



UWI TODAY

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES • ST. AUGUSTINE CAMPUS

70TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE



Future Farming



Hydroponics, fully automated soil-based grow-boxes soil-less media systems, vertigrow systems, floating raft systems, deep flow techniques – these modern farming techniques are all beautifully displayed at the **Technology Demonstration Park** of the Faculty of Food and Agriculture of The UWI. Built by graduate students of the Faculty, the Technology Demonstration Park is a testimony to the new agriculture that is possible in our region. Located just off Evans Street in Curepe, it is visible from Agostini Street as you go past the northern perimeter of The UWI's St. Augustine Campus. All are welcomed to visit by appointment through the Dean's Office at 662-2002 ext. 82113, or by email: Dean.ffa@sta.uwi.edu. PHOTOS: MARIA NUNES



FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Excellent and Ethical

The UWI, says the “Times Higher Education,” is among the finest universities in the world. It is a celebrated part of that narrow band of elite universities that does not seek to be politically elitist but demographically accessible. All citizens are encouraged to feel a part of the enterprise. The recent surge in the regional and global recognition of its reputation as an institution committed to inspiring people of the Caribbean and beyond, rises from its relentless provision of the evidentiary basis of the claim. And

for ten years UWI TODAY has been a primary vehicle on which critical assessments of output have travelled from Faculty floors through domestic doors in Trinidad and Tobago, the region, and the wider world.

It has been a site where the science of content-sifting has been perfected by brilliant and bold editing. UWI TODAY has achieved an enviable reputation for its high quality. As a forum it is as UWI as the pelican that binds us all as a family in flight. Designed to discover the diversity of discourses within the academy, and to share with society, it has been highly successful as a source of knowledge about the intellectual and academic communities within the region.

Success did not rain from the sky. It represents at once a tribute to the conceptual and technical expertise and leadership of editor, Vaneisa Baksh, especially, and the commitment of colleagues determined to share their creativity. With the turning of every page the reader feels the passion to assure communities that the team cares and represents a reliable and dedicated force for good.

A bridge has been built that spans the spaces between the academe and the citizen. It’s an arc that bends in the direction of a need for greater communication with the communities that The UWI serves. The mantra is meaningful; those who have research access to information, and possess the tools of knowledge creation, must share findings with our funders: the public. The evidence found in each edition is a piece of the process that informs its intention. UWI TODAY, therefore, can best be read as a thousand testimonies told over ten years with pure passion.

Excellence and ethics must be sustained. Only the guidance of corresponding values and virtues in its choices will assure the integrity of its pedagogy and fan the flame to achieve even greater Faculty productivity. Being disruptive and innovative is an internal ideology that speaks to the politics and policy of academic leadership.

The fevers that promote academic fertility do not always warm the hearts of management, but they do provide valuable content for the paper on an ongoing basis. Contention with content has therefore been a good thing. For these and many other related reasons it is my pleasure and honour to celebrate the ten-year journey of UWI TODAY, and to give thanks to the St. Augustine Campus for its empowerment of the regional enterprise that is The UWI.

PROFESSOR SIR HILARY BECKLES

Vice-Chancellor



Take back the Light

For 70 years, The UWI has been the light shining over our Caribbean. We have walked with leaders, with business, and civic society as we forged a way forward through colonialism, independence, economic downturns, and global engagement.

Who would have imagined back in 1948 that the 2019 “Times Higher Education” World University Rankings would place The UWI among the world’s top institutions? Our regional University is among the 1,258 top universities for 2019 – an elite band of the top 5% worldwide, based on data which show that there are over 25,000 recognized universities globally. Of no

small note, is the fact that your UWI is the only Caribbean institution on this world-wide list.

Our faculty, staff, students, graduates and pioneers, along with every consecutive generation, have stayed the course and kept their eyes on the goal: to advance learning, create knowledge and foster innovation for positive transformation. Our graduates dot the global landscape, too numerous to mention, and have made significant differences in the world.

In those seven decades, there has been progress but we acknowledge there should have been more.

Scroll through our archives and the perennial problems still exist – crime, poverty, gender discrimination, and underdevelopment. We can add to that growing list – climate change and increasingly destructive natural disasters, drugs, financial markets, energy crises, terrorism, poor governance, education, demographics, health care, food nutrition and security.

As economic uncertainties continue, we remain committed to creating an innovative and entrepreneurial university and being a vital partner to Caribbean Governments, industry, and the international community so as to secure regional sustainable development. This is not a task for the faint-hearted and this goal – mission! – can only be achieved in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration.

This region’s future depends on the creation of a strong culture of innovation in the economy, in our ecology, and in our society. We must grasp the possibilities within us and use our knowledge and our intellectual potential to build partnerships for creating initiatives and policies that will make our economies more internationally competitive, forge a much more comfortable, nurturing and mature Caribbean society, and protect and preserve our environment for future generations. We must have a firm belief in ourselves and an even firmer belief that, particularly in this technological age, there is absolutely no limit to what we can achieve.

Every year, young, bright graduates enter our places of work in the private and public sector. Our success in the next 70 years will depend in no small way on the success of these young people.

The Caribbean is home to a diversity of cultures and religions that all project light, hope and renewal in the latter half of the year. At this time when Christmas lights surround, enthrall and engage us, The UWI must, now more than ever, take full responsibility for carrying the torch in the ongoing fight against the looming darkness.

PROFESSOR BRIAN COPELAND

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FROM THE EDITOR

A Journey of Discovery

This special issue of UWI TODAY joins the 70th anniversary celebrations of The UWI with a collectible edition that reproduces some of our favourite features over its ten years of publication.

We’ve scoured our archives to make these selections, and it was charmingly difficult to choose from the hundreds of stories that truly tell the story of our University’s diverse range of research and teaching over this past decade. Our pages have been a chronicle of the life of the campus: the work of staff, students, visitors; the events that stimulate mental growth like conferences, seminars, lectures and workshops. It’s all there in the 111 issues that have been produced so far.

We thought it fitting to remind readers of the outstanding work, the support for the arts, sports and community involvement with these reprints. We had a hard time narrowing it down, but you don’t have to settle for this selection; you can find them all online at the website where the full archive is available. All you have to do is pay a visit to <https://sta.uwi.edu/uwitoday/archive.asp> and browse to your heart’s content.

On a personal note, producing this edition was especially gratifying, as it is the last one I will be editing. It has been nearly ten years of continuous fascination for me. I still marvel at how a small place with limited resources can consistently create such wonders, and I fully understand that it is only possible because there are so many exceptional people within our precincts. It has been my privilege to walk among them. As I leave The UWI, I want to thank those who have made it such a memorable journey and to assure readers that UWI TODAY will continue to keep you informed about the life of our Campus.

VANEISA BAKSH



THE UNIVERSITY

Statement by Dr. Arthur Lewis, Vice-Chancellor *Press Conference, April 25, 1962*

The granting of a new Royal Charter converting us from a University College, teaching for degrees, marks the completion of our period of apprenticeship. It recognizes that excellent foundations have been laid over the past fourteen years. The College has achieved a reputation for high academic standards, and can now go forward in confidence on its own.

We must forever be grateful to the University of London for the part it has played in helping to make this reputation. The University of London did more than just set examination papers and mark the results. It helped us to recruit staff and every year sent some of its own Professors to visit us. It also advised over a wider range of problems. The apprentice system is valuable, and we profited greatly by it.

The University of London accommodated us by modifying its syllabuses to suit local requirements. This is more successful in some departments than in others. For example, Physics is the same wherever you study it, so are the Classics, Mathematics or French. Other subjects are difficult to adapt, whether because the subject matter is different or because the purpose of the training is different. Britain is an industrial, urbanized, racially homogenous community, with small closely knit families while the West Indies is agricultural, rural and racially mixed, with a unique family system. No amount of modification could produce a social science syllabus which fitted both Britain and the West Indies. Or if you take Medicine, the London medical degree includes neither Public Health nor Psychiatry, since in Britain both these fields are left to specialists. But in the West Indies we train a doctor who goes out into the country for his first job, and may find himself doing both Public Health work and Psychiatry, so we need these subjects in our medical training. Having the right to devise our own syllabuses will make only marginal difference to some subjects such as Engineering, or Chemistry, but it will be quite significant in the biological and the social sciences.

It will also make quite a difference in the Final Honours year. Honours students are supposed to come up to the frontier of knowledge in some part of their subject; to be familiar with the latest researches, and to see how the subject is advanced. Here the research which the teachers are doing spills over into their teaching. Since different teachers are doing different researches, you cannot regulate this by having a standard syllabus. Each Final Honours teacher must decide what he is going to teach and frame his examinations accordingly. To the students this is the most exciting part of their work, because here they see their subject actually being made. Our new freedom will therefore virtually add a new dimension to the teaching of our Final Honours classes.

The quality of the University will also be upgraded in another way, namely, that we shall now be able to have a large body of postgraduate students. As an external College of London, the University College could register a student for a Master's or a Doctor's degree only if he already had a Bachelor's degree of the University of London. If a graduate of Oxford or Manchester or Harvard presented himself, we couldn't take him. Now, most universities build up their graduate schools by taking students from other universities. You send your own students to another university for postgraduate work, and take in postgraduate students from elsewhere. Today there are more than 4,000 West Indians taking Bachelor's degrees in universities overseas. The sensible place for them to do their postgraduate work is here, where researches of special West Indian relevance are going on. We plan to have two to three hundred graduate students immediately – that is our next big step forward. It will make a big difference to us academically, since the academic core of a good university is its postgraduate teaching and research. And it will also make a big difference to the general life of our students to have a large body of mature postgraduates around. This is much the most important effect of getting a new charter, and much the most important reason we needed to get a new charter as soon as possible.

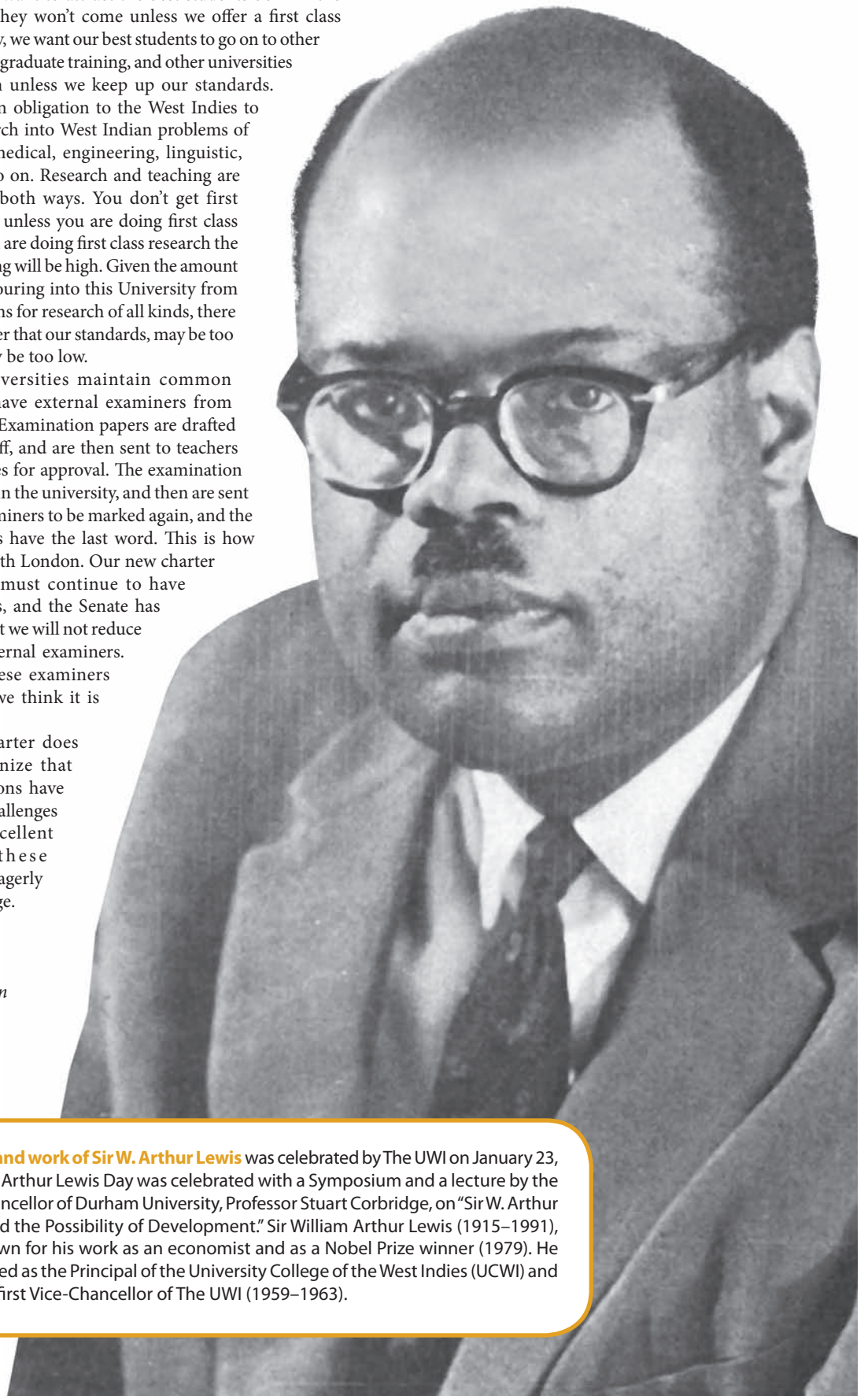
From what I have said you may correctly surmise that the standards of the College are more likely to rise than to fall, as a consequence of our independence. Our intention is to hold them constant, at the level at which they have now been stabilised by the University of London. We have to keep at this level for several reasons. Firstly we want to attract the best students born in the West Indies, and they won't come unless we offer a first class education. Secondly, we want our best students to go on to other universities for postgraduate training, and other universities will not take them unless we keep up our standards. Thirdly, we have an obligation to the West Indies to do first class research into West Indian problems of all kinds, social, medical, engineering, linguistic, agricultural, and so on. Research and teaching are intimately linked both ways. You don't get first class teaching staff unless you are doing first class research, and if you are doing first class research the standards of teaching will be high. Given the amount of money that is pouring into this University from research foundations for research of all kinds, there is much more danger that our standards, may be too high than they may be too low.

