repertoire of important viruses.

Her research project during the time spent at the UWI "primarily focused on a variety of avian viral diseases, surveillance of viruses of economic importance, and veterinary health focus in both poultry [and] wild bird populations," she says.

Dr Brown Jordan has had novel results in several first-author papers published in peer-reviewed journals, and has worked with the Ministry of Agriculture (specifically the Poultry Surveillance Unit and the Wildlife Section),

■ OUR PEOPLE

and various other stakeholders, including a collaborating World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) national reference laboratory in Italy.

“She is really a great example of a UWI graduate at their best – carrying out excellent and important research that has a direct impact [on] the livestock industry in T&T in her PhD and then going on to use the knowledge and skills that she has learnt to serve her country during this critical period,” says Chris Oura, who is a professor of Veterinary Virology at the Faculty of Medical Sciences

For Dr Brown Jordan, the gap between St. George’s and UWI was filled by an MSc in Medical Microbiology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and an initial stint at the Trinidad Public Health Laboratory in the Ministry of Health. Upon submitting her thesis in 2018, she applied for an HIV related laboratory coordinator position at the Ministry and returned there, where faith had it that she would serve during the pandemic.

Like influenza, rabies, dengue and chikungunya to name a few, COVID-19 is reported as a zoonotic disease which is linked to origins from an animal source. Within her study of medical microbiology and veterinary virology, Dr Brown Jordan examined such zoonotic viruses. Zoonotic diseases (zoonoses) are defined by the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as “diseases that are caused by germs that spread between animals and people”.



“The only way we can prevent these occurrences are by knowing what is circulating, and by understanding how we can mitigate spread of infection and disease,” she says.

The significance of studying zoonotic diseases is paramount to preventing future pandemics, she says, as up to “75 percent of new or emerging infectious diseases are zoonotic in nature”. With an estimated 1.7 million

undiscovered viruses that currently exist in mammals and avian hosts, with over 600,000 of these having the ability to infect humans (according to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services) Workshop on Diversity and Pandemics in 2020, Professor Oura sums it up well:

“Veterinary research is very important... critical in the process, because if you can control and stop these pathogens coming through the animals and into humans, you... avoid the death and destruction and massive financial consequences.” Infectious disease experts around the world like Peter Daszak, a Disease Ecologist who attempted to warn the world about the next pandemic after SARS hit in February of 2003, would agree.

The lesson: if we are not careful and simply revert to the way things were, with surveillance and monitoring programmes, before COVID-19, then we are awaiting the next pandemic. This underlies the significance of veterinary research to the health of humanity as we continue to erode the buffer between ourselves and wildlife.

It is UWI, through its postgraduate programmes with alumni like Dr Brown Jordan that produces the next generation of specialists and game changers that are teeming with the desire to be of service to society.

As a woman in Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), she says, “I personally had great support around me [through] Professor [of Molecular Genetics and Virology] Christine Carrington and [Director of the School of Veterinary Medicine] Dr Karla Georges, as well as many female colleagues and fellow researchers who definitely made my experience as a woman in STEM one of ease.”

She urges both women and girls who have an affinity for STEM, or anything really, to “go for it” as “there are no limits except for the ones we put on ourselves”.

When asked about her upbringing and how it has helped her become the person she is today, Dr Brown Jordan speaks of an amalgamation of Caribbean and Trinbagonian identity marked by adventurous childhood days of “running around in the bush” with siblings and visiting Maracas Bay. The support of her parents, Brian and Denise, and also that of her grandparents, kept her balanced and contributed to her success.

As for hobbies, she says, “I love to sew... I started making dolly clothes as a child”, and this has been her mainstay throughout the years and even now is a creative outlet. Dr Brown Jordan still carries her love for fashion and sewing with her, and attempts to incorporate this in her business ventures and hobbies alike.

Like the rest of us, Dr Brown Jordan tells of the difficulty of adjusting to life under the introduction of COVID-19, with the addition of longer hours at work and more demanding home life. The “balancing act with many twists and turns along the way,” as she describes it, has allowed her to be more dependent on God, her husband, family, and friends to cope with the times. Even so, she is spirited in her pursuit of capacity building and laboratory diagnostics, so it seems that there are milestones left for her in her future roles in the field of Virology and infectious disease laboratory strengthening.

Kanisha Vincent is equal parts sport scientist, storyteller, poet and freelance writer.

