



# Network and Outreach for Disability Education and Sensitization (NODES) and The Disability Studies Unit, UWI



*Ms Eileen Dunne, Ireland*



*Prof. Gerard Hutchinson, Trinidad*



*Prof. Elizabeth Harry, USA*

**Thursday April 23<sup>rd</sup> & Friday April 24<sup>th</sup> 2015**

**TOWARDS SOCIAL INTEGRATION**  
RIGHTS, ROLES, RECOGNITION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

# SPONSORS

Consulate of Ireland  
Trinidad & Tobago



Ministry of the People & Social Development



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago



MINISTRY OF THE  
PEOPLE AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



## CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME

Welcome to the first conference on disability organized by the UWI Network and Outreach for Disability Education and Sensitization (NODES). This organization emerged out of our conviction that the many dispersed groups advocating for persons with disabilities in our society could be enabled if we, as University of the West Indies academics, used our skills and training to work alongside other voluntary groups and persons with disabilities.

We set ourselves three tasks initially: to use the media in every way possible to sensitize and educate the general population about persons with disabilities; to develop a documentary on persons with disabilities and to host a conference which would bring together persons with disabilities, advocates, NGOs and researchers.

We are pleased to collaborate with the Disability Studies Unit in this venture. The University of the West Indies Disability Studies Unit (DSU) pioneered Social Disability Studies in the Caribbean in 2004.

This unit facilitates the empowerment of the diverse community of persons with disabilities and has concentrated on disability as a social phenomenon and a social construct. Its lecturers encourage the recognition of human rights, and anti-oppressive and the promotion of anti-discriminatory social environments that promote social inclusion for the differently abled. The unit has been involved in research, publications and outreach work with persons with disabilities since its inception.

We look forward to two exhilarating and productive days during which our collective goals are realized

Jean Antoine  
*Chair, Network and Outreach for  
Disability Education and Sensitization (NODES)*

## ABOUT NODES

***The UWI Network and Outreach for Disability Education and Sensitization (NODES)*** is a team of scholars and activists who have been working in the field of disability. NODES seeks to leverage its UWI positioning to connect existing diverse groups currently working in the field of disability in Trinidad and Tobago. The intention is to act as facilitators and integrators and to create interfaces between these organizations

Our aims are:

- *To support education and consciousness raising in relation to persons with disabilities*
- *To sensitize the public to challenges faced by persons with disabilities*
- *To facilitate self-representation on the part of persons with disabilities*
- *To stimulate media awareness*
- *To address stereotyping and to promote positive portrayals of persons with disabilities*
- *To encourage inclusion of persons with disabilities*
- *To remove societal restrictions*
- *To promote access to education and in particular higher education*

Our plan of action is:

- *Research, publicize and seek access to media*
- *Publish a magazine that targets the general public and includes contributions from persons with varying disabilities. The magazine to be distributed electronically and in paper format*
- *Make and distribute a documentary film on disability*

- *Plan a disabilities workshop on the theme: Integration through Innovation for the University of the West Indies St Augustine campus initiation week in September 2014*
- *Plan and organize workshops culminating in an academic conference on disabilities in 2015*
- *Interface with the University of the West Indies Academic Support Disabilities Liaison Unit and the Disability Studies Unit at St Augustine.*

Our members are:

Dr. Jean Antoine-Dunne

*Chairperson*

Dr. Paula Morgan

*Secretary*

Dr. Innette Cambridge

*Treasurer and Coordinator of UWI St Augustine Disability Studies Unit*

Ms. Jacqueline Huggins

*Coordinator of UWI St Augustine Academic Support/ Disabilities Liaison Unit*

Major David Benjamin

*Special Olympics activist and Director of SPEC*

Ms. Joanna Owen

*Community Representative: Mother of a daughter with Down Syndrome*

Dr. Benjamin Braithwaite

*Coordinator of the Diploma in Caribbean Sign Language Interpreting*

Mr. Anil Waithe

*MSc Student UWI who is differently-abled*

# PROGRAMME

	DAY 1		DAY 2
8:00	Registration		Registration
9:00	<b>Welcome</b> <b>Dr Jean Antoine-Dunne</b> <i>Chair, NODES Committee</i>  <b>Keynote Address</b> <i>Towards Independence and Social Equality</i> <b>Ms Eileen Dunne</b> <i>Disability Activist, Ireland</i>	9:00-10:15	<b>Keynote Address</b> <i>Lifting the Burden: The Future of Disability</i> <b>Professor Gerard Hutchinson</b> <i>The University of the West Indies, St Augustine</i>
	Roundtable 1: Integration and Participation		
11:00	BREAK	10:15	BREAK
11.15	Session 1 & 2 / Workshop 1	10:30-12:30	Session 5 & 6 / Workshop 3
12:45	<b>LUNCH</b> <b>BOOK LAUNCH</b> <b>Ms Annicia Gayle-Geddes</b> <i>Disability and Inequity : Socioeconomic Imperatives and Public Policy in Jamaica</i>	12:30-1:45	<b>LUNCH</b> <b>FILM SCREENING</b> <b>Short Film – Mr Francis Escayg</b> <i>Crossing the Gap</i>  <b>Video – Kerry Ann Ifill</b> <i>Accessible Tourism in Barbados</i>
1:45	Roundtable 2: Ministering to the Disabled	1:45-3:15	Roundtable 3: Mental Disorders
3.15	BREAK	3:15	BREAK
3:30-5:15	Sessions 3 & 4 / Workshop 2	3:30-5:30	Panels 7, 8, 9 / Workshop 4
6.00-7:30	<b>OPENING CEREMONY</b> <b>Keynote Address</b> <i>Integration is a two-way street: The power of reciprocity</i> <b>Professor Elizabeth Harry</b> <i>University of Miami, Florida, USA</i>	6:00-7:30	<b>CLOSING CEREMONY</b> <b>Film: Dis-Abled Mis Labeled</b>
	Refreshments		Principal's Reception

## DETAILED PROGRAMME

	<b>THURSDAY APRIL 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015</b>	
<b>08:00-09:00</b>	<b>REGISTRATION</b>	<b>LRC 2</b>
<b>09:00-11:00</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	
	<b>KEYNOTE ADDRESS 1 / Introduction: John Patrick Clarke, CEO Down Syndrome Ireland</b>	<b>AUD. A, B &amp; C</b>
	<i>Eileen Dunne Disability Activist, Ireland Towards independence and social equality</i>	
<b>ROUNDTABLE 1</b>	<b>INTEGRATION &amp; PARTICIPATION / Chair: Joanna Owen</b>	<b>AUD. A, B &amp; C</b>
	<p><b>Glen Niles</b> President, Down Syndrome Family Network</p> <p><b>Joanna Owen</b> Director, Down Syndrome Family Network</p> <p><b>Beverly Beckles</b> CEO, National Centre for Persons with Disabilities, Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p><b>Kerry Ann Ifill</b> Senator, Government of Barbados</p> <p><b>John Patrick Clarke</b> CEO, Down Syndrome Ireland</p>	
<b>11:00-11:15</b>	<b>BREAK</b>	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES LOUNGE</b>
<b>11:15-12:45</b>	<b>PANELS 1, 2 / WORKSHOP 1</b>	
<b>PANEL 1</b>	<b>EDUCATION AND ACCESS / Chair Bennie Berkely</b>	<b>AUD. A</b>
	<p><b>Hyacinth Guppy-Hickson and Cathryn Kelshall</b> Dyslexia: Matching educational intervention to brain research</p> <p><b>Sabeerah Abdul-Majied and Jacqueline Huggins</b> Feeling their way: Negotiation and accommodation for students who are blind or visually impaired at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine</p>	