The way universities maintain common standards is to have external examiners from other universities. Examination papers are drafted by the teaching staff, and are then sent to teachers in other universities for approval. The examination scripts are marked in the university, and then are sent to the external examiners to be marked again, and the external examiners have the last word. This is how we have worked with London. Our new charter provides that we must continue to have external examiners, and the Senate has already decided that we will not reduce the number of external examiners. The cost of all these examiners is very high, but we think it is money well spent.

Our new Charter does not merely recognize that excellent foundations have been laid; it also challenges us to erect an excellent structure on these foundations. We eagerly accept this challenge.

This was taken from the university publication, "Pelican Annual" of 1962

The life and work of Sir W. Arthur Lewis was celebrated by The UWI on January 23, 2018. Sir Arthur Lewis Day was celebrated with a Symposium and a lecture by the Vice-Chancellor of Durham University, Professor Stuart Corbridge, on "Sir W. Arthur Lewis and the Possibility of Development." Sir William Arthur Lewis (1915–1991), was known for his work as an economist and as a Nobel Prize winner (1979). He also served as the Principal of the University College of the West Indies (UCWI) and was the first Vice-Chancellor of The UWI (1959–1963).



Early Pioneers of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

“Parents don’t understand the importance of being a role model, they think children only pick up best practices.”

BY VANEISA BAKSH

One of the areas appearing to withstand the rigours of a shrinking economic pie is early childhood education. In the recent national budget presentation, the Minister of Finance announced that the 50 Early Childhood Care Centres (ECCE) promised in the last fiscal year would be completed in this new one, and that an additional 50 would be started.

The focus on early childhood education has been so politically marked that one could easily imagine that its foundation stones had been laid only when the first ECCE came to pass a couple years ago.

It goes way back actually, 21 years ago this month, to the pioneering days of 1988, when the School of Education of The UWI opened up its first “learning lab”, formally known as the UWI Laboratory Pre-school, at the current site at St John’s Road in St Augustine.

Back then, the School of Education (SoE) enlisted the help of two Fulbright scholars from the US to design an educational system for the region that recognised that the first seven years in a child’s life were crucial in terms of development.

The current administrative director of what has since been renamed the Family Development and Children’s Research Centre (FDCRC), Dr Carol Logie, was a fundamental part of this daring new initiative in early childhood education and she speaks with a creator’s pride of its evolution.

To explore new ways of learning, new ways of teaching had to emerge. No tertiary level programmes existed regionally, so the SoE busied itself with designing and introducing first the Certificate in Early Childhood Care and Development and then the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.). In 1996, when the B.Ed. was introduced, there were nine students, today, with the degree offering two separate specialties—Primary and ECCE—student enrolment is at 120.

“We’ve been able to tie what we’ve been doing with the growth and development in the region,” said Dr Logie, as she explained how they could expand to the post-graduate level and offer masters and doctoral degrees as well as post graduate diplomas in education.

The FDCRC, as part of the SoE, is more than a school for young children, it is actually a training centre for students of education, many of whom will actually be employed at the State-run ECCE centres. Within an environment carefully designed to appeal to all of the sense, teachers and students interact in a marvellous routine that enables both parties to learn from each other.

The notion of learning communities forms the theoretical foundation of the Centre, based on psychologist Lev Vygotsky’s theory of social interaction’s role in the development of cognition. The Centre encourages everyone—parents, teachers, students, family members—who moves within the orbit of the child to see their relationships as opportunities for two-way learning at every level. Theoretically, people become each other’s students.

Thus, the approach at the Centre emphasises early



PHOTOS: ANEEL KARIM

Dr Carol Logie, FDCRC’s Administrative Director, has served on various boards and organisations related to early childhood education. She has chaired the **National Council for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCECCE)**. She is part of the **Bernard van Leer Foundation**-sponsored Caribbean Support Initiative, and sits on the Executive Board of the **World Forum for ECCE**. She has been an international education consultant to the **United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)** and worked with the **World Bank** to develop the first survey of early childhood provision in Trinidad and Tobago. She is the Head of Department, Early Childhood Education, School of Education, UWI.

empowerment of children to make decisions and take responsibility for decisions and to find socially appropriate ways of interacting with each other.

Dr Logie, who has been working at various levels in the area of early childhood education, has a broad and uniquely detailed knowledge of its complexities and its relationship to national development. In conversation, she connects every strand of thought to development, and it is as clear that she has had to make the case several times as it is that she firmly believes in the link.

People don’t quite see that link, she says, don’t realise that the state of Trinidad and Tobago, which everyone complains about, and the behaviour of the youth which they lament, are connected to their own misbehaviours.

The children are looking at the adults, and we have to look at the state of parenting, the values you carry, she said. “It’s not about whether you’re single or not,” it’s about the values you communicate.

“Parents don’t understand the importance of being a role model, they think children only pick up best practices,” she said. “We can see it on the roads, we can see it in the way they relate to children at home,” we can see it in the poor relationships that children witness.

“We have to stop as a society and examine what we are doing,” she said, citing the use of corporal punishment as one sure way to perpetuate violence. “Children have to understand that they have to find other ways to deal with problems,” she said. “We need our children to understand [what it means to have] a caring, loving, warm environment, and to bring a new learning experience to them.”



70TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

RESEARCH – ISSUE ARCHIVE SEPTEMBER 2009



Children at the Centre



Diane Phillips is the Centre's Supervisor and an integral part of ensuring that things run smoothly on a daily basis.

■ The Centre holds:

A respectful image of all children as competent, capable, and equipped with an enormous potential for development

That children's rights are to be respected

The belief that all adults in the environment are co-researchers and co-constructors in the educational process

The child's role in constructing knowledge through exploration and relationships

The value of observation, documentation, and individual and group processes as important elements of the programme

Its environment as a source of well-being and an educational force that will work in the best interest of every child

The importance of fostering self-expression, learning and communication through the use of a wide range of media

The value of collaboration among stakeholders in the educational system

The importance of the relationship among school, community, family life and values

The reciprocal influences of diversity, ethnicity, and family norms on high-quality early childhood care and education

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

“We live in a fishbowl,” says administrative director, Dr Carol Logie, repeatedly, as she guides a tour of the facilities at the Family Development and Children's Research Centre (FDCRC) on St John's Road in St Augustine.

Although most people refer to it as the UWI Pre-school, it is much more than a school, as its formal name indicates. Founded by The UWI's School of Education in 1988, the FDCRC is practically a learning lab in many ways. While its design and ongoing upgrades are meant to integrate and express a specific philosophic and theoretical approach to early childhood education, it is also an active classroom for trainees in the field.

The physical structure has been recently upgraded, presenting a charming façade that is idyllic to a fault. The serenely cheerful spaces—areas earmarked for every possible activity, all built on the scale that suits 3-5 year-olds—must make parents wish that they could transpose this completely into their households.

The Centre is not, as many people think, exclusively for the children of UWI staff, and although the waiting list is long, Dr Logie says people are welcome to come and have a

look at it to see whether its “distinctive approach” appeals to them. They have an annual open day and a book fair which provide ideal opportunities for exposure.

“Parents have invested heavily in their children,” she says, adding that they see it as a site of investment (instead of a carnival costume) and so they do what it takes to pay for enrolment.

It was just a few days into the new term so the children were all fresh at it, but they seemed very able to adapt to the expectation that they set their own places at the table, washed up after themselves, chose their own activities and took responsibility for their choices.

Even so, amidst all the freedoms and ownerships on offer, it was obvious that it wasn't a free-for-all and the adults were guiding and monitoring them constantly. The children are kept within adult supervision of a 10:1 ratio, and there is a discreet overhead observation deck where students can study the children from behind a glass window without interrupting their activities.

Everything is worth studying in this laboratory of ideas. It's a fishbowl in there.

A SHAKE UP CALL

Consultation delivers an earthquake action plan

The location and geologic setting of Trinidad and Tobago make it susceptible to earthquakes. Most of the previous earthquakes which could have caused significant damage have been centered in a number of zones offshore.

Increased vulnerability and our understanding of the seismo-tectonics of the south-eastern Caribbean indicate that the earthquake threat is very significant within the 21st century. (The UWI recently collaborated with the European Centre for Training and Research in Earthquake Engineering (EUCENTRE) to produce new seismic hazard maps for the Eastern Caribbean.)

As the country increases its building stock, population and infrastructure will become exposed to the seismic risk. Implementing mitigation measures and reducing vulnerability are the most effective mechanisms to reduce the potentially devastating impact of future strong and major earthquakes. Measures such as the application of building codes and land use policies are most effective when applied at the planning and design stages of projects. In order to reduce the potential impact of the next large magnitude earthquake that could affect Trinidad and Tobago a comprehensive strategy needs to be determined.

The UWI Seismic Research Centre and the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM) held a two-day national consultation, “Earthquake Safety in Trinidad and Tobago – A call for action!” in early July to identify measures to improve earthquake safety.

Out of just over a dozen presentations on related themes—some identifying vulnerable areas as south-west of Tobago, Toco and Chaguaramas, and that the Central Plain Fault may be locked and could experience a significant magnitude earthquake—discussions identified several deficiencies in the country’s state of preparedness and proposed ways to address them.

DEFICIENCIES IDENTIFIED

At the organisational and administrative level, flaws were found in the design approval process regarding construction of buildings, as well as in the regulation and monitoring of construction.

Since builders and contractors are not licensed, no mechanisms exist to ascertain their competencies or knowledge in earthquake risk reduction techniques.

The registration process for engineers needs improvement.

Data collection on risk assessment and management is inconsistent. No database on building structures exists.

National disaster legislation does not exist, and there is no active public education programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussions took place at regular intervals between presentations and at the end, several recommendations were made by participants and a way forward proposed. The following outlines those proposals.

A National Earthquake Stakeholder Organization (NESO) should be set up with a Steering Committee to take the work forward. The NESO should be a public-private partnership to which any individual or organisation can belong.