DCFA partners with NGC

Remote music literacy training for steelbands

BY DIXIE-ANN BELLE



Members of the Tobago-based NGC Steel Xplosion in action.
PHOTO: COURTESY NATIONAL GAS COMPANY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Pannists from several bands in Trinidad and Tobago will soon be equipped to independently create music with the skills they learn through a new Remote Training in Music Literacy programme.

Developed by The UWI’s Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA) and funded by the bands’ sponsor, The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC), the programme will greatly enhance the skillsets and marketability of the participating musicians. It will allow them to be certified by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM), one of the world’s premier associations for music certification.

Participating in this training will be members of Trinidad-based NGC Couva Joylanders, NGC La Brea Nightingales, and NGC Steel Xplosion, based in Tobago.

NGC Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Officer Alister Narinesingh noted that NGC wants to build capacity within these bands and develop players who are capable of reading music notations to operate at the highest professional level.

“This programme builds on previous work we have been doing in that regard, with one important difference,” he explained. “Previously, the training was delivered by various providers. Now we can offer a standardised training programme from an accredited institution to all our steelbands.”

“The band members will receive training and certification over time in at least the first five grades offered by the ABRSM,” stated Jessel Murray, Senior Lecturer, DCFA. “That will actually take them to the basic requirements for getting into a degree programme at any of the tertiary education institutions that offer music.”

Murray explained that the training will help fill a void in local music education and will instil valuable life skills. The students will learn to translate “written music scores into playing music scores rather than always relying on the services of an arranger or driller”. He hopes the programme will help sustain the steelpan community.

“Too often in the steelpan world, we find that the musicians are dependent upon one or two persons within a panyard – that’s the arranger et al,” said Murray. “We want to build independent capacity.”

Myles Lewis, Head CSR, NGC, echoed the senior lecturer’s sentiments. “The ultimate goal of this programme is sustainability. Not only do we want to see these pannists grow as musicians, but through their skillsets, their bands must grow into viable businesses, capable of innovating and attracting people to pan. Being able to read and write music will also allow for preservation of music that could otherwise be lost in oral tradition. For our industry to live on, our heritage must be carried through to the future.”

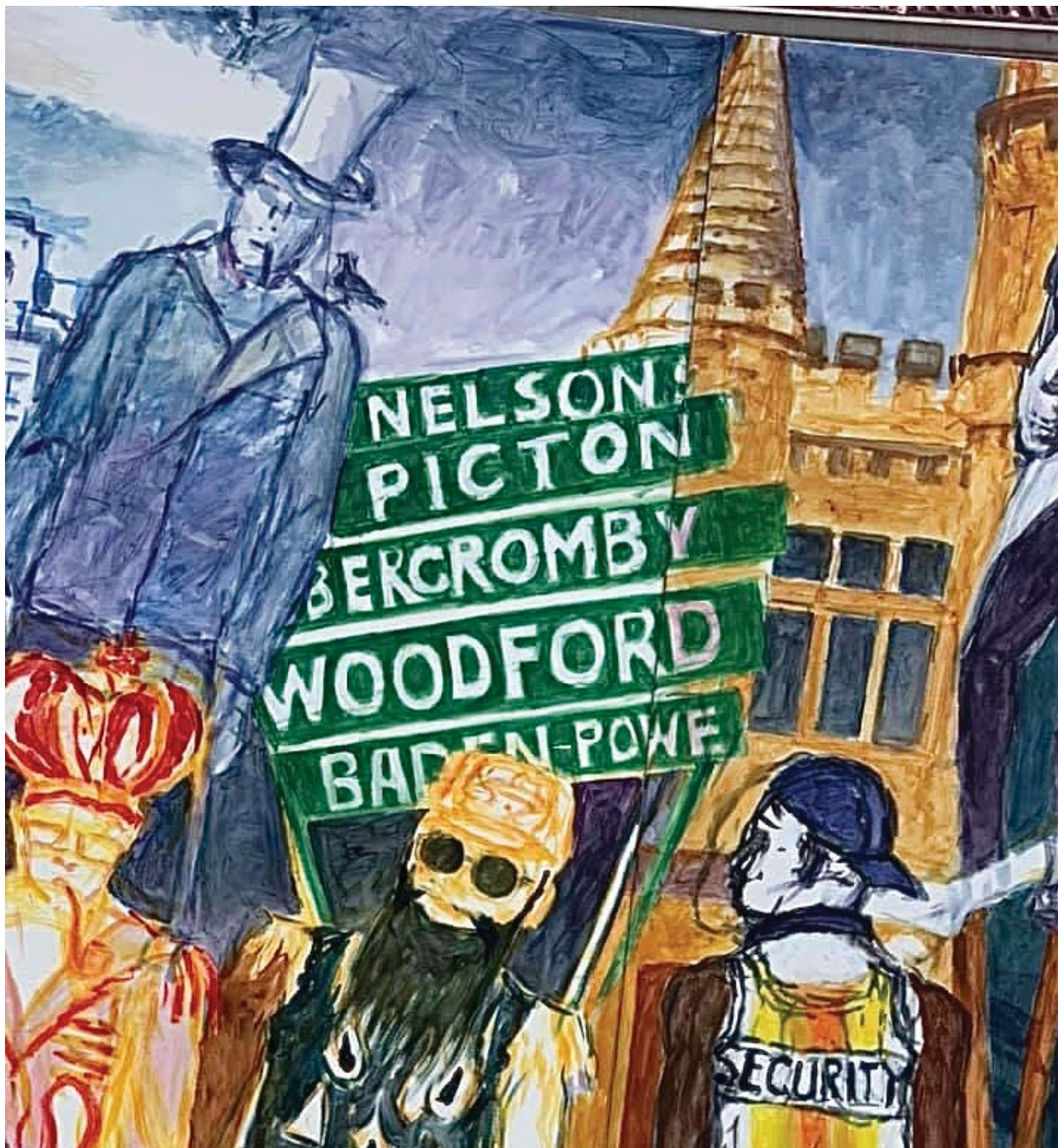
Murray envisions that the skills and certification the students acquire could also ensure future employment: “We want to get them trained to be assistants and to be, of course, teachers of the future within the panyards.”