	<b>Stacey Blackman, Dennis Conrad, Lisa Philip</b> A Study of students with disabilities at the U.W.I Cave Hill and St Augustine	
<b>PANEL 2</b>	<b>THE STATE AND THE NEEDS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES / Chair: Sunity Maharaj</b>	<b>AUD. B</b>
	<b>Arnold Ramjitsingh</b> Towards inclusive development: The role of the Ministry of the People and Social Development in addressing the needs of persons with disabilities in Trinidad and Tobago  <b>Renée Figuera</b> When the law cannot hear and does not sign: A critical case study of the legal framework for language use and deaf human rights in Trinidad and Tobago  <b>Maxine Hunte</b> Caring for a child with cerebral palsy: An investigation of the challenges and needs of parents with a child with cerebral palsy in Trinidad and Tobago	
<b>WORKSHOP 1</b>	<b>INTEGRATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES INTO SOCIETY (UWI Disability Studies Unit)</b> <b>Debbie Austin-Kerr, Teresina Sieunarine, Maria Thomas / Chair: Innette Cambridge</b>	<b>AUD. C</b>
<b>12:45-01:45</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>  <b>BOOK LAUNCH</b> <b>Annicia Gayle-Geddes</b> <i>Disability and Inequality: Socioeconomic Imperatives and Public Policy in Jamaica</i>	
<b>ROUNDTABLE 2</b>	<b>MINISTERING TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES / Chair: Seamus Dunne</b>	<b>AUD. A &amp; B</b>
<b>01:45-03:15</b>	<b>Therese Antoine</b> Mother General Dominican Sisters  <b>Christina Aruajo</b> Dominican Sisters  <b>Nasser Mustapha</b> Muslim Community  <b>Doreen Anderson</b> Bahai Faith  <b>Mikkel Trestrail</b>	
<b>03:15-03:30</b>	<b>BREAK</b>	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES LOUNGE</b>

<b>03:30- 5:15</b>	<b>PANELS 3, 4 AND WORKSHOP 2</b>	
<b>PANEL 3</b>	<b>EMPLOYMENT AND ACCESS / Chair: Gabrielle Hezekiah</b>	<b>AUD. A</b>
	<p><b>Lianna Balkaran</b> Employment and access</p> <p><b>Nicole Cowie</b> Analyzing oppression with regards to the employment of persons with disabilities in Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p><b>Loretta Crane</b> Meaningful and sustainable employment for persons with special needs</p>	
<b>PANEL 4</b>	<b>SPORT LIFE SKILLS AND ACCESS / Chair: Belinda Baptiste</b>	<b>AUD. B</b>
	<p><b>Jayne McGuire</b> Changing minds through recreation and sport</p> <p><b>Roy McCree</b> Sport and disability in Trinidad and Tobago: An exploratory study</p> <p><b>Ceronne Prevatt</b> Life skills and social integration of persons with disabilities</p> <p><b>Samantha Jaimungal, Colin Ng Wai, Abigail Cezair, Subash Sharma</b> Development of a guide/ assistance dog service for the differently-abled in Trinidad and Tobago</p>	
<b>WORKSHOP 2: ROUNDTABLE INTERACTION</b>	<b>AUTISTIC SOCIETY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO</b> Frederick Felix in conversation with persons with autism	<b>AUD. C</b>
<b>06:00</b>	<b>OPENING CEREMONY</b>	<b>AUD. A, B &amp; C</b>
	<b>KEYNOTE ADDRESS 2 / Introduction: Paula Morgan</b>	
	<p><b>Professor Elizabeth Harry</b> University of Miami. USA Integration is a two-way street: The power of reciprocity</p>	
<b>07.30</b>	<b>REFRESHMENTS</b>	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES LOUNGE</b>



	<b>FRIDAY APRIL 24<sup>TH</sup> 2015</b>	
<b>08:00-09:00</b>	<b>REGISTRATION</b>	<b>LRC 2</b>
	<b>KEYNOTE ADDRESS 3 / Introduction: Jacqueline Huggins</b>	<b>AUD. A, B &amp; C</b>
<b>09:00-10:15</b>	<b>Professor Gerard Hutchinson</b> <b>UWI St Augustine</b> <i>Lifting the burden: The future of disability</i>	
<b>10:15-10:30</b>	<b>BREAK</b>	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES LOUNGE</b>
<b>10:30-12:30</b>	<b>PANEL 5,6 AND WORKSHOP 3</b>	
<b>PANEL 5</b>	<b>SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY-CHALLENGES AND INTERVENTIONS / Chair: Ben Braithwaite</b>	<b>AUD. A</b>
	<p><b>Sirlon George and Valerie Youssef</b> <i>'Is our future in our schoolbags too? Children with language difficulties' therapeutic and educational prospects in Trinidad and Tobago 2014</i></p> <p><b>Keisha T. Lindsay and Mona Gardner</b> <i>Forging international bonds in the Caribbean: A service learning initiative in St Lucia, West Indies</i></p> <p><b>Kathy-Ann Drayton</b> <i>Conceptualizing communication disorders within the ICF framework</i></p> <p><b>Donnella Rodriguez</b> <i>A parent training program for children with language delays</i></p>	
<b>PANEL 6</b>	<b>DISABILITY GENDER AND VIOLENCE / Chair: Angelique Nixon</b>	<b>AUD. C</b>
	<p><b>Yansie Rolston and Sandra A.M. Bell</b> Challenging the sexual oppression and exploitation of persons with disabilities</p> <p><b>Ana Maria Sanchez Rodriguez</b> <i>Civil society practices to end violence and abuse of woman and girls with disabilities in Mexico</i></p> <p><b>Eudalie Wickham-Ashby</b> Invisible Woman: Strategies for coping with domestic violence</p> <p><b>Paula Morgan</b> When history is a pile of manacles: Gendered trauma and disability in Chariandry's <i>Socouyant</i></p>	
<b>WORKSHOP 3</b>	<b>ENHANCING LIVES WITH MUSIC THERAPY / Facilitator: Jean Raabe</b>	<b>AUD. B</b>
<b>12:30-01:45</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES LOUNGE</b>

	<p><b>FILM SCREENING</b> - <i>Crossing the Gap</i> <b>Francis Escayg</b></p> <p><b>VIDEO</b> - <i>Accessible Tourism in Barbados</i> <b>Kerry Ann Ifill</b></p>	
<b>ROUNDTABLE 3</b>	<b>MENTAL HEALTH- ITS IMPACT ON EDUCATION AND LIFE / Participant Moderator: Shirin Haque</b>	<b>AUD. A, B &amp; C</b>
<b>01:45-03:15</b>	<p><b>Sarah Chin Yuen Kee</b> <i>Student Counsellor UWI</i></p> <p><b>Catriona Persad</b></p> <p><b>Nicole Cowie</b> <i>Activist</i></p> <p><b>Jacqueline Huggins</b> <i>Coordinator ASDLU</i></p>	
<b>03:15-03:30</b>	<b>BREAK</b>	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES LOUNGE</b>
<b>03:30-05:30</b>	<b>PANELS 7, 8, 9 AND WORKSHOP 4</b>	
<b>PANEL 7</b>	<b>SERVICING THE NEEDS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES / Chair: Ronald Marshall</b>	<b>AUD. A</b>
	<p><b>Natalie Dick</b> Cognitive behavioural psychotherapist and development behavioural paediatrician: A professionally rewarding “blend”</p> <p><b>Patricia A. Fletcher</b> The cultural meaning of the wheel chair symbol for the aging population</p> <p><b>Natalie Dick</b> Quality monitoring and success indicators related a paediatric multi-disciplinary service</p>	
<b>PANEL 8</b>	<b>SEEKING INCLUSION</b>	<b>AUD. B</b>
	<p><b>Sirlon George and Donnella Rodriguez</b> <i>Right start early intervention program: An effective model necessary for the child with autism</i></p> <p><b>Rhonda Ochoa</b> Inclusive education: Teaching the deaf English Language</p> <p><b>Elizabeth Harry and Selris James</b> Mastery of Depth and Perspective: The Artistry of Selris James</p>	

<b>PANEL 9</b>	<b>SERVICES AND ADVOCACY FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES / Chair: Josh Drayton</b>	<b>AUD. C</b>
	<p><b>Ravi Ragoo</b> Specialty community paediatrics in Trinidad: Providing services and advocating for children with disability</p> <p><b>Laura Beekhoo</b> A parent satisfaction survey of the specialty community paediatric service, South West Regional Health Authority (SWRHA, Trinidad)</p> <p><b>Prithiviraj Bahadursingh</b> Services for children with autism: a caregiver perspective in Trinidad</p>	
<b>WORKSHOP 4</b>	<b>GENERATING SELF-EMPLOYMENT / Facilitator: Sylvester Clarke</b>	<b>LRC 2</b>
<b>06:00- 07:00</b>	<b>CLOSING CEREMONY</b> <i>Film <del>Dis</del>-Abled Mis Labled</i>	<b>AUD. A, B &amp; C</b>
<b>07.00</b>	<b>PRINCIPAL'S RECEPTION</b>	<b>PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE</b>

#### POSTER PRESENTATIONS

**Keisha T. Lindsay and Mona Gardner**

*The advantages and disadvantages of seeking speech-language therapeutic intervention locally – An initial survey from Trinidad and Tobago*