The Government should be apprised of recommendations made with respect to Earthquake Risk Reduction.

A series of workshops/meetings will undertake to establish work groups and define a work programme, designate an operational base, and develop a business plan.



Dr. Richard Robertson, Director Seismic Research Centre

Specific actions identified by Consultation participants:

A. SHORT-TERM (1-2 YEARS)

Publish a National Building Code and enact legislation to govern its use

Make the Small Building Code freely available to all builders (one presenter, Richard Clarke, provided a link for builders that he called a free, how-to-manual at <http://ideascaribbean.com/hurri/>)

Organise earthquake risk reduction training for engineers, disaster management professions, building inspectors and builders.

Assess the state of critical facilities with respect to susceptibility to earthquake and determine the needs for retrofitting.

Undertake economic impact analysis of earthquake risk reduction and analyze the financial requirements for preventative action.

Analyze the organisational capacity of regulatory and monitoring agencies to undertake the tasks required.

Develop risk management financial solutions for property owners (driven by the insurance sector).

Employ engineers with experience in Earthquake Resistant Design in the Regional Corporations and City Councils.

Establish clear guidelines for the construction of buildings in Trinidad and Tobago.

B. MEDIUM-TERM (3-5 YEARS)

Draft and enact national disaster legislation.

Access the quality of all building stock and determine the needs and costs for retrofitting.

Undertake comprehensive rehabilitation of critical facilities and infrastructure and implement other required solutions for total national resilience to optimal levels.

Undertake public awareness programmes designed to obtain a mindset/culture change with respect to natural hazard mitigation.

Establish a budget for preventative action.

Undertake scientific quantitative regional loss estimation.

Review the existing system for the registration of Engineers (including Structural Engineers).

Review and improve the approval process for building design and construction.

Establish a mechanism for the licensing of Contractors.
Instrument the Central Plain Fault.

Promote and undertake engineering research on unique forms of local construction.

Establish clear procedures for the registration of foreign engineers working in Trinidad and Tobago.

Arrange for ongoing training and professional development of staff of the regulatory approval agencies.



From left, Mr. Lloyd Lynch, Instrumentation Engineer SRC, and Dr. Myron Chin Former Director of NEMA (now OD PM) and Former lecturer Dept of Civil Engineering UWI, at the national consultation.



THE ONLY CARIBBEAN UNIVERSITY TO BE RANKED AMONG

Best in the World

The University of the West Indies (The UWI) made its debut in the prestigious
Times Higher Education (THE) rankings.

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

Regarded as the definitive list of the top universities, 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.

For more on The UWI's performance, see
[https://www.timeshighereducation.com/
world-university-rankings/university-west-indies](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/university-west-indies)

■ BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH – ISSUE ARCHIVE AUGUST 2010



PRESERVING NATURE'S BOUNTY

The University of the West Indies is taking the reins in the global movement to preserve our environment by establishing and funding environmentally focused programmes and research to help educate our society on the bounty of natural resources at our doorstep. Serah Acham speaks with three UWI students who have turned their postgraduate research projects into a bid to preserve the wildlife of our twin-island nation.

Kerrie Naranjit

Tell us about your project.

My project assesses the phenology of the Trinidad Piping Guan (Pawi). Phenology is the study of plant and animal life cycle events and how these are influenced by seasonal variations. The Pawi is a large forest bird endemic to Trinidad (found only here) and it's critically endangered, with less than 200 left in the world. They've become endangered because of hunting and habitat loss. It's illegal to hunt them, but it has been going on.

My project is basically looking at the ecology of the bird so that we can learn more about it to develop better management plans for the species.

Although there've been other projects on it before, they're usually short-term, so this is pretty much the longest project on a single population of birds. I've done more than two years' field work at Grande Riviere and Morne Bleu. Those are two sites where they're regularly seen.

My fieldwork included field studies where I would go out there every morning – they're most active in the morning, so I did most of my observations from sunrise, about half-five, to about nine o'clock. If I did see them, I'd observe their activities – whether they're feeding or preening or anything like that – what they're feeding on, where they are in the area, if there are any preferences for parts of the habitat, how they interact with each other, how they interact with other species and stuff like that. What I'm doing right now is analyzing that data so that if we get a better idea of what their behavior is like and of their habitat use, we can put good management strategies in place for them, because it's really important right now to increase their population.

Why did you choose this topic?

When I was looking for my M Phil project, the EMA (Environmental Management Authority) decided to fund several Environmentally Sensitive Species projects, so there was funding available for it. I also did my undergrad project on the Pawi in Grande Riviere and enjoyed it. So it seemed a logical choice. I was financially supported by the World Pheasant Association and the Pawi Study Group, which is a local group that deals with conservation of this one species.

How has your personal experience been working on this project?

Well I've always been a field person, so it was the ideal project for me in some senses. But there are always the difficulties of having to get up early in the morning, climb a hill before sunrise in whatever weather, with insects around, when you may or may not see what you're looking for. I have been exposed to a lot of things that a lot of people don't get to see, just from working out there, a lot of birds and other animals that are in the forest, and working with community members who are trying to make the most of the situation. The same people who might have hunted them in the past, are actually trying to build up eco-tourism.

I lived in Grande Riviere, a rural village on the North coast of Trinidad, for most of the project. I came home every other week. I lived in an interesting house. My bedroom was part of the living room and we had chickens living inside and stuff like that. But it was a very, very safe place to live. The villagers are very friendly, so I felt comfortable.

The difficulty is when you're actually all by yourself and you have to go up there and sit down and look and wait.

You learn to be patient. You find ways to occupy your time. Sometimes you don't see them (the Pawi) at all for days.

I came across snakes and other forest creatures. I actually came across a Mapepire (a poisonous snake) practically on my shoe because I walked into it without noticing and luckily just happened to stop. I was looking for something, or listening for a sound, and then I looked down and the Mapepire was right on the edge of my shoe, so I just stepped back. It was a small one, but you do get bigger snakes as well. I never got close to bigger ones really ... well that I knew of.

What did you like most about working on your project?

Being outside. I learnt a lot about my birds. I enjoyed that a lot. I did a lot of photography up there. I actually do photography now – that kinda grew out of being out there. I was always interested in photography, but I didn't really start anything professionally until I got up there. I also got a lot of practice and experience with the project itself. You have to take pictures of every Pawi that you see pretty much.

I think the experience also increased my sense of responsibility for conservation and environmental issues. Working with a rare and endangered species is unique and rewarding. The people I worked with, both in the field and out, have helped build me into who I am proud to be today and I hope to continue working with them to rescue this valuable species, and to encourage personal involvement in conservation and environmental issues in as many people as possible.

70TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

RESEARCH – ISSUE ARCHIVE AUGUST 2010

Michelle Cazabon-Mannette

Tell us about your project.

I've been studying two species of sea turtles that we have locally – Greens and Hawksbills. They live close to shore, feeding on the reefs and sea grass bed habitats that we have around Tobago. I've been doing my Master's research studying their distribution on reefs around the island, as well as their abundance, so how many of them there are in one location compared to another. I've also been collecting some samples to study their genetics – comparing them with nesting populations and other foraging aggregations around the Caribbean. I've also been looking at their value to the economy through fishing, because fishermen still capture turtles for sale for their meat, and I've been comparing that with their value to scuba divers because scuba diving is a growing industry in Tobago and turtles are a very popular thing to see to a diver.

Why did you choose this topic?

I wanted to continue with research after doing my undergraduate research project – I really enjoyed that. I was hoping to find something marine oriented and maybe

I could tie in scuba diving. I also wanted something that I thought would be important for Trinidad and Tobago, especially conservation oriented, and I know that sea turtles have hardly been studied locally, besides nesting beaches. A lot of work gets done on leatherbacks on the nesting beaches here but those are turtles that come here every three years, nest and leave – each after only spending a couple of months in our waters. The green and hawksbill turtles we have are here year round, living around both islands and they're subject to the local fishery.

How has your personal experience been working on this project?

For about a year and a half I was living in Tobago and just coming back to Trinidad for short breaks in between. I love to scuba dive and that was a big part of my method. In order to estimate the distribution and abundance of the animals, I would scuba dive at locations scattered around the island with the help of local dive shops and I was able to log over 200 dives doing that and it's something I love.

I loved being in the water, being able to observe turtles as well as other animals and interact with them. I also got to meet a lot of great people in Tobago. The local dive masters who work at the dive shops helped me out a lot. I was also able to help educate them about turtles and they like to learn about it so that they can teach their customers. I was also able to talk with a lot of visiting scuba divers. We get a lot of

divers, both from America and Europe, so I would interact with them, interview them for my survey.

What did you like most about working on your project?

Scuba diving and being able to handle the turtles. In order to get the tissue samples for the genetic study, I would have to capture them. I was also tagging them so I could see, if I recaptured them, if they had changed location. That gave the divers who were on the boat chance to interact and learn more about the turtles as well. I tagged over 50 turtles – mostly medium-sized to small ones, but a few adult-sized ones that were quite big and required help to get on the boat.

I'm glad I was able to be involved in this – it's the first time that we've done any studies of these turtles. I think it's very important work that needed to be done because turtles are a shared resource really. They don't live here all the time. They move hundreds, thousands of kilometres across the Caribbean Basin. So having an open fishery here for example, we're not just affecting our stocks of turtles. We're depleting stocks of turtles from other locations where they might be trying to protect them. It makes no sense for each country to be managing the turtles differently. We need to have a regional management programme, otherwise the work at one location is not going to do much. We have to protect them everywhere that they're found.

Lee Ann Beddoe

Tell us about your project.

Overall, what we're doing is looking at a methodology for restoring coral reefs, because they're degrading due to anthropogenic (man-made) and natural causes. We're trying to find the fastest method for reversing this deterioration, and what we're using is electrolytic mineral accretion using low Direct Current (DC), to enhance the growth of the corals.

Our experimental site was based in a man-made bay in Tobago – Coconut Bay. We were using electricity from a dive shop and it was converting the household electricity (AC) to DC before charging the corals. This incorporated physics so the Physics Electronics Workshop helped us with that configuration. And using cables, we ran the electricity to the experimental site.

We needed a species of coral that was fast growing, but not endangered, so we used fire coral, also called *Millepora alcicornis*. We ran electricity to 40 individual pieces and had 40 pieces which acted as the control and received no electricity. We compared the growth changes every two weeks for 1 year.

We then used a Scanning Electron Microscope and X-Ray Diffractometer, through the Physics Department. So we had photos showing the skeletal structure of the coral that received electricity vs. the control, as well as the chemical analysis. At the end of the experiment we crushed different aspects of the coral to determine the composition, and we found that it was very similar to the natural growing coral. That's good because Buccoo Reef is a major tourist attraction and everybody depends upon reefs for the goods and services they offer, like fishing, scuba diving and tourism. That's good in terms of having a regional impact as well.

Why did you choose this topic?

I wanted to do a research project that wasn't just going to collect baseline data and sit on a shelf. I wanted to do something applicable to protecting the environment. So Prof Agard [John Agard, Head of The UWI Department of Life Sciences] suggested exploring the idea of mineral accretion.



Lee Ann Beddoe

What I liked about the project was that it pulled from different disciplines, even chemistry.

How has your personal experience been working on this project?

When I started the project I thought "ok, I'm going to do research that would help the environment." I didn't take into consideration the social aspect, but being in Tobago I have learnt about it. Tobagonians take a lot of pride in their environment and conserving it – they depend on their natural resources for tourism etc. They're very, very cooperative when it comes to doing research that could help preserve their resources, so I learnt about the people who actually use these resources and how much they depend upon them to feed their families. It inspired me to further my research in the Marine field, but more so Environmental Biology.

There's also the educational aspect because I got to teach people about different things and why we need to do this. Tourists especially were very interested and they were pleased that people were doing research like this.

I was a demonstrator and teaching assistant for a Marine Ecology course in the department and I asked students from that class to come and help me with my project. They learnt the technique of buoyant weighing and measuring corals, how to handle certain coral species with care and some of them actually learnt to scuba dive. I also advanced my scuba diving and learnt about coral species. I learnt new things from Physics. It was an exchange of knowledge.