Participants will be screened to determine their skill level, as some are primary and others secondary school students. The tutors guiding the students locally are recent DCFA graduates Samantha Joseph and Christopher Sookhoo, as well as Joshua Joseph, an adjunct lecturer at the DCFA. The training is scheduled to commence in the First Quarter of 2021.

What next for Carnival?

Panchayat symposium ponders the national festival during its lost season

BY ZAHRA GORDON



Depictions of Carnival used with the kind permission of artist **Jackie Hinkson** from his exhibition *On the Road*. Displayed from February 5 to 16 on Fisher Avenue in St Ann's, the exhibition of murals and sculptures was a major public attraction.

For more on the exhibition and its Carnival themes, read the essay "Visual Communication on the Road with Jackie Hinkson" by **Professor Godfrey Steele**, Professor of Human Communication Studies in the Department of Literary, Cultural and Communication Studies, at the UWI St Augustine website: <https://sta.uwi.edu/news/releases/release.asp?id=22220>

"The feelings of freedom and passion that you experience during j'ouvert are the same that you experience in literature, whether you're reading or writing. Literature takes you to that same point of letting go as j'ouvert," said Dr Muli Amaye, Creative Writing Programme Coordinator at the Faculty of Humanities and Education.

"They just work together – the rhythm, just being one with an art form – it's freeing."

With Carnival 2021 cancelled globally as well as in Trinidad and Tobago due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Amaye, one of the organisers of *Panchayat: The Mas(s) in We: (Re)claiming de People's Festival*, believes this is a critical time to look at Carnival with fresh eyes. Of particular importance to Amaye as not only a scholar, but a writer, is the relationship between Carnival and literature. For her, the parallels between the festival (particularly j'ouvert, which she sees as the core of Carnival) are pronounced.

Panchayat was a three-day, virtual research and arts symposium held from February 24-26 and streamed on The UWI YouTube channel. The symposium sought to delve into the myriad ways ordinary people can regain their stake in how Carnival is formulated and celebrated throughout the country. The guiding themes for the three days were mas, music and resistance. Organisers engaged musicians, mas makers, writers, performers, Carnival entrepreneurs and scholars.

The subject matter was wide-ranging, spanning the gamut from the influence of the Black Power Movement on calypso and soca, to Caribbean sexuality, to issues of race and class separatism as they relate to Carnival and even the business and manufacturing of pan. Featured panellists included radio personality Gerelle Forbes, Pan Trinbago Education Officer Marcus Ash, National Steel Symphony Orchestra director Akua Leith, historian Aiyegoro Ome, Trinbago Unified Calypsonians Organisation president Lutalo "Brother Resistance" Masimba, Soca artiste Erphaan Alves, writer/activist Corey Gilkes, filmmaker/choreographer Sonia Dumas, Department of Literary, Cultural and Communication Studies lecturer Dr Suzanne Burke, Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA) lecturer Omari Ashby, and Dr Sue Ann Barratt of the Institute of Gender and Development Studies. There were also participants from Goethe University in Germany, UWI Mona, Université des Antilles, and The University of Trinidad and Tobago.