**Rebekah Lewis**

*Profile of deaf education in Jamaica*

**Tenyse Wells**

*Deaf people and the law for deaf education*

**Akin Kallan**

*Deaf good and bad in Trinidad and Tobago*

**Salina Peterson and Ian Dhanoolal**

*The Trinidad and Tobago manual alphabet*

**Natalie Dick**

*Empowerment of persons with disabilities through vocational training and job placement: The NCPD model*

**Ben Braithwaite**

*The diversity of signed languages and deaf cultures in the Caribbean*



# ABSTRACTS

SABEERAH ABDUL-MAJIED &  
JACQUELINE HUGGINS  
The University of the West Indies, St Augustine

## **Feeling their Way: Negotiation and Accommodation for Blind or Visually Impaired Students at UWI, St Augustine**

This study investigated the factors influencing negotiative and navigation efforts expended by students who are blind or visually impaired to succeed in the programmes they were pursuing at UWI St. Augustine and the level of support provided by the institution to those students. A qualitative case study using semi-structured interviews was conducted with two male and two female students. Data was also collected via questionnaires which were administered to academic and administrative support staff. Phenomenological analysis revealed that to overcome the many challenges to succeed, students had to take responsibility for their learning, know their rights, negotiate infrastructural changes on their own behalf and be proactive to ensure that their needs were met. Changes to university practices and procedures were accommodated through a structured entity – the Academic Support/Disabilities Liaison Unit which used information from three main sources for making changes to accommodate the students. The findings are discussed within the context of the complementarity of the roles of the institution and students with disabilities in an inclusive educational setting.

DEBBIE AUSTIN-KERR, TERESINA SIEUNARINE &  
MARIA THOMAS  
UWI Disability Studies Unit

## **Workshop: Integrating Persons with Disabilities into Society**

The workshop is designed to provide a means of sensitizing participants to issues which affect persons with disabilities. The aim is to strengthen the support for the inclusive integration of these persons into society, which is in keeping with one of the major goals of the Social Disability Studies Unit of The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. This workshop will enlighten participants to some of the daily challenges which are encountered by persons with disabilities, with emphasis on appreciation of their rights as equal citizens. The activities chosen for the interactive workshop have been specifically designed to provide participants with the opportunity to build a level of empathy, whilst enhancing an understanding of the need for the integration of persons with disabilities into society. These discussions and activities will assist participants in deconstructing the current myths and misperceptions with a view to developing positive attitudes and acceptance.

LIANNA BALKARAN

*Graduate of The University of the West Indies*

## **Employment and Access**

One key problem that plagues persons with disabilities is unemployment, the reasons for which vary. As a person with a disability, I believe access extends beyond putting physical infrastructure in workplaces. In order for persons with disabilities to have real access to employment they must also have access to education and training and open-minded employers.

PRITHIVIRAJ BAHADURSINGH

*Paediatrician, SWRHA, Trinidad & Tobago*

## **Services for Children with Autism: A Caregiver Perspective in Trinidad**

Autism is a condition requiring multidisciplinary support services. Currently, within the South West Regional Health Authority, speech therapy and occupational therapy are not available; child psychiatry/psychology, medical social worker and dietician services are available but limited. Many autistic children are denied placement in schools and declined for the special child disability grant. This study observed selected children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. Sixty of seventy-five caregivers were successfully contacted to fill out a structured questionnaire regarding services.

The result highlights the need for improving the availability and access to essential multidisciplinary services for children with Autism in Trinidad.

DENNIS CONRAD, LISA PHILLIP & STACY BLACKMAN

*The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill*

## **A Study of Students with Disabilities at UWI Cave Hill and St. Augustine**

The purpose of this qualitative research was to document the experiences of a group of students with disabilities pursuing studies at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill, Barbados and St. Augustine, Trinidad. The study utilizes a case study strategy and an eco-systemic and phenomenological framework to explain how students with disabilities navigate the barriers to integration and participation in higher education settings. Findings indicate that while the main barriers to participation are contextual and personal in nature that lack of equality of opportunity and lack of initiative are some of the underlying issues that account for these limitations. Students with disabilities navigate these challenges best by adopting an attitude of self-actualization buttressed by supportive relationships contained within the micro, meso and exo systems. The implications of these findings are that the University of the West Indies must seek to equalize opportunities for students with disabilities in order for them to successfully complete their academic studies and to foster a more inclusive educational environment.

LORETTA CRANE

## **We Wish to be Looked Upon: Rights and Recognition for Persons with Disabilities**

Many children with special needs who enter public schools have not been referred, screened or diagnosed. Several students who progress to high school either drop out or are asked to leave. The few survivors entering post-secondary training find it difficult to attain jobs and persons who enter university find it difficult to complete their studies. If they do graduate, there are no jobs for them. This paper uses case study methodology and posits that the high unemployment rate among persons with disabilities is a form of oppression as defined by Iris Young (1990). Using the Thompson (1995) "PCS" model of oppression (i.e. personal, cultural and social), this paper will analyse oppression with regards to the employment of persons with disabilities in the twin island republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The paper will then explore existing solutions to the social problem of unemployment of persons with disabilities in Trinidad and Tobago. It will also make recommendations for improvement of said social problem using the model of Paulo Friere as described in "Pedagogy of the Oppressed".

NATALIE DICK

*Caribbean Kids & Families Therapy Organisation*

## **CBT and DBT- A Professionally Rewarding "Blend"**

About 20% to 30% of children and teenagers experience social and emotional problems that are concerning to their caregivers, and some of these are clinically significant. This quantum is far larger in children and adolescents with disabilities, whether simple or complex, especially if they have co-morbid chronic medical conditions. At the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex, a novel collaborative and integrated model of service delivery has been taking place over the past two (2) years between a mental health clinician (Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist) and a physician (Developmental Behavioural Paediatrician). Case selection occurs from the socioeconomically and geographically diverse clientele of a public health sector, sub-specialty Paediatric Ambulatory service. Outcomes of this professional synergy have been that this resource-poor environment has gained improvements in the insight of the child/teen and/or their caregiver(s), self-monitoring (where applicable), and application of well-known strategies to enhance behaviour and to augment coping skills, in chronic conditions. This integrated service has been a useful adjunct to the psychopharmacotherapeutic approach necessary in management of some children/teens with mental health and developmental disorders, there is potential to expand this type of service to provide more effective and holistic multidisciplinary care to this vulnerable niche of our paediatric population.

NATALIE DICK

*Caribbean Kids & Families Therapy Organisation*

## **Quality Monitoring and Success Indicators related a Paediatric Multi-Disciplinary Service**

The World Health Organisation estimates that approximately 80% of the 600 million people living with disabilities in the world reside in low-income countries. Despite the paucity of relevant data in Trinidad and Tobago, it is estimated that about 10-15% of school-aged children have some form of disability. Identification and management of disabilities should begin as early as possible, with the combined efforts of an integrated multidisciplinary model likely to be the most maximally effective approach. Monitoring of the quality and success of multiple interventions for children and teenagers with disabilities is challenging, especially due to the complexity and chronicity of many of these cases.

At Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex, a public health sector facility, a socioeconomically and geographically diverse clientele is serviced in the sub-specialty Paediatric Ambulatory Service. A prospective study among professionals and caregivers was conducted to determine the most feasible and suitable measures of quality and success relevant to an emerging multidisciplinary clinical unit for children and adolescents with developmental, behavioural and/or academic challenges.

KATHY-ANN DRAYTON

*The University of the West Indies, St Augustine*

## **Conceptualizing Communication Disorders within the ICF Framework**

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) (WHO 2001) was developed to encapsulate ideas of health and disability within a medical and social framework that highlights domains of activity and participation in the context of personal and environmental factors that influence both. This framework has been used to describe communication disorders and the rehabilitation of these disorders in many developed countries (O'Halloran et al 2008). This paper examines the application of the framework to the description of communication disorders in the Trinidad and Tobago context, and the application of concepts enshrined into the ICF in the development of rehabilitation programmes for persons with communication disorders. The application of the ICF will be discussed in relation to two groups: persons who are Hard of Hearing (HoH), and adults with stroke related speech and language problems. The effects of impairment on activities of daily living and participation in family, and community life, will be described through the use of interviews and case history data.



FREDERICK FELIX

*The Autistic Society of Trinidad & Tobago*

## **Psychotherapy, Pharmacotherapy and Developmental Disorders: Bane or Boon?**

There are many challenging behaviours that are present clinically and are attributed to be the symptoms of existing or suspected developmental disorders. The affected patients are at risk of institutionalisation or life-long pharmacotherapy. In some cases, these behaviours are a result of mental disorders which are co-morbid or a result of bio-psycho-social challenges which have gone unrecognised in the family home or institution. Such comorbidity results in substantial additional impairment, which can further rattle the unsuspecting clinicians and educators.

