



# UWI TODAY

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES • ST. AUGUSTINE CAMPUS

SEPTEMBER 2015



## The UWI and Republic Bank PARTNER FOR THE FUTURE



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION

For more than five decades, Republic Bank has been a feature on the St. Augustine Campus – starting in a tiny space next to Daaga Hall to its current facility on the western side of the Campus. In just 16 months, however, Republic Bank will become a landmark at the northern entrance to the Campus when the construction of a \$60 million branch is complete. This spanking new branch will support the needs of the Campus community as well as environs (Curepe, St. Augustine, Tunapuna).

The St. Augustine Campus has entered into a landmark private sector-university partnership with Republic Bank. Construction, on

prime land of The University, is the first phase of a broader, more transformative partnership with the concurrent construction of a new building for the Department of Creative and Festival Arts and the future development of a modern 'Northern Plaza' at the Campus entrance.

Executive Director Derwin Howell noted that "Over the course of the past five decades, our relationship with both The University and the community continued to grow and it moved even beyond our commitment to provide signature financial products and services". He continued, "as many of you know, we have been a long-time stalwart of

young adult empowerment initiatives, such as Career Fest and the World of Work Programme. While we have continued and have grown that support, we are always eager to do more, especially in novel, groundbreaking ways...both figuratively and literally."

St. Augustine Campus Pro Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor Clement Sankat made the point that "it is through these types of partnerships (commercial as well as philanthropic), that Universities such as ours can continue to be transformational and make a significant positive impact upon our collective development."

(See page 4)

### UWI LIFE - 10

#### Welcome, Freshers!

#GetInvolved2Evolve!



### CAMPUS NEWS - 11

#### Elections in a Flawed Democracy

Professor W. Andy Knight



### CAMPUS NEWS - 12

#### A Pioneer in the Knowledge House

The story of Jenny Joseph, the story of the Alma Jordan Library



### CAMPUS NEWS - 13

#### Will You Be There?

UWI'S Half Marathon: 12th Edition

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■ THE EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

# PRIMUS INTER PARES

The above Latin phrase is usually translated as *First among Equals* and relates to a person or position that is 'formally equivalent to others in a group, but is superior in some attribute'.

His Excellency Brigadier David A. Granger, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, at the ceremonial 'topping off' of The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine South Campus at Penal Debe, reiterated what so many already know:

*The Anglophone Caribbean is a region of small states. This highly-Balkanized area, with a population of just around five million, however, has astonished the world by producing three Nobel Laureates. Some larger states with populations measured in millions are yet to produce a single Nobel Laureate.*

*Caribbean men and women have distinguished themselves on the global stage. We have produced sons and daughters of eminence and excellence who are to be found in almost all professions in almost every country of the world. These persons are products of a culture of struggle which has traditionally attached great value to education.*

This month's issue of UWI Today salutes 8 such Caribbean notables: **Mr Gérard A. Besson, Mr Hollis R. Charles, Justice Ralph Narine, Madame Justice Jean Angela Permannand, Mr Rajkumar "Krishna" Persad, Mr David Rudder, Mr A. Norman Sabga, Dr Marjorie Thorpe.** All of them have made immense contributions to Caribbean development and, in recognition of which, will be conferred honorary degrees by The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus.

We also welcome others who are embarking on another kind of 'first' – new entrants into university life and living. First year experience is one that should be remembered positively and UWI Today is chockfull of key information that will assist students (and their loved ones) to navigate seemingly choppy waters with a degree (pun intended) of confidence.

In all that we achieve at The University of the West Indies, there is reliance on partnerships – government, private sector, global tertiary level institutions and people (faculty, students, alumni, staff). Within these pages, **UWI Today** recognises three such partnerships – with the Trinidad and Tobago Government in the historic building of the St. Augustine South Campus at Penal Debe; with Republic Bank Limited which has been a part of the St. Augustine landscape for decades and is now building a new branch at the northern end of the Campus; and with the Guardian Group which has partnered with the St. Augustine Campus since 1998 in the hosting of Premium Teaching Awards and Premium Open Lectures.

With the support of all those mentioned above, this regional institution will continue to make strides; and, indeed, the St. Augustine campus intends to always be *primus inter pares*.

*Caribbean men and women have distinguished themselves on the global stage. We have produced sons and daughters of eminence and excellence who are to be found in almost all professions in almost every country of the world.*

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

## WELCOMING OUR NEW STUDENTS

### *Arriving at a Time of Enormous Change and Expectation*



It is with great enthusiasm and expectation that I share my excitement in welcoming the new students and those returning, to the unique experience of being part of the St. Augustine Campus of The University of the West Indies community. You are all arriving at a very dynamic period of the university's history, as we celebrate the 55th anniversary

of the St. Augustine Campus, and at the same time, breaking new ground in creating a new and interesting future for all of us here at The UWI.

Just last month, the St. Augustine Campus held a Ceremonial Topping-Off and Deed Handover Ceremony of its South Campus in Penal-Debe which is the most significant infrastructural development and expansion accomplished at our Campus for 55 years and the Regional University for over 40 years. This grand affair was attended by many dignitaries from around the region, with the commemorative plaque being unveiled by the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar and our Chancellor, Sir George Alleyne; and witnessed by our newly appointed Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, the President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, His Excellency Brigadier David A. Granger, the Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, the Honourable Fazal Karim, the Minister of Housing and Urban Development, the Honourable Dr. Roodal Moonilal, and of course, many more of our stakeholders and benefactors.

The benefits to be derived from this new facility are enormous, with the Faculty of Law being the flagship Faculty. Notwithstanding, this Campus will also be the site for the delivery of other programs from our various faculties, as well as UWI-ROYTEC, to begin with. While it is critical that such state-of-the-art facilities are provided, it is even more important that we attract students who are willing, able, committed and dedicated to building on the great legacy of the graduates of The University of the West Indies. In addition, you, our young students must also distinguish yourselves through your commitment to upholding high moral standards and values, while at the same time demonstrating a solemn respect for the well-being of your fellow students. The UWI will challenge you like you have never been challenged before, to not only be very proficient in the speciality of your subject, but to be critical and creative thinkers and problem solvers. You will therefore need to nurture a keen sense of individual and social responsibility, become self-starters and learners, engage in team work and exemplify strong communication skills. This will be a big leap in your development as a young professional.

I wish to remind all of us (students and staff) that we must demonstrate on an ongoing basis, our efforts to develop the regional, social and cultural bond that naturally exists in The UWI experience. As the leading regional higher education institution, this is how we will espouse the unique demographic makeup of Caribbean people represented at our university, which has risen out of the diversities of our West Indian heritage. It is incumbent upon us as Educators, to deliberately incorporate this component (our rich regional diversity) to form part of the ethos of our UWI educational psyche. In so doing, we will be able to ensure that our promotion of a Caribbean identity is fully realized, and that the products of our system are not only academic, but are also caring, cordial and bring about much needed harmonious existence, in a world that seems threatened by divisions of all kinds. To this end, your success as a graduating student of The UWI manifests itself, not only by making our country, region and the world a more efficient and prosperous place, but also by making our societies more compassionate, peaceful and caring.

The staff of The UWI St. Augustine Campus gives all first year students the assurance that support through mentorship will be provided on an ongoing basis. It is our primary objective to ensure that we make available all the resources that would ultimately allow our students to be successful, as they work towards graduating from this unique regional institution. Paramount to this success is our university's thrust in developing students who are well rounded, with the ability to balance their academic pursuits, while at the same time participate in social activities among their peers. All students enrolled in this upcoming semester will benefit from the various new courses and programmes being offered, as well as the many clubs, societies and sporting facilities that exist on the grounds of our university. The UWI St. Augustine Campus is always making every effort to meet the growing demands of the workforce and the inevitable needs of our society. Your tenure here as students must prepare you to immediately add value and relevance as you progress through your years of study and eventually move into the working world. We are here to help you do just that.

In closing, I once again welcome you, and look forward to offering you the very best in higher education, while at the same time anticipate the level of excellence and dedication that you will bring to our beloved regional University of the West Indies.

**CLEMENT K. SANKAT**  
Pro Vice-Chancellor & Principal

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## ■ OUR CAMPUS

## The UWI and Republic Bank PARTNER FOR THE FUTURE *(cont'd)*

In this rainy season, the weather can indeed prove capricious. All things considered, therefore, the lack of rain (although threatening) was a good thing for a sod-turning. As part of the agreement with Republic Bank, the building will be handed over to The University of the West Indies in 25 years.