In addition to the panels and roundtables, there was a virtual exhibition hosted on The UWI website and lunchtime film interludes which included one-minute video submissions from the public answering the question: What does Carnival mean to you?

"So much of what was spoken about is captured in the title itself, which is defined in two ways: mas as in the shortened version of the masquerade, and the creeping loss of the masquerade for the masses," said Jessel Murray, DCFA senior lecturer and symposium organising Chair.

"There's a sort of built-in consumerism which has been taking over the Carnival at the expense of what we might term the heart of traditional mas. With the contemporary mas, there appears to be some heightened consumerism and, with that, its own economics, but we're finding that the traditional persons who create the mas and participate in it are being left out of this consumerism. This panchayat was a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of each wing of Carnival. So it's a marriage of those two wings with all its contentious nature and what we aimed to get out of it is a way moving forward," added Murray.

■ UWI IN SOCIETY



Murray, who is also the former director of the National Steel Symphony Orchestra, coordinated the panel “Soca Tributaries: Discussing the confluence that continues to shape soca”; and recruited most of the participants of the roundtables including – “The Young Kings to Where?” and “The Business of Pan and Pan Manufacture”.

According to Murray, it was important to have a variety of speakers to bridge the gap between the public and academia. “The role of academia is that we can persuasively combine the voices of other academics to the voices of people who may not be academic, but are strongly within the mas, and partner in advancing the cause. We had academic panels in the Panchayat, but we also had significant people who would not have gone through the academic route, but have lived experience, and we want to combine these ideas,” he added.

Amaye chaired the roundtable “Mas Literature - Carnival as Chrysalis”, which featured mainly women, student writers in the MFA programme and local author Breanne McIvor. Participants included June Aming, Faith Jaffareli, Nadja Nabbe, and Randy Ablack. They shared excerpts from original short stories set during Carnival. The focus on women’s voices was important because Amaye believes there to be a distinct difference to depictions of Carnival historically written by some male writers, which tended to depend on metaphors of Carnival developed through the female body.

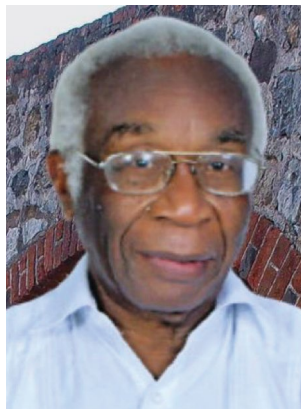
“These stories are very much about how the writers approach Carnival in their work and use it as a landscape for the unfolding narrative,” she said. The full-length stories will also be made available on The UWI St Augustine website for public consumption.

Overall, Amaye saw the cancellation of Carnival 2021 and the positioning of the Panchayat symposium as a time for re-imagination and reflection: “This was a good opportunity to look at Carnival’s past, its present and to imagine a future and think about what could be ushered in. We have to ask some serious questions. Has it just become a money-making machine? Is it constantly changing just like languages and people?”

Honouring CARL CAMPBELL

UWI St Augustine's first History Teacher

BY PROFESSOR BRIDGET BRERETON



In October 1963, with the opening of what was then called the College of Arts and Sciences, teaching began at St Augustine in the humanities and the social and natural sciences (previously the only two faculties were Agriculture and Engineering). Conditions for staff and students were difficult, with a severe shortage of teaching

resources, including books, and a scramble for usable classroom and laboratory space.

The first person to teach history courses at St Augustine was the eminent Jamaican historian, Professor Emeritus Carl Campbell, who arrived here just days before the term began. He stayed until 1972, pioneering, along with a few colleagues, undergraduate teaching and graduate research in History on the still new campus. Campbell transferred to Mona in 1972, and was a pillar of the History department there up to, and long after, his official retirement in 2004.

Even though he went to Mona in 1972, he returned often to Trinidad and to the St Augustine Campus. His major research interests were the history of Trinidad's free coloured and free black communities, and the social history of education in T&T between the 1830s and

the 1980s. His books on these two subjects remain the authoritative works up to today.