Many such patients continue to be given this monotherapy in the face of studies which prove that a combination of pharmacotherapy and psychotherapy is efficacious in the treatment of anxiety disorders in general and depression in particular. Without an efficacious treatment regime which should also include relapse prevention, patients suffer not only the stigma that poor mental health brings especially in the Caribbean, but also lack of self-esteem and social skills, and reduced education and employment opportunities. Arguably, this scenario can be attributed to a combination of reasons including lack of training in primary care services, lack of resources and apathy and discrimination in treating persons with mental disorders and invisible disabilities. A case study could elucidate the problems associated with this type of diagnosis and the current treatment available.

RENÉE FIGUERA

*The University of the West Indies, St Augustine*

## **When the Law Does not Hear and Cannot Sign: A critical case study of the Legal Framework for Language Use and Deaf Human Rights in T&T**

This paper showcases real and potential acts of discrimination, disenfranchisement and abuse in matters of legal rights and due process for deaf citizens and makes recommendations to improve the treatment of the deaf within the existing legal framework by members of the protective services. While metropolitan societies such as the United States and England were obligated to embrace the disabled because of the Great World Wars, the Caribbean has yet to achieve true inclusion of the disabled within its current legal-protective framework.

The researchers use three case studies from within Trinidad and Tobago to explore law enforcement issues: one focussing on the unlawful detainment of a deaf football team during the State of Emergency in 2010; another of the abuse of the disabled while in police custody following a robbery; and finally a case of abuse of police power in issuing a traffic ticket to a deaf-mute driver on one-way street. From these cases, the absence of education among law enforcement officers and the lack protection for the deaf, in particular, become evident within the legal-protective system in Trinidad. Based on evidence of a breakdown in the protective mandate of the police regarding the deaf, the paper makes recommendations for policy inclusion and training on behalf of officers who enforce the law, regarding the treatment of the deaf.

PATRICIA A. FLETCHER

## **The Cultural Meaning of the Wheelchair: Symbol for the Aging Population**

The demographic shift of the aging population will affect all aspects of society. Elderly people are living longer due to healthier lifestyles as well as to advances in medicine and technology. Therefore, it is important for people with disabilities to interpret the meaning of a symbol, which is critical in helping them improve hearing, vision, and literacy as the number of mobility-impaired individuals increase.

The purpose of this paper is to identify the role of the disability placard and plate artifact. Older adults use signage to provide daily application and acceptance, and seek to understand the cultural indicators that can affect the delivery of meaning. The negotiated artifact (Wenger, 1998, p.89) used to enhance a shared meaning among all age groups, makes it easy to identify the symbol of the wheelchair. This community interaction is essential for creating policies that will help everyone improve the translation and acceptance of symbols in any language. This accommodation is a stored pictorial content found on license plates, maps, parking signs for designated spots, located outside a restroom needed to clarify instructions. This example of Wenger, 1998, (p.107) standardization will show a wheelchair on every disability placard and plate, for a universal understanding of a policy that interprets someone's needs of mobility assistance. The author explains the importance for the public's visual recognition and understanding of this symbol. This will lead to additional discoveries of how visual language can improve cognitive function with memory loss.

SIRLON GEORGE & VALERIE YOUSSEF  
*The University of the West Indies, St Augustine*

## **'Is our Future in our Schoolbags too?' Children with Language Difficulties' Therapeutic and Educational Prospects in T&T 2014**

This paper documents the support experiences of parents of children with special needs, specifically those with speech and/or language difficulties, from the time of their recognizing that their children had these difficulties to the present. Parents who responded to our survey questionnaire have children who attend speech-language therapy sessions at least once per week and several of them are funded by the Regional Health Authorities for this therapy. They include children with a range of disorders on the autism spectrum (ASD), as well as some with expressive language delay, attention deficit disorder (ADHD), Cerebral Palsy and Down's Syndrome. The paper seeks to establish how possible it may be at the present time to establish more universal support, involving assessment, therapy and guidance to enable children with special needs to receive education and diverse medical and therapeutic care. It includes consideration of whether the children can be accepted into the school system and whether additional support can be afforded them to negotiate that system.

If we can define the present situation with accuracy we will be better able to achieve goals for future development which can be presented to the appropriate authorities for implementation. This is our main concern in an age of maximal education for equality of opportunity.

SIRLON GEORGE & DONNELLA RODRIGUEZ  
*The University of the West Indies, St Augustine*

### **“Right Start Early Intervention Program: A Model for the Child with Autism”**

Despite severity of the disorder, if provided with a structured environment and therapeutic resources, the young child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) should and could live a typical life (become independent in daily living and/or transition to typical school). The directors aim to develop a program (The Right Start Early Intervention Program) that could foster the necessary early childhood concepts and skills that could prepare for future mainstream education (daily living and/or mainstream schooling). A preschool early intervention program specifically designed for children with ASD between the ages of 2-5 years, a structured classroom setup using a variety of specialized approaches to teaching, weekly speech and language therapy sessions in order to provide the systematic framework necessary for this population, data collection including clinical documentation, Individualized Goal Plans (IGP), independent work data collection and term progress reports were instrumental in tracking the progress made. An overview of the current status of children who have participated in the Right Start Early Intervention program revealed that early intervention and consistent structure plays a significant role in the life of a young child with ASD. The program has proven to be an effective model for initiating the development of prerequisite skills for independent daily living and/or transition into typical schooling.

ELIZABETH HARRY & SELRIS JAMES  
*University of Miami, Florida, USA*

### **Mastery of Depth and Perspective: The Artistry of Selris James**

This presentation will highlight the life and outstanding talent of 40 year-old Selris James. Against the overwhelming odds of having been born with Rubella syndrome, Selris' superior intelligence and artistic talent was evident from age 7, when, with no formal schooling, he taught himself to write letters of the alphabet by watching Sesame Street with his eyes no more than 2 inches away from the TV screen, and drew pictures that displayed mastery of depth and perspective. Using samples of Selris' art, the presentation will show how this talented person uses his inborn talent to represent the best and worst of his daily life and to communicate to his mother his dreams of a normal life, with a job as an architect, and a wife and family of his own. One could say that Selris is fully integrated into the life of his community, yet without the educational and vocational services he needs, his potential has never been realized.

HYACINTH GUPPY-HICKSON & CATHRYN KELSHALL  
*Dyslexia Association*

### **Dyslexia: Matching Educational Intervention to Brain Research**

Dyslexia is a congenital disorder characterised by unexpected difficulty learning to decode and spell words in relation to one's verbal intelligence, motivation and educational opportunities. If left

unattended, dyslexia becomes a disabling condition. We propose to discuss the efficacy of the teaching methods used by the Dyslexia Association in order to “draw attention to the rights of” dyslexic students to receive proven educational intervention in school. Albert Gallaburda’s study of ten dyslexic brains, found that the dyslexics’ brains were symmetrical, and that specifically, the area of the brain dealing with language was larger than those of non-dyslexic samples. Gallaburda also found abnormal neuronal migration. The foci of this affected mostly the left hemisphere especially areas affecting letter strings and words. The second by Torgensen et al, carried out fmri scans on dyslexic and non-dyslexic brains while phonological tasks were being carried out pre and post-intervention. The scans showed that the left hemisphere of the dyslexic’s brain is not fully engaged. This changed after intervention. Both studies found that the left side (the language hemisphere) differed in size and function. We will demonstrate that the programmes taught by the Dyslexia Association particularly meet the needs of these learners as shown by the above studies.

MAXINE HUNTE

*Ministry of the People and Social Development*

### **An Investigation of the Challenges faced by Parents of Children with Cerebral Palsy in T&T**

Globally, cerebral palsy is a common disability in childhood, with a prevalence of at least 2 for every 1000 live births. However, there is a dearth of national data on the experiences of individuals living with cerebral palsy, as well as the experiences of their parents or caregivers in Trinidad and Tobago. Utilizing data from a variety of State Agencies, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and interviews with

families and individuals who live with the disability, this paper will present the perspectives and experiences of parents and caregivers of individuals with cerebral palsy in Trinidad and Tobago. The needs, challenges, gaps in service provision and critical policy considerations are also identified. The study revealed that some of the main issues confronting parents/caregivers of children with cerebral palsy include: the breakdown of spousal relationships; financial burden and the inability to seek full-time employment, stigmatization, lack of available therapists, inaccessible public transportation and the lack of inclusion in educational facilities. Recommendations include providing counselling to families; providing greater financial assistance, enhancing public awareness on disabilities, increasing the pool of therapist through varying measures and increasing the opportunities to access public transport and public educational facilities.

SAMANTHA JAIMUNGAL, COLIN NG WAI,

ABIGAIL CEZAIR & SUBASH SHARMA

*The University of the West Indies, St Augustine*

### **Development of a Guide/Assistance Dog Service for the Differently-abled in T&T**

It was our intent to develop a guide and assistance dog service for Trinidad and Tobago by assessing the basic infrastructure and policies, and examining the social integration of these dogs into society. Surveys were performed to determine the need for guide dogs among 43 visually impaired individuals, and to determine the level of awareness to disability among 86 employees of business places and Government offices, and 19 managers of companies in four regions of the country.

From the data collected, 95% of the visually impaired were supportive of a new local guide dog program. Most people surveyed perceived guide dogs as pets, for protection and to assist the blind with daily activities. Some problems associated with the use of guide dogs in T&T found were the denial of access into public spaces and transportation, fear of dogs and lack of laws to regulate the use of assistance dogs. Both education and legislation are necessary to protect the dogs and handlers from discrimination. Infrastructural changes can alleviate some of the existing challenges for the differently-abled. Trinidad and Tobago can greatly benefit from a guide/assistance dog program.

KEISHA T. LINDSAY

*The Therapeutic Workshoppe, St Augustine*

MONA GARDNER

*The University of the West Indies, St Augustine*

### **Speech-Language Pathology: What influences choice of services**

Speech-Language Pathology services, once delivered by only a handful of practitioners in Trinidad and Tobago, is now more widely available, though still in great need. Families often decide to seek services abroad, usually in the United States or the United Kingdom. This presentation will highlight the results of a survey study that was performed in order to begin the conversation about why families choose one or the other. Coming to the forefront were professional issues that families experience that should begin to inform the practice of speech-language pathology not only in the local context, but in the regional one as well.

ROY MCCREE

*The University of the West Indies, St Augustine*

### **Sport and Disability in Trinidad and Tobago: An Exploratory Study**

In the Caribbean, the areas of sport and disability have one major thing in common: they have been largely understudied. 'Disability sport', however, has not been studied at all either from the perspective of the social sciences in general or public policy in particular. Ironically, the need for visibility, inclusion and equality which has driven concern about the disabled and the study of disability was not extended to the field of disability sport and athletes with disability who have been virtually blanked out of the local academic discourse on disability. In the latter regard, sport was not even included as one of the thematic areas for this conference.

Against this backdrop and in order to help fill this void, this paper is based on an exploratory study of disability sport in Trinidad and Tobago. In this regard, it has 4 major related objectives which are to examine (i) the development of disability sport locally and globally; (ii) the various cultural and resource challenges faced by local athletes with disability; (iii) the role of public policy in alleviating or facilitating these challenges and (iv) the significance of these experiences for the future development as well as the medical and social construction of disability sport. The paper is based on a national survey of primary (n=2,508) and secondary school (n=6,398) students as well as interviews with officials and athletes from within the disabled sport community.

JAYNE MCGUIRE

*Humboldt State University, California, USA*

## **Changing Minds through Recreation and Sport**

People who experience disabilities often encounter a discouraging array of barriers to their efforts to lead meaningful lives as valued community members. These barriers can affect many aspects of their lives, including the schools they attend, the career options available to them, and the opportunity to fully engage as a productive member of their communities. Recreation, which focuses on strengths and abilities, provides an ideal platform to address and remove the societal barriers that can limit an individual's involvement in their community. Yet, research shows us that people who experience disability are far less likely to be involved in recreation and sport than their peers without disabilities.

Full inclusion in society requires a shift in the public's perception of disability. Awareness needs to be placed on valuing individuals for their unique contributions rather than excluding them because of their differences. This shift in attitudes and beliefs can be launched through recreation practices that build upon the framework of the theory of planned behaviour and universal design. This interactive workshop will guide conference attendees through a series of activities that focus on identifying and removing barriers in recreation and sport, resulting in recreation services that celebrate each person's contribution.

PAULA MORGAN

*The University of the West Indies, St Augustine*

## **When History is a Pile of Manacles: Gendered Trauma and Disability in Chariandry's *Socouyant***

Countless national histories are rooted in violence and traumatizing encounters between people groups and many are the ways in which historical wounds have been culturally imbricated onto national narratives of being and becoming. Just as significant are the often tragic ways in which the outcome of violent encounters between peoples and nations drill down into personal lives. This presentation focuses on the interface between historical and social trauma and the early onset of dementia, the resultant personal and familial crises, and the narrativization of failing memory, impaired cognitive functions and threatened ontologies. The study traces correlations between the disorder and the narrative strategies deployed to capture its nuances and complexities, to clear away the clutter and trivia of everyday life in order to arrive at a deeper meaning of lived experience which transcends the banal dreadfulness attendant on living with and extending care to persons with Alzheimer's disease.

RHONDA OCHOA

*The University of the West Indies, St Augustine*

## **Inclusive Education: Teaching the Deaf English Language**

The importance of teaching English to this minority group is linked to the opportunity for them to better exercise their constitutional and educational rights and to the chance to be empowered and enjoy more meaningful life. For this reason and from an educator's perspective, differences between signed languages and English must be understood. Firstly, while signed languages are natural, visual-gestural, grammatical languages, which facilitate the expression and reception of complex ideas equally to spoken languages, there is a common misconception among hearing individuals that there is a one to one correspondence between the grammar and vocabulary of both languages. However, spoken and signed languages have distinct systems which should be classified as foreign languages, which are not mutually intelligible. Secondly, signed languages, though not completely iconic, are more so than spoken languages, like English. Finally, a signed language has fewer registers than does a spoken language, such as English. For this reason, presenting grammatical categories in English that do not formally exist in signed languages is challenging. Also, making abstract concepts as concrete as possible and understanding that there is less opportunity for incidental learning among deaf students are important factors in teaching English to the Deaf. These issues are particularly important to teachers, deaf students and curriculum officials, who facilitate education within the Deaf community.

RANJIV PARASRAM

*South West Regional Health Authority, Trinidad*

## **A Parent Satisfaction Survey of the Specialty Community Paediatric Service, South West Regional Health Authority (SWRHA), Trinidad**

The aim of the survey was to evaluate Parent/caregiver satisfaction with the Specialty Community Paediatric Service, South West Regional Health Authority (SWRHA), Trinidad. A 20 item questionnaire covering domains of appointment time, infrastructure and service provision by staff was administered to caregivers attending review appointments at the Community paediatric clinics over a five week period. Ninety-nine caregivers participated. Recommendations resulting from the findings of the survey are, (i) further improve waiting times for appointments, (ii) improve seating/waiting area facilities and (iii) further improve waiting times to see the physician.

CERONNE PREVATT

*Trinidad & Tobago Reading Association*

## **Life Skills for Social Integration of Persons with Disabilities**

The thrust towards social integration of persons with disabilities, and work on recognising them as persons worthy of their rights and chosen roles continues. Life Skills development offers a holistic way to develop the behavioural, emotional, social and communicative competencies so that the person is ready to take advantage of

opportunities and gain happiness in family life, general society and the world of work. It is in theory available to persons in primary school and secondary school in programmes such as HFLE - Health and Family Life Education, a Life Skills subject, and in out-of-school youth and tertiary education such as Life Skills. It is not being offered as yet even in theory to persons with disabilities in vocational spaces for the differently-abled. This paper puts forward a varied Life Skills curriculum, to meet the diverse personal, learning and life choice needs of the differently-abled. We will demonstrate through best practices used in the field, an approach to intrapersonal-understanding of self; interpersonal relationships, listening and communication, in particular dealing positively with anger and conflict in our world of stigma and discrimination.

ARNOLD RAMJITSINGH

*Ministry of the People and Social Development*

### **Towards Inclusive Development: The Role of the Ministry of the People and Social Development in Addressing the Needs of Persons with Disabilities in T&T**

In 1991, the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was ratified and subsequently in 2007, the GoRTT also signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). ). Approximately 4% of the population of Trinidad and Tobago are living with a disability, and adequately satisfying the rights of persons with disabilities is on the national agenda. The Ministry of the People and Social Development is the governmental agency with the national mandate to address the concerns and needs of all persons, inclusive of children, with disabilities.

This paper will provide an overview of the role of the Ministry of the People and Social Development in addressing the national concerns and needs of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). It will further outline some of the strategic initiatives of the Ministry geared towards the support, protection, enrichment and development of Persons with Disabilities in Trinidad and Tobago. The limitations and gaps in service provision and other critical policy considerations are also identified.

YANSIE ROLSTON AND SANDRA A.M. BELL

*The University of the West Indies, St Augustine*

### **Sexuality and Disability - Challenging the Sexual Oppression and Exploitation of Disabled People**

Research has shown that disabled people are being restricted from experiencing fulfilling romantic relationships and taking ownership of their physical and emotional sexual health while being subject to coercive control, sexual assaults, rape, emotional abuse, and unnecessary exposure to sexually transmitted diseases. The workshop will focus on raising awareness of the issues, dispelling myths and stereotypical perceptions about disabled people and sexuality, sharing of good practice models, and developing ideas for further action with a view to influencing policy, practice and service delivery.



JEAN RAABE

*The University of the West Indies, St Augustine*

## **Enhancing Lives with Music Therapy**

The proposed session about music therapy involves an interactive workshop in which the presenter provides both a lecture and demonstration of music therapy as an intervention for persons with disabilities. There are multiple techniques which can be used by a music therapist to reach the therapeutic needs of disabled people within a wide range of disabilities. Music therapy is the scientific use of musical interventions to produce desired outcomes in patients, clients, or students who are referred to music therapy services. A trained music therapist designs specific music interventions to improve or increase desired behaviours or actions that have been identified as needs of the clients. Interventions can be focused on academic/cognitive, physical, social and/or emotional goals for both children and the ageing population. More specifically, quality of life and self-expression are important goals, but social skills and active participation can also be improved through music interventions. Health considerations are also a concern of a trained music therapist, meaning improved pain management and vital organ signs have been experienced by music therapy clients. There is ample research to demonstrate the effectiveness of music therapy.

RAVI RAGOO

*South West Regional Health Authority (SWRHA), Trinidad*

## **Specialty Community Paediatrics in Trinidad: Providing Services and Advocating for Children with Disabilities**

Specialty Community Paediatrics covers child development, child protection, education, medicals, health promotion and general paediatrics. In January 2011, the first Specialty Community Paediatric Service was initiated in the South West Regional Health Authority (SWRHA), Trinidad. The main focus of Specialty Community Paediatrics apart from medical service provision is to work with the multidisciplinary team/services to ensure the best quality of life for children. Work is ongoing regarding childhood obesity which would undoubtedly impact on children with disability. Building links with Student support services is ongoing to help facilitate children with special needs. Linking with the Children's Authority is also ongoing since children with disability are more at risk.

ANA MARIA SANCHEZ RODRIGUEZ  
*University of Massachusetts, Boston, USA*

## **Civil Society' practices to end violence and abuse of women and girls with disabilities in Mexico**

The role of Civil Society Organizations (CSO) is crucial to advance the right of freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse and prevent gender-based violence (GBV) against women with disabilities. Literature of CSOs work in these arenas is surprisingly slim. In addition, a knowledge gap exists as to if and how GBV policies addressing women with disabilities are reflected in CSOs practices. This study will explore this gap using a multiple case study approach of CSOs working specifically in the area of GBV against women with disabilities in Mexico. There are two major points to consider: The first is to analyze the policy context in which CSOs work to end GBV and Mexico's current policies and the second is to explore the ways in which CSOs are addressing GBV against women with disabilities including key strategies, challenges and successes. I will use a human rights-based approach and gender analysis of intersectionality to explore how CSOs are implementing international human rights law with respect to participation, inclusiveness and accountability. The ultimate purpose of this research is to systematically examine current practice, including promising CSOs practices, to inform and improve their practices and public policy in Mexico, and in international domains.

TERESINA SIEUNARINE  
*The Autistic Society of Trinidad and Tobago (ASTT)*

## **Roundtable Discussion**

**TOPIC:** *As a person with autism I strive for acceptance and respect in order to make my contribution in society*

The Autistic Society of Trinidad and Tobago is a parent support group formed 25 years ago. Persons with autism are encouraged to become self-advocates especially those diagnosed as Level 1 autism in the new Diagnostic and Statistic Manual V (DSM-V) formerly Asperger's Syndrome. The participants with Level 1 autism will be invited to share their experiences. They will converse with a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist and share challenges in relation to social integration before and after diagnosis, with their peers, teachers, family members.

EUDALIE WICKHAM-ASHBY  
*Barbados Employers' Confederation*

## **Invisible Women: Strategies for Coping with Domestic Violence**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms that, 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights' yet, there are widespread violations of the human rights of women and girls with disabilities, as well as failures to promote and fulfil their rights. While domestic violence suffered by Caribbean women with disabilities is acknowledged, it is rarely discussed. Due to structural poverty and social exclusion, these women remain largely invisible and voiceless,

even though they face multiple forms of discrimination. Neither governmental nor non-governmental organizations adequately address the needs of this section of the population. These individuals experience a measure of exclusion from civil society organizations aiming to advance the rights of women and persons with disabilities.

Gender-based violence continues to escalate and to be silenced. Women and girls with disabilities who experience domestic violence encounter a lack of appropriate support services and programs. This paper will seek to explore ways to strengthen existing programs and services to meet the needs of this vulnerable group.

# PROFILES

## **Sabeerah Abdul-Majied**

Dr Abdul-Majied is a lecturer in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) at the School of Education, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, and coordinator the Bachelor of Education ECCE programme at the university. She has 30 years teaching experience at all levels of the education system having previously taught at two Teachers' Training Colleges and primary schools in Trinidad. She has taught special education courses and has interacted with the first legally blind teacher pursuing an undergraduate degree in ECCE at the university. Dr Abdul-Majied has presented papers at international conferences and published research articles in peer reviewed journals. Apart from inclusive education, her research interests include teacher preparation and child development.

## **Jean Antoine-Dunne**

Dr Jean Antoine-Dunne is a Senior Lecturer in Literatures in English at The University of the West Indies, St Augustine and has published widely in literary criticism as well as in the interface between film and literature. She has also been working in the field of disability for thirty five years, both in the Republic of Ireland and in Trinidad and Tobago. She has delivered several papers on representations of persons with intellectual disabilities in Caribbean literature. She also writes a column on disability for *The*

*Sunday Newsday*, Trinidad and Tobago. Dr Antoine-Dunne is a former co-editor of the Magazine of Down Syndrome Ireland and received a long service award from this association in 1998. She founded the UWI Network and Outreach for Disability Education and Sensitization in 2014 and is Chairperson of NODES and conference coordinator.

## **Debbie Austin-Kerr**

Debbie Austin-Kerr holds a Masters of Science in Applied Psychology. She is a past recipient of the Wayne Naranjit Award and has completed her master's thesis in the area of autism while also gaining her practicum experience in the area of learning support for primary school students. Mrs. Austin-Kerr is currently a Tutor in the Social Disability Studies Course.

## **Lianna Balkaran**

Lianna Balkaran is a twenty-six year old person who has been living with Cerebral Palsy and depends on a wheelchair for mobility. Her academic life began at the Princess Elizabeth Special School where she was a resident student. After being successful in the SEA exams, she went on to Tabaquite Composite, where she achieved seven O'Levels in Business Studies and four CAPE A'Levels. After completing on-the-job training as a Clerical Assistant, she read for a BA in Linguistics and Communication at UWI St Augustine. Since

graduating in 2013, she has been seeking gainful employment. Ms Balkaran's interests include: corporate communications, teaching and publishing.

**Alicia Bharath, Sirlon George,  
Donella Rodriguez-Laird, Valerie Youssef**

Alicia Bharath and Sirlon George are both speech-language pathologists who trained in the USA but returned to Trinidad & Tobago to practise, recognising the intense need for therapeutic services in the country. They both run speech-language clinics and small pre-schools: Sirlon and Donnellia Rodriguez-Laird run one specific to children on the autism spectrum, and Alicia's serves children with a range of disabilities. Valerie Youssef is a recently retired Professor of Linguistics of UWI training to become a speech-language pathologist and working under these practitioners. The data for our paper was collected through the referenced schools and clinics.

**Innette Cambridge**

Dr Innette Cambridge is a senior lecturer in social policy at The University of the West Indies, St Augustine. She designed and co-ordinated the Social Policy Programme within the Department of Behavioural Sciences and has also developed electives in social gerontology, social disability studies, social development policy and sociology of families. She crafted the Disability Studies Unit that pioneered Disability Studies in the Caribbean. The DSU began in 2004 but was officially established at the university in 2007 as a research, teaching and outreach unit dedicated to enabling the social integration of persons with disabilities into society. Dr Cambridge completed her Ph.D at Bristol University, England. Her

publications are in the areas of child welfare, social work education, living conditions and disability studies.

**Abigail Venita Cezair**

Abigail Venita Cezair holds a B.Sc in Biology with minors in Biotechnology and Marine Biology. She is currently reading for a BSc. Optometry at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus. Ms Cezair is the director of the Trinidad and Tobago Guide Dog Association (NGO). She is also the co-author of the article on the World Council of Optometry's website: "UWI optometry students create a new way forward for the blind in the Caribbean". Ms Cezair has completed an online Uncontracted Braille course in 2014 with The Hadley School of the Blind, Winnetka, Illinois.

**Nicole Cowie**

Nicole Cowie (nee Henry) holds a BSc Sociology with a minor in Social Policy (UWI). She was the 2008 winner of the Wayne Naranjit Prize for achieving the best all-round performance in the Social Disability Studies programme at UWI, St. Augustine and was also awarded the Government Scholarship for persons with Disabilities. Ms Cowie continues to volunteer with the Academic Advising and Disabilities Liaison Unit, UWI and is conducting research interests on disability and employment, disability and education, social policy, comparative disability legislation and gerontology.

**Natalie Dick**

Dr Natalie Dick has a passion to see Persons with Disabilities attain their highest God-given abilities. At the local level, she is a Specialist Developmental Behavioural Paediatrician and General

Paediatrician. Internationally, she serves as the founding Vice-President of the Epilepsy Society of the Caribbean; is a member of the Subcommittee on Children & Youth with Special Needs, of the American Academy of Paediatrics, and the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect. She uses her training and expertise to serve and advocate in schools, hospitals and community settings for children with various types of disabilities. Dr Natalie Dick provides voluntary service to non-profit organizations such as the National Centre for Persons with Disabilities, of which she is the Chairperson of the Board of Directors, and as a founding board member of Caribbean Kids and Families Therapy Organization. As well, she also provides health care and educational lectures via faith-based community medical outreaches, nationally and internationally.

#### **Kathy-Ann Drayton**

Kathy-Ann Drayton is a Speech-Language Pathologist, and lecturer and coordinator of Speech-Language Pathology programmes at The University of the West Indies, St Augustine. She works at the University Speech and Language Clinic with children and adults with a variety of communication disorders, with a research interest in the aural (re)habilitation of children and adults with hearing aids or cochlear implants.

#### **Eileen Dunne**

##### ***Keynote Speaker***

Eileen Dunne is a young woman with Down Syndrome. She was one of the first persons to achieve integrated education with support in Ireland after parents successfully petitioned government to provide support structures for persons with Down Syndrome in the Republic of Ireland. She has attended mainstream primary,

secondary and tertiary education and has been the recipient of many awards including Student of the Year from Cavan College of Further Studies (now Cavan Institute). She also holds two gold medals from Special Olympics. She has represented Down Syndrome Ireland on many occasions including conferences in Jerusalem and Northern Ireland. She was elected to the National Advisory Council of Down Syndrome Ireland in 2014.

#### **Frederick Felix**

Mr Felix is a cognitive behavioural psychotherapist working with persons with disabilities and their families or caregivers, especially those having children with Autism. Mr. Felix has extensive experience working with persons on the Autism spectrum especially those diagnosed as severe, and other developmental and uncommon disabilities. He is an Executive Board member of ASTT and Co-Founder and Board member of another NGO, Youth Inclusive Play and Education Experience (YIPEE!). His qualifications include: M.Sc., Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (2011-2012) from Buckinghamshire New University; Dip. Psychoanalytic Developmental Psychology at UCL; and Child and Adolescents studies at Anna Freud Centre London.

#### **Mona Gardner**

Mona Gardner holds a B.SC *cum laude* in Biology from Fairleigh Dickinson University, Madison, New Jersey and is currently, she is pursuing a masters' degree in Speech- Language Pathology at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. Her clinical experience thus far has allowed her to evaluate and treat individuals with autism, childhood apraxia of speech, feeding disorders aphasia, traumatic brain injury, articulation, phonological and language disorders. After graduation, Ms Gardner plans to return to her

home island of Antigua and be the first resident, full- time Speech-Language Therapist.

**Elizabeth Harry**  
**Keynote Speaker**

Beth Harry is a Professor of Special Education at the University of Miami in Florida, USA. After completing her high school education in her native Jamaica, Beth earned her Bachelor's and Master's degrees at the University of Toronto before moving to Trinidad, where her children, Melanie and Mark were born. Melanie had cerebral palsy and her special needs led Beth to establish the Immortelle Children's Centre in Port of Spain, Trinidad, in 1978. Melanie died in 1981, and in 1986 Beth moved to the U.S.A., where she studied for a Ph.D. in Special Education at Syracuse University. Thirty seven years later, thanks to the efforts of Immortelle parents, who formed a non-profit organization to run the school, the Immortelle lives on – Melanie's contribution to her community.

Beth's work in the USA has focused on family and multicultural issues related to disability. She has published 8 books and many journal articles on these topics and has had the privilege of serving as a member of the National Academy of Sciences' panel (1999-2001) to study the disproportionate placement of minorities in special education programs. She also had the honour of receiving a Fulbright award to do research on Moroccan children's schooling in Spain, where she was based for 6 months at the University of Seville. Although her academic work has been inspired by Melanie, Beth's memoir is in no way academic: *Melanie, Bird with a Broken Wing*, is, simply, a mother's story.

Beth's current project brings her full circle to the start of her work in Special Education. Here in Trinidad, she is doing a research

project on the history of the Immortelle, through the eyes of parents, teachers, and community partners. This research will involve interviews and observations at the school, a review of school archives, and interviews with community personnel who are involved in advocacy or service provision for people with disabilities.

**Hyacinth Guppy- Hickson**

Hyacinth Guppy- Hickson is a professional in remedial teaching and business management. She holds a Master's Degree in Education with a concentration in Special Education from the University of Sheffield. She is also trained in Psychometric testing methods and is a member of the British Psychological Society. She is qualified in the Orton Gillingham method for teaching Dyslexics; the Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing Program for Reading, Spelling and Speech programme for children experiencing difficulty discerning the sounds in words; and the Visualising and Verbalising programme for children with slow processing and weak comprehension/writing skills. She has over 20 years experience in remediating students in the age groups 3 to 50 years and is a senior lecturer with the Dyslexia Association, training teachers to identify and remediate students with dyslexia using a multi- sensory approach. She possesses over 11 years business experience in Canada and Trinidad & Tobago in the areas of accounting, marketing, and human resource development.

**Jacqueline Huggins**

Ms. Jacqueline Huggins is the Coordinator of the Academic Support/Disabilities Liaison Unit (ASDLU) at the University of the West Indies St Augustine. She is the holder of a Master's degree in Sociology and a Bachelor's degree in Social Work, and presently a

Doctoral candidate in Sociology where her focus is on inclusive postsecondary education and disability. She has worked as a Research Assistant and Tutor in the area of Disability Studies in the Department of Behavioural Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, for six (6) years before assuming the position of Coordinator. As the manager of the Unit, her duties include the provision of academic support to all students at all levels of their academic career and providing and ensuring equal access (infrastructure/academic) to all students who present with a disability. For the past (25) twenty-five years, she has been involved with organizations of and for persons with disabilities in the capacity of volunteer, member, researcher and consultant.

#### **Gerard Hutchinson**

##### **Keynote Speaker**

Gerard Hutchinson is currently the Professor and Unit Lead in Psychiatry, at the School of Medicine, Faculty of Medical Sciences (FMS), University of the West Indies, St Augustine. He also serves as the Academic Coordinator and First Examiner of the MSc Clinical Psychology programme, St Augustine campus. He functions as the Head of Psychiatry at the North Central Regional Health Authority.

He is a graduate of the University of the West Indies and the Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College, University of London and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in Epidemiology. He has been employed at the University of the West Indies since 1999 and was previously a Clinical Lecturer in Psychiatry at the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College, University of London.

He has published as author or co-author over 100 peer-reviewed papers and book chapters. He serves as a manuscript reviewer for several regional and international journals. His research interests

include migration related issues in mental health, developmental trajectories in mental illness and suicidal behaviour in the Caribbean.

#### **Selris James**

Selris James was born in Trinidad on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 1974. He was soon diagnosed with severe vision and hearing loss resulting from Rubella during the gestation period. Selris had cataracts removed at age two and a half, which allowed him limited vision, although he was still legally blind. Selris' deafness made it impossible for him to learn normal speech and, because of his dual impairment, he was not accepted at either the School for the Blind or for the Deaf. He attended Immortelle Children's Centre from 1982 until 1995, where he learned basic reading and writing and developed a great affinity for computers. Selris has lived all his life with his mother, Mrs. Gwenie Gomez-James, who has been a passionate advocate for her son, and has succeeded in gaining some public attention over the years, but without any sustainable assistance that would support Selris in developing his artistic, academic, and communicative abilities. Selris lives in Maloney Gardens, D'Abadie.

#### **Cathryn Kelshall**

Cathryn Kelshall is the chairman of the non-profit organization The Dyslexia Association in Trinidad and Tobago. Since its inception, the Association has been able to train over 600 teachers in specific methods of teaching both children and adult dyslexics. Ms Kelshall holds a BA (Hons English) from the University of Montréal, is a Montessori trained teacher, and did her Dyslexia training at the Dyslexia Institute, U.K. (now Dyslexia Action). She currently tutors dyslexic students, and heads many of the training programmes offered by the Dyslexia Association. Additionally, she is qualified in



the Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing Programme for Reading, Spelling and Speech (LiPS) for children experiencing difficulty with phonological awareness; and the Visualising and Verbalising programme for comprehension and expressive language skills. She has been tutoring dyslexics since 1986. Cathryn Kelshall is a member of the Teachers' Guild, Dyslexia Action of the UK and also of the International Dyslexia Association of the USA.

### **Keisha T. Lindsay**

Keisha Lindsay is a Trinidadian Speech Language Pathologist who holds certification from the Council of the Professions Related to Medicine in Trinidad and Tobago as well as from the American-Speech-Language-Hearing Association. She achieved her Bachelors of Science degree from New York University and her Masters' of Art degree from the City University of New York- Queens College. Deeply interested in multidisciplinary service provision, Keisha works within a multidisciplinary clinic: The Therapeutic Workshope, located in St. Augustine, Trinidad. Keisha's other research and clinical interests include conducting service learning projects throughout the Caribbean, developing norms and assessments that are normed on children of the Anglophone Caribbean as well as improving the general ethical morale of services that are provided for persons with disabilities in the Caribbean.

### **Roy McCree**

Roy McCree holds a PhD (Sociology) from Leicester University, UK. Dr Mc Cree is a Research Fellow at the Sir Arthur Lewis institute for Social and Economic Studies, at the UWI, St. Augustine. He lectures on sociology of sport and sport and public policy. Roy McCree's

research interests also include youth, community development, social capital.

### **Jayne McGuire**

Jayne McGuire is an associate professor at Humboldt State University, CA, USA and teaches courses in the Department of Kinesiology and Recreation Administration and in the School of Education. Her passion lies with building upon individuals' strengths and connecting people with positive learning experiences. Her interest in inclusive recreation is grounded her experiences with working with children and young adults who experience disability. She has had the opportunity to share this passion throughout her career as a recreational therapist, director of a non-profit organization, public high school teacher, and currently as a college professor. Jayne Mc Guire has been actively involved with teacher preparation, Special Olympics, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and the Student Disability Resource Center at Humboldt State University for the past eight years. She has published in the areas of special education, inclusive recreation and universal design in higher education.

### **Paula Morgan**

Paula Morgan is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Literary, Cultural and Communications Study in the University of the West Indies, St Augustine. Her primary focus of teaching and research has been gender issues in the Caribbean Literature and Culture. She has published numerous articles on the domestic violence, the interface of ethnic and gender relations, the construction of Caribbean masculinities, disabilities studies and pedagogical approaches to literary and popular discourses. She has produced

and or collaborated on five book length publications the most recent being *The Terror and the Time: Banal Violence and Trauma in Caribbean Discourse* (UWI Press 2014).

### **Rhonda Ochoa**

Ms. Rhonda Ochoa, is currently a student of Speech and Language Pathology, at Certificate Level, at the University of the West Indies; a past student of (B.A.) Spanish and Linguistics at the University of the West Indies, a past student of American Sign Language, at Certificate at intermediate level and past student of French, German and Portuguese, certificate level at the University of the West Indies. Practical experience includes working as an English language tutor to a secondary school level Deaf pupil, as a English Language Assistant in the Public School system in The Republic of France and as a Sign Language Interpreter at the University of Trinidad and Tobago for all courses at level 1, for the Bachelor's in Education.

### **Ceronne Prevatt**

Ceronne Prevatt is an educator in language arts literacy and life skills technical consultant. She is also the vice-president of the Trinidad and Tobago Reading Association. She is also a graduate of The University of the West Indies and London University School of Education.

### **Jean Raabe**

Jean Raabe, MT-BC is a Board Certified Music Therapist from the United States who works as a part-time lecturer at University of the West Indies, teaching a course about music therapy. She has worked as a music therapist for over three decades, and played

steelpan with Phase II Pan Groove for 17 Carnival seasons. She completed her Bachelor of Music in Music Therapy at Western Michigan University, and both her Master of Education and Master of Business Administration at Regent University. She has provided music therapy sessions, workshops and services to a variety of populations and medical staff while in Trinidad. She has presented workshops at several recent conferences in the United States and Trinidad, including: American Music Therapy Association annual conference in 2013 and 2014; Arts and Disabilities Conference sponsored by UTT and Consortium of Disabilities Organizations; and, Steelfest 2012, International Conference on Steelpan.

### **Yansie Rolston**

Yansie Rolston has over 22 years international experience designing and managing multi-stakeholder innovative solutions and empowerment programmes within civil society, public and private sector organizations on complex social issues including disabilities, mental health, sexual health, HIV/AIDS, domestic violence, and intimate abuse, Ms Rolston previously worked in local government as the Deputy Head - Health Unit setting up and managing health equalities programmes, and then as the Organizational Development Manager developing, implementing, and evaluating equality and diversity policy and practices, and managing the supported employment for disabled people programme. She has presented her work at international conferences, and co-hosted the Trinidad and Tobago Conference on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. She is currently awaiting her PhD viva defense having recently submitted her thesis which is a critical analysis of culture and its impact on the notions and perceptions of disabilities and mental health in Trinidad and Tobago.

### **Ana María Sánchez Rodríguez**

Ana María Sánchez is a doctoral candidate in the PhD program of Public Policy at UMass Boston. She graduated from the University: Universidad Popular Autonoma del Estado de Puebla, Mexico, with a B.A. in Political Science. She received a M.Sc. in Management of Non-Governmental Organizations from the London School of Economics and Political Science. She also attended to the Program of Advanced Studies on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law at the American University Washington College of Law. Ana Maria served as Director of Social Liaison and Public Policy for the Human Rights Commission of Mexico City. She is a Graduate Student Affiliate (GSA) of the Economic and Social Rights Research CSOup (ESRG) at the Human Rights Institute at the University of Connecticut. Her research interests are human rights based approaches in public policy, disability rights, women's rights, human rights and development.

### **Teresina Sieunarine**

Teresina Sieunarine holds a Masters in Education as well an Advanced Diploma in Education and Psychology of Children with Special Needs. She is a parent of a son with autism and the President of the Autistic Society of Trinidad and Tobago formed in 1990. Mrs Sieunarine is currently a Tutor in the Social Disability Studies Course.

### **Maria Thomas**

Maria Thomas holds a Masters in Education (Special Education) and has been an educator for 35 years of which over 20 years have been

spent in the area of special education. She is also a former Principal of the Princess Elizabeth Home for the Physically Handicapped. Ms. Thomas pioneered the teaching of the Social Disability Studies course at the University of the West Indies (St. Augustine) and is currently the Lecturer for the course.

### **Eudalie Wickham-Ashby**

Eudalie Wickham-Ashby has held a range of positions on local, community, national and regional boards and committees for over 20 years. She has an excellent knowledge of the issues within the disability arena including: accessibility, transport, employment and education. Through her enthusiasm for sharing best practices and employment strategies, she strives to change employer perceptions regarding disability. She worked with the Barbados Employers' Confederation in producing a booklet on promoting the employment of persons with disabilities. In BARNOD, Ms Wickham-Ashby leads the Education Committee which is responsible for: reviewing educational policies, designing and implementing training and promoting the U.N Convention of the Rights of persons with disabilities. In 2014, she engaged employers and citizens with disabilities through the Job Prep program in training PWD's for the world of work and facilitated a six-week internship. She has a keen interest in communication and is the driving force behind BARNOD's weekly radio program "Outreach" As a woman with impaired vision for most of her life, she has blazed a trail through advocacy, writing and volunteering. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work and has worked as a counsellor for women with disabilities, in sexual and reproductive health, as well as with the elderly population.