Republic Bank's Executive Director Derwin Howell turns the sod to the delight of The UWI and Republic Bank senior personnel as well as contractors. PHOTO BY ATIBA CUDJOE

## The UWI/Guardian Group Premium Open Lecture

*Back to Basics with Student Engagement and Beyond the Tech Hype*

**Come September 25**, The UWI and the Guardian Group will celebrate a partnership that began in 1998 and which continues to this day. The initiative celebrates excellence in teaching and learning. Alternate years see the hosting of Premium Teaching Awards for Faculty or a Premium Open Lecture such as the 2015 Open Lecture, *Back to Basics with Student Engagement and Beyond the Tech Hype*.

Dr. Elizabeth F. Barkley, Professor of Music at Foothill College, Los Altos, California, will speak on one of her keen interests: engaging students through active and collaborative learning; transforming F2F and online curriculum to meet the needs of diverse learners, especially those from new and emerging generations; the scholarship of teaching and learning; and connecting learning goals with assessment.

With more than three decades as an innovative



Dr Elizabeth F. Barkley

and reflective teacher, she has received numerous honors and awards, including being named California's Higher Education Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, formally recognized by the California state legislature for her contributions to undergraduate education, selected as "Innovator of the Year" in conjunction with the National League for Innovation, presented with the Hayward Award for Educational Excellence, and honored by the Center for Diversity in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Additionally, her *Musics of Multicultural America* course was selected as "Best Online Course" by the California Virtual Campus. She was also named one of two Carnegie Scholars in the discipline of music by the Carnegie Foundation in conjunction with the Pew Charitable Trusts.

# Caribbean V-C's Democratic Vision at home and abroad

*Sir Hilary Beckles tells Ellie Bothwell about his plans for The University of the West Indies' future*

BY ELLIE BOTHWELL

As higher education jobs go, leading an institution spread across the Caribbean islands of Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad sounds like a dream opportunity.

But as the newly appointed vice-chancellor of The University of the West Indies knows full well, it doesn't come without its challenges.

During his inaugural address as leader on 1 May, after 36 years in various roles at the university, Sir Hilary Beckles announced that one of his main goals was to re-establish the institution as one integrated university.

"Our UWI must more than ever function and operate as one; not four separate universities but one indivisible academy. To this restoration of the singularity of our university, my colleagues and I are committed," he said.

Speaking to *Times Higher Education*, Sir Hilary said that by making each campus as "responsive as possible to its immediate environment", the university "might have gone too far in giving [them] too much autonomy. We might have to do some rebalancing."

He sums up the challenge by reciting a "mischievous joke" told by Eric Williams, the former prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago, following the country's withdrawal from the West Indies Federation.

"He said: 'What God has put asunder, let no man put together.' So in some ways we are fighting God, but we will put [the university] together."

UWI was established in 1948 as a college of the University of London and started out with one campus, Mona, in Jamaica. Fifteen years later, the university gained independent degree-granting powers as the "winds of change" blew through the region.

Two more campuses were built: St Augustine in Trinidad and Tobago and Cave Hill in Barbados.

## DEMOCRATIC VISION

Historically, each campus specialised in a different subject – originally medicine, engineering or law – but all three now offer a wide range of courses.

"As the economies of the region went deeper into recession, students found it difficult to pay for travel and housing costs away from home," Sir Hilary said.

"Our vision is no matter where you are in the Caribbean, the UWI is on your doorstep. We want to give every citizen democratic and equal access."

Around 90 per cent of students at the Mona and St Augustine campuses are residents of their parent islands, while the figure is around 70 per cent at Cave Hill.

However, despite the university's regional focus, Sir Hilary said the Caribbean had the lowest percentage of citizens enrolled in higher education in the Western hemisphere, while the English-speaking islands have the lowest enrolment rates within the Caribbean.

"This is disturbing, especially when we recognise that a country's potential for sustainable economic development is linked directly to the number of citizens who have been in higher education," he said.

"So we've grown the university considerably in the past 10 to 15 years. You can very well imagine the economic environment is not very conducive to that."

## GROWTH STRATEGIES

It is this growth that in 2008 led to the launch of the university's Open Campus, which now has nearly 50

learning centres scattered across 17 countries in the English-speaking Caribbean.

Sir Hilary's main area of focus is to double the number of students enrolling in science and technology courses to about 40 per cent of the total population. This will, in part, involve encouraging more men to enrol for degree study. The university's student cohort is presently 70 per cent women.

Another major part of the university's growth strategy is to "globalise in a much more aggressive fashion" by increasing its international student cohort to 20 per cent from its current 10 per cent.

Sir Hilary said it will develop a science and technology centre in China in collaboration with an existing institution; create joint colleges in parts of North America where there are large Caribbean communities; and collaborate with "one or two British universities" on a course in Caribbean studies. These will be forged by building partnerships rather than branch campuses.

He admitted that although the university had not previously created the kind of international collaborations now common among leading higher education institutions across the world, globalisation was certainly not a new concept for UWI or the Caribbean.

"I can think of no other part of the world with as deep a global penetration of the economy as the Caribbean," Sir Hilary, a historian by training, said.

"Five hundred years ago, Columbus arrived here and that brought Europe, Africa and later Asia into the Caribbean. So historically you can say the Caribbean is the world's first global community. We were built that way and we can capitalise on that."

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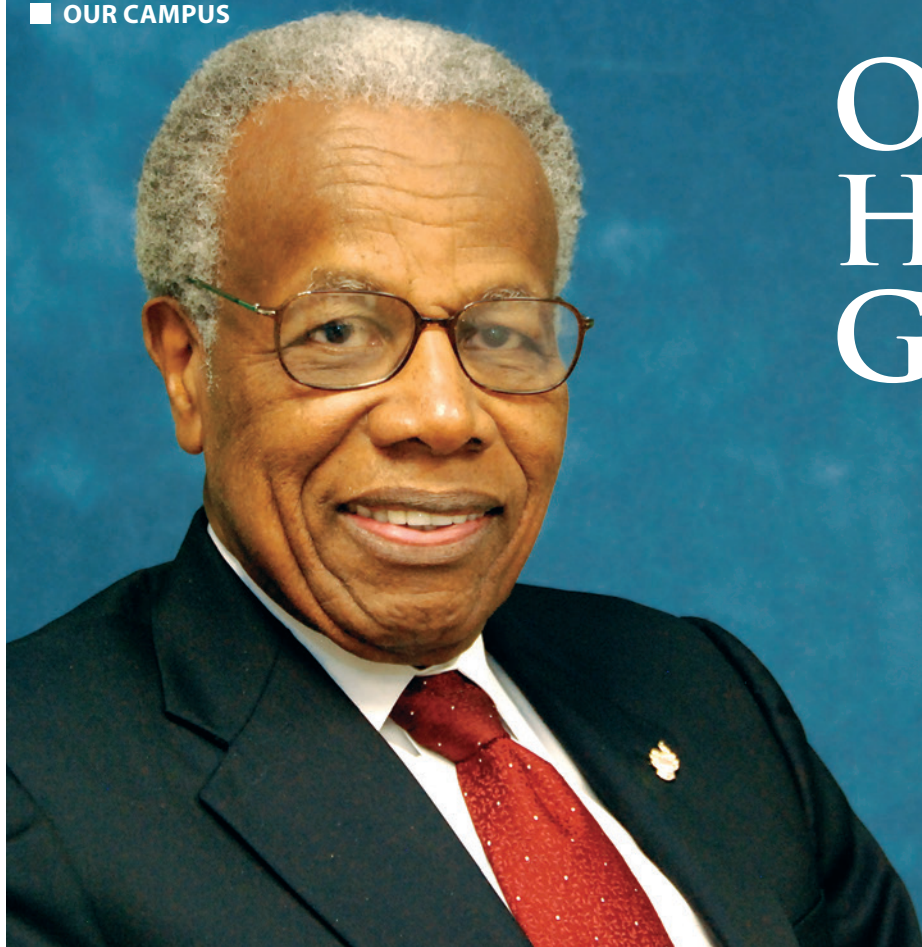
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## ■ OUR CAMPUS



# OUR HONORARY GRADUATES

**Chancellor Sir George Alleyne** will confer honorary degrees on 21 individuals in recognition of their stellar contributions to the Caribbean at The UWI 2015 graduation ceremonies.

*Here are the eight honorary doctorates from the St. Augustine Campus.*

**GÉRARD A. BESSON** is founder of Paria Publishing which has published and produced well over 80 titles on the history and culture of Trinidad and Tobago. A published historian and folklorist, he writes an internet blog on history and heritage and published two historical novels.

Mr Besson helped establish a library at President's House during the presidency of His Excellency, Noor Hassanali, and convened the cabinet-appointed work group occasioned by the centenary anniversary of Tobago becoming a ward of the



unified colony of Trinidad and Tobago, 1887-1987. Specialised museums on which he's worked are the Angostura Museum, City of Port-of-Spain Museum and Police Service Museum. He is recipient of the Hummingbird Medal (Gold) for Heritage Preservation and Promotion from the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago.

**HOLLIS RAYMOND CHARLES'** accomplishments directly fostered the advancement of technological research and industry in Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean. One of The UWI's earliest graduates in Electrical Engineering, he then obtained an MSc in Management from the Sloan Programme of the Graduate School of Business, Stanford University, USA.

Mr Charles was founding co-Director of the Caribbean



Industrial Research Institute and the first local Director. For the next 20 years, he was responsible for developing CARIRI into what is recognised as one of the foremost multi-disciplinary technological institutions in the developing world. He is a Past President of the Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries and the Association of Professional Engineers of Trinidad and Tobago.

**JUSTICE RALPH NARINE**, CMT graduated as a Barrister in London in 1952 and served for 35 years in Trinidad and Tobago as a Lawyer and Judge. Justice Narine was also an astute sportsman in cricket and volleyball and a notable musician, playing the mandolin and violin in an Indian orchestra. He was a founding member of the National Council for Indian Culture in 1964.

His appointments to State boards and committees dealt with a host of matters including sports administration,



operations of the Port Authority, Justice of the Peace and the Integrity Commission. In 1988 the Government of Trinidad and Tobago presented him with a National Award, the Chaconia Medal (Gold) for public service.

■ OUR CAMPUS

**MADAME JUSTICE JEAN ANGELA PERMANAND**, CMT, a former Judge of the Appeal Court of Trinidad and Tobago, began her career in Law in 1962 with her own private practice. She was appointed Senior Counsel in 1981, Solicitor-General in 1980-1982 and acted as Chief Justice during the period 2001/2002.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago presented her with the Chaconia Medal (Gold) in 2003 for long and meritorious service to the country. In 2009, she was elected President of the Commonwealth Law Reform Agencies. She has served on the Integrity Commission, chaired the Committee to review mediation in Criminal Matters as well as the Committee to review the Appointment Process of Senior Counsel.



This accomplished cultural ambassador has represented his country in North America, the United Kingdom, Europe, South America and the Far East. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago presented him with National Award of the Humming Bird Medal in 1969 and then many years later again recognised him as an 'Icon'.

**RAJKUMAR "KRISHNA" PERSAD**, HBM has steadfastly promoted Indian art and culture for more than five decades. He was the first Trinidad and Tobago national to have been awarded a scholarship by the Indian Government to study music and dance in India and received the title, 'Natya Kala Ratna'. In 1967 he became the founder, director and choreographer of the Trinidad School of Indian Dance, the first to be established in this part of the world.

Professors Kenneth Ramchand and Gordon Rohlehr. Renditions such as 'Ganges meets the Nile', 'Hosay', 'The Power of the Glory', 'High Mas' have been given significant respect for their impact in further inculcating all facets of the country's social fabric into song. His sterling contribution has projected the image of Trinidad and Tobago in a positive way on the world stage.



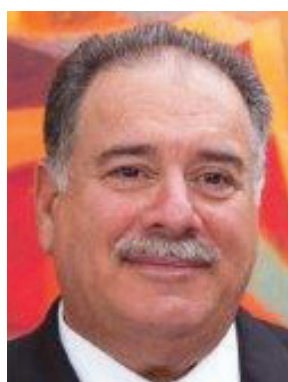
**DAVID RUDDER**, more so than any other local artiste, has been recognised internationally for his integration and capture of the essence of Trinidad and Tobago's multicultural society through his music. His music, which blends pop, jazz, blues, calypso, has been considered a bridge between modern pop and World Beat Music.

Mr Rudder's lyrical prowess has been recognised, acclaimed, studied and evaluated by academics such as



**A. NORMAN SABGA** is the Chairman and Chief Executive of the ANSA McAL Group, one of the largest and most diversified conglomerates in the Caribbean with some 6,000 employees. He was educated at the Red Rice College in the United Kingdom and then at Fordham University in the United States.

A leading entrepreneur, he has been pivotal in the expansion of the group's business through St. Kitt's, Grenada, Barbados, Guyana and the United States and made significant headway into introducing new commodities and business models in the region.



**DR MARJORIE THORPE** is a graduate in English of McGill University and Queen's College – both of Canada – and The University of the West Indies. She also has a post-graduate diploma in Mediation.

A former University Dean and Deputy, Dr Thorpe pioneered the introduction of the first Women and Development Studies at The UWI in 1985 and published many selected articles. She has held appointments as the Chair of the Trinidad and Tobago Public Service Commission and the



Chair of the Trinidad and Tobago Board of the Defence Force. She served as Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations from 1988-1992; after which she held the post of Deputy Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women in New York until 1995. She then served as Resident Coordinator of the UN System Operational Activities and UNDP Resident Representative for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean until 1999.

■ OUR CAMPUS

# MARKING AN END, A BEGINNING

*The UWI St. Augustine South Campus, Penal-Debe*



The UWI Chancellor Sir George Alleyne makes a point on stage

A long-standing tradition in the construction industry, a ‘topping-off’ ceremony often signals the end of one phase of a building project. The presence of the Chancellor of The University of the West Indies Sir George Alleyne and Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles at just such a ceremony one month ago was ample proof (if any were needed) of the importance The University attaches to the creation of a new satellite campus in the south of Trinidad, Penal-Debe.

This satellite campus helps advance The University’s mission, vision and core values. In particular, ‘accessibility’, one of The UWI’s seven core values, speaks to continued expansion to reach underserved populations. St. Augustine Campus Principal Professor Clement Sankat noted that, for the first time, persons living in south Trinidad will have “close access to a state-of-the-art facility and a quality tertiary education opportunity” provided by the region’s premier higher education institution. The Mona Campus also has a satellite campus in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, His Excellency Brigadier David A. Granger, an alum of The UWI, noted that the responsibility of higher education, in general, and UWI specifically, was to help to build a more resilient economy than the one inherited: ‘We have to build one that can compete with the eagles of the West and the tigers of the East.’

Other responsibilities, he said, were to build more cohesive societies in which the people are educated to suppress their outdated social and class differences and pretences. ‘Our societies must eliminate inequalities and eradicate extreme poverty.’ Thirdly, higher education is required to ‘build a more inclusive political system where, by and large, people can be empowered to participate fully in local and national democratic organs and can feel confident in their elected representatives.’

Also speaking at the event were Trinidad and Tobago’s Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, the Honourable Fazal Karim and Minister of Housing and Urban Development, Dr the Honourable Roodal Moonilal,

in his capacity as Member of Parliament for the constituency of Oropouche East, in which the South Campus is located.

Trinidad and Tobago’s Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar officially handed over the lease agreement for the site and, together with senior University and Government personnel, unveiled a commemorative plaque.

In its first phase of operations, the South Campus will house The UWI St. Augustine’s Faculty of Law. The last quarter of 2015 is expected to be a transitional period as Law faculty and staff relocate from St. Augustine to Penal-Debe in preparation for the student intake. In order to make this facility the premier learning institution that is envisioned, phase one of the project also includes a student dormitory, a student union and sporting and recreational facilities including cricket and football fields, cricket pavilion, swimming pool and hard courts.

Construction works began in August 2012 and overall completion is scheduled for the last quarter of 2015. The first student intake is earmarked for January 2016.



Vice-Chancellor Prof Sir Hilary Beckles is greeted by Campus Principal Prof Clement Sankat. Others in picture (L-R) Minister of Housing and Urban Development, Dr the Hon. Roodal Moonilal; The UWI Chancellor Sir George Alleyne; Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar SC; President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, His Excellency Brigadier David A. Granger and Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, the Hon. Fazal Karim. PHOTOS BY ATIBA CUDJOE AND DEXTER SUPERVILLE



## ■ SITE PROFILE

Approximately 70 hectares (172 acres), in the vicinity of the Debe High School, with lands that are part of a gently rolling greenfield sugar estate lands previously operated by Caroni 1975 Ltd. It is bound on the east by the San Fernando/Siparia/ Erin Road, on the west by Papourie Road and on the south by the M2 Ring Road.

## ■ CAMPUS AREA (buildings)

24,050 sq. meters



# First Year EXPERIENCE 2015-2016



**#GETINVOLVED2EVOLVE**

First Year Experience is a year-long programme consisting of a series of orientation and transition activities aimed at helping you adapt to UWI Life. All first year and first time students are required to attend the relevant activities.