To honour Campbell's long and distinguished career, his colleagues decided to organise a "Festschrift"—a publication to celebrate a scholar's work. It took the form of a special issue of *The Journal of Caribbean History*, the organ of the three UWI departments of History which has been published since 1970. The guest editor was Bridget Brereton of St Augustine, a close friend and colleague of Campbell ever since they were both PhD students at the St Augustine Campus between 1968 and 1972.

A hybrid virtual/in-person event was held on January 29, in which copies of the special journal issue were presented to Campbell at Mona. Many people attended virtually and paid tribute to his many contributions to the writing and teaching of Caribbean history. They included UWI Vice Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, who recalled that Campbell was head of the department at Mona when he arrived for his first job there, and was met by him at the airport in Kingston. Other distinguished UWI historians who spoke briefly included Sir Woodville Marshall of Cave Hill and Sir Roy Augier of Mona.

While Carl Campbell spent most of his UWI career at Mona, St Augustine can claim him as the "Founding Father" of history teaching and research here. His pioneering research and writing on T&T's history in the 19th and 20th centuries ensure he will always be remembered.

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Bridget Brereton is Emerita Professor of History at UWI St Augustine.

UWI Calendar of Events MARCH 2021

UWI St Augustine Campus Council Meeting 2021

March 16 at 10:00am

ONLINE

Tune in to the livestream of the Campus Council Meeting Open Session to see the annual presentation from Campus Principal Brian Copeland on UWI St Augustine's accomplishments last year, and way forward in 2021. UWI Vice-Chancellor Sir Hilary Beckles will give his remarks from the perspective of the entire university.

The open session will be
livestreamed on
UWItv at <https://uwitv.org/>
Facebook at
<https://www.facebook.com/UWITV/>

Academic Advising and Mentoring in Higher Education: A Caribbean Context

March 22–24

ONLINE

To make informed choices, students need proper guidance. This three-day virtual seminar looks at the many questions related to academic advising and mentorship, and will be valuable to anyone interested in re-envisioning how they are provided.

Keynote speakers include Deputy Dean and Senior Lecturer in Psychology Dr Sandra Reid, and Director of the School of Education Professor Jerome De Lisle.

Visit <http://conferences.sta.uwi.edu/aam2020/> for more.

In Pursuit of Radical Educational Reform for Trinidad and Tobago

March 31

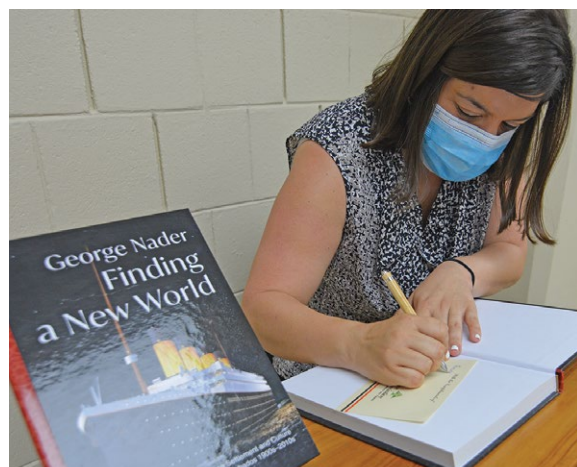
ONLINE

Has the time finally come for dramatic change in teaching and learning? This virtual symposium, hosted by the School of Education, will look at the possibilities for T&T's educational reform and the policies to ensure greater equity and quality in the new system.

Participants include former education Ministry CEO Mr Harrilal Secharan, School of Ed Director Professor Jerome De Lisle, and Educational Leadership lecturers Drs Freddy James and Rinnelle Lee-Piggott.

To register, visit:
https://uwi.zoom.us/join/register/WN_ND37NJLzRMasQon5qyP8TQ

SHARING THE SYRIAN LEBANESE STORY



Jo-Marie Zakour, President of the Syrian Lebanese Women Association of Trinidad and Tobago (SLWATT), signs a copy of the book, *Finding a New World* by Professor George Nader at a handover ceremony at the Alma Jordan Library (AJL) on February 5. The handover continues a partnership established between AJL's West Indiana and Special Collections Division (WISC) and the Syrian Lebanese community that began in 2019. Through the assistance of SLWATT member Mrs Norma Hadad, the history and experiences of the Syrian Lebanese community are being recorded for the Oral and Pictorial Records Programme (OPReP). To date, several octogenarians have been interviewed for this collection by Dr Glenroy Taitt, Senior Librarian at WISC. *Finding a New World* documents the history of the Syrian Lebanese community in Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados.