



# UWI TODAY

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES • ST AUGUSTINE CAMPUS

SUNDAY 7 APRIL 2019



## A FEARLESS GAZE

Flash, a feisty yellow-headed caracara (*Milvago chimachima*), looks unbothered by the smiling presence of Alana Joseph, a volunteer at the El Socorro Centre for Wildlife Conservation and UWI graduate student. The small bird of prey, along with several other animals including an owl, rabbits, dogs, an anaconda and even a pony, were on campus as part of “Unwind your Mind”, an initiative of The UWI Counselling and Psychological Service (CAPS). Unwind your Mind took place on March 20.

The yellow-headed caracara is a resilient little bird, able to adapt to urban environments, and has gone from “rare” to “relatively common” in Trinidad and Tobago. That spirit of resilience is echoed in the energy of The UWI St Augustine Campus itself. On March 19, we hosted the annual St Augustine Campus Council Meeting, a gathering of the university and campus leadership, as well as key stakeholders. The purpose of the meeting is to report on the previous year and reveal the ideas and strategies driving the current direction.

This year’s Council theme was “Bold Strokes”, emphasising UWI St Augustine’s ambitious and audacious approach to facing the challenges of institutional development, as well as the development of Caribbean society. Like Flash the yellow-headed caracara, UWI faces a changing world with resiliency, adaptability and an unflinching eye. PHOTO: ANEEL KARIM

### CAMPUS NEWS - 04

#### To Boldly Go

■ A very daring Campus Council



### OUR CAMPUS - 06

#### A Decade as Chair

■ Ewart Williams reflects



### SPORTS - 08

#### Of Athletes and Academics

■ UWI awards first sports scholarships

### EDUCATION - 11

#### Readers and Listeners

■ A loud literacy strategy



#BeUWI



**UWI**  
ST. AUGUSTINE  
CAMPUS

Be part of the next generation  
of leaders, thinkers and innovators

There's a **space** for you in August 2019

**APPLY NOW**

Visit <https://sta.uwi.edu/admissions>

**DEADLINES:** UNDERGRADUATE DEADLINE - 12 July 2019 | POSTGRADUATE DEADLINE - 31 May 2019

8 Faculties | 100s of accredited & internationally recognized undergraduate & postgraduate programmes  
Entry options for CSEC graduates & mature students | Facilities, opportunities & support to help you succeed

#BeUWI     

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

# TO PROSPER, WE MUST EVOLVE

**The story of every institution begins the same.** First there is a need. Perhaps a need to feed the community or to protect it. Perhaps a need to educate the society. From that shared purpose individuals come together, bringing their ideas, the processes available to them and the technology of the time to build the institution. It's as simple as that, from need to collective action to institution. This is how every great institution was born. This is how The University of the West Indies was born.

But there is a special danger for great institutions. In fact, the greater the institution, the greater the danger. The world is always changing. The Caribbean of 70 years ago is not the Caribbean of today. It's not the Caribbean of 50 years ago or 25 years ago. Some would argue it's not even the same Caribbean as five years ago. With the passage of time there has been an explosion of technology, a renaissance of process and a new world of ideas. Even the fundamental needs of Caribbean society have evolved. If we wish to not only survive but be a prosperous institution we have to always ask the question - have we kept pace? Are we evolving alongside the society we were established to serve? And, if the society itself is lagging, are we doing everything we can to propel it forward?

This March the St Augustine Campus held its annual Campus Council meeting, bringing together members of the university's executive management, our own campus administrative team, student representatives and members of civil society. The purpose of the meeting was to ask these very questions. We took account of what has been accomplished in the previous year and we outlined our vision for the new year. Many words were spoken. Presentations were given. Protocols were followed. But underneath it all was the most basic of drives - fulfilling the purpose for which this institution was created.

The theme of this year's Council meeting was "Bold Strokes". Bold strokes are required. And I was very pleased to see in the presentations of our Deputy Principal Professor Indar Ramnarine and faculty heads the way in which they have taken on this spirit of bold action. In every presentation I saw and heard colleagues committed to the evolution of the campus. This is not easy work. As the saying goes "there is comfort in the familiar". But it is necessary work. *(For more information on the Campus Council meeting see our page four story).*

This Campus Council was the first for our new Chair Ms Sharon Christopher. We are truly fortunate to have someone with the dynamism and professional pedigree of Ms Christopher in this vital role. Not only is she committed to the development of Trinidad and Tobago and the region, she is also acutely aware of the importance of our institutions and confident in their ability to grow, change and serve society. In fact, in her previous role on the executive management team of First Citizens she was a major contributor to the bank's evolution and astounding success. Her contribution to the Council will be invaluable.

This means that 2019 will be the first year in over a decade without Mr Ewart Williams in the chairman's seat. Mr Williams, quite simply, is a great citizen of Trinidad and Tobago. He is one of those rare examples of an individual who possesses not only outstanding attributes of intellect, professionalism and presence, but also patriotism, conscientiousness and empathy. When I became Campus Principal he was already Council Chair, and his steadiness, insight and command over the Council meetings provided great reassurance. The foundation for many of the initiatives that are being implemented at UWI



*If we wish to not only survive but be a prosperous institution we have to always ask the question - have we kept pace? Are we evolving alongside the society we were established to serve? And if the society itself is lagging, are we doing everything we can to propel it forward?*

St Augustine today were laid during his tenure and with his guidance and support. Mr Williams will be missed as Council Chair. However he is still a member of our campus community. We thank him for his service.

On March 18, I was happy to sit on a panel with Minister of Trade and Industry the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, UWI Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, President of the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce Ronald Hinds and Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) Professor Densil Williams, PVC of Academic-Industry Partnerships and Planning. The theme of the gathering was consultation between The UWI, the private sector and Government.

This type of partnership, which we have been advocating and working towards at UWI St Augustine for some years now, is crucial for ensuring The UWI's relevance, as well as supporting the development of Caribbean entrepreneurship and innovation. In his address, Sir Hilary pointed to several initiatives being carried out by The UWI at the regional and international levels to create the critical skills required in our people, support governments and the private sector, and establish the enabling environment for innovators and entrepreneurs to thrive.

The gathering benefited enormously as well from the contribution of Mr Hinds, who spoke on behalf of the private sector. His insight on the need for better communication with the business community and understanding the beliefs that motivate them when developing plans (and in the case of Government policies) to reach out to them, was particularly relevant.

We were most encouraged by the strong words of support from Minister Gopee-Scoon for our endeavours. Despite the fiscal challenges they face, Government has shown interest and receptiveness for our initiatives to redefine and expand the University's role in fostering entrepreneurship and innovation. The Minister continued that trend in her remarks.

At St Augustine we have already embarked on the process of deep collaboration with the private sector. Our campus team is led by Professor of Practice Gerry Brooks. Professor Brooks is a private sector powerhouse known for his successes as Chief Operating Officer at the Ansa McAl Group and his current post as Chairman of the National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago (NGC). UWI St Augustine is in consultation with some very significant players in the private sector and we are grateful for their support.

In that very meeting I gave those in attendance a date of October 2019 for the launch of the St Augustine Campus Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem. The ecosystem will be a haven for innovators, spin-off companies and academics and researchers with the critical skills necessary to fulfill the needs of the business sector.

Yes, October is just months away, but our team has been working up to this moment for quite some time. As I said in the beginning, we went back to the fundamental questions - what is the need? What tools do we have or can we acquire? How can this institution best serve the society? And when we answered those questions we took action, bold action. And so UWI St Augustine evolves.

*Brian Copeland*

**PROFESSOR BRIAN COPELAND**

*Campus Principal*

## EDITORIAL TEAM

**CAMPUS PRINCIPAL**  
Professor Brian Copeland

**AG. DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**  
Wynell Gregorio

**AG. EDITOR**  
Joel Henry  
email: joel.henry@sta.uwi.edu

**CONTACT US**  
**The UWI Marketing and Communications Office**  
Tel: (868) 662-2002, exts. 82013 / 83997  
or email: uwitoday@sta.uwi.edu

# The UWI St Augustine sets “bold” agenda at CAMPUS COUNCIL 2019

BY JOEL HENRY

“We have to be full of conviction. We have to make bold strokes going forward.”

These were the words of Professor Brian Copeland, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Campus Principal of The UWI St Augustine. Copeland, speaking at the 2019 Campus Council meeting, laid out his ambitious, transformative agenda for the St Augustine Campus, an agenda with the potential to benefit not only the university, but Caribbean society itself.

At the annual Campus Council meeting held on March 19 at UWI St Augustine under the theme “Bold Strokes”, Copeland reported on the campus’ activities and accomplishments in the 2017-2018 period, focusing heavily on The UWI’s objective of “Revitalising Caribbean Development”. The heart of the strategy, he outlined, is using the campus as an ecosystem for entrepreneurship and innovation that will act as a catalyst for innovation-driven economic development for the region.

“To successfully compete (in the global marketplace) you have to innovate,” Copeland told a gathering that included Education Minister Anthony Garcia, Minister of State in the Ministry of Education Dr Lovell Francis, new Council Chair Ms Sharon Christopher, UWI Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, senior administrators from The UWI, student representatives and members of civil society.

Tying his report to the university’s 2017-2022 Strategic Plan and its “Triple A Strategy” (Access, Alignment, Agility), Copeland highlighted several initiatives geared towards fostering innovation and entrepreneurship at St Augustine. These include:

- The establishment of a spin-off company for asphalt-based coatings based on research originating from the Chemistry Department
- Awarding of a patent for fingerprinting technology coming out of the Faculty of Science and Technology
- A provisional patent for antibiotic resistant drugs developed in the Department of Life Sciences
- FCC certification for the Percussive Harmonic Instrument (PHI), making it the first Caribbean invented electronic product to receive such certification and allowing it to be sold in the US
- The creation of UWI Ventures Limited, a company to commercialise intellectual property
- The finalising of a technology licensing agreement

“We have achieved a lot,” said Copeland about these and other initiatives for the advancement of the campus. “However, you can’t stand still in this world. It moves very quickly. There is a lot more to be done.”

Pointing to grim indicators such as a steady increase in unemployment from 2011 to 2018, low GDP growth, a position of 96 out of 126 countries in the Global Innovation Index, and a placement in the bottom 20 per cent globally for viable new startups, the Campus Principal said, “we are spending foreign exchange to earn TT dollars. That shows our production sector is not where it is supposed to be.”

Framing his strategy within the larger UWI plan as well as Government’s “Vision 2030” and National Innovation Policy, Copeland again called for the creation of a “Caribbean Mittelstand”, a regional version of the successful German model of small and medium-sized firms. The Mittelstand accounts for 30 per cent of German exports and over 60 per cent of the labour force.

Copeland envisioned UWI graduates as the driving force behind a Caribbean Mittelstand: “We want our graduates to be able to go forward and form their own businesses. We want our graduates to lead the charge.”

Vice-Chancellor Beckles, in his remarks during the Council, put the St Augustine Campus’ agenda and



From left: Mr David Moses, St Augustine Campus Registrar; St Augustine Campus Principal and Pro Vice-Chancellor Professor Brian Copeland; Campus Council Chair Ms Sharon Christopher; UWI Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles; St Augustine Deputy Principal Professor Indar Ramnarine. PHOTOS: ANEEL KARIM



achievements in the larger context of The UWI’s overall mission:

“We are aware that all the magnificent research conducted by our professors and academics in all of the faculties must now find its way into the commercial space to generate value of the university and for the communities,” he said.

He added, “the concept we are using is that this research - outstanding, cutting edge - must migrate from the faculties to the factories and must migrate from the institutes on the campuses to all of the industries that constitute the national and regional economy.”

Campus Council 2019 marks the first council with new Chair Sharon Christopher former Deputy Chief Executive

of First Citizens and a major contributor to the growth and success of the bank.

“We wish the new Chair an excellent term of service,” said Sir Hilary.

A special recognition was given to the previous Chair, former Central Bank Governor Ewart Williams, who served 10 years at the head of the Council and as Chair of the Audit Committee prior to that.

“He has given yeoman service as a Caribbean man, not only to Trinidad and Tobago but to the Caribbean and the world,” said David Moses, St Augustine Campus Registrar.

During the Campus Council all seven St Augustine-based faculties gave short video presentations of their activities over the period. The Dean of the Faculty of Sport, Dr Akshai Mansingh, also gave a video presentation about its work and near-term future plans. The faculty is based at The UWI’s Regional Headquarters in Jamaica but serves all campuses.

Deputy Principal Indar Ramnarine gave a detailed presentation about the activities of the Office of the Deputy Principal, which deals primarily with student matters. Among the initiatives coming out of the office were a major community engagement activity through the UWI-Farm Road Collaborative Project, the implementation of a sexual harassment policy for students and staff, the conversion of the north block at Canada Hall to provide more accommodation for female students and new student amenities such as over 760 new computers, four new shuttle buses, and eating and recreational facilities.”

He also revealed “works in progress and planned works” such as policies for students with disabilities and “at-risk” students. The Deputy Principal said the campus was in the process of recruiting a full-time psychiatrist and developing an early warning system to detect at-risk students. Professor Ramnarine said there would be an expansion of the campus Wi-Fi network, a major concern of students.

Every year, the four campuses of The UWI each hold their Campus Council meeting to report on their accomplishments, challenges, metrics and goals for the future.

The Councils are critical for the governance and accountability of the institution to its stakeholders - Caribbean society.

This year the University Council, the governing body of The UWI, will also host its annual meeting at the St Augustine Campus on April 26.

■ You can see the 2017/2018 UWI St Augustine annual report “Bold Strokes” at <https://sta.uwi.edu/annualreport/report.php>

# A novel approach to the elusive GOAL OF DIVERSIFICATION

It's been one of the most persistent challenges facing Caribbean society - how to free our economies from dependence on a few industries and commodities. Diversification has been a priority for policymakers, planners and academics for decades. Yet progress has been remarkably slow. Why? How do we change?

A brand new book written by a diverse group of scholars from UWI St Augustine and edited by Professor Ann Marie Bissessar, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSS), uses a fresh approach to answer these questions and provide policymakers with workable solutions. Instead of examining diversification as a purely economic problem the multidisciplinary team looks at the issue from a range of perspectives - risk and financing, politics, community development, corruption and many others. Its title is *Development, Political, and Economic Difficulties in the Caribbean*.

"We have a lot of things written about diversification - usually from the economic and planning perspective," says Professor Bissessar. "This book is different because it incorporates different academic ideas on diversification."

*Development* was published by Palgrave Macmillan and contains 16 chapters with different areas of focus relating to diversification. Topics include portfolio management, human capital, tourism, sustainable agriculture, austerity, the global recession and parliamentary committees, among others. Apart from Trinidad it looked at Jamaica, Cuba and Martinique.

The articles are written by emerging scholars and graduate students. This was intentional:

"I thought this book was an avenue to hone the skills of the new academics, the young academics," says the FSS Dean. "It is difficult to make a breakthrough in the world of academia. This book gives these young academics the opportunity to publish with a reputable publisher."

On March 21 a book launch for *Development* was held at the FSS Lounge on campus. Senior economist Winston Dookeran, UWI's Professor of Practice for International Diplomacy, said in his remarks at the launch:



Professor Bissessar gives a copy of the book *Development, Political, and Economic Difficulties in the Caribbean* to Campus Librarian of the Alma Jordan Library Frank Soodeen. PHOTO: ANEEL KARIM

"This book is a most welcome contribution and perhaps a preface to a project on Caribbean Convergence. In focusing on the diversification challenge of the region, the ideas lead naturally to capturing new economic space, so essential for making strategic choices on the future of the Caribbean economy..."

Professor Bissessar, who also wrote *Development's* first and final chapters, would like to see the findings and prescriptions in the book utilised by region's governments. Like many others she is deeply concerned about the

condition of Caribbean society and sees diversification as crucial for the region's well-being.

"If we do not diversify we are going down a dangerous path," she says.

She is however hopeful that broad-based solutions that include not only governments and the private sector, but also the citizenry themselves can bring about the change that has remained so elusive for all these years.

(Joel Henry)

**THE ONLY CARIBBEAN UNIVERSITY TO BE RANKED AMONG**

## Best in the World

**Times Higher Education (THE) rankings.**  
The definitive list of the top universities globally

**1** in the Caribbean

**Top 3** % in Latin America and Caribbean\*  
THE WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2018 TOP 40 LATIN AMERICA

**Top 5** % in the world\*\*  
THE WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2019 TOP 600

The prestigious **Times Higher Education (THE)'s World University Rankings** is the only global university performance table to judge research-intensive universities across their core missions of teaching (the learning environment); research (volume, income and reputation); international outlook (staff, students and research); citations (research influence); and industry income (knowledge transfer).

- \* among 1200+ recognised universities in Latin America & Caribbean region.
- \*\* among 25,000+ recognised universities globally.

Visit <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/university-west-indies> | <https://uwi.edu>

## OUR PEOPLE

**“I still say ‘our,’”** remarks Ewart Williams. He means “our” UWI St Augustine.

He is reflecting on his decade as Chair of the Campus Council, two five-year terms. And even though his tenure is complete his instinct is to talk of the campus as “we”, “us” and “our”. It speaks to a connection to the university that goes all the way back to the 1960s. It tells of a commitment to its future, a future for which he helped lay the foundation.

“My role was not as an executive,” he says of his position on the Council. “But for the ten years, anywhere I could have helped, I did. And when I needed to give advice or volunteer suggestions, I gave it my best.”

This is no exaggeration. During his tenure Mr Williams’ activities went far beyond the traditional role of chairman. His support was especially important in the area of funding for The UWI.

“As Campus Council Chair I was a member of the University Audit Committee, which gave me an opportunity to participate in the resolution of the financial challenges being faced by the University,” he says.

Locally he is most well-known for his role as Governor of the Central Bank (from 2002 to 2012). In the world of international economic policy Williams is renowned for his 30-year career with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). He achieved the position of Deputy Director of the Western Hemisphere Department, a massive accomplishment in his field, especially for someone from a small developing country. Last year he received the national award, the Chaconia Medal (Gold), for exemplary service to the nation.

Now retired, he still sits on a few state boards. But other things keep him busy.

“Well I have five grandchildren,” he laughs.

He’s slimmer than in his older photos and his speech is more deliberate, but the laughter is powerful. Tall and jaunty, he has a surprisingly confident and easygoing energy, much more like a sportsman than a technocrat.

“I am a San Juan boy,” he says of himself.

That San Juan youth was there in the early days of The UWI St Augustine. He was a member of the first class of students at the College of Arts and Sciences in 1965, where he studied economics in the Social Sciences Division (and was Student of the Year of the St Augustine Campus in 1967). After graduation he was the first and only member of the economics class to do a master’s degree.

It sounds commonplace today, but the St Augustine of the 1960s was far from what it has become. Back then it was a fledgling institution with a small group of students (800 in 1965). Yet still Williams and students like him had faith in the institution.

“My generation was very excited about going to this new university,” he says.

“I had a strong nationalist sentiment,” he smiles, “which lasted the 30 years I spent in Washington DC and it has got even stronger since.”

A deep love - and gratitude - for Trinidad and Tobago stands out in his words and actions.

He reflects: “This society has given me so much. This society has made me what I am. When I came back to the Central Bank as Governor I really saw it as a way of giving back to society.”

Williams adds, “I am passionate about Trinidad and Tobago. My late mother used to tell people that in my 30 years in Washington I missed 29 Christmases and one Carnival.”

That spirit of gratitude also brought him back to UWI.

Speaking at the UWI St Augustine Campus Council 2019 meeting, Campus Registrar Mr David Moses said:

“(Ewart Williams) has given yeoman service as a Caribbean man, not only to Trinidad and Tobago but to the Caribbean and the world.”

His active service, Mr Moses said, spanned almost 15 years, during which he supported three campus principals – Dr Bhoendradatt Tewarie, Professor Clement Sankat



# UWI to D’ BONE

BY JOEL HENRY



PHOTO: ANEEL KARIM

and now Professor Brian Copeland. Mr Williams became a member of the Campus Planning Committee in 2004 and then he served as Chair of the Audit Committee. In 2009 he became Campus Council Chair.

For the next decade he worked intimately with Professor Sankat and his successor Professor Copeland, as well as with the St Augustine and UWI’s regional administrators.

“When I first came and saw the kind of transformation that was being envisioned for the university I was overwhelmed,” he says. “I asked them, ‘are you sure you can do this?’ Don’t you think it is too crowded an agenda? Looking back I think the process of transformation is being successfully implemented, though perhaps unexpected obstacles have slowed down the pace below what was envisaged.”

Williams speaks highly of both campus principals. He admires the intellect and energy of the Vice-Chancellor of The UWI Professor Sir Hilary Beckles (who expanded an already ambitious programme), and he has a special word of thanks for Chancellor Emeritus, Sir George Alleyne, who gave him the opportunity to serve The UWI.

Of Professor Copeland he says, “he has a passion for the things he does and is prepared to take the time to bring people along. When you do this you can attempt herculean tasks and I think that is where the success is coming from.”

He is particularly happy with UWI’s evolving role in “getting involved in the problems of society, and helping the society workout solutions”.

“Many of the programmes that are being introduced now, like service learning and engagement with the community and private sector, should have been started many years ago” he says.

“Changes in the economic and social environment have made it clear that the university needs to be more actively involved in the transformation of the national economy and in the resolution of the many social problems that we face,” he says.

“I think that’s happening now.”

His optimism about UWI and its role is refreshing. He does however see the challenges the university has to deal with and the improvements it needs to make. Williams points to the danger of UWI continuing to rely disproportionately on the Government of Trinidad and Tobago as its biggest financier.

He also highlights the importance of balancing the need for increasing student enrolment with maintaining the quality of UWI graduates entering the workforce. The former Council Chair spoke as well about staff and ensuring they are compensated properly for their work:

“One of our successes, particularly under Brian Copeland, is the extent to which he has achieved buy-in by the staff. However, you are talking about a staff that hasn’t had a salary increase in the longest while. You are talking about a staff that is under pressure.”

Challenges aside, Williams is optimistic about the trajectory of The UWI and proud of the work it is doing. He also looks back very fondly at his time as Chair.

“I functioned as an advocate, a kind of cheerleader and advisor,” he says of the position. “I enjoyed my time there. At times, it was demanding. The university has more meetings than the Lord allows. But it was a labour of love.”

And for anyone with ambitions for life that could take them to achievements as great as his, what does he advise?

“Take yourself seriously and think big,” he smiles. “Could you imagine a little fellow from San Juan, going to a brand new, small university, turning up at the IMF? When I entered the IMF’s Economist Programme, my class was largely filled with PhDs from the Ivy League schools. But I had confidence. And UWI taught me to analyse economic problems and to think on my feet. You have to work hard and believe in yourself. Be open to learning new things.”

It’s good advice for the individual, good advice for the institution.

■ OUR STUDENTS

# IIR students take top awards at prestigious HARVARD NATIONAL MODEL UN

BY JOEL HENRY

It's been about a month but Tonicia Williams can still vividly recall the moment she saw the words "The University of the West Indies" appear on the massive projector in the hall at the Boston Park Plaza hotel.

"I just remember screaming," says the 24-year-old student from the Institute of International Relations (IIR) at The UWI St Augustine.

And well she should. Tonicia, along with her fellow delegate and IIR student Terriann Baker, had just been announced "Outstanding Delegates" in the intensely competitive 65th session of the Harvard National Model United Nations (HNMUN), besting student delegates from the most recognised universities around the world. They weren't alone.

Two other IIR students, Nestor Garcia and Asabi Rawlins, were awarded the coveted "Diplomatic Commendation" at HNMUN. Students from UWI Mona also received three certificates, meaning the entire UWI delegation (including St Augustine, Mona and Cave Hill) took an incredible five certificates in competition with Ivy League schools such as Harvard, Yale, Oxford and many others. In total, 3000 students from 90 countries took part.

"It's really a phenomenal accomplishment," says Dr Georgina Chami, Coordinator of the Postgraduate Diploma at IIR, Research Fellow and Faculty Advisor for the St Augustine HNMUN.

Founded in 1955, the HNMUN is the "oldest, largest and most prestigious" (the official statement says) model UN. Model UN's are called "simulations" because they allow students to experience the working life of a delegate.

As Asabi says, "While such conferences are 'simulations,' I truly think it benefits your personal and professional growth. It's a confidence builder, expands your appreciation and awareness of complex global issues and strengthens your negotiation skills. Less than two weeks after HNMUN, I went to the actual UN headquarters in New York thanks to my job and I certainly see how MUN prepares you for real world diplomacy."

HNMUN is also a competition with the goal of crafting the "winning" resolution (a type of treaty). Participants can also win certificates for their performance, as was done by the UWI team. HNMUN was held from February 14 to 17 in Boston.

"There is a duality," says Nestor. "It's all about cooperation but it is in a competition setting."

The UWI St Augustine delegates in particular had to overcome the challenge of a small window of time to prepare for the event. Model UN simulations are no small matter and universities make major investments in time and teaching for their students to compete.

"For several universities taking part in model UNs is part of their curriculum," explains Dr Chami. "They take it extremely seriously."

Although UWI Mona has a model UN club and St Augustine created one at the end of 2018, the four delegates - Nestor, Tonicia, Asabi and Terriann - had no such resource to rely on. Instead they had a rigorous, three-month training process to prepare them.

"It was extensive," says Nestor, who, unlike the others had taken part in the HNMUN before.

Tonicia elaborates: "First, you have to submit a position paper which is a country's stance and solutions to your topics, for each subtopic in one page. And so, the research that went into that was intense, because that's the Dais' first introduction to your work and how your country is thinking, and then on top of that we had training. We had no idea what to expect. Giving impromptu speeches was one of the hardest things to learn, especially with no preparation and



From left: Terriann Baker, Asabi Rawlins, Nestor Garcia and Tonicia Williams with their certificates.



Nestor and Asabi with their fellow international delegates. PHOTOS: COURTESY INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

that's why research was so important."

However, the team benefited greatly from the experience of two HNMUN veterans, Akeela Marin and Brandon Rampersad, who both have competed in the model UN several times.

"They are very seasoned," Dr Chami says of them. "They came and did a lot of training with us in the areas we were lacking."

The complete UWI team for HNMUN was assigned the role of the delegation for Kenya. Terriann and Tonicia represented the World Health Organisation and Asabi and Nestor represented the International Organisation for Migration Committee. Within their respective groups both partnerships were competing and cooperating with more than 160 delegates.

Despite the challenges it was an extremely rewarding experience:

"It really taught me to be brave and confident in my ideas," says Terriann. "There were so many great

experiences. There is a different dynamic when you are speaking, a different dynamic when you are writing, and a different dynamic when you are collaborating with your partner."

She was also pleased with how UWI was able to take a position among the top universities on an equal footing and show its excellence.

Tonicia stressed that even though it was a competition they were able to become acquainted with people from all over the world. "It kind of humanises the whole experience, as much as we were there to win and we are very happy that we won those awards."

Dr Chami, who gave a special thanks to the Office of the Vice-Chancellor of The UWI for its support, was most pleased for the students:

"It's a lot of work, a lot of preparation and then they get their moment in the sun," she says, smiling. "You know what these students have been through and you want them to shine."

## SPORT

A nine-year-old girl takes up her position at the white-bordered edge of a green table. She stares intensely at the low net on the short horizon, clutching her table tennis racket in a pen-hold grip. She drops the weightless white ball onto the paddle's pimpled surface and a spirited rally begins.

UWI social sciences student Brittany Joseph is a long way from that little girl who became enamoured of the clackety clack cadence of table tennis. For this UWI sportswoman of the year 2018/19 though, her affection for the sport has only flourished. What began for Joseph as ping-pong is starting to look like the road to Tokyo 2024... the Summer Olympics. Big things have small beginnings. This is thanks, in part, to a commitment by the university to boost the sporting ambitions of students at the institution.

This commitment is echoed in a student athlete policy that lays out an established framework for students to go for sporting gold in national, regional and international competitions.

They're reaching for the stars while keeping their feet on solid academic ground. The university is, however, also walking the talk through a sports scholarship programme geared towards giving student athletes much needed financial assistance to chase their dreams on the court, pitch, field or tennis table.

In 2018, Deputy Principal Professor Indar Ramnarine approached the UWI Development and Endowment Fund (UWIDEF). His goal was to prod them to finance ten sports scholarships at \$5,000 each. With no arm-twisting necessary, the UWIDEF was down with cause. UWI received outstanding support from UWIDEF Chair Nigel Romano and Secretary Kenrick Nobbee. Thus was born their sports scholarship programme. The ten, one-year scholarships were provided to four young women and six young men in areas such as football, cycling, swimming, volleyball, basketball, track and field, cricket and table tennis.

To be sure, the sum of \$5,000 is modest. The underpinning philosophy of the scholarship programme, however, is anything but. For Professor Ramnarine, this investment has positive repercussions for the wider society well beyond a campus boundary. This is sport with a vision to build society.

### When is a sport bigger than the game?

For the Deputy Principal, the recently minted UWI Faculty of Sport (launched in July 2017) and sports scholarship programme are significant firsts for the university. It's an idea rooted in more unassuming objectives – creating a sporting environment that bolsters the physical well-being of students. It fosters a well-rounded academic ecosystem, one that enhances the chrysalis phase of students' lives. Sport as positive influence in human development isn't, in itself, a spanking new concept. As Professor Ramnarine points out, however, there is a grander vision at play here.

“The global sport industry is estimated at approximately \$145 billion and growing. It's an area where an athlete from the smallest island can compete globally and become a giant on the world stage. It is also linked to a number of other industries, namely entertainment, fashion, medicine and tourism.”

What Professor Ramnarine is talking about is the long game. He views sport as a viable industry for T&T, germinating lucrative athletic careers through a fledgling scholarship programme. Pro athletes are going to need specialist coaches, medical practitioners, financial advisers; The UWI Deputy Principal is looking at the entire field of play, not merely one innings.

Ours is a small nation with a need for an alternative model of economics, one in which there are several contributors to economic growth and stability. The potential of sport to become a major player in a national diversification thrust is nothing to sniff at.

The Faculty of Sport at The UWI very much sees itself as a driving force in this regard. It's challenging the institution to lead the charge in research, education and

# Betting on Sport

*A new UWI programme provides scholarships for student athletes*

BY PAOLO KERNAHAN



Brittany Joseph PHOTO: ANEEL KARIM

*“UWI is escaping prevailing perceptions as an institution that only favours erudition. It's proving itself to be more inclusive of all types of individuals in search of higher learning as it celebrates the development of both mind and body.”*



From left to right: Professor Indar Ramnarine, Deputy Principal and Chair, Campus Committee for Undergraduate Studies; Jerry Medford, Board Member, UWI Development and Endowment Fund (UWIDEF) and President, UWI Alumni Association; scholarship awardees; Curtis Mike, Manager, Division of Student Services and Development and Kenrick Nobbee, Secretary, UWIDEF.

### UWI St Augustine Sports Scholarship Recipients

Marcus Boneo  
Akeem Braham  
Malaika Dedier  
Jasmine Deyal

Alexander Evans  
Latoya Garraway  
Emilo Gopaul

Sachin Seecharan  
Mickel Besson  
Brittany Joseph



Sachin Seecharan. PHOTO: ANEEL KARIM



## ■ ADVOCACY

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Women's Rights Rally and March

## Hundreds March for Gender Justice

BY DR ANGELIQUE V NIXON

learning to advance sport as a new engine of economic growth. That's something sorely critical to a traditionally two-stroke economy that's aching for an upgrade. The university is hoping its Faculty of Sport and scholarship programme will attract the researchers, top tier coaches, athletes and medical professionals, as well as investors with an eye for what's around the bend.

Of course, The UWI can't hold a candle to the investments tertiary institutions in others countries are able to manage. As mentioned earlier, big things have small beginnings.

The institution envisions a more robust economy and multi-faceted society. Every vision must start somewhere. These initiatives are that first, tentative step.

### Changing perceptions, building discipline

For Sachin Secharan, cricket was an ever-present influence in his early life. The game was as fundamental as breathing to his family. Additionally, it was never lost on him how his cricketing heroes were able to translate a passion for the game into viable careers. From cricket with a coconut branch on a blustery beach to accolades at Lord's Cricket Ground; if you're going to dream, there's not much point to merely dreaming of a softer pillow.

As a social sciences student, Sachin appreciates that more people are growing to accept sports as a major element of the university experience. UWI is escaping prevailing perceptions as an institution that only favours erudition. It's proving itself to be more inclusive of all types of individuals in search of higher learning as it celebrates the development of both mind and body.

As a scholarship recipient, Secharan has his sights set on the Trinidad and Tobago senior team as well as the Combined Colleges and Campuses (CCC) cricket team. For this up and coming cricketer, \$5,000, though small to some, enabled him to purchase some of his gear and get him in the game.

Sachin also sees the discipline that sport demands as the sort of lifelong programming that will serve him well after his university days are over.

The UWI scholarship programme, while designed to give aspiring athletes a modicum of support, is not meant to compete with the demands of academics. Awardees are expected to hit the books as much as they hit their high scores. Maintaining a GPA of 3.0 or higher while maintaining active participation in their chosen sport is a delicate balancing act awardees must manage. Deputy Principal Ramnarine explains that the Student Athlete Policy is designed to help students attain that crucial balance. Awardees are excused from some classes so they might fit in competition schedules. The policy also embraces alternative forms of teaching, such as tutorials and online outreach to strike a balance between athletics and academics. As The UWI works to create an environment in which both facets of the developmental process can co-exist, it is also focused on the future of the programme.

### Building on a strong sporting foundation

There can be no question that students are keen on the sports scholarship programme. When it was first advertised, there were 23 applicants for the ten available scholarships. The ten eventual awardees met the criteria for qualification without breaking a sweat. For Professor Ramnarine, the lead champion of the initiative, the main hurdle is a scarcity of resources. The UWI remains committed to continuing the scholarship programme through UWIDEF. With 80 per cent of the bursaries offered by the university coming from the public sector, it is hoped that sport can also get favourable consideration. As such, The UWI remains open to sponsorship from the wider community and the private sector to further the big picture objectives of the Faculty of Sport.

For table tennis champ Brittany Joseph, and cricketer Sachin Secharan, today it's Trinidad and Tobago, tomorrow it's the world. But then, you may have read this somewhere before – big things have small beginnings.



In celebration of International Women's Day, commemorated globally on March 8, The UWI's Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS) joined a coalition of organisations to host the third successful Women's Rights Rally and March at the Queen's Park Savannah (Opposite Whitehall) under the theme "Demand Better – March for Gender Justice!" On Saturday, March 9, right after Carnival, all were invited to "Bring Yuh Message and Come".

We built upon the daring coalition speaking out against violence and injustice that began with the "Life in Leggings Solidarity Regional March" in 2017. In 2018, we continued this coalition calling everyone to "Speak Your Truth" for empowerment of women and girls and to be fearless in pushing for progress. In 2019, we demanded better for gender equity and equality, for women's rights, for sexual rights, for human rights, and justice for all. We came out to celebrate women.

The event started with an Information Fair, including counselling services (wholeness and wellness counselling), legal advice, resources from community organisations, and more. Hundreds of people joined, some wearing mas' costumes and bringing messages of gender justice. We marched around the Savannah with empowering music, chants led by Womantra and a tassa band. Organisations and individuals raised their concerns through messages of defiance and empowerment on placards, t-shirts, banners, and flags.

The one hour rally, hosted by Gerelle Forbes, showcased a variety of voices and perspectives through short remarks and performances including T&T Sweet Tassa International; a spoken word poetry group from St Georges College; songs by Georgia McIntyre, Morisha Ransome, and Zachery Montrose; excerpts from the play *Gene Miles* by Cecilia Salazar; and poetry by Arielle John. Remarks were given by Sabrina Mowlah-Baksh (General Manager, Coalition Against Domestic Violence), Her Excellency High Commissioner Carla Hogan-Rufelds (Canadian High Commission), Cassandra Tommy-Dabreo (General Secretary, Amalgamated Workers Union), Jackie Burgess (Coordinator, Network of NGOs for the Advancement of Women), and Dr Gabrielle Hosein (Head of The UWI IGDS).

A number of partners and organisations supported the event, namely the Breastfeeding Association, CAFRA T&T, The Equal Opportunity Commission, Girl Guides Association, Mamatoto Resource and Birth Centre, Midwives Association, Ministry of Social Development, National Centre for Persons with Disabilities, National Union of Government and Federated Workers, Network of Rural Women, Single Mother's Association, Soroptimist International, T&T Unified Teachers' Association, and The UWI Guild of Students, among many others.

The working group included members of CAISO: Sex and Gender Justice, CEDAW Committee of T&T, Fire Circle TT, UWI IGDS, Network of NGOs of TT for the Advancement of Women, Womantra, and Women Working for Social Progress. The IGDS offices acted as a base and secretariat, coordinating the event with key staff members Angelique Nixon, Renuka Anandjit and Kathryn Chan working closely with Dr Hosein and the rest of the IGDS Staff.

The event was made possible with financial support and resources from the Canadian High Commission, British High Commission, Blue Waters, Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action T&T (CAFRA TT), Cocoa in the Sun Marketing, Express, Family Planning Association of T&T (FPATT), First Citizens, Guardian Media, The UWI IGDS, Ministry of Gender and Child Affairs - Office of Prime Minister, UN Women, and Women's Institute for Alternative Development (WINAD).

We want to recognise and offer gratitude to all the partnering organisations and sponsors for showing up and bringing out their groups, families, and friends. We offer thanks to all for raising their voices and joining forces for women's rights and all the intersecting issues related to gender and sexual justice – from workers rights to reproductive justice to disability rights to economic and ecological justice to LGBTI+ rights. We spoke out against injustice and discrimination, against gender based violence, against sexual harassment, against sexism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, racism, and classism. We demonstrated unity and power in coming together to Demand Better and March for Gender Justice. The UWI IGDS looks forward to working again in the coalition for next year's rally and march.

<https://www.facebook.com/IWDTTrinidadandTobago/>

■ ADVOCACY

Imagine that you live peacefully in a self-sufficient, close-knit community whose spiritual and cultural beliefs and practices are at one with the environment. Then imagine strangers arrive from a far off land to claim your land as their own, slaughter your comrades, disrespect your philosophies, ridicule your way of life, dispossess you of your land, and purge you of your inherent human rights of dignity and identity.

This is what the indigenous peoples of Trinidad and Tobago faced when the colonials invaded in 1492 in what their descendants refer to as a “terrorist attack” on the nation’s first peoples.

Today indigenous peoples and their “hard-fought” rights are still being threatened by the advent of extractive industries as well as the longstanding inadequacy of efforts placed on protecting and leveraging their intellectual property (IP) and environmental rights. While their beliefs and customs continue to be mocked and ridiculed by the lesser enlightened in our society.

Speaking at a recent workshop hosted by UWI’s Faculty of Law (FOL) entitled “*Protecting Intellectual Property and the Environmental Rights of Indigenous Peoples of Trinidad and Tobago*”, Santa Rosa First Peoples’ Community Chief Ricardo Hernandez, said indigenous peoples still suffer from high levels of invisibility, and the continuity of historical injustices have greatly challenged their ability to preserve their cultural identity as it relates to language, food, music, spiritually and protection of the environment as a whole.

But help, in the form of education and advocacy, is on the way.

FOL Dean and President and Former Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) OAS, Washington, Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine said, “The story of our indigenous peoples is in truth one of human rights. Sadly however, too often it is about violations of those rights by imperialists of apathetic uncaring states. It involves genocide and cultural loss, but also defiance, resistance and survival”.

“The First Peoples of T&T are still at the stage of reaffirming their cultural identity and patrimony, necessary prerequisites to their full recognition and of deserving entitled legal subjects of a nation that embraces history and corrects wrong,” stated Professor Antoine.

“For indigenous communities, relations to the land are not merely a matter of possession and production but a material and spiritual element which... are premised on community and harmony, and is not about individual greed and possession,” she explained, adding that it was widely believed at an international level that the traditions of the indigenous people is more conducive to sustaining the Earth through broader notions of collective rights and responsibility to the land we share.

She said the main purpose of the workshop was to harness the knowledge of the first peoples of Trinidad and Tobago by providing them with concrete tools of law in relation to Intellectual Property (IP) and Environmental Rights to protect and preserve their contributions, interests and resources. “We see law as an instrument of positive social change centred in its rightful place, the community. We do not see law and legal education as only for lawyers and elitists, rather we want to use law to empower.”

Also speaking at the workshop was Minister of Labour and Small Enterprise Development, Senator the Honourable Jennifer Baptiste Primus, who urged the indigenous people of Trinidad and Tobago not to lose heart.

“The reality is that the current IP system was developed to meet the needs of an industrial society and the protection of IP rights of indigenous peoples are of a much more recent vintage. We are a culturally rich country and I am sure that you would agree with me that we could do more to secure our culture and heritage,” commented the Minister.

Held on February 23 2019 at UWI’s Faculty of Social Sciences (FSS) Conference Lounge, the packed workshop included several members of the First Peoples’ community

# RIGHT TO IDENTITY

*Faculty of Law hosts workshop on First Peoples’ intellectual property and environmental protections*

BY LISA LUANA OWEN



From left, Chief Ricardo Hernandez, Labour Minister Jennifer Baptiste Primus, Professor Belle Antoine and Cristó Adonis. PHOTOS: KEYON MITCHELL, COURTESY OF THE FACULTY OF LAW INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CLINIC.

**“We do not see law and legal education as only for lawyers and elitists, rather we want to use law to empower.”**

*Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, Dean of the Faculty of Law*



Elsy Curihuinca

of all ages. Participants also included those with an interest in intellectual property, indigenous languages, traditional medicine, environmental advocacy, government policy as well as members of the legal fraternity.

First Peoples speakers and presenters included Roger Belix, President of the Partners for First Peoples Development; Cristó Adonis, who presented on traditional medicines and products of the Santa Rosa First Peoples; and Elsy Curihuinca, an attorney at the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of the IACHR.

Presenters from The UWI included Dr Justin Koo (lecturer from FOL), on intellectual property to commercialise First Peoples’ products; Dr Sharon Le Gall (senior lecturer, FOL) on protecting indigenous medicine; John Knechtle (senior lecturer at FOL) on environmental conservation; and Dr Roger Hosein (senior lecturer at FSS) and Rebecca Gookool (researcher at FSS) on supporting microenterprise development for First Peoples.

The workshop was part of a broader work revolving around a two-year donor project funded by the European Development Fund entitled “*Strengthening Trinidad and Tobago’s Human Rights Capacity through Innovative Legal Education Building*”. It involves an innovative legal education concept integrating the Faculty’s new International Human Rights Clinic and corresponding LLB course with NGOs, special interest groups, the State, faculty, staff, students and practicing attorneys within a dynamic programme of advocacy, activism, litigation and research.

The project is being administered by the Ministry of Education and includes persons deprived of liberty, including refugees, persons on remand, indigenous peoples, children’s rights, disability law and gender.

## ■ EDUCATION

**Mem Fox, a famous author of children's books said,** “the fire of literacy is created by the emotional sparks between a child, a book, and the person reading. It isn't achieved by the book alone, nor by the child alone, nor by the adult who is reading aloud – it's the relationship winding between all three, bringing them together in easy harmony.” Indeed, this holds true for children and adults alike.

Really, for many people, experiencing a *read aloud* is a powerful literacy event – hence “World Read Aloud Day”.

Created by LitWorld, a nonprofit organisation committed to encouraging self-empowerment and changes in communities through literacy, World Read Aloud Day is celebrated in 173 countries around the globe. Beginning on February 1, the faculty and students at the School of Education (SOE), St Augustine Campus engaged in different “read alouds” in commemoration of the day.

Reading aloud provides significant benefits to any audience and it is especially beneficial to emergent, developing and struggling readers. The sheer joy of being read to is known to be the experience of audiences ranging from unborn children to professionals with the highest academic qualification.

When a text is read aloud successfully, it serves as a model of fluent reading that also supports visualisation and comprehension. Reading aloud is animated with aspects of prosody such as modulation of pace, pitch and power while matching the expression of the characters and emotions of the text. Readers also pay careful attention to conveying any dialogue so that the individual character traits are identified.

The Read Aloud sessions took place in and around the SOE compound. Several lecturers jumped at the invitation to have their students join. The audience of students, faculty and staff, thoroughly enjoyed the event. Lecturers shared that they learned a great deal from the experience.

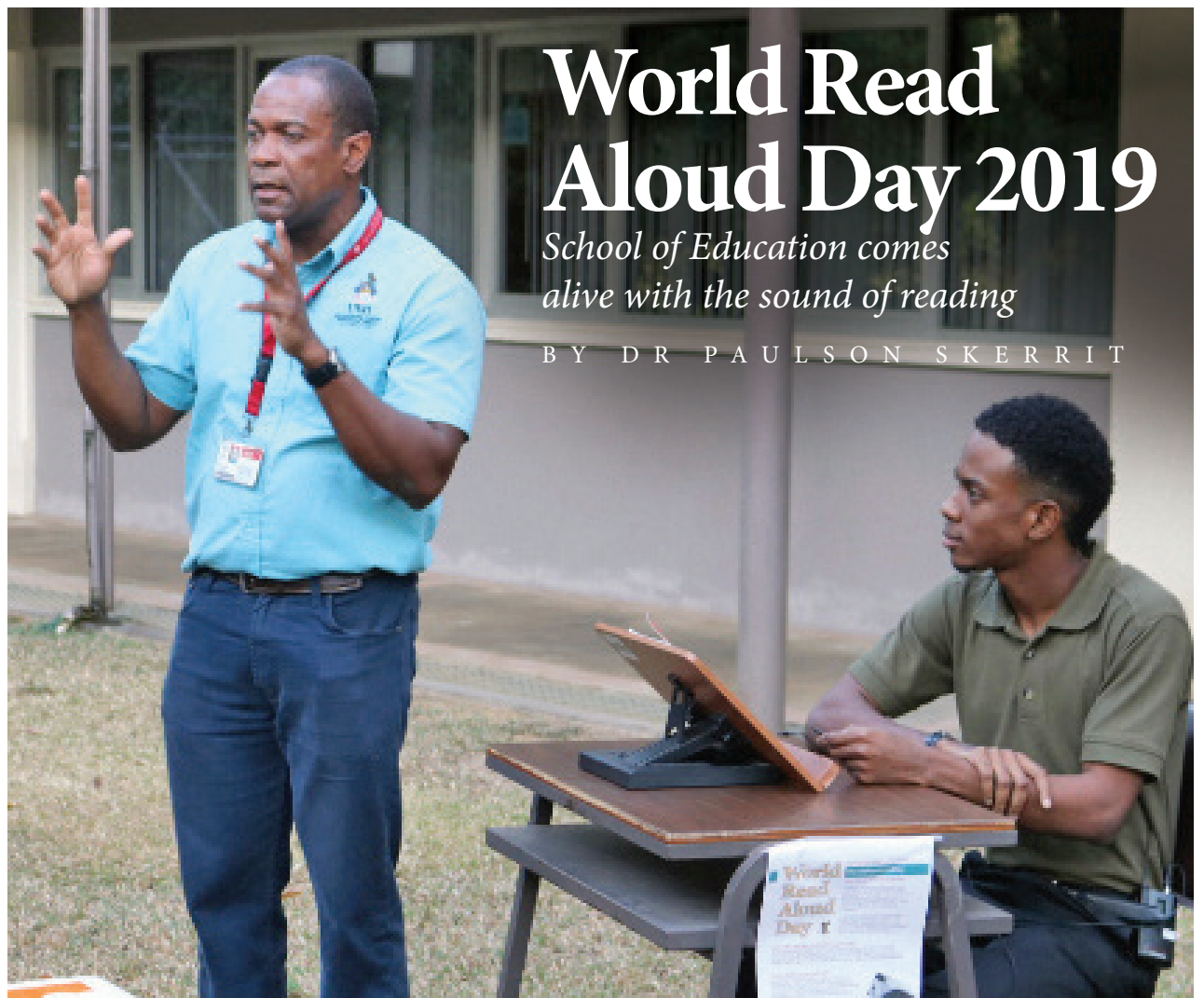
The students of the Developing Literacy Abilities course also held several read alouds using various genres. One student read a piece that she wrote herself. Other lecturers and their students, for example in the Diploma in Education programme, were very creative in selecting various genres and mediums for their read alouds. Ms Murella Sambucharan-Mohammed's foreign language class held read alouds in Spanish, while projecting the English on the board. The reading was accompanied with music.

Lecturers in the Teaching of Mathematics Dr Sharon Jaggernauth, Mrs Nalini Ramsawak and Dr Zhanna Dedovets discussed the read aloud as an instructional strategy in their classes. Lecturer in the Teaching of English Dr Krishna Seunariningsingh's class employed read alouds with a poem to engage students with its key concepts.

During the lunch period, Dr Simone Primus, Librarian at the SOE, and Mrs Petra Pierre-Robertson, Documentalist, also set up a read aloud session in front of the library. Pierre-Robertson read from her book, *Second Chances* that dealt with the abuse of women. The interactive nature of the read aloud stimulated intense discussion among the audience.

Good teachers are relentless in addressing literacy in schools. Read alouds offer teachers a very motivating way to teach many things at once – to arouse interest in reading specific texts; promote wide reading; model fluency (particularly the critical aspect of prosody); provide vicarious experiences for students; and to make connections between narrative and content. All are encouraged to model this very important activity in lectures and tutorials and urge their students to do the same.

The SOE's celebration of World Read Aloud Day certainly achieved its designated purpose in empowering both lecturers and students to engage in motivating read alouds for advancing literacy and teaching in-service teachers literacy strategies.



Dr Skerrit speaks to readers and listener PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

# World Read Aloud Day 2019

*School of Education comes alive with the sound of reading*

BY DR PAULSON SKERRIT



*The sheer joy of being read to is known to be the experience of audiences ranging from unborn children to professionals with the highest academic qualification.*

Mrs Pierre-Robertson reading from her book *Second Chances*.

ARTS-IN-ACTION 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

# Playing their Part

BY GILLIAN MOORE



Performers from Arts-in-Action mesmerise an audience of students from the Dinsley/Trincity Government Primary School at an interactive performance workshop. PHOTO: RAYHAAN JOSEPH

When she first moved to Trinidad and Tobago with her Trini-born husband Dexter, Australian native Dani Lyndersay already had experience under her belt in the field of arts activism. She had worked in Theatre in Education in Nigeria.

Their T&T arrival happened to coincide with the aftermath of the 1990 attempted government overthrow by the Jamaat al Muslimeen. Then-Culture Minister Joan Yuille Williams, noting how many young people had been caught up in looting and other nefarious activities, made a call for youth programmes and plans of intervention. It was from this moment of societal trauma that Arts in Action would eventually emerge.

Founded by Lyndersay in 1994, Arts-in-Action (AiA) has made its reputation as the leading “applied creative arts” company in the Caribbean. In 2019 they are celebrating 25 years of public education and social intervention through the arts.

## CREATIVE INTERVENTION

A Senior Lecturer and former Director of the Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA), Lyndersay recalls those early days before AiA was created. She put together “Youth Crossroads”, a tour of community centres using drama workshops to engage young people and their communities.

“I needed work,” she says, “and I am a very good nag!”

Lyndersay was able to secure donations for fabric, instruments, paint and other materials to get the initiative going. However, following elections and a change in government, the programme fizzled.

Later, working at the DCFA, Lyndersay moved to create a new programme that would use theatre, dance, music, visual arts, storytelling, spoken-word, Carnival Arts, and others to help create social change. Teaming up with then-DCFA Head Rawle Gibbons, Theatre Arts lecturer Ken Joseph and the late

*“Lyndersay explains that the work is not about dispensing solutions, but rather helping clients understand issues and work out their answers for themselves through the process: ‘It has to be interactive. You are responsible for your life. In figuring out how to help effect change, we sing, write, and dance about it.’*



Dani Lyndersay, founder of Arts-in-Action, and Senior Lecturer and former Director of the DCFA, conducts an introductory training session for AiA Creatives 2018. PHOTO: DAVID RAMCHARAN

Brian Honore (of Midnight Robber fame), Lyndersay birthed (AiA).

From humble beginnings based at a desk at the library of the old Creative Arts Centre on Agostini Street, the programme now has its own office at the DCFA at the Gordon Street campus. Posters about their work and several commendatory certificates line the walls, including and EMA Green Leaf Award and, from the university, the Vice-Chancellor’s Award for Excellence.

From this base, AiA seeks to extend the work and mission of the organisation into communities and institutions in T&T and the Caribbean.

The programme is project-based. They work with institutions, primary and secondary schools, communities, private companies and other organisations to find solutions to diverse issues through artistic activities.

Core members include Artistic Director Patrice Briggs; Artistic Programme Manager Brendon Lacaille; and Artistic Networking Officers Camille Quamina and Marvin George, both currently lecturing at the School of Drama at Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (where George is Dean) at The UWI Mona Campus in Jamaica.

Briggs, also a DCFA lecturer and an early recruit of the programme, remains enthusiastic about the mission, which draws from the student population for personnel.

“Arts-in-Action is a space where people who have a passion for finding themselves through the arts, and reaching out to young people, can grow in their artform,” she says.

Like many participants, she got involved with AiA as a UWI student. While doing a double major in English Literature and Theatre in 1998, she joined the team and hasn’t looked back. She says AiA encounters “many students who are not

## ■ ARTS-IN-ACTION 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

necessarily studying the arts,” but through their interaction “the truth of their passion is revealed to them”.

When asked to intervene in a problematic situation, she says, first: “we ask, ‘what is the need?’ We research it. We talk and create an interactive presentation. We speak the truth about the issue at hand.

“People also come to start up their arts business – because it is a business,” she says. Their programmes show practitioners how to turn their passion into sustainable ventures.

It is a lesson AiA learned early. They could not survive relying on external funding: “We have to see about ourselves and stand on our own feet.” The organisation, though sometimes sorely challenged by a lack of financial resource, is fully self-funded.

“We realised when we reached our 13<sup>th</sup> year, people don’t normally last this long doing what we do. But we have found a way. If this is the work you want to do, it is viable.”

Lyndersay stresses that the programmes they create are tailored to the needs of each client and based on research, “so that it resonates”.

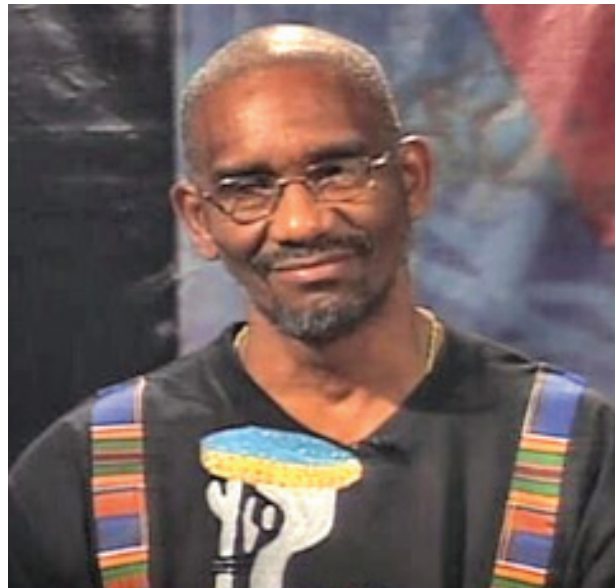
Lyndersay explains that the work is not about dispensing solutions, but rather helping clients understand issues and work out their answers for themselves through the process.

“It has to be interactive. You are responsible for your life. In figuring out how to help effect change, we sing, write, and dance about it.”

Lacaille, who joined around the same time as Briggs, feels it is AiA’s unique Caribbean essence that truly speaks to, engages and empowers communities, as they are able to see themselves.

“Whether it is Carnival characters or Ramleela, the work takes the community into account,” he says.

He feels the power of the arts is under-appreciated: “Theatre does not just play a supporting role in making change. It is the vehicle for transformation.”



Rawle Gibbons, Co-Founder of Arts-in-Action and founding director of DCFA.

Dealing with issues “from the point of view of the community and through their interactive performance workshops,” he says, “people find meaning”.

The workshops challenge the audience to seek positive ways of achieving mindset, attitude and behaviour change.

Unlike “a show where you just look and clap,” Briggs says, AiA’s productions must involve the audience.

And unlike full productions, AiA takes a minimalistic approach to sets and costuming, using cubes, boxes, and symbolic items to represent the reality being examined. “We ask the audience to use their belief,” Lyndersay says.

And through their belief in their mission, it continues to grow, in spite of persistent ongoing areas of need. Their wish-list includes a better-equipped home for their work and a proper theatre hall at the university, instead of the multi-purpose halls which do not have proper backstage areas and other performance-specific requirements.

Lacaille feels the university should take a leading role in helping the public to value DCFA’s work. “If UWI demonstrates how the arts should be treated, people will follow.”

On their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, he says “we want to honour the work that has gone before.”

To celebrate their milestone, AiA has lots in store. From September 20 to 22, they will host a major symposium at the DCFA, entitled “Applied Arts in Action”, examining the educative arts in the region.

They will hold their annual arts-based Discovery Camp for children five to 13, which staged a full production called *Jumbie Birds* last year. They have also been asked to train performers by the National Ramleela Council of Trinidad and Tobago.

Energy company BHP Billiton has commissioned AiA for an anti-bullying project for North-East and South-East schools called “Safe Spaces”. They are also working with the Citizens for Conservation on behalf of “at risk” youth. And they are hosting AiA Creatives, a series of quarterly experimental workshops for DCFA students.

And so the work is ongoing, but so are the challenges – and the inspiration.

“It never stops,” says Lyndersay. “We can’t stand still.”

“That’s the beauty of the arts. It is eternally new.”

**More information on Arts-in-Action is available at [artsinaction.org](http://artsinaction.org)**

*“Arts-in-Action is a space where people who have a passion for finding themselves through the arts, and reaching out to young people, can grow in their art form.”*

*Artistic Director Patrice Briggs*



Brendon Lacaille, Funding and Business Development Officer of AiA, leads a Care and Love for the Environment and Nature (CLEAN) tree planting at the Gandhi Memorial Vedic School in San Juan. PHOTO: RAYHAAN JOSEPH



Children taking part in a theatre production of “Jumbie Bird” for AiA’s Discovery Camp 2018. PHOTO: QUINCY OSBORNE

## HISTORY FEST 2019

Cricket is one of the most iconic parts of our colonial history. Yet despite colonialism's negative connotations, few aspects of West Indian life are as linked with our sense of self, of nationhood and pride.

This topic was discussed at The UWI's Alma Jordan Library on February 14 when the Department of History hosted a panel discussion: "Experiences of Cricket, Colonialism and Nationalism". It was part of "History Fest 2019", a series of events and activities hosted by the department from February 11 to 15 under the theme "Sports, Resistance and Nationalism".

Dr Claudius Fergus, former Head of the History Department, introduced guest speakers Deryck Murray and Philo Wallace, saying the former West Indies players represented the emergence of the spirit of Caribbean nationhood.

Fergus traced the 200-year history of the game in the region, noting that "it was the domain of white elites before the African working class" were allowed to participate. Even so, recognition was slow in coming.

"Cricket represented British culture and authority," he said. "There was always a white captain."

He said CLR James was among those at the forefront of calls for a black player to lead the region. Frank Worrell took on the captaincy in the 1950s.

Murray recalled that during his early moments with the team he had dreamed of joining, a young Worrell admonished: "If you want to be considered equal to the English you will have to be twice as good."

Fergus traced the development of the game in the islands, saying, "Trinidad was critical in breaking the hegemony. Teams like Queen's Park Cricket Club and Stingo Club were pioneers in desegregating sport."

The clubs were also beacons of regional integration, as "many players came from other islands to Trinidad." He said through their play, they developed "a sense of Caribbean identity".

Murray said there was a "real linkage between colonialism and cricket," but noted that we had "adopted and adapted the game to our own style".

He said through playing the game we had "developed our own nationalism and regional pride that drove us to become the best".

He linked the rise of the game and the mixing of athletes from different islands to the push for regional Federation around 1960.

He said West Indies Cricket and the University of the West Indies were the two main institutions that had survived as unifiers in the Caribbean.

He contrasted the "glory days" of the regional game with the recent struggles of the team.

"When we lose, it hurts."

"It appears to be a lack of pride."

Murray lamented the fact that politically we had not yet had the leaders who could bring us together more meaningfully, but said, "one day that will come".

Held annually by the History Department, History Fest celebrates our Caribbean past and contemplates its legacy today through panels, workshops, tours, school competitions and book launches, all open to the public.

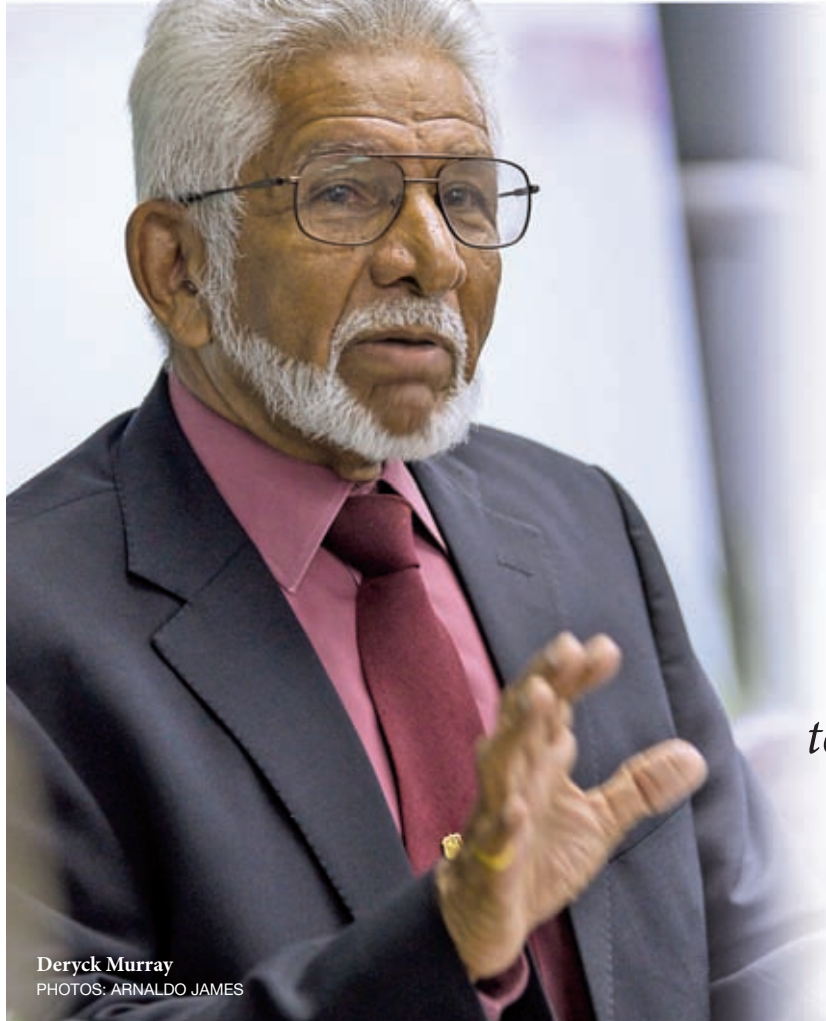
This year's History Fest included a cricket competition between history staff and students, a lecture on the 100-year anniversary of the 1919 protests by Professor Kelvin Singh, a lecture by Professor Brinsley Samaroo on the 150-year anniversary of Mohandas Gandhi's birth, a tour of Queen's Park Cricket Club Museum, and a screening of the cricket film *Fire in Babylon*.

Speaking at the panel discussion, Philo Wallace recalled the immense honour he felt after, growing up in Haynesville, Barbados (and emulating Windies great Desmond Haynes, for whom the town was named), he joined the team.

"It was my dream to represent the great nation of the West Indies," he said.

# WINDIES GREATS: "we made the game our own"

BY GILLIAN MOORE



Deryck Murray  
PHOTOS: ARNALDO JAMES

*"Murray recalled that during his early moments with the team he had dreamed of joining, a young Worrell admonished: 'If you want to be considered equal to the English you will have to be twice as good.'"*



Windies wisdom. Philo Wallace speaks with a student.

He too said Caribbean pride meant the old "colonial masters' were the team to beat: "When we beat England, we beat that entire mindset."

"We have come a long way in breaking the status quo."

Wallace said he was encouraged by the team's recent Wisden victory and hoped the success would continue: "We have talented people. We need to support them."

He alluded to his post-cricket administrative and academic career, saying, "We have to face reality, cricket is not a (long-term) job."

Aiming his words at current and future WI players, he asked, "are you just going to take home your pay packet, or do you want to take a pride?"

He noted that sponsorship had become harder to come by because of poor performances.

"Everybody wants to be part of something good. If the product is not good nobody will want to come on board."

Wallace encouraged young players to "strive to be number one. If you are not number one you are not good enough."

Both Wallace and Murray bemoaned the fact that administrators seemed to be actively discouraging today's young players from seeking advice from their predecessors.

They encouraged this interaction as a vital piece of the WI pride puzzle.

"Come to me now," Murray said, "while I am alive."

# RACE, GENDER *and the* GLASS CEILING FOR SCHOLARS

*New book focuses on the struggles and solidarity of black women in the university system in the Caribbean and US*

BY DIXIE-ANN BELLE

**For women contemplating the sometimes intimidating world of academe,** Dr Talia Esnard has a heartening message. “You are not alone”. Dr Esnard of UWI’s Sociology Unit (Department of Behavioural Sciences) in the Faculty of Social Sciences has spent the last few years researching the experiences of women in the Caribbean and the United States and recently published her findings in a book co-authored by Dr Deirdre Cobb-Roberts of the University of South Florida.

Since its release in August 2018, *Black Women, Academe, and the Tenure Process in the United States and the Caribbean* has had 652 chapter downloads and has been acquired by 99 universities. Dr Esnard is delighted by the response.

The work has been evolving for years, its origins tracing back to the beginning of Dr Esnard’s career. In the field of sociology she found the opportunity to make sense of her existence. She fell in love with “that critical perspective on the social that is so central to who we are as human beings”. She embraced the “springboard to do research, to think of myself, to theorise what is going on in our own context, to make sense of my own existence and to help others who are trying to negotiate that specific context”.

Her research interests were also deeply personal. Her mother is an entrepreneur; whose experiences have also influenced her broader body of work on women, work, and organisations, which extends to examinations of female entrepreneurs and women in higher education.

Dr Esnard’s personal background also serves as inspiration. In her office surrounded by marks of her identity - pictures, flowers, and the St Lucian flag - she reflects on moving to Trinidad and Tobago. “You grow up with taken for granted notions of who you are,” she recalls, “that conversation about the importance of race and racism and the practices around that in (specific) contexts was never something that came on the table”. However, these understandings have been expanded through her own training, research, collaborations, and networks.

In fact, she and Dr Cobb-Roberts began to network with other women who also shared their experiences around working in the academy. The researchers examined three groups: African American women in academia, Caribbean women in the region, and Caribbean-born women working within higher education institutions in the United States. The stories they heard moved the authors to evolve from “just focusing on tenure to looking at how identity is also embedded within the experiences of black women”. Their insights helped them challenge the notion that all black women are the same; even though their experiences across contexts say otherwise.

While the way the women were viewed differed across contexts, these perceptions/stereotypes affected their experiences within the academy. The sometimes volatile race relations in the United States lead to difficulties for those based there. Dr Esnard heard accounts of intensification of open racism and micro-aggression; which were often compounded by stereotypes related to gendered racism.

Black women in the US writing about their experiences of systemic oppression in the university found their research being dismissed. She notes that mechanisms of power seem to be in place to try to silence voices raised in protest. Dr Esnard noted that in the Caribbean, Black women were differently positioned based on the intersection of gender, ethnicity, and colour. Their struggles and experiences within the academy therefore unfolded differently. So too is the case of Caribbean migrants working in the US academy who struggled with the multiple binds of race, gender, nationality, and ethnicity.

*“Through her writings, Dr Esnard is striving to show how these women are not isolated though they are experiencing some degree of marginalisation. She reveals that her work also ‘celebrates spirituality and the response through networks, their support in their communities, their families, (and) the church.’”*

Dr Esnard speaks to the importance of providing a voice to those facing these institutional struggles/challenges in her work. As a result, the book expresses “the depth of the struggle that those women had around their identity and how they experienced those journeys around tenure”. The work also addresses issues related to migration, stratification, identity, and resistance, which are captured through their discussion on the struggles, strength, survival and success of these women.

Through her writings, Dr Esnard is striving to show how these women are not isolated though they are experiencing some degree of marginalisation. She reveals that her work also “celebrates spirituality and the response through networks, their support in their communities, their families, (and) the church”. As she continues building this network, Dr Esnard hopes to foster this sense of community, so female academics can feel supported and strong enough to make their contribution within academe. Even when they are isolated, they can know their “sisters” are behind them.



Dr Talia Esnard  
PHOTO: ANEEL KARIM

# UWI Calendar of Events

## APRIL – AUGUST 2019



**Deepening the Domestic Violence Dialogue**  
**April 11**  
**The UWI St Augustine**

The Faculty of Social Sciences (FSS) presents the “Deepening the Dialogue: Strengthening Domestic Violence Policy and Charting a Way Forward” symposium. The symposium will take place on April 11 from 9am to 3.30pm at the Learning Resource Centre (LRC).

**For more information, visit the Campus Notices and Announcements page at <https://sta.uwi.edu/news/notices/>**

**DCFA launches Season of the Arts**  
**April to May**  
**The UWI St Augustine**

Love music, art and theatre? The Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA) has it all at their Season of the Arts. Check out productions in April:

- Carnival Studies Mas’ Colloquium – April 9
- UWI Arts Guitar Ensemble – April 13
- Theatre Arts Production “Baddesse” – April 12 to 14
- Music of the Diaspora – April 27
- More than Just Jazz – April 26
- Sole to Sole Dance Concert – April 26 and 28

**For more information, please visit DCFA’s Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/UWI.DCFA/> or email [dcfa@sta.uwi.edu](mailto:dcfa@sta.uwi.edu)**



UWI ST. AUGUSTINE CAMPUS

DEPARTMENT OF CREATIVE & FESTIVAL ARTS

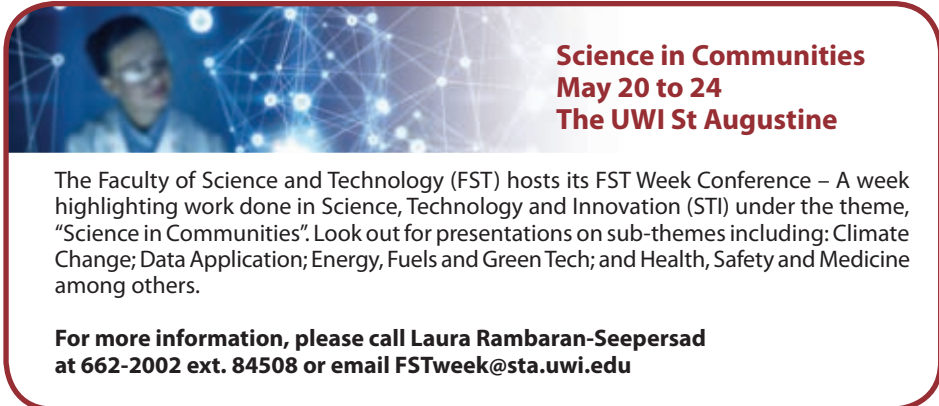
**DCFA**

SEMESTER II 2018/2019

*Season of the Arts*

**UWI TODAY WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU**

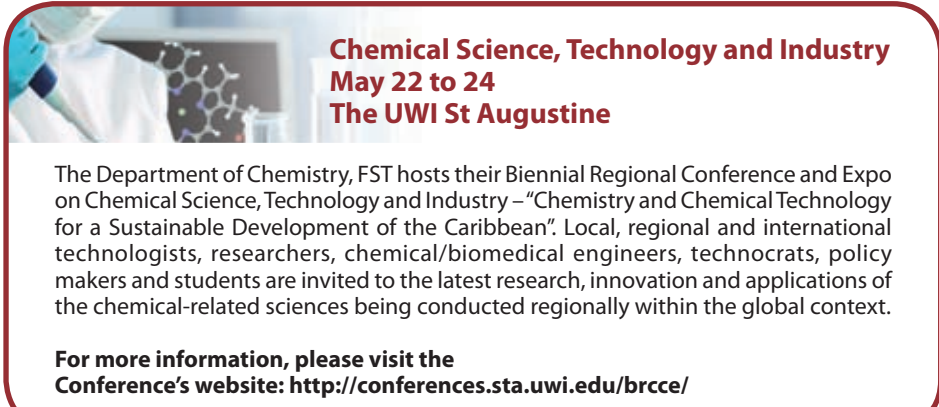
**UWI TODAY** welcomes submissions by staff and students for publication in the paper. Please send your suggestions, comments or articles for consideration to [uwitoday@sta.uwi.edu](mailto:uwitoday@sta.uwi.edu)



**Science in Communities**  
**May 20 to 24**  
**The UWI St Augustine**

The Faculty of Science and Technology (FST) hosts its FST Week Conference – A week highlighting work done in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) under the theme, “Science in Communities”. Look out for presentations on sub-themes including: Climate Change; Data Application; Energy, Fuels and Green Tech; and Health, Safety and Medicine among others.

**For more information, please call Laura Rambaran-Seepersad at 662-2002 ext. 84508 or email [FSTweek@sta.uwi.edu](mailto:FSTweek@sta.uwi.edu)**



**Chemical Science, Technology and Industry**  
**May 22 to 24**  
**The UWI St Augustine**

The Department of Chemistry, FST hosts their Biennial Regional Conference and Expo on Chemical Science, Technology and Industry – “Chemistry and Chemical Technology for a Sustainable Development of the Caribbean”. Local, regional and international technologists, researchers, chemical/biomedical engineers, technocrats, policy makers and students are invited to the latest research, innovation and applications of the chemical-related sciences being conducted regionally within the global context.

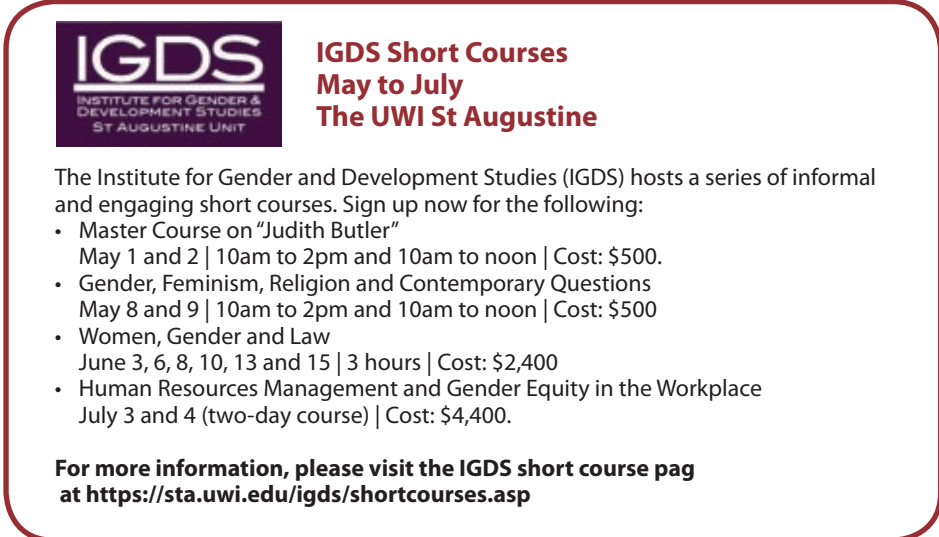
**For more information, please visit the Conference’s website: <http://conferences.sta.uwi.edu/brcce/>**



**Learn to Sign**  
**May 27 to August 12**  
**The UWI St Augustine**

The School of Education’s Continuing Professional Development and Outreach Unit invites you to register for its upcoming Introductory Sign Language Course. The course takes place on Mondays from 5 to 7pm at our campus. The course costs \$1,700 and payment is due on May 3.

**For more information, visit the Campus Notices and Announcements page at <https://sta.uwi.edu/news/notices/>**



**IGDS**  
 INSTITUTE FOR GENDER & DEVELOPMENT STUDIES  
 ST AUGUSTINE UNIT

**IGDS Short Courses**  
**May to July**  
**The UWI St Augustine**

The Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS) hosts a series of informal and engaging short courses. Sign up now for the following:

- Master Course on “Judith Butler”  
 May 1 and 2 | 10am to 2pm and 10am to noon | Cost: \$500.
- Gender, Feminism, Religion and Contemporary Questions  
 May 8 and 9 | 10am to 2pm and 10am to noon | Cost: \$500
- Women, Gender and Law  
 June 3, 6, 8, 10, 13 and 15 | 3 hours | Cost: \$2,400
- Human Resources Management and Gender Equity in the Workplace  
 July 3 and 4 (two-day course) | Cost: \$4,400.

**For more information, please visit the IGDS short course page at <https://sta.uwi.edu/igds/shortcourses.asp>**