## SAVE THESE DATES

### Meet & Greet

Airport greeting for regional and international students

**Aug 17 - 30**

### Campus Tours

Faculty specific tours

**Aug 17 - 28**

### UWI Clicks

Introduction to the UWI website and student portal

**Aug 17 - 21 & Sept 10**

### Check-In

Weekend orientation activities for regional and international students

**Aug 22 - 23**

### Know Your Faculty

Orientation events for Faculties

**FEng – August 24**

**FHE – August 25**

**FSS - August 25**

**Law – August 26**

**Food & Agri - August 26**

**MedSci – Sept 1**

**Sci&Tech – Sept 3**

### UWI Life Support

UWI Admission forum for parents and families

**Aug 27**

### UWI Life Student & Information Village

UWI Administration orientation

**Aug 28**

### UWI Life Prime

Orientation for Evening, Part-time Undergraduate and Postgraduate students

**Sept 12**

### Welcome Home

Halls of Residence welcome activities

**Sept 1 - 3**

### UWI Guild Fest

The Guild of Student's orientation activities

**Sept 1 - 4**

### Orientation for students with disability

An introduction to the support services available for students with disabilities.

**Sept 10**

### Orientation for Commuting students

An open session for commuting students that explores opportunities to engage and connect with organisations and other students on campus.

**Sept 11**

### Matriculation

Official ceremony to formally recognise new students as members of the University

**Sept 17**

### Know Your Library

Library orientation sessions

**Sept 1 - 19**

### Health & Well Being

Health Services Unit workshop

**Sept 14 & 21, Oct 19 & 26**

### Career Seminar

Guidance to career planning and development

**Oct 1, 8, 15, 22**

### Study Skills

Workshops for developing practical study habits

**Oct 15, 22 & Nov 12**



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## ■ UWI LIFE 2015



BY NIKOLI EDWARDS

The University of the West Indies can be considered a diverse playground exploding with opportunities for self-growth, social interaction, professional development and cultural integration. Amid the hustle and bustle of racing from class to class, students genuinely seek a University experience which is significantly different from that of secondary school. This is where the focus shifts from pure academics to 'UWI Life' which distinguishes this prestige university from its contenders. The Guild of Students can be seen as the heartbeat of the campus as it is made of up all students who have various wants, needs and even offerings.

The activities of the student body are usually decided by the Guild Council, an elected committee of 24 students, which manages the Guild funds paid during registration at the beginning of each academic year. The funds are used to host small and large scaled events, subsidise student amenities, provide students with financial assistance and cover the daily operational costs associated with the Guild office. The Guild council serves as a strong link between the students and the administration of the campus and represents the interests of all students relative to academics, student expenses and access to services, their general wellbeing and any form of injustice against students.

Student Government at the St. Augustine Campus, while an important medium through which issues are addressed, takes on the other aspect of a social experience as well. Under the Guild, there are dozens of clubs and associations which are tailored to the needs of all students. You can definitely join groups relating to academic, religious, sporting, activism, humanitarian or professional interests. These groups host almost weekly events, ensuring that there is always something for students and help relieve the stress that may sometimes come while studying. Or you may decide to start a club or association of your own- just visit the Guild office and the friendly staff would be more than willing to assist.

The Guild Council hosts numerous and wide-ranging annual activities. These all start with Orientation Week, the largest welcoming function for new and returning University students, held in the first week of the new semester. It offers students an opportunity to engage clubs and societies on campus that they may be of interest to them. Students can also enjoy products and services offered

by sponsors, participate in fun activities hosted by different committees of the Guild Council and, essentially, make new and valuable friends and connections. The week culminates with Freshers' Fete, an event that caters for the party animal in all of us. It is highly subsidised by the Guild, taking into consideration the average student budget.

Following Orientation Week students can look forward to the various Hall Concerts which build on the talents of the students who reside at each of the Halls of Residence. Each hall hosts a concert on campus showcasing singing, dancing, acting and even fashion at its best. Speaking of fashion...students may wish to take part in UWI Style which is an event dedicated to the fashion designers and models on campus. It's the perfect platform to launch your clothing line or try your hand at modelling. Then if you're motivated enough, the next step may be the Mr and Miss UWInverse pageant. It would be remiss of the Guild not to ensure that the pageant focuses on intellect and character rather than simply beauty. The event is one of the more successful activities under the Guild and continues to grow beyond expectations.

Another important Guild initiative is Caribbean Integration Week. Celebrating 'Caribbeanness' and determining where we go as a people is an important mandate undertaken by the Guild, given the cultural melting pot that is The University of the West Indies. During Caribbean Integration Week, the Guild's International Affairs Committee oversees forums, social activities, cuisine exchanges and other meaningful events where students are encouraged to demonstrate the best of their country and people. This is undoubtedly a perfect lead up to Campus Carnival, which builds upon Trinidad and Tobago's Carnival and takes on elements of other regional Carnivals, all with an education component prior to the big day. Open to all students, it is held on the Campus itself and comprises Carnival bands with music trucks and revellers in full costume.

The University of the West Indies is bursting with activity spearheaded by the Guild. So if you're interested in student politics, personal development, and determining your future and that of your peers, toss your hat in the annual election ring. Until then be sure to participate in all that the Guild has to offer! #GetInvolved2Evolve!

*Nikoli Edwards BA (Hons) is Secretary of the St. Augustine Campus Guild of Students*

## The Mystique behind the Matriculation Ceremony

**"I SOLEMNLY PROMISE THAT, AS A MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, I WILL STRIVE TO FOLLOW THE IDEALS OF ACADEMIC LIFE, TO LOVE LEARNING, TO ADVANCE TRUE KNOWLEDGE, TO SHOW RESPECT TO THE STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY AND MY FELLOW STUDENTS, TO LEAD A SEEMLY LIFE AND SET A WORTHY EXAMPLE OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR WHEREVER I MAY BE"**

*The Academic Vow taken by First Year Students*

For first years, entrance into university is the start of an exciting phase of life. Yet, in spite of the all the red tape; the newness of the books purchased; the first round of lectures and introduction to others like themselves – it often still seems unreal. By participating in The University's Matriculation Ceremony on Thursday, September 17th, students can finally let the reality sink in.

### THE CEREMONY

Dressed in their formal white and black, assembled students will be grouped by Faculty, pending their procession.

Guests will rise as the Academic Procession enters. They are followed by the Platform Party led by Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, Campus Council Chair Ewart Williams and Principal and Pro Vice-Chancellor Professor Clement Sankat.

At a point during the programme, Makesi Peters, President of the Guild of Students, will lead students in the reading of the Academic Vow. After which there will be candle lighting by students.

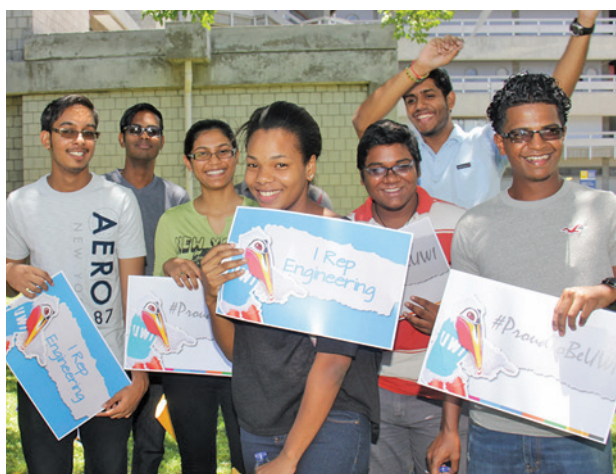
Students have until September 11th to register for the Matriculation Ceremony. The reply form is available at: <http://sta.uwi.edu/matriculation/index.asp>.

Every year, 5,000 plus new students are admitted to the St. Augustine Campus of The University of the West Indies.

For several years now, **UWI Life**, a one-day event that introduces new students to the ins and outs of campus life, has been integral to their transition. Here, new students aka Freshers engage key UWI faculty, staff and current students who give them a behind-the-scenes look at life on the campus. Tailored to the newcomer, the approach is less formal and is aimed at facilitating greater interaction.

**UWI Life** is part of the **First Year Experience (FYE)**, a year-long orientation programme for new students. FYE is a holistic compilation of all orientation and transition events, which embrace every aspect of university life, and has become one of the largest and most anticipated series of events on the campus calendar. The objective of FYE is to ensure that all first year undergraduate and postgraduate students enjoy the smoothest possible transition to The UWI way of life.

## WELCOME, FRESHERS!



Themed #GetInvolved2Evolve, FYE 2015 includes a host of activities and events spread over both semesters of the 2015 academic year (see advertisement on page 9). These events include Meet and Greet for regional and international students, Campus tours, "Check-in" – campus support services and cultural exposure for foreign students, Halls of residence, library and faculty orientation, "UWI Guild Fest" – Student Guild activities, "UWI Life Support" – a forum for parents and guardians, "UWI Life" – orientation for all new students, "UWI Clicks" – an introduction to the UWI website and student portal, "Study Skills" – workshops on developing study habits, Career seminars, and Health and wellness workshops.

FYE 2015 began in the first semester on August 17, 2015 and will run from January 18 2016 in the second semester. For more detailed information on the 2015 FYE schedule of events, visit The UWI St. Augustine's FYE 2015 website at <https://sta.uwi.edu/fye/>, UWI St. Augustine on Facebook and Twitter @UWI\_StAugustine.

## ■ OUR CAMPUS

# Elections in a Flawed Democracy

W. ANDY KNIGHT



I'm observing general election campaigning in Trinidad and Tobago for the very first time. As I do so, I am reminded that The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is a fledgling and immature democracy. I am also reminded of the fact that the concept of democracy itself is flawed and essentially contested. So many of the deficiencies we are witnessing with democracy in this country are also seen in more mature and established democracies the world over.

Winston Churchill once said that "Democracy is the worst form of government except all other forms that have been tried from time to time." And he was probably spot on. Democracy, or "rule by the people," is a concept that has assumed a positive normative value. It is very difficult for anyone these days to criticize "democracy" without being stigmatized, especially when one considers the many people around the world who live under dictatorships and who are clamouring for democracy. But not all states that claim to be democratic are actually engaged in the positive norms of the democratic ideal. Furthermore, there is no universal model of democracy.

Let's begin with what most political scientists consider as the essence of democracy. Democracy for these scholars is essentially "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." That definition implies that people ought to be at the heart of any democracy. The population of any given country must therefore collectively decide on who should govern them, and those in government should be answerable to the people who elect them to office. On the surface those assumptions seem fairly straightforward. But we all know that societies are generally not uniform. Therefore, the societal interests will mostly likely be fractured along ethnic, racial, economic, religious and social lines. No elected government can fulfil the wishes of all of its citizens. Every political decision cannot be submitted to the masses for their approval. Not every signal citizens in a democracy can have a say on every issue that affects him or her. Not all divergent views can be taken into consideration or given equal weight when decisions on what constitutes the populations' interests are taken. Thus, determining which societal interest should receive priority is left in the hands of an elite few.

Very few democratic societies can engage in what is called "direct democracy." The closest model of this form of democracy is practised in Switzerland. But even in



W. Andy Knight

**What I am seeing in the 2015 Trinidad and Tobago election campaign is very troubling indeed. The vitriolic and acerbic rhetoric spewing out of the mouths of some of our politicians is extremely worrisome. The amount of money being spent on advertising by some parties is obscene.**

Switzerland, the "demos" model of governance is undergoing "opinion-expression fatigue". There are so many referenda on so many different issues that voter turnout and participation has experienced significant decline. It is just too impractical to consult with the population on every decision that must be taken regarding what ought to be the interests of that population. Direct democracy is therefore quite impractical, especially in countries with large populations. In any event, not everyone will agree with decision reached via the

direct democracy vehicle, even if that consensus model of democracy is considered ideal. At the end of the day, the majority rules in democratic societies.

So what we are left with, for better or worse, is representative democracy. The cornerstone of that form of democracy is "elections". Elections are generally considered the benchmark of truly democratic countries. But in some cases, elections are rigged or otherwise flawed. I'm sure that most people would remember the 2000 American Presidential elections when Al Gore was denied victory because of hanging chads and the vagaries of US Electoral College. Gore lost to George W. Bush, even though the former Vice President had secured a majority of the popular vote. Thus, even in the US – the so-called "beacon of modern day democracy" the votes of the majority can have little or no impact on the outcome of an election.

Elections, and election campaigns, can be very divisive. What I am seeing in the 2015 Trinidad and Tobago election campaign is very troubling indeed. The vitriolic and acerbic rhetoric spewing out of the mouths of some of our politicians is extremely worrisome. The amount of money being spent on advertising by some parties is obscene. One gets the impression that the goal of certain parties is to win at all cost, rather than find ways of truly representing and serving the people. In Kenya, back in 2008, the divisiveness of the election campaign led to violence in which over one thousand people were killed. My fear is that in a very close election, such as the one we are likely to witness here in Trinidad and Tobago, unless cool heads prevail, violence is just seething underneath the surface and could erupt particularly if one party feels that it has been aggrieved or cheated out of victory.

One of the biggest problems with democracy is the "tyranny of the majority". Whatever the outcome in this election, there must be a renewed level of respect for the loser. The party that forms the government should recognize that they have been given a mandate by the people to govern, and not to obliterate the opposition. The main opposition party needs to be respected as a possible "government in waiting". Minorities have to be guaranteed that their rights will be protected and not be trampled upon by the majority. If we can adhere to some of those basic principles of civility, then there is hope for this very flawed and fledgling democratic state – the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

## ■ OUR CAMPUS

# A Pioneer in the KNOWLEDGE HOUSE

BY JOEL HENRY



If a university is like a society in small, then information is its currency. And the Alma Jordan Library is UWI St. Augustine's treasure trove. For more than a hundred years now, even before UWI was UWI, there has been a repository of knowledge – texts, documents, film, artifacts – for the students of St. Augustine. The students have changed and the library has evolved, but its essential mission has remained the same.

“Our purpose is to provide support for all aspects of the teaching, learning and research of the university community through a range of services and resources,” says Ms. Jennifer Joseph.

As a senior member of the library's team for 17 years, Campus Librarian at St. Augustine since 2008 and University Librarian (coordinator for The UWI's entire library system) since 2009, Ms. Joseph is more than an authority on the subject. In her time at the UWI, she has not only assisted thousands within the university community in their acquisition of knowledge, she has also played a major role in the development of the library system.

On the eve of her retirement, Ms. Joseph looks back at her career and the evolution of the library system of the University of the West Indies.

## The Librarian

By the time this article is published, the 2015-2016 academic year will be well underway and upward of 4,000 new students will be beginning their courses of study on the St. Augustine Campus. For every last one of them, the Alma Jordan Library will be a vital resource. They will benefit from a library system that has evolved from largely print-based resources to a collection that is more than 80% electronic. Their research will be facilitated by new computer systems, new online resources, a massively expanded repository of Caribbean-specific items and even an overnight reading room. New students will enjoy assets that represent more than 15 years of effort by the staff of the library to meet the demands of the university's exploding student population.

Ms. Joseph played an integral part in the process:

“It was exciting – for it was the time of transition, when we were just launching fully into the world of technology, moving from print to electronic, changing from the traditional card catalogue to the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), developing new services and providing staff with training in the use of technology. My predecessor, Professor Margaret Rouse-Jones, who had been appointed as Campus Librarian in 1997, was leading this process and the library had been set on a new path.”

Ms. Joseph joined the staff of the library in 1998. It was still called the Main Library at that point (it would be renamed the Alma Jordan Library in 2011 after Dr. Alma Jordan, who was Campus Librarian from 1960 to 1989). By then Ms. Joseph had already had a successful career in the field.

“I joined the staff at a senior level in the Librarian stream having already had 22 years experience as a professional librarian in the public service (several ministries), the state sector and at an international level (the World Bank),” she explains.

Her first assignment was in the West Indiana and Special Collections Division, the heart of Caribbean-focused information. She then moved relatively quickly to become Liaison Librarian for the Faculty of Social Sciences. It was in 1999, as the library sought to evolve its services by employing a management consulting firm. Out of this initiative a new strategic plan and a Library Senior Management Team was created, which expanded the leadership structure to include unit heads.

“While I was not a ‘head’ I was invited by the Campus Librarian to serve as a member of that team,” Ms. Joseph says. “I was given the Finance portfolio (monitoring our budget and financial procedures) to ensure compliance with UWI procedures and standards. For me it was certainly an opportunity to contribute to the development of the library's operations and to be part of the team that was shaping the future development of the Campus Libraries Services.”

Her dedication to the advancement of the campus library and her capability in the leadership position spurred further advancement. By December 2000 she attained the position of Deputy Campus Librarian and eight years later she became the Campus Librarian of the Alma Jordan Library.

She shared her guiding vision: “The library plays a most important role in assisting students. We provide the necessary information resources and the systems for locating this information. In doing so, the library must provide a welcoming and comfortable space for users, and competent persons to provide, training, assistance and guidance in accessing resources. The library must also work closely with faculty to ensure that the relevant information is selected and made available in a variety of formats.”

Ms. Joseph has been integral to some of the most important modernisation activities carried out by the Alma Jordan Library and the Campus Libraries System. That work will now be continued by Mr. Frank Soodeen, Head of the library's Information Technology Services Division, who will take up the post of Campus Librarian on September 1 of this year. With 22 years' service at the Alma Jordan Library, Mr. Soodeen, like Ms. Joseph, has been a major player in the technological, systems and service provision improvements over the last decade and a half.

But technology and processes aside, what about the human component of library service?

“Students should look forward to guidance and support from a team of dedicated persons who are intimate with the information resources,” Ms. Joseph says, adding that “they should expect to be provided with prompt responses to their questions and a smooth and cordial interaction on all administrative processes.”

Looking back on her life as a librarian, she says, “I feel satisfied. I have had a long and rewarding career in various aspects of library services in Trinidad and Tobago – through the public service, The UWI and the Library Association of Trinidad and Tobago. I feel that I have utilised my training and skills and made a good contribution to the development of library services at the national and the regional level through The University. I have had the privilege of managing the St. Augustine Campus Libraries and leading a team of

persons who are dedicated to their task. I have been at the helm at a time of moving from traditional library services to the new age embracing all that technology can offer.”

Retirement does not however mean work stops. The drive and inclination that motivated her in her professional career is guiding her towards community development through her Methodist faith. The keeper of books has embraced a suggestion to write a book of her own – on the Methodist Church in Trinidad and Tobago.

She laughs, “I anticipate that I will be very busy!”



Some of The University Library advances have been:

### ■ Movement from print to digital resources

– with more than 280 online databases and thousands of ebooks, students can access the vast majority of information online from anywhere and at any time.

### ■ Computer access for students

– the library has two spaces: STARRS (the St. Augustine Research and Reference Services) and UEC (USER Education Centre) which give students access to computers for online research.

### ■ Cross-campus electronic gateway

– Through UWILinC (the UWI Library and Information Connexion), students can access information across all campuses.

### ■ Expanded Unique Caribbean Resources

– Through the digitisation of many resources within West Indiana and the development of UWISpace (the repository of UWI in-house research), students have greater access to electronic resources unique to the region.

## ■ OUR CAMPUS

# The Art of Peace



BY DARA WILKINSON - BOBB

On a diverse campus with a large population of mixed ages, races, backgrounds, genders and worldviews, there is bound to be conflict. After all, a university campus is a microcosm of the world outside.

“Mediation negotiations are about agreements,” says Ann Diaz, Programme Co-ordinator of The UWI’s Mediation Unit, which seeks to develop skilled practitioners in the art of making peace. She was facilitating a two-day mediation workshop which had attracted the attention of representatives from law firms, trade unions, the coast guard, a church and firms in the financial services sector and airline industry, among others.

Feature speaker on the first day of the programme was attorney and chaplain Adrian Sieunarine who introduced participants to the idea of Interpersonal STARS. STARS, he explained, is an acronym for sensitivity, tolerance, assertiveness and restraint – all key components to successful interactions. The yin-yang of sensitivity and assertiveness implies a willingness to receive the other person gently while holding one’s ground when necessary.

Sieunarine traced the trajectory of thoughts into feelings, then habits. These in turn shape behaviour, character and, ultimately, lifestyle. For students just embarking on a tertiary education, much of the information inputs that will form the foundation of their careers will be

drawn from their years at The UWI and the development of critical thinking ability. Indeed, the formative years of childhood into youth as well as these very crucial years of intellectual growth and challenge will strongly influence that first stage: thoughts.

The term “conflict” is defined in the dictionary as serious disagreement, and also, an antagonistic state or action. The ability to clearly analyse a particular problem can greatly influence the outcome of the conflict. Sieunarine points out that hasty words often have long-lasting negative effects. Life often makes circles and it is far better to use this time to be collaborative and build linkages for the future.

“Many people in our society grow up thinking of who we are against. We need to change that culture and learn to work together. It is a massive cultural shift,” says Sieunarine.

Skillful mediation is simply the art of peace-making. Armed with the right tools, you can take gentle control of a conflict situation. According to Sieunarine, “If you have the skill to unite and guide people, you will have an amazing victory. Do not divide and conquer. Unite and guide.”

## Mediation and Conflict Resolution Guidelines

### ■ When not to add fuel to a confrontational situation

Can you read people? Even if not overtly so, can you tell when someone is upset?

### ■ Separate the issue from the person

Try to perceive when a history of negative interactions or other biases are colouring our own contributions to the actual discussion at hand.

### ■ Be Open

At some point it may be necessary to say when you’re uncomfortable with a situation or how aggressively the other person is pursuing a position.

### ■ Manage your body language

“Don’t stomp and slam the table,” says Sieunarine. Another step backwards, Sieunarine says, ‘is rolling your eyes and contorting your face in an asymmetrical way to convey contempt and condescension. Practice smiling instead.’

### ■ Watch your language, particularly word choices

Use simple, non-threatening language. Think through the words you use and how those words relate to the background from which others are coming. Don’t interrupt others and diplomatically ask them not to interject when you are speaking.

### ■ Use empathy to build relational bridges

Generally speaking, subconsciously people are resistant to change and to learning new things. What might initially be mistaken for stubbornness might eventually be seen, by standing in the other’s shoes, as fear of abandoning “certainties” and comfort zones.

### ■ Speaking voice

Lower a loud voice, project if you have a soft voice, and modulate your tones if you have a shrill voice.

To learn more about mediation, please contact the Mediation Unit, Faculty of Social Sciences. T: 662-2002 ext. 82539, 82617; email: Rohan.Mack@sta.uwi.edu

## Will YOU Be There?

UWI’S HALF MARATHON  
12th edition, 1200 participants

It’s time to challenge yourself. On October 25, it will just be you and the road and your innate determination to complete what you started months ago.

You’ll meet some old friends (like Daniel Chavez Da Silva of Brazil, Rupert Green of Jamaica and Philip Lagat of Kenya; even Caroline Kiptoo of Kenya, Brazilian Cruz Nonata Da Silva and Colombian Lineida Madeus Rojas and Guadeloupe’s Christelle Laurent). You’ll find some new – Cuba’s Richer Perez, gold medal winner in the Men’s Marathon at the 2015 Pan Am Games and Levan Reyes of Venezuela.

You’ll remember that you’re doing it for you and for the Rape Crisis Society and the Coalition against Domestic Violence, charities affiliated with title sponsor First Citizens Bank PINK Card initiative. And you’ll spare a thought for Mr. Charles Spooner, the 2014 over 80 winner who passed away this May. He was 91 and the 2014 race was his 9th consecutive UWI SPEC International Half Marathon.

With more than \$150,000 in cash prizes, there’s a category for just about everyone - including prizes for the physically challenged, Special Olympics, wheelchair and team/club. Participants can expect water stops and markers at every mile, electronic timing and finish line photography.

So, the question remains – will you be there?



**Registration at First Citizens branches for the 12th UWI SPEC International Half Marathon runs until September 18, 2015.**

### ■ Package Collection

October 5 – 18  
at UWI SPEC  
Weekdays:  
9am – 5pm  
Weekends  
9am – 1pm

### ■ Start/Finish

UWI SPEC,  
St. Augustine  
Campus

■ OUR CAMPUS

## Aqua Amazing!

### *Aquaponics takes Centre Stage at Children's Discovery Workshop*

BY JEANETTE AWAI

What do plastic bottles, goldfish, glass marbles and filtered water have in common? They are all parts of a basic aquaponics system – so simple, a child can do it and 67 children from 3 to 13 did! They were at The UWI After-School Care Centre's Children's Discovery Workshop as part of the project *Science Education as a Climate Change Resilience Strategy (SECCRS)*.

Aquaponics – the symbiotic system combining aquaculture (raising aquatic animals such as fish in tanks) with hydroponics (cultivating plants in water) wherein, the fish waste produced provides an organic food source for the growing plants, and the plants in turn, provide a natural filter for the water the fish live in – was just one of the topics covered during the two-week workshop. The children also learned about climate change and green technologies through outdoor activities, games, arts and crafts, and a visit to the NIHERST National Science Centre.

The workshop was a result of the St. Augustine Campus Department of Chemistry's ongoing SECCRS initiative, an 18-month project funded by the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP). The project's overall goal is to empower communities to apply practical knowledge of green technologies to best meet the need of local circumstances.



Workshop participants and their aquaponics system  
PHOTO: ATIBA CUDJOE

Members of the Heights of Guanapo community were trained to use aquaponics to avoid soil and water contamination from the landfill. Nine of these adults were then mentored to work directly with the children of the ASCC and Guanapo to pass on what they had learned. The UWI Department of Chemistry and Department of Clinical Veterinary Sciences Aquatic Health Unit, the Guanapo Community Environmental Development Organisation and the National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST) have a unique partnership with the ASCC to accomplish the project goals.

According to workshop facilitator and the SECCRS Project Team Leader, Dr. Leonette Cox, "the big picture is knowledge sharing and building confidence and capacity in community." Confidence was in full display as the combined teams of children, led by the Guanapo facilitators, performed poems, skits and dance numbers dedicated to aquaponics to a crowd of parents, UWI staff members and others.

The project's next phase involves project leadership and proposal writing training. For more information about the SECCRS project, contact **Dr. Leonette Cox**, Research Outreach Consulting and Analytical Services, Department of Chemistry at [leonette.cox@sta.uwi.edu](mailto:leonette.cox@sta.uwi.edu) or 662-2002 ext. 84334.

*The project's overall goal is to empower communities to apply practical knowledge of green technologies to best meet the need of local circumstances.*

## THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL:

*for the safe use of technology, for the protection of the consumer*

BY MARISSA MOSES

To the man on the street, the clever media hype that surrounds technology, might make it appear as though creative products and solutions materialise from thin air and unto our shelves, but this is not the case. Years, sometimes decades of research, development and safety tests are needed before any new products interface with the public, even more so when it involves food and pharmaceuticals.

In October 2000, Trinidad and Tobago acceded to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which is one of the Protocols found in the Convention on Biological Diversity. The term Biosafety is used to describe practices to reduce and eliminate any risks resulting from biotechnology and its products. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is the means by which over 169 countries will establish minimum standards for regulating the import and export of products made using modern biotechnology.

Since the inception of the project to implement the Protocol, The University of the West Indies, through its Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research), has been partnering with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to reach out to citizens; heightening awareness of the Protocol on Biosafety; explaining the science of modern biotechnology and how this technology is used around

the world. The University has been the main collaborator in national public consultations in north, east and south Trinidad as well as in Tobago. Youth were also engaged in specially designed sessions, which included many of the young researchers from The UWI's St. Augustine Campus as well as national institutions such as NIHERST, IICA, CARDI, UTT and secondary school students. Through these varied interactions with the public, a National Policy on Biosafety was created and successfully approved by Parliament in April 2014.

As a regional institution, The University's role extends far beyond the twin-island shores of Trinidad and Tobago. The UWI is the lead executing agency for the *Regional Project for Implementing Biosafety Frameworks in the Caribbean SubRegion*, which is part of the UNEP-GEF suite of projects. It is mandated to oversee the implementation of the Protocol in all Caribbean countries that are signatories. The overall goal of the regional project is to implement effective, operable, transparent and sustainable National Biosafety Frameworks, which cater for national and regional need and deliver global benefits, which are compliant with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Countries participating in this project include Antigua and Barbuda, Belize,

Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. The countries of Barbados and Bahamas also participate in project activities but in a limited capacity.

Relying on the strength of more than 60 years' experience in leading regional issues, The University was able to efficiently pool technical personnel and financial resources for the maximum benefit of all in the Caribbean. Nowhere has this been better reflected than in the numerous University hosted regional workshops, facilitated by international experts from the United States, Canada and Australia, to build capacity among scientists and technocrats in the region.

The University partnership with the National Biosafety Co-ordinating Unit, focal point of the national project of Trinidad and Tobago, continues in 2015. Professor of Genetics Path Umaharan, is a member of the Trinidad and Tobago Cabinet appointed committee on Biosafety and is also the Technical Lead of the Regional Project on Biosafety of which Trinidad and Tobago is a part.

The successful implementation of this policy will promote the safe use of the technology while protecting consumer rights. View the national biosafety policy at: <http://www.legalaffairs.gov.tt/>

*Relying on the strength of more than 60 years' experience in leading regional issues, The University was able to efficiently pool technical personnel and financial resources for the maximum benefit of all in the Caribbean.*

## ■ OUR CAMPUS

## UWI FILM @ 10

## A Renaissance Movement

BY REBECCA ROBINSON

“Our greatest achievement has been the output of students who have brought an immensely diverse suite of narratives to the storytelling table, through their productions”, says Yao Ramesar, lecturer in and coordinator of The UWI Film Programme and a singularly diversified and distinguished filmic storyteller, with a note of well-deserved pride.

Notable feature film releases that have come from students of the programme include *Santana: The Movie* (Roger Alexis) and *Escape From Babylon* (Nicholas Attin). Programme alumni have gone on to professional work in all genres of cinema – sci-fi, animation, horror, urban, slice of life, documentary and the world of video gaming – just to name a few of the post-programme arenas. Graduates of the programme “constitute a highly mobile workforce”, remarks Ramesar.

There are two possible tracks in the film programme. There is the major (B.A) in Film Production – an interdisciplinary programme designed to teach potential filmmakers the technical skills and of production at the highest level, and ensure that these filmmakers understand and apply the theoretical and aesthetic principles of film. It is designed to ensure the balance between theory and practice is maintained and that analytical and critical skills for the practice of craft are also learnt.

The other track is a major (B.A) in Film Studies, designed to teach students how to evaluate, critique and

analyse film products and understand how film images work. Future critics and aestheticians of film will therefore be grounded in the basic technical skills of filmmaking. Among numerous courses offered are Caribbean Cinema I & II, Cinemas of Africa, Latin American Cinema and Indian Cinema.

With numbers growing, and the requirement of studio and editing spaces proportionally with this growth, the country's first film degree programme now has its own building – a testament to the flow and growth of the development path since its inception in 2006. The precursor was the first tertiary level film courses offered in Trinidad and Tobago, designed and deployed by Ramesar and Kenwyn Crichlow at the then Creative Arts Centre (now Department of Creative and Festival Arts/DCFA) UWI, as a component of the B.A in Visual Arts degree in 1998. The programme is located in the Office of the Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Education.

Ramesar notes that cinema here ‘has a renaissance capacity’. “Students”, he explains, “have the potential to and have demonstrated their power to advance the narrative structure of filmic storytelling, as the Hollywood formulaic way has been trapped in a closed romantic realist structure for much of its existence.”

That ‘renaissance capacity’ it appears, is a key success factor of The UWI Film Programme. Students begin the

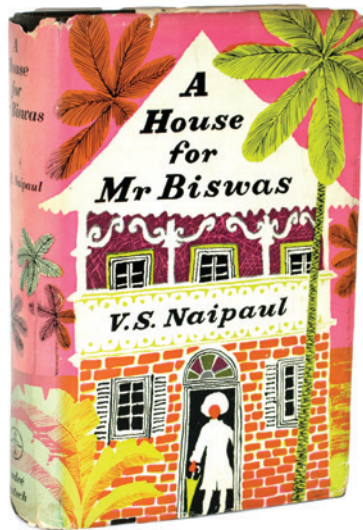
work of challenging the form and structure of storytelling in film and, as graduates of the programme, continue to push the proverbial envelope in the spaces where they pursue their original productions – with a high degree of competence, if audience feedback is the gauge. The programme's students routinely cop multiple awards at The Trinidad & Tobago Film Festival, usually their first port of call upon completion of their films.

This ‘renaissance capacity’ is also the context for the programme's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary showcase event – the first staging of the *World Festival of Emerging Cinema*. The inaugural festival takes place this November around the theme, *Women in Cinema*, and will bring together the best works of the students and their international peers while facilitating opportunities for global collaborations and co-productions. It recognizes that filmmakers throughout the Caribbean region need to be provided with the expertise and portable skill sets to ensure their competitiveness in the burgeoning international film industry and this is the direction in which they are moving.

From next month until the *World Festival of Emerging Cinema*, *UWI Today* is pleased to make space to feature the writings of some of the programme's students on the Film Studies track as they reflect on topics from Caribbean Cinema, filmmaking in the region, critiques of form and content and the theme of the Festival, *Women in Cinema*.

## The Plenitude of VS Naipaul

BY VIJAY MAHARAJ



All thirty of VS Naipaul's books and his hundreds of articles and interviews would take up considerable space on a library shelf. Add in some of the critical work on his oeuvre, then a one-room-four-wall shelved space usually allocated to a personal library would be occupied solely by VS Naipaul

along with work pertaining to his writing.

If, you consider “the writer is worth reading slowly,” and you read like VS Naipaul, then you have been reading for a long time, for he says: “I would like to read only 20 pages a day – to read more is to throw away lovely things” (Interview with John Baker, *Publishers Weekly* 6 June 1994, 44-46). You would, however, have certainly found the spatio-temporal investment worth your while, especially if you read his words – carefully crafted, as he tells us in the Foreword to *A House for Mr Biswas*, at the rate of approximately 400 words a day – like he does, and particularly if you obtain the kind of enlightenment I have.

Illumination comes in a variety of ways. It inheres in the models of precision and clarity the writing provides, quite

frequently on issues that reader as well as author harbour ambiguous, ambivalent views and emotions, and for which therefore only the most subtle techniques of caricature, parody, irony and resultant humour are suitable. We can think for example of the well-loved works of the youthful writer: *Miguel Street* (1959 – written first; published later), *The Mystic Masseur* (1957), (adapted for the Merchant-Ivory film script by Caryl Phillips), *The Suffrage of Elvira* (1958) and *A House for Mr Biswas* (1961). But the description also applies to the portraits of the British working class in *Mr Stone and the Knights Companion* (1963), the Black Power movement captured in *Guerrillas* (1975), and of Willie Chandran's ostensibly revolutionary endeavours in his journeys across Africa, India and Europe in *Half a Life* (2001) and *Magic Seeds* (2004).

One also gains a special kind of socio-cultural and historical awareness through VS Naipaul's journalistic techniques, from which many a journalist could learn. This is most evident through the nine books comprising the Latin American-Caribbean, Indian and Islamic-Middle Eastern trilogies: *The Middle Passage* (1962), *The Loss of El Dorado* (1969), and *The Return of Eva Peron with the Killings in Trinidad* (1980); *An Area of Darkness* (1964), *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1976) and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1990); *The Overcrowded Barracoon* (1972), *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* (1981) and *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions Among the Converted Peoples* (1998) as well as the three comprising reflections on Africa in one of the narratives in *Finding the Centre: Two Narratives* (1984)

and the recent *Masque of Africa* (2010) and on the United States in *A Turn in the South* (1989).

These books model not only a writing style but an attitude to life of courage and detachment. Equally importantly, the acumen the work yields has to do with the development of a keen grasp of human psychology especially with regard to lust for power and pleasure and the abyss between desire and its object. For many ardent Naipaul fans, this assertion will immediately bring to mind the political Caribbean novels *The Mimic Men* (1967) and *A Flag on the Island* (1967) as well as the earliest and most penetrating analyses of the postcolonial condition in the collection of stories *In a Free State* (1971) and the novel *A Bend in the River* (1979). Finally, (only because to do otherwise is to exceed my word limit), there is a philosophical education from becoming immersed in the hybrid works *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987) and *A Way in the World* (1994) and the most recent collections of essays.

From the little said here, it should be possible to glimpse why V. S. Naipaul echoes his father and brother to insist on the nobility of the writer's calling. As he said to Tarun Tejpal: “It is the only noble calling. It's noble because it deals with the truth” (*Random Magazine* June 1998).

*The Department of Literary, Cultural and Communication Studies in the Faculty of Humanities and Education at the St Augustine Campus joins with the Friends of Mr Biswas to host a conference, Seepersad & Sons: Naipaulian Creative Synergies, October 28-30.*

# UWI CALENDAR of EVENTS

## SEPTEMBER 2015–JANUARY 2016

### CRITICAL THINKING EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

September 10–11 & October 5–6  
Institute of Critical Thinking,  
The UWI, St. Augustine Campus

#### SEPTEMBER 10-11

Building organisational efficiency using Emotional Intelligence – Aligning skills, purpose and strategy. Team leaders learn strategies for improving awareness and control of their own emotions; techniques for managing workplace conflict positively; and more.

#### OCTOBER 5-6

Strategies for Handling Aggressive & Other Problem Personalities. Learn how to identify the difference between personalities who display difficult behaviours and those who thrive on conflict; implement a process for reaching balance and settling tensions between people within organisations and more.

Both workshops run from 9am to 4pm and cost TT\$5000.

For more information,  
please visit [www.sta.uwi.edu/news/ecalendar](http://www.sta.uwi.edu/news/ecalendar).

### HUMAN COMMUNICATION STUDIES CONFERENCE IDENTITY, CONTEXT AND INTERDISCIPLINARITY IN HUMAN COMMUNICATION STUDIES IN THE CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND

September 24 and 25

The UWI, St. Augustine Campus

Listen to panelists discuss subthemes such as communication studies education; communication, culture and gender; communication, culture and conflict; health communication; popular culture and critical theory and many other areas.

For further information,  
visit <http://sta.uwi.edu/conferences/15/humancommunication/registration.asp>.

### PREMIUM OPEN LECTURE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT – BACK TO BASICS AND BEYOND THE TECH HYPE

September 25

Daaga Auditorium

The UWI, St. Augustine Campus

The Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in association with the Guardian Group present a Premium Open Lecture by Dr. Elizabeth F. Barkley, Foothill College, Los Altos, California.

For further information,  
please call 662-2002 ext. 82611 or 224-3736  
or email [cetl@sta.uwi.edu](mailto:cetl@sta.uwi.edu).  
Or visit [www.sta.uwi.edu/news/ecalendar](http://www.sta.uwi.edu/news/ecalendar).

### COTE 2015 MANAGING DEVELOPMENT IN CARIBBEAN ECONOMIES: THE KEY ROLE OF HEALTH, PUBLIC POLICY AND SOCIAL SECURITY

October 8 and 9

Learning Resource Centre,

The UWI, St. Augustine Campus

The Department of Economics' Annual Conference on the Economy (COTE 2015) will focus on sub-themes of Caribbean development like Health and Sustainable Development, Public Policy: Resource Challenges in Health, Social Security Challenges & Opportunities and many more.

For further information,  
visit: <http://sta.uwi.edu/conferences/15/cote/index.asp>.

### THE HISTORY OF INVESTMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN November 4–8

The UWI, St. Augustine Campus

The University of the West Indies and the Caribbean Economic History Association (Asociación de Historia Económica del Caribe, AHEC) present the 3rd Annual Conference of the AHEC.

Listen to panelists discuss the evolution of investment in the Caribbean from the 15th century to the present; the movement of capital flows into and out of the greater region and the incorporation of the Caribbean into global economies and markets over the past centuries. The Conference will also address the flow of investments, its sources and destinations and the impact of these flows on the region's economy and society, in micro and macro terms.

For further information,  
please visit [www.sta.uwi.edu/news/ecalendar](http://www.sta.uwi.edu/news/ecalendar).

### 2ND BIENNIAL CONFERENCE ON SPORT STUDIES AND HIGHER EDUCATION: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH PHYSICAL LITERACY: GENDER, SCIENCE, AND SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT

January 13–15, 2016

UWI St. Augustine

This conference will contribute to the development of research and scholarship on sport to support sports programmes in tertiary and higher education institutions. Call for Papers – abstracts should be submitted by October 31, 2015 addressing sub-themes including but not limited to The Role of the State; Sexuality and Gender Identities in Sport, Anti-Doping Policy and more.

For further information, please email [sportstudiesconference@sta.uwi.edu](mailto:sportstudiesconference@sta.uwi.edu) or visit [www.sta.uwi.edu](http://www.sta.uwi.edu).

### UWI GRADUATION 2015

October 22–24

Mark your calendars!

2015 Graduation Ceremonies take place as follows:

#### OCTOBER 22

**(AM)** Faculties of Science & Technology and Food & Agriculture; Honorary Graduand and Guest Speaker; Mr. Hollis Charles.

**(PM)** Faculties of Engineering and Law; Honorary Graduand and Guest Speaker Justice; Jean Angela Permanand.

#### OCTOBER 23

**(AM)** Faculty of Social Sciences (Group 1) & ALL Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business graduands; Honorary Graduand and Guest Speaker; Mr. A. Norman Sabga.

**(PM)** Faculty of Social Sciences (Group 2); Honorary Graduand and Guest Speaker Mr. Gerard Besson

#### OCTOBER 24

**(AM)** Faculty of Humanities & Education; Honorary Graduand and Guest Speaker Dr. Marjorie Thorpe; Honorary Graduand and Guest Performer; Mr. David Rudder.

**(PM)** Faculty of Medical Sciences; Honorary Graduand and Guest Speaker Justice Ralph Narine; Honorary Graduand; Mr. Rajkumar "Krishna" Persad.

For further information, visit the St. Augustine Campus' graduation website, closer to graduation dates at <https://sta.uwi.edu/graduation/>.

### THE UWI SPEC INTERNATIONAL HALF-MARATHON

October 25, 2015

Sport and Physical Education Centre,

St. Augustine Campus

Registration is open for The 12th UWI SPEC International Half-Marathon, which kicks off at 5.30am at The UWI Sport and Physical Education Centre (SPEC). Registration closes on September 25 or once the limit of 1,200 entries has been received. Registration is available at First Citizens branches.

For further information,  
please visit [www.sta.uwi.edu/spec/marathon](http://www.sta.uwi.edu/spec/marathon)

### THE UWI RESEARCH EXPO 2015: ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE, IMPACTING LIVES

September 22–25

JFK Quadrangle, The UWI, St. Augustine Campus

Experience UWI research in action through interactive displays, mini workshops, networking opportunities, tours, cultural programming, fun activities for the kids and more.

For further information,  
please visit [www.sta.uwi.edu/researchexpo](http://www.sta.uwi.edu/researchexpo)

## UWI TODAY WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU

UWI TODAY welcomes submissions by staff and students for publication in the paper. Please send your suggestions, comments, or articles for consideration to [uwitoday@sta.uwi.edu](mailto:uwitoday@sta.uwi.edu)