I went to the Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences to do some training – a Coral Reef Ecology course for three weeks. I got a partial scholarship and UWI provided the rest of the funds to travel, and it was fantastic. I met other students doing research in the marine environment and networked with other marine scientists.

It sounds like fun.

Oh definitely! I have pictures of creatures that are on my research. A sea horse came and he actually started living on it (the experimental site), so it was good for the dive shop because when they teach their beginner divers, they take them on the experiment site and they would see the sea horse. We call him Sea Biscuit. We also had squid, starfish, several species of reef fish and a moray eel that would come to visit from time to time.

The Mature Lady and the 12-year-old Boy

BY PROFESSOR BRIDGET BRERETON

Professor Bridget Brereton's book, **From Imperial College to University of the West Indies: A History of the St Augustine Campus, Trinidad & Tobago**, will be launched as part of the celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of St Augustine on October 12, 2010

On October 12, 1960, an impressive ceremony took place at the brand new Queen's Hall in Port of Spain: the handing over of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture (ICTA) to the University College of the West Indies (UCWI.) Present were a veritable Who's Who of the day: the Governor-General and Prime Minister of the West Indies Federation; the Governor and Premier of Trinidad & Tobago; ministers of both the Federal and the local governments; and, of course, the top officials of UCWI and ICTA.

The speech of the day was by Arthur Lewis, Principal of UCWI, the future first Vice-Chancellor of UWI (1962) and Nobel Prize winner. He described the 'marriage' being celebrated as one between a mature lady of forty and a twelve-year-old boy, and advised that the boy must be

willing to learn and the lady to be tolerant. This was the union which made St Augustine the second campus of the regional University and launched fifty years of steady growth in tertiary education at this site.

The Imperial College had opened its doors to students in 1922. In its 38 years of operation, it never offered degrees; instead, students (mainly West Indian school-leavers) studied for a Diploma which was roughly equivalent to an undergraduate degree, while others (mostly British) obtained postgraduate qualifications. Its main purpose was to prepare British men for posts in the empire's agricultural services, and to do research on the cultivation and processing of tropical crops; training young West Indians in agriculture was secondary. By the 1950s ICTA's student body

was very international, with West Indians outnumbered by postgraduates from Britain and from virtually every colony in the tropical empire.

ICTA's weaknesses were that it never offered degrees, its student body was always small, its links to the country and the region in which it was located were weak, and it was a distinctly colonial institution at a time when colonialism was on its way out. Its strength lay in its international reputation for high-level research and its impressive group of research scientists at St Augustine.

This formed the core of the first Faculty at the new UCWI campus, the Faculty of Agriculture (1960), followed in 1961 by the Faculty of Engineering. Under the leadership of Philip Sherlock and Dudley Huggins in the 1960s, the fledgling campus was transformed as part of the regional University, which gained its 'independence' as UWI in 1962. In 1963, undergraduate teaching in the arts, social sciences and natural sciences began under the umbrella of a 'College of Arts and Sciences'. From a total student body of 67 in 1960, all in the Faculty of Agriculture, the campus had 1270 students in 1969, studying many different subjects and courses.

During the 1960s, St Augustine was still dominated by the buildings and facilities inherited from ICTA: the Administration Building, the Frank Stockdale Building, and many other structures located in the northern half of the campus. But new structures soon appeared, starting with the first Engineering Block (1962-63) and Canada Hall (1964), the second student residence (Milner has been opened in 1927-28 as ICTA's student hostel). Trinity Hall, for women, was opened in 1972. Much of the new building in the 1960s was located in the southern half of the campus—the area used as the College Farm in the days of ICTA—and the impressive, if hardly beautiful, structures of the JFK Complex were erected here. By 1968-69 the Complex was occupied, providing much-needed space for teaching in the arts, social sciences and natural sciences, along with a lecture theatre, an auditorium, a cafeteria and student amenities, and—above all—a new Library. From its desperately cramped quarters in the Administration Building, the Main Library, under the inspirational leadership of Alma Jordan, moved to its present location in 1969. It was to undergo two major extensions in the 1980s and 1990s. In the northern area where most of ICTA's facilities had been taken over



After a visit to the Campus in April 1958, this photo appeared in the Trinidad Guardian with the following caption: HRH Princess Margaret receives a bouquet from Patricia Khelawan. Standing in the background are student representatives from each of the West Indian territories participating in the ICTA.

70TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

■ HISTORY – ISSUE ARCHIVE SEPTEMBER 2010



Bridget Brereton, Professor of History at the History Department, UWI, St. Augustine.

“ICTA’s weaknesses were that it never offered degrees, its student body was always small, its links to the country and the region in which it was located were weak, and it was a distinctly colonial institution at a time when colonialism was on its way out. Its strength lay in its international reputation for highlevel research and its impressive group of research scientists at St Augustine.”

presided over by Lloyd Braithwaite, Principal 1969-84. The College of Arts and Sciences was disbanded and replaced with Faculties of Arts & General Studies, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Education, replicating the structure at Mona, and joining the original Faculties of Agriculture and Engineering. The oil boom (1973-81), coupled with the determination of Prime Minister Eric Williams to create a petrochemicals and heavy industry sector in Trinidad, made possible a spectacular expansion of the Faculty of Engineering, funded by the national government, in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This was the ‘Empire of Engineering’, much envied by less fortunate sections of the campus. The oil boom also funded the huge Mount Hope Medical Complex, and drove the government’s decision to set up a new Faculty of Medical Sciences in Trinidad which would teach dentistry and veterinary science as well as medicine. This was a painful and difficult process; but at last (long after the end of the boom), in 1989, the new Faculty based at Mount Hope opened its doors to students.

Just like the nation itself, St Augustine has suffered from recurrent periods of ‘boom and bust’. After the heady years of the oil boom, from which the campus benefitted tremendously, a period of hard times set in from the mid-1980s, which lasted more or less a decade. It fell to Principal G.M. Richards (1985-96) to bring the campus through these difficulties. Many new developments had to be put on hold, but the growth in student numbers, and in programme and course offerings, never stopped. By the mid-1990s, the financial situation had improved, and a new era of building and general expansion began, funded in part by massive loans from the IDB, as well as subventions and capital grants from the national government. Important new structures went up in this period of renewed expansion, presided over by Principals Compton Bourne (1996-2001) and Bhoendradatt Tewarie (2001-07), such as the Learning Resource Centre, the Student Activity Centre, the Sport and Physical Education Centre (SPEC), the extensions to the Natural Sciences and Chemistry blocks, the Centre for Language Learning, the Joyce Gibson Innis Hall at Mount Hope, and others. Student numbers increased steadily, and dramatically from about 2001, when the national government first pledged to pay half of all tuition fees for undergraduates, then (2004) a hundred per cent (GATE).

Many new programmes, undergraduate and postgraduate, were introduced in this period and some departments or programmes were seriously stretched to accommodate the rapidly rising enrolments. Some developments were not universally welcomed, such as the move to the two-semester system, carried out in the early 1990s; and the decision in 1996 to merge the Faculties of Arts and Education to create the Faculty of Humanities & Education, and the Faculties of Agriculture and Natural Sciences to create what was eventually named the Faculty of Science & Agriculture. This last merger, eliminating the

by the Faculty of Agriculture, the new Dudley Huggins Building (1969) provided more space for that Faculty.

In universities all over the world, the late 1960s witnessed considerable political activism by students, and St Augustine was no exception. Indeed, it can be said that between 1968 and 1970, the campus was more at the centre of national events, and more intensely present in the public’s consciousness, than ever before or since. The Rodney Affair, the local repercussions from the Sir George William University events in Montreal, the swiftly developing Black Power Movement, largely led by St Augustine students or

recent graduates, the formation of NJAC—all placed the campus at the centre of events. Student leaders like Geddes Granger (Makandal Daaga), Dave D’Arbeau (Khafra Kambon) and others became household names.

Several members of the academic staff were prominent in the movement and two were detained during the State of Emergency (1970), along with several students or recent graduates. All in all, 1970 was a tense time for the campus, whatever people’s individual opinions about Black Power.

Political activism on campus waned in the 1970s, and the campus entered another period of expansion,



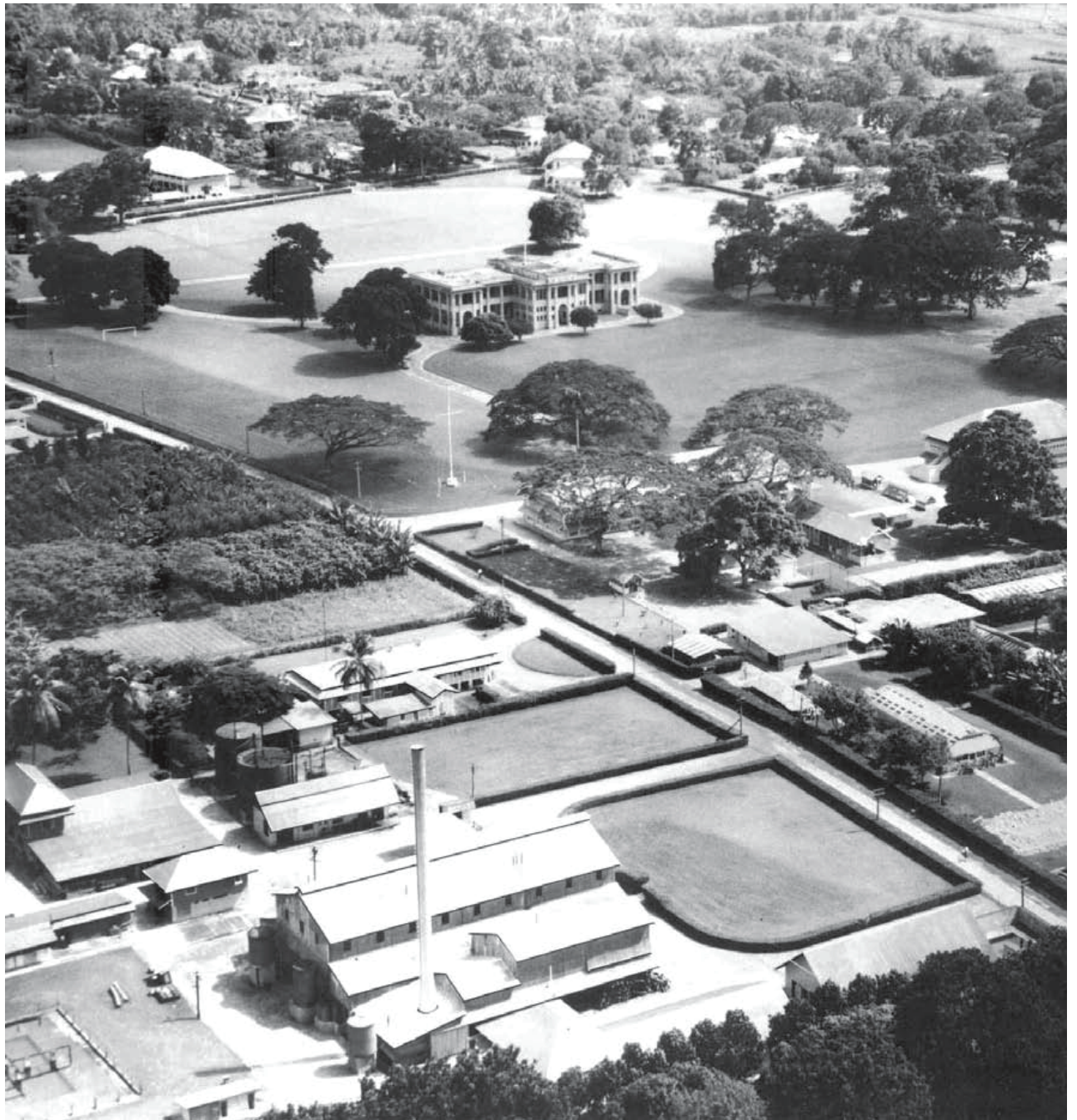
The speech of the day was by Arthur Lewis, Principal of UCWI, the future first Vice-Chancellor of UWI (1962) and Nobel Prize winner. He described the ‘marriage’ being celebrated as one between a mature lady of forty and a twelve-year-old boy, and advised that the boy must be willing to learn and the lady to be tolerant.

■ **HISTORY – ISSUE ARCHIVE SEPTEMBER 2010**

first Faculty to be established at St Augustine, the inheritor of the ICTA tradition, was especially difficult, creating reverberations which exist to this day.

Yet unquestionably the last few years have been an exciting time of expansion—in student numbers, staff, buildings, programmes, support services, centres or institutes—with the campus enjoying another boom period up to the onset of the world-wide depression in 2008. Stresses and strains there inevitably were (and are) but the sense of forward movement was palpable. Impressive new buildings went up, such as the Lloyd Braithwaite Student Administration Building, the Daaga Auditorium, the Sir Arthur Lewis Hall of Residence on St John’s Road, Engineering Block 13, and the still incomplete six-storey Teaching and Learning Complex. While the present financial situation is again difficult, the forward movement is not likely to be reversed, with the continuing support of the national government despite its own challenges, and under the leadership of Principal Clement Sankat (2008) and his team.

As we walk around the campus today, we can read its history in the buildings, trees, green spaces and roads. ICTA’s legacy is strong on the northern side, with the grand old Administration Building (rededicated earlier this year after a thorough refurbishing inside and out) still presiding over the landscape. To the south the JFK Complex and the Main Library, the creation of the 1960s, along with the many and massive Engineering buildings, dominate. The newer structures, erected in the 1990s or later, are to be found everywhere, with the Daaga Auditorium perhaps standing out particularly. Its name recalls our history: On its site, in 1927, the ICTA Dining Hall was opened, a two-storey building with dining facilities and kitchens downstairs, club and recreation rooms upstairs. When St Augustine became a UWI campus, this structure became the Guild Hall, the centre of student activities. In the period of student activism of 1969-70, it was renamed Daaga Hall after an African ex-slave soldier who led a mutiny at St Joseph in 1837. The building was destroyed by fire in 1980, and the present Auditorium stands on the same site. And the history of our campus going back even before the creation of ICTA is recalled by our oldest building: the Principal’s Office, up to 1996 the Principal’s residence, is the original Great House of the St Augustine sugar estate, built in the middle of the nineteenth century.



EARLY DAYS: An aerial view of the ICTA. The main building is at the centre, the new L-shaped biology building is at right (Frank Stockdale laboratories), and the new sugar laboratories and Soil Sciences Chemistry. The Experimental Sugar Factory is in the foreground.



For the first years of its life, the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture functioned in converted army huts. Photograph shows an early council meeting in an army hut.

■ RESEARCH – ISSUE ARCHIVE JANUARY 2011



Children now facing ADULT TYPE DIABETES

Obesity underlies most cases of diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, cardio-vascular diseases

Metabolic Syndrome is a widespread syndrome with a prevalence of 25% in the developed world and a surprisingly higher (and increasing) prevalence in developing countries. In 2007, the Diabetes Education Research and Prevention Institute (DERPi), was established through a \$5million grant from Helen Bhagwansingh, to research the disease and determine early preventative measures. The results of the DERPi Project research were presented on Tuesday 18th January at the Daaga Auditorium, UWI.

Obesity, said Professor Surujpal Teelucksingh, is the common factor in a range of diseases linked to the Metabolic Syndrome. Obesity underlies most cases of diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, cardio-vascular diseases – part of the Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases for which the Caribbean has some of the highest incidences in the world. Indeed, said Prof Teelucksingh, we lead the regional figures for diabetics. Citing pioneering work done by Dr Theo Poon King more than 50 years ago, Prof Teelucksingh established the relationship between unhealthy lifestyles, urban living, and childhood obesity with the onset of what was once adult diabetes in the local population of youngsters.

This project was aimed at providing information about diabetes in children and adolescents in primary and secondary schools in Trinidad and Tobago. This is the first study of this nature and magnitude to be conducted in Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean. Many of the deaths caused by the Metabolic Syndrome can be prevented by improving early detection, and prevention of diabetes in

childhood is likely to be more cost effective than treating complications that accrue from the undiagnosed or under-treated disease. Earlier recognition will add many years of quality of life.

The cross-sectional survey was performed among 67,000 school children aged 5-17 years in Trinidad during 2009 for urine glucose. It was determined that in testing every 100,000 children, 10 children with type 2 diabetes and 19 children with difficulty in handling ingested glucose, were detected. As many of these children signalled undiagnosed type 2 diabetes in the family, DERPi proposed to intervene on all family members in the household, who were willing to participate in a family-oriented, school/community-based intervention.

DERPi's intervention focused on the promotion of healthy eating behaviour, physical activity, diabetic education and the creation of a suitable environment for the acquisition of the knowledge, skills and attitudes to understand and address chronic disease.

Under the supervision of Prof Teelucksingh and Dr Brian Cockburn, PhD candidate, Ms Yvonne Batson, has been integral to this work, moving the project from the initial survey to working with schools to address lifestyle changes.

Speaking to an audience which included the Minister of Education, Dr Tim Gopeesingh, Mrs Helen Bhagwansingh, Prof Teelucksingh made the case for funds to be allocated towards prevention and early detection of diabetes, as this was roughly a third of the cost of treatment.

He also predicted that depression (a feature of the Metabolic Syndrome) was going to assume epidemic-like proportions in the near future, and that this further underscored the urgency with which attention and funds must be directed towards these diseases.

The members of the Board of Directors of this collaboration between The UWI and the private sector are Professor Surujpal Teelucksingh, Dr. Rohan Maharaj, Dr. David Rampersad (Secretary) Mr. Vishnu Ramlogan (Chairman, Finance), Dr. Brian Cockburn (Treasurer), Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie (Chairman), and a representative of the Medical Board of Trinidad and Tobago

The DERPi Trust was established to “operationalize” existing knowledge on the treatment and prevention of diabetes into effective, immediate interventions. It is expected that this will help prevent the potentially exponential increase in cases of Diabetes in Trinidad and Tobago through a series of interventions and projects aimed at education and prevention, most of which will be community based. The idea to use the funding for a school-based diabetes screening project actually came from Dr Cockburn, a keen researcher himself.

The Trust supports research to increase knowledge about the disease in the local context. The research agenda has been built upon work by researchers in several Faculties at The UWI as well as by those operating in the field who have already made significant inroads and discoveries on their own such as the identification of the “Slippery Slipper Syndrome” the “Ticking Thumbtack Sign” and a new subtype of Diabetes, MODY Type 4.

“The cross-sectional survey was performed among 67,000 school children aged 5-17 years in Trinidad during 2009 for urine glucose.”

The Chataigne Peeler

Student's machine could put this delicacy on your table every week

BY RODNEY HARNARINE



The Chataigne fruit is well known in parts of the Caribbean, notably Trinidad and Guyana, as a delicacy served in a coconut curry sauce at special occasions, such as weddings and at Divali.

A close relative of the breadfruit (*Artocarpus altilis*), the chataigne (*Artocarpus camansi*) contains twice the protein, and its seeds are low in fat compared with nuts such as the almond, brazil, and macadamia.

Known in the region as the bread nut or katahar (Guyana) it is prized when ripened for the seeds, and when mature, but not ripe, it is prepared in delicately flavoured curries.

To do this, the thick, spiky skin must be removed, and the flesh shredded apart by hand after the seeds are painstakingly removed. Served with roti (paratha) along with other vegetables, it is a popular dish at weddings and other functions.

While the demand for curried chataigne has been growing, the task of peeling and preparing the fruit is so labour intensive that it makes it almost prohibitive.

A typical wedding might require 300 chataigne fruits for a side dish, and this would take about 12 man-days for preparation, i.e. peeling, shredding and then preparing the seeds before cooking. No wonder it has remained such an occasional delicacy!

That might soon be a thing of the past.

Nishad Gopaulchan, a final year Mechanical Engineering student at The UWI, has designed and built a simple machine that can prepare 100 chataigne fruits in an hour.

DEVELOPING THE MACHINE

Various methods for separating the seeds from the fibrous inner core of the fruit were considered and these included friction, brushing and impact, however the one that showed the best potential was impact.

Initial trials with steel rods impacting on the inner core of the fruit, left bruises or marks of injury on the final product. Although this could be minimized and managed, it showed up as brown to black marks on the product when kept refrigerated for awhile.



Nishad Gopaulchan with the chataigne peeler machine.

Replacing the steel rod beaters with a steady rubber one, minimized, if not eliminated, the problem of impact injury on the finished product.

Placing the rotating and stationary rubber fingers was a critical factor in the design, as the spacing must be appropriate to allow the flow of the separated fiber and seeds through the machine without clogging and “sticking” the machine.

The machine is powered by a single phase 110 Volt motor; hence it can be plugged into any domestic household electric supply.

The machine is ergonomically designed; the hopper is at the top and can be easily reached by the average adult while the lower chute allows enough height to place a receptacle to collect the finished product. There are no sharp edges or projecting bolts that could create risks for injury to users of the machine.

COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL FOR THE MACHINE

The machine was on display at both the recently concluded Sci-technofest, run by NIHERST and the Open Day at the Faculty of Engineering; without quoting a price for the machine, more than 100 persons have indicated an interest in having one of these machines.

Among those who have expressed interest, caterers were the largest group. At the Faculty of Engineering at UWI, we see this as a wonderful opportunity to expand the consumption of local cuisine, with its attendant backward linkage with agriculture, while simultaneously creating the opportunity to commercialize our homegrown mechanical, machine-building skills.

The project has a high potential for success both locally and internationally.

Rodney Harnarine is a development engineer at the Department of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, at The UWI, St. Augustine. He supervised the construction of Nishad Gopaulchan's Chataigne Peeler.

“A typical wedding might require 300 chataigne fruits for a side dish, and this would take about 12 man-days for preparation ...that might soon be a thing of the past.”

BBC Caribbean Archives find a Home

UWI gets 23 Years of Recordings

BY JENNIFER JOSEPH

Excitement abounded among the four Campus Librarians of our regional institution, who coincidentally were all together in Jamaica for UWI Cross-Campus meetings in early February 2011 when we received word from the Vice Chancellor, Professor E. Nigel Harris that The UWI was being offered the Archive of BBC Caribbean programmes for the period 1988-2011, in view of the imminent closure of the BBC Caribbean Service on March 25, 2011.

Debbie Ransome, veteran broadcaster from Trinidad and Tobago and Head of the BBC, Caribbean Service had made this generous offer, recognizing that UWI was indeed the most suitable regional organization to preserve and make the files available for research for all of the Caribbean.

As University and Campus Librarian, the task was entrusted to me to manage the process of the transfer of this important and rich archive to The UWI.

The Head of the Information Technology Services at the Alma Jordan Library, Frank Soodeen, went immediately to London in the second week of March to consult with the BBC technicians and to manage the process of download and transfer before the actual closure of the offices. His visit was followed by that of Claudia de Four, Deputy Campus Librarian who, with Ransome and Roanna Gopaul, counsellor at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London, ensured the on time completion of the file transfer and safe delivery of the digital files to the Alma Jordan Library.

There followed months of anticipation and preparation as the University Counsel, Dr. Beverley Pereira liaised with the BBC to arrive at a mutually agreeable Legal Deposit Agreement which was eventually signed by the relevant parties. In the Agreement, the UWI undertakes to preserve the BBC Caribbean Service archive, make it accessible to UWI stakeholders and bona fide researchers and develop an index to the collection.

The initial February 8, 2011 acceptance culminated in an official handover ceremony that took place on November 4, 2011 at the Mona Campus, where the originals will reside.

At that ceremony, Professor Harris noted that “a university is not only about education and research, but a university is a repository of a civilisation’s history.”

He expressed his gratitude to the BBC for choosing the UWI as the institution to preserve and make accessible this rich resource of major news stories and current affairs to researchers and the Caribbean at large.

The library staff at St. Augustine has been leading the project to transfer the historic material to a digital platform that researchers could use to find the various stories. The process involves the digitization of the recordings into formats that can be streamed over the Internet, and also in formats that will ensure the long term preservation of the original content. The Librarians will be indexing each recording to allow users of the resource to get an immediate sense of the contents of a programme before actually listening to it.

In total, the UWI received 3,000 hours of audio covering 12,000 15-minute programmes of the BBC daily Caribbean news. These programmes tell the story of the happenings in the Caribbean for the years spanning 1988 to 2011. There are the stories and details of the hurricanes and how they affected us, that fateful earthquake in Haiti that occurred in January 2010 and a myriad of other events in our history.

Mr Soodeen has indicated that the material also covers



Debbie Ransome, Head of the BBC Caribbean Service, poses with the archived material from 1988-2011 she had just presented to The UWI with Professor Wainbinte Wariboka, acting Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at the Mona Campus, Jennifer Joseph, University and St. Augustine Campus Librarian and Vice Chancellor, Professor E. Nigel Harris.

“In total, the UWI received 3,000 hours of audio covering 12,000 15-minute programmes of the BBC daily Caribbean news. These programmes tell the story of the happenings in the Caribbean for the years spanning 1988 to 2011.”

the attempted coup in Trinidad and Tobago, the death of leaders such as Michael Manley, and Cheddi Jagan, the Allen Stanford saga and the CLICO financial issues. It also contains a number of special programmes aired by the BBC Caribbean Service, including a series on the use of drugs by Caribbean youth, a tribute to the Jamaican cultural icon, Miss Lou, an analysis of Caricom, and a look at the lives of Caribbean war veterans living in the UK.

The Librarians at UWI have many hours and, I daresay,

years of work ahead of us as we build an index that would identify each news report, each news clip, the speakers, etc. so that researchers can find that special story that is of importance to them. This work will be done by librarians at our campuses in Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. Hopefully, in about three years’ time, with the appointment of staff to this project, all the material would be available for use.

Building with an Eye on the Future

In 2007, The UWI St Augustine Campus had some 15,000 students and 1,700 staff. Six years later, there are in excess of 19,000 students and 3,000 staff. A university is a living, breathing organism. It's forced to grow physically as the student population grows but it also grows organically to meet the needs of a maturing society.

Campus management pays close attention to quality standards and continually works to provide additional facilities and equipment for teaching, learning, research, student accommodation and recreation. The overall square footage of built space has increased by 30% to cater for these additional services yet every effort has been made to preserve the green space.

The UWI's Division of Facilities Management, led by Director **Suresh Maharaj** and Campus Projects Office, led by Senior Projects Officer **Alfred Reid**, had their plates full driving urgently needed capital projects to fulfilment. Here's a look at some of the major projects at the St Augustine Campus.

THE UWI SOUTH CAMPUS

Penal/Debe

Approximately 40.5 hectares (100 acres), in the vicinity of the Debe High School, has been identified for The UWI St. Augustine South Campus. The lands are part of a gently rolling green field site previously cultivated with sugarcane. 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. The campus area will occupy 24,050 sq. metres. An urgent need to find a home for the newly expanded Faculty of Law led to a decision to allocate the signature building project at the St. Augustine South Campus to the housing of the Faculty of Law. In this regard, facilities will be created to meet the needs of students most of whom will come from areas far and wide. These would include accommodation for 100 students, recreation areas, including playgrounds and hard courts; as well as pedestrian, parking and roadway facilities.



FAMILY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

No. 32 St. John Road St. Augustine now houses both The UWI's Children's Research Centre and a new Family Development Centre

This new 2-storey building covers 665 square metres and accommodates administrative offices, a meeting/lecture Hall, library/research Room as well as offices for Research Fellows. The centre is designed to promote a greater understanding of the contexts, processes and diverse factors within families, communities and institutions that influence the growth and development, early education, health and general well-being of children and families in Trinidad & Tobago and other Caribbean communities.

STUDENTS' ACCOMMODATIONS

San Fernando General Hospital

Renovation of the existing three-storey building at the San Fernando General Hospital is done. Through the renovation, medical students with early and late clinical hours can now be accommodated in any of the 22 bedrooms.

Two lecture rooms, a general office, kitchenette, washroom and laundry facilities as well as parking spaces for 11 vehicles add to the practical and convenient educational experience. It permits for achievement of the learning outcomes, a mandatory requirement of the accreditation process.



70TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

CANADA HALL OF RESIDENCE

Refurbishment & Renovations

Canada Hall of Residence was the first Hall of Residence constructed for the St. Augustine Campus in 1963 to accommodate 192 students. Primarily two 3-storey dormitory blocks, four rooms on each floor were converted to two kitchens in 1983, reducing the number of rooms to 168.

In spite of minor modifications in the last 50 years, the time was right for major refurbishment and renovation to upgrade the hall. Existing dormitories are being extended and renovated to conform to modern configurations for halls of residence. In the first phase, the South block is receiving an upgrade of rooms including a new lobby and common areas, new furniture and fittings (desks, beds, closets, book shelves). The same will be done to the North block beginning in the last quarter of 2013. Phase 3 involves construction of a new block to house 80 post graduate students and a residence manager.



ACADEMY OF NURSING

The team also completed renovation of the western building at the El Dorado Girls' Youth Camp. This teaching facility, which is part of the Academy of Nursing, can provide training to nursing students at a national level on par with international standards.

The existing building is a three-storey, reinforced concrete monolithic building with approximately 16,530 square feet of usable space. It has been retrofitted to provide administrative offices, laboratories, lecture theatres and tutorial rooms. In addition, the building was modernized with the installation of new communication infrastructure (telephone and internet).



SENIOR COMMON ROOM

Upgrade and Expansion

DFM has initiated a tender action process to convert The UWI's Senior Common Room into a convention centre with seating for 200. In addition to the conference hall, features will include handicapped ready male and female washrooms, kitchen space, office areas, a conference room, lobby area, janitorial space and outdoor terrace. The existing building will be reused with modifications to the structure, office space and washroom facilities.



STUDENT RECREATIONAL / STUDY CENTRE

Mt. Hope, Faculty of Medical Sciences

Construction works on this two storey building started in July 2012 and is now complete. The facility will accommodate study rooms, a computer lab and a meeting room. There is also a lounge, a gym and a minimart. The centre is expected to be fully functional later this year.



TEACHING & LEARNING COMPLEX

This multi-storey building includes 4 Lecture Theatres seating from 200 to 400 students, 2 Lecture Rooms seating 90 students each, 8 Tutorial/Seminar/Teaching Rooms seating 20 to 25 students each, Offices for the CETL and Specialized Biology and Chemistry Science Labs. The project is substantially complete with testing and commissioning of the services to go.



NEW SEISMIC RESEARCH BUILDING

The DFM is currently constructing a new building for the Seismic Research Unit. The new three-storey structural steel building has approximately 9,975 square feet of usable space and will improve the seismic monitoring operations of the Unit.

The importance of preserving the building and associated seismic equipment during and after a natural disaster meant that it was designed using the latest engineering codes and stringent seismic requirements. It is 80% completed and final finishes/fixtures are being installed. When completed, the facility would increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the monitoring, research and response to earthquakes, volcanoes and tsunamis. Beneficiaries would be the English speaking countries of the Eastern Caribbean who rely on this primary source of information during any one of the natural disasters identified above.



The True Collection of Traditional Mas

National competitions for traditional carnival characters notwithstanding, no one site brings such a comprehensive collection together than the Old Yard hosted by The UWI's Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA) every year. And it isn't just robber talk from some mocking pretender to make that claim.

The Old Yard, which began life as Viej La Cou, took place on February 3 at its regular venue: the DCFA's Gayelle on Agostini Street in St. Augustine.

The care and attention to detail that goes into creating this gayelle is heart-warming. The yard is remade with an architectural style reminiscent of times gone by, and the characters come out flexing exquisite detail as they bring to life the figures from the past and demonstrate the antics and traits for which they are known.

Dames, devils, jab jabs, baby dolls, gorillas, imps, medieval figures, donkeys, pierrots, minstrels, midnight robbers and ghostly figures were all present.

Like a heritage fair of sorts, onlookers can stroll, sit, feast, and play games while mingling with the masqueraders, and for the children it is always an enormous treat, while being an unnoticed history lesson.

Photographer **Aneel Karim** was at the gayelle and came back with so many spectacular shots that it was difficult selecting just a few for these pages, so why not visit us online at **Flickr** and check out some of the others?





No Small Place called Home

Jehue Gordon at the St Augustine campus where he returns this September.

BY VANEISA BAKSH

It has been just a couple of hours since Jehue Gordon arrived in London from Moscow to overnight at a hotel before heading to his aunt's before taking off to Italy for two races in the first week of September. Might seem a hectic schedule, but he's grown used to it after four years. We're talking by phone because there's no internet. He has a bit of a cold, he says, so his voice is a little raspy.

I tell him his comments on winning the gold medal at Luzhniki Stadium – about doing it local – were striking and had touched a chord in the country. What influenced his decisions to stay local?

“The support from my family,” he says immediately, “... being able to stay in my comfort zone. Caribbean culture is so different from American culture. In Trinidad your parents do everything for you. My mum basically does everything, she cooks, cleans, washes...I just had to concentrate on training.”

For Jehue, it was not simply about having people do things for him. It was recognising by watching the example of Marcella, his mother, and her hard work and dedication to his success, that he understood that it didn't matter the size of the space you grew up in (money is not everything is a common phrase in his lexicon); it mattered how large you set your goals. He was never one to think small, and perhaps this is what caught the eyes of the other enormous pillars of support his life has had since he was 12: coaches and mentors, Dr Ian Hypolite, a psychiatrist and the almost 73-year-old 400m Olympian Edwin Skinner.

Jehue is very clear that he was fortunate to have steadfast support from what he calls his close circle: Marcella, Ian and Edwin, who have stuck with him through thick and thin, and who have acted as inspiration, guides and protectors

from the vagaries of a world that has not always been kind.

Since winning the gold medal in the 400m hurdles at the IAAF world Championships on August 15, he has been interviewed countless times and he has consistently showered praises on these three, crediting them with providing him with the physical, mental and spiritual sustenance he has needed for his journey so far.

It rings true, all of it; nothing shallow about this young man, who is able to identify exactly what he means when he talks about its significance to his upbringing and outlook and his capacity to focus and be disciplined enough to achieve his personal goals.

Mind you, Jehue was not simply a wheelbarrow to be rolled along; from very small he had a keenly competitive mind and a fierce desire to excel. “I hate people to feel they're better than me,” he says, as he defends his choice to stay at home to prepare for the world in the face of many criticisms that he would be better off with foreign fare. “Everything I do, I do to the best of my ability.”

His belief that everything we need to do well can be found right here in the Caribbean was not just inculcated by the three pillars, but embedded because of the deep trust he feels towards them. He describes their relationships and how he knows that “they didn't do it for money.”

“They encouraged me to further my education even when opportunities came for me to go professional,” he said, as he explains how “Doc” insisted that he would be better prepared if he nurtured his intellectual life just as fully. Three years ago he had enrolled in the Sport Management Programme at UWI, and when the semester reopens in September, he will be entering the fourth and final year. Even that choice had been questioned because he'd received

offers of athletic scholarships from universities like Harvard, University of Florida, Mississippi State, Florida State and Texas A&M.

“I wanted to show people I was not normal, that we can do things here. A lot of people limit themselves. They ask, why you want to study at UWI? Ask the CEOs of big companies here why they studied at UWI. I am 150% red, white and black!”

So how has he been managing both his athletic career and his studies?

“It has been tough,” he admits. “Success doesn't come easily. It is hard work. But I don't want people to feel I don't work hard.” He says that he has had great support too from other classmates on the programme, who shared notes and had study group sessions to help him catch up. Given his mantra, he doesn't ask more of the teachers, though he was really disappointed that one lecturer would not give him the one additional mark that would have made one of his papers an A.

Still, he shrugs that off, and hopes that this upcoming year will be manageable now that most of his friends are finished with the three-year programme and are off-campus.

He remains unwavering in his belief that Caribbean people should feel more confidence in their abilities.

“I tried to get people to understand what I have been trying hard to do for all these years,” he says. “They didn't see that.”

It was a big hurdle for him to cross, and now with his gold medal to prove it can be done, Jehue's message that when you think big, there is no such thing as a small place, might finally come across.

■ UWI SPEC INTERNATIONAL HALF-MARATHON – ISSUE ARCHIVE AUGUST 2013

The 10th LAP



When **UWI SPEC** officially opened its heavy doors on March 16, 2003, it was already bursting with ideas for the development of sport and physical education in the region. The Director of Sport and Physical Education at the St. Augustine Campus, **Dr Iva Gloudon**, to whom SPEC has been like her very own child, was clear that it was going to be branded as a site for excellence in the region for that and more.

Just about a year and a half later, on November 14, 2004, the first **UWI SPEC International Half-Marathon** came pelting out the heavy doors, bringing a number of innovative firsts to the region, and it has not looked back.

In that first year, though the prize money was all of \$100,000, and the entrants were around 300, it caught the public's attention for several reasons. It had managed to secure the first traffic-free course in the region. The 13.1 mile journey, beginning at 6.30am, would use the Priority Bus Route up to La Resource and loop back to the finish at UWI SPEC. University students from all over were invited to attend as the idea was to involve students in the concepts of healthy lifestyles as well.

As she looked forward to the first edition, Dr Gloudon had said, "We wanted UWI SPEC to be tied in to the excellence in sport and physical education from an international standpoint. We don't know of any other traffic-free road race in the Caribbean. And it is also an exciting way to have a laboratory for our students in the sport management, coaching certificate and physical training instructors' programme. It's an opportunity for all of these students to practise the craft in a practicum setting. And in a wider sense, to begin to brand UWI as an institution committed to having its students focused on having a well-balanced, well-rounded education."

This year marks the tenth edition of that first step, and it is interesting that some, like **First Citizens** and **Raffique Shah**

(though he is no longer hands-on as technical advisor), have gone the distance, throwing their support behind an event that has indeed grown to be a major international event, just as Dr Gloudon had intended.

But if some things have remained the same, much has changed as well.

Since then the categories for entries have grown. In addition to UWI staff and student

groups, the wheelchair and physically challenged categories, there is now a team category for a minimum of 15 athletes, for instance.

Over the years, as registration grew, a decision was made to cap it off at the first one thousand.

For current director of Sport and PE at UWI, **Justin Latapy-George**, it has been a privilege to preside over this special edition. Latapy-George, who is also the Race Director, says the honour is also magnified by "allowing me to be a part of the University's long-standing support of academia and Sport and PE while promoting a healthier lifestyle choice that is aptly supported by the race's sponsors; principles that allow me to enjoy my role tremendously."

This year, as part of the special commemoration of this tenth year, a number of symbolic changes have been made. Registration will be open to the first 1010 runners; and the race, will get going a bit earlier, starting at 10 minutes to six.

The focus in this tenth year is giving; giving to charitable organisations, and so, the Marketing and Communications Office team, led by acting Communications Manager, **Renata Sankar-Jaimungal** (who is also a Sport Management Master's student), came up with a plan to invite 10 people to champion 10 charities and to encourage the public, as well as staff and students to pledge \$10 towards one of these people and the money would go towards their chosen charity.

Anyone can pledge, even as groups, organizations, faculties; anyone can, because the aim is to support the marathon and its related charities. Organizers are hoping that pledges can be made through staff deductions, bank deposits into a special account, by deposit at the Bursary Cashier on the St. Augustine campus. For every \$10 received 10% will go towards marathon funding and the rest to the named charity. Pledges will also be taken on the day.

This team, called The 10, are not there just for their looks though, they have to be part of a 12-week training programme, specially designed by SPEC. One would imagine that the training programme would have been 10 weeks long in keeping with the theme, but there is no compromise when it comes to ensuring that they are fit and ready to race, on the big day, October 27. – (Vaneisa Baksh)



Justin Latapy-George

UWI SPEC
 INTERNATIONAL
 HALF-MARATHON



■ **THE TEN TRAINING** The 12-week training programme has a fairly intense schedule, with sessions carded for Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays with distance running on the weekends. **The Ten** have been hauling themselves to SPEC as best as they can to take part in training.

This includes field **Fartlek** (*Fartlek is a training technique, used especially in running, in which periods of intense effort alternate with periods of less strenuous effort in a continuous workout*), pace work and sprints. The gym sessions involve circuit training, core, legs, upper body and stretches. Of course, there are drills involved, and some hill work too.

By the time race day arrives, even if they did not make it to all the sessions, The Ten are going to be more than fit and ready!



Dr Iva Gloudon

REGION MUST STAND UP

Once again, the role and responsibility of CARICOM is part of public debate as the region tussles over the September 23rd ruling of the Dominican Constitutional Tribunal that “foreigners with no residence permit in the country must be equated with the category of foreigners in transit, under which their children are not eligible for Dominican citizenship, even though they were born in Dominican territory.”

Some members of the Caribbean Community have been vocal and unambiguous in their positions. Prime Minister of St Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph Gonsalves, has written to President of the Dominican Republic, Danilo Medina, not once, but twice since then, urging him to act swiftly “to correct the Court’s prejudicial denial of the human and citizenship rights of persons of Haitian descent born in your country.”

UWI Professor Emeritus Norman Girvan, a former Professorial Research Fellow at The UWI Graduate Institute of International Relations has been an outspoken advocate for CARICOM action.

“It is very important for CARICOM to act as a single bloc—a bloc of 14 states which has voting power in several regional and international fora—to exert the maximum effort to see that this ruling is reversed,” he said. “The ruling is inconsistent with several international conventions and rulings to which the Dominican Republic is a party, and especially a 2005 ruling of the Inter American Court on Human Rights which reiterates the principle of jus soli—the right of citizenship to persons born within a country.”

“CARICOM is in a position to influence the course of events in this matter by blocking the DR’s application for admission to CARICOM and the Caribbean Development Bank and pressing for suspension of the DR from Cariforum and PetroCaribe,” he said. “If the ruling is implemented it will render stateless and vulnerable thousands of native-born Dominicans, who have lived and established families in their country of birth for up to 83 years. These persons will find it increasingly difficult to send their children to school, access medical services and secure employment.”

“It is a repugnant and racist situation which the regional community should vigorously oppose,” he said.

Professor Girvan also attended a demonstration on November 6, staged by the UWI-based arts group, Jouvay Ayiti, outside the Office of the Prime Minister. Using masquerade in a strategy they call “mas action,” the group depicted several traditional mas figures that were adapted for the particular message.

The group presented a petition of 800 numbers to the Embassy of the Dominican Republic and the Office of the Prime Minister.



JOUVAY AYITI takes a position. PHOTOS: CAMILLE QUAMINA, AN MPhil CULTURAL STUDIES STUDENT AND PART-TIME LECTURER AT THE DEPARTMENT OF CREATIVE AND FESTIVAL ARTS AT UWI, ST AUGUSTINE.



On November 26, a CARICOM statement was issued after a meeting in Port of Spain, which condemned the September ruling, calling it “abhorrent and discriminatory.” It called on the Government of the Dominican Republic “to take the necessary political, legislative, judicial and administrative steps urgently to redress the grave humanitarian situation created by the ruling,” and asked “regional and hemispheric countries and organisations to lend their voice to urge the Dominican Republic to right this terrible wrong.”

“The Community welcomes the intervention by Venezuela to assist in resolving the issue but given the grave humanitarian implications of the court ruling the Community cannot allow its relationship with the Dominican Republic to continue as normal. In that regard, the Community, at this time, will suspend consideration of the request by the Dominican Republic for membership of the Caribbean Community. Furthermore, the Community will review its relationship with the Dominican Republic in other fora including that of CARIFORUM, CELAC and the OAS. It cannot be business as usual,” said the statement.

*“It is very important for CARICOM to act as a single bloc
—a bloc of 14 states which has voting power in several regional and international fora
—to exert the maximum effort to see that this ruling is reversed”*

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70TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

■ CARIBBEAN-PACIFIC MOBILITY SCHEME (CARPIMS) – ISSUE ARCHIVE MARCH 2014

Life in SAMOA

Where Adventure Begins

One minute it's just a dream. The next you're on a Pacific island and living that dream.
For **Melissa McAllister** and **Ramona Boodoosingh**, dreams do come true.

MELISSA McALLISTER

I struggled to complete my application then, while on the verge of giving up, CARPIMS emailed about the application extension!

I had obtained a BSc Accounting Special degree at UWI and I'm doing a Master's in Development Studies with my thesis topic in micro finance at the National University of Samoa (NUS) through the CARPIMS programme.

My Samoan experience had a rough start... we were robbed within the first night of my colleague's arrival but the university moved us within the day. I feel very safe here and the scenery is lovely. I started teaching dance to children and adults, assisting the dance group Salsa Samoa by conducting dance classes and organizing performances at different social events. I am also learning the cultural dances of the Polynesian Islands. Luckily for me, most Samoans speak English pretty well. I speak slowly because my "Trini accent" is a bit difficult to understand (but they still love to hear it).

A Samoan funeral and the Si'i (gift exchange) are interesting. The custom is for people to carry gifts for the family of the deceased and in return the family gives gifts. We went with NUS staff to present a bouquet and gift items to a staff member's family and among the many gifts to NUS were raw chicken, pigs and cows. As a result funerals are so expensive that people often take loans to cover the cost.



Melissa at a Samoan beach

Living conditions generally are very simple and open. In most villages, families live in open houses or "fales". Samoans are not very materialistic so they don't desire many possessions and they can manage to live in houses with no walls. For most families in rural areas living conditions appear less than desirable though they seem fine with their way of simple living. Samoans call the areas where families live 'better off', a "palagi"/foreign lifestyle. They eat a lot of meat especially pork and do not cook with a lot of seasoning. Their dress code, like everything else, is very simple; it's very normal to see men and women in a T-shirt and "lava lava" (wrap skirt) along with a pair of slippers (which they quite often refer to as shoes).

Both Samoa and Trinidad and Tobago enjoy the closeness of families, although this is more prevalent in Samoa because of traditional customs of living in the same compound. Also Samoa appears to be 10 years behind our country in terms of development. Samoans are less vocal, especially when in the presence of authority.

The world now seems a smaller place. In Samoa I have made friends from all over the world. The Pacific region is a culturally enriched region, though with development challenges. I have learnt to observe the customs and practices of a different culture and use this information to better understand individuals. Moreover I have learnt to be grateful for many things that I once took for granted. You can live a simple life and be happy.

RAMONA BOODOOSINGH

I completed a BSc in Chemistry and Management and a Post Graduate Diploma in Mediation Studies at UWI. Here I'm pursuing a Masters in Development Studies at NUS. My thesis research focuses on support services for survivors of Intimate Partner Violence. The experience has been amazing.

As with all countries, there have been the good, the bad and the ugly. I am grateful for the opportunity to be reminded of how much I took for granted at home. I am a vegetarian and within two days of being in Samoa, I realized starvation was a real possibility. Vegetarians find it rather difficult here. I decided to eat seafood - it is not full proof as I have often faced a plate of many meats which do not include fish!

Electricity is very expensive, internet plans are done by data and purchasing drinking water is advisable. Honestly, I miss YouTube.....a lot. It is amazing to live in a country where the culture is thousands of years old and some parts are so strikingly beautiful and unique. Artefacts tell of ancient stories and I often feel that I am living an episode of National Geographic.

Samoa used to exist for me only in an atlas. When natural disasters occurred, I felt sad but did not empathize. Now these are



Ramona in Samoan print

my friends' homes and this is also my region. I was really blessed to intern with the UN Women Multi Country Office, under the Ending Violence Against Women Programme.

I try the Samoan language with sometimes tragic results. I accidentally called a matai (chief), a chicken pen (pamoa) by misspelling his name (panoa) in a group email. This resulted in my "punishment" of fruit smoothies for all!

Traditions are deeply entrenched in Samoa; Fa'asamoa (Samoan way) is an integral part of life. Family and the church are very important. Modesty in dress for women is preferred with the traditional dress being called the pulatasi, a top which reaches to the knees or below and a floor length skirt.

Taro (dasheen) and coconut are as basic a food item as rice, roti and bread in Trinidad and Tobago. Interestingly, cassava is considered pig (pua'a) food it is not easy to find. The traditional cooking method is the umu, constructed above ground using heated lava stones to bury the food which has been wrapped in some cases in banana or taro leaves. It is normally constructed on Sunday for the Sunday lunch by the men in the family.

In closing, please send me salt fish, Maggi vegetable soup and preserved mango.

■ About CARIBBEAN-PACIFIC MOBILITY SCHEME (CARPIMS)

CARPIMS nurtures cooperation and mobility between regions in the areas of postgraduate education and staff development. It is funded by the Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency of the European Union. CARPIMS comprises 10 Caribbean and South-Pacific Higher Education Institutions which act as host institutions. The University of Porto and UNICA provide technical and other assistance. The project forges strong cooperative links, enhances institutional capacity and creates an active network of the host institutions to directly address common issues and challenges.

For details, one-on-one application assistance, visit: www.sta.uwi.edu/carpims or email CARPIMS@sta.uwi.edu

The world is a very different place at 6,000 feet under the sea. Cold, lightless and with crushing pressure, one could easily assume that few creatures could survive at such a depth. But in certain places, not only can creatures survive the abyss; they have formed thriving undersea communities of exotic mussels, tube worms, prehistoric fish, crabs, shrimp and other species that are unearthly as they are beautiful. These oases of life in the deep dark void are known as “cold seeps”, and thanks to an international team of explorers, including two Trinidadians and one faculty member from The UWI, one such seep has been discovered in the waters to the east of Trinidad and Tobago.

“It’s called a siphonophore,” Dr. Judith Gobin, Lecturer in Zoology at The UWI’s Department of Life Sciences in the Faculty of Science and Technology tells me. We are watching a short video clip of a sea creature that the crew of the Exploration Vessel *E/V Nautilus* captured on their expedition of the Southern Caribbean.

The creature is unreal, a column of seemingly both gas and solid with two long elegant feathers protruding from it. Up close the feathers aren’t feathers at all, more like structures made of transparent flower petals moving independently of each other. Strangest of all, the siphonophore is a “colony” animal, made up of many individual organisms living together as one slow drifting creature.

“It was an amazing experience,” Dr. Gobin says, perhaps seeing the wonder in my eyes.

For one week, Dr. Gobin and fellow Trinidadian, deep-sea biologist D. Diva Amon, joined the crew of the *Nautilus*. The *Nautilus* carries out research and exploration of the sea floor on expeditions all over the world, using advanced technology, 24-hour live streaming and inviting scientists, geologists and other researchers to partake in or even suggest missions. The ship is part of the Ocean Exploration Trust, which was founded in 2008 by Dr. Robert Ballard, who led the team that discovered the wreck of the *Titanic* in 1985.

“It is an incredible operation and it is so well done, so precise,” Dr. Gobin says. From October 2, 2014, she served as a member of the *Nautilus*’s science team, working and forming friendships with crewmembers of various ages, races and genders from around the world.

“We all had to work two four hour shifts up in the Van (the ships command centre where the video is viewed and decisions are made as to what images should be captured). Every shift there was eight or nine of us in the Van looking at six video screens. That number included two scientists, videographers and the remotely operated vehicle (ROV) pilots (the *Nautilus* team comprises 28 people while the ship’s crew is about 13-14),” she describes. “I was really impressed by the amount of women that were on the crew doing everything the men did. Some of the ROV operators were women.”

For Dr. Gobin, the ROVs, because of their sophisticated technology and the intricacy of their operations, were particularly fascinating.

“When you watch them pilot the *ROV Hercules* it is extraordinary. It has arms, it has cameras, it has thrusters that allow it to move in every direction. The arms can pick up samples and store them in containers. And this is a multi-million dollar piece of equipment, so the pilots cannot make mistakes with it,” she says.

LIFE IN THE DEEP

Dr. Gobin joined the team in Grenada, where they were continuing work they had begun last year exploring Kickem Jenny, the Caribbean Sea’s most active deep-sea



An overview of one of the cold seep sites found off Trinidad and Tobago.

Secret Life on the Sea Floor

Dr. Judith Gobin takes part in landmark expedition to T&T’s cold seep



Dr. Judith Gobin (left) and Dr. Diva Amon (right) in front of ROV Hercules



Dr. Diva Amon (left) and Dr. Judith Gobin (right) measuring some of the *Bathymodiolus* mussels sampled from the cold seeps

volcano. The UWI lecturer had been a member of that 2013 team as well, which she hoped would be able to explore Trinidad and Tobago’s undersea terrain at that time. However, circumstances prevented it from happening and were it not for the frantic efforts on Dr. Gobin’s part and support from several Government ministries it would not have happened this year either. The area, about 17 nautical miles east of Tobago, is oil and gas exploration territory, and is primarily the domain of the multinational energy companies. It took a major effort to get the necessary permissions for the expedition in the short timeframe.

“We knew there were seeps but there isn’t much documentation,” Dr. Gobin explains. “We know the oil companies have some information on it as well but we do not have access to that. That’s why this was such a breakthrough, it was the first time we have underwater video being taken of a cold seep in our waters. It was exciting for me because it was all about Trinidad and Tobago. It was about exploration and understanding what we have.”

And what did they find? In the words of Dr. Gobin, an amazing “array of life”.

Cold seeps are formed by seismic activity, the shifting of the earth’s plates on the sea floor. Through that activity, substances like methane and hydrogen sulfide seep through fissures into the water, creating “pools”. Bacteria metabolises these substances, in other words they use it as a source of fuel

to survive. The term for this is “chemosynthesis” – obtaining energy from chemicals. This is different from “photosynthesis” obtaining energy from light, which is the basis of life as we know it, but which is impossible in the lightless environment of the deep sea.

These bacteria form the base of the cold seep food chain, either as bacterial “mats” that other species can feed from directly, or through symbiotic relationships with species like mussels. At the Trinidad cold seep the *Nautilus* crew found a massive community of mussels and tubeworms.

“We found the largest mussels ever recorded last year at Kickem Jenny (the species *Bathymodiolus*),” Dr. Gobin said. “This year the scientists were saying that here in Trinidad, it was the largest community of mussels that they had ever seen.”

The cold seep food chain can include snails, crabs, shrimp, certain species of deep-sea fish and octopus. This is all remarkable because these creatures are living in a lightless environment in temperatures as low as 4 degrees Celsius and 120 atmospheres of pressure (120 times the pressure we are accustomed to).

“These deep-sea organisms have to be adapted to the pressure, the lack of oxygen, light and food. Many of these animals are blind,” Dr. Gobin said.

So what’s next for Dr. Gobin after this enormous find?

“For a coastal person (Dr. Gobin specialises in marine biology) this experience made me very interested in the deep sea. I will definitely do more deep-sea work. My trip last year (to Kickem Jenny) was the highlight of my career and this year was outstanding because it was in Trinidad and Tobago.”

Looking at the siphonophore, gliding along in that hidden world so far beneath the waves, who wouldn’t want to know more?



Chemosynthetic *Bathymodiolus* mussels with *Alvinocaris* shrimp and amphipods.

A MAVERICK idea to count money

BY NATASHA COKER JONES

“I saw it as a blind person’s independence day,” Marlon Parieaho, a member of a local NGO called Persons Associated with Visual Impairment (PAVI), said of the hand-over day of an app that allows persons in Trinidad and Tobago living with visual impairment to identify their local currency bills without assistance from the sighted.

He was referencing an app called MAVERICK – which was created by Jessie Saitoo, an under graduate student of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (DECE) of The University of the West (The UWI), St Augustine Campus and presented to some members of the visually impaired community last week. The application MAVERICK is testament to what can happen when a societal problem meets opportunity backed up by institutional strength. The handing over ceremony drew a crowd to the Audio Visual Room at the National Library and Information System Authority (NALIS) in Port of Spain.

It all started in 2014 when Marlon Parieaho—a Police Officer, who lost his sight four years ago due to advanced glaucoma—met Jamaican programmer and UWI Electrical and Computer Engineering graduate Ramone Graham. The latter was recruited to work on Mobi Assist—a project which when completed would help persons with visual impairment to safely navigate the streets. Impressed by Graham’s programming skills, team leader Parieaho began questioning the UWI grad about other ways technology can help the visually impaired.

“I said you know what would be really cool, if you can develop an app to help blind persons identify different currency denominations,” Parieaho, 35, said.

All currency feels basically the same to the visually impaired. Such individual employ techniques like folding their notes, or compartmentalizing denominations in their wallets to distinguish between notes. The problem is that they must rely on others to help them identify the bill before they are folded or compartmentalized. And both methods are meaningless if the person with visual impairment cannot remember how he or she has assigned the notes. Foreign-designed money detectors are not adept at reading TT currency.

But techniques, regardless of how fastidiously applied, provide little protection against unscrupulous merchants. Parieaho knows this first hand. He recalled the time he paid for a thirty dollar lunch with a hundred dollar bill and thought that he’d received his correct change. Upon return to work, he discovered from his colleagues that he had in fact received seven single dollars and not the seventy dollars he thought he had. Parieaho got back his money, but he knows too well that such examples of restitution are the exception rather than the norm in his community.

Graham arranged for Parieaho to meet and share his concerns with Dr. Akash Pooransingh, his former lecturer in Computer Systems in DECE. “I listened to what Marlon had to say,” Dr. Pooransingh said. “Not only with the money-reader but he expressed other challenges. Marlon was trying to explain what it means to be visually impaired. Marlon himself is an incredible and fascinating individual.”

Dr. Pooransingh, whose research area is in image processing, saw an opportunity to engage his students. He proposed the project as a final year undergraduate special project. One student was selected for project from among the best students in the Department. That student was Jesse Saitoo, a National Scholarship winner. Saitoo has become the visually impaired community’s new best friend, judging by the hugs and praises heaped on him during the handing over, which was well represented by the visually impaired community.

Saitoo hunkered down to work immediately after receiving the nod. As part of the requirements for this



UWI innovates for visually impaired: MAVERICK, a money recognition app for persons with visual challenges was handed over to benefactor groups by its creators in a ceremony where there was a deluge of praise for it by members of that community. Representing both groups in the photo above are (l-r): Marlon Parieaho who has been visually impaired for four years, Jesse Saitoo 1st class Hons. UWI graduate who developed the app, Dr Akash Pooransingh who was Saitoo’s supervisor and Professor Stephan Gift recently appointed Dean of the Faculty of Engineering

All currency feels basically the same to the visually impaired. Such individual employ techniques like folding their notes, or compartmentalizing denominations in their wallets to distinguish between notes.



A cross section on the packed audience present who witnessed the handing over of MAVERICK.

project, he had to take Visual Media Processing, a Masters course. This equipped him with the image processing theory required to execute the project. Dr. Pooransingh reported that every two weeks, Saitoo would come with a new and improved version of the app. The moment of truth came in February 2015, when Saitoo met Parieaho for the first time.

Let’s just say that things didn’t go as Jesse imagined. “Basically what Marlon said was he was disappointed, so I was disappointed,” Saitoo said of that meeting. “I went home and started back from scratch. I had to research a new method that would incorporate the feedback.”

He did just that, and not only did he eventually produce an app that did the job, he earned himself an A plus. The gravy came when he learned that the journal paper outlining his approach—one based on facial recognition algorithms—was accepted for publication by *The West Indian Journal of Engineering*. Not bad for a 22-year-old undergrad, who will be graduating this October with First Class Honours.

The project is finished; Saitoo’s got his grades, but he is still tweaking the app to perfect it. He said it needed a voice to let the user know that MAVERICK is running.

“No, I didn’t feel like Bill Gates,” Saitoo said chuckling at the comparison. “Honestly, I didn’t feel like a UWI student at an undergraduate level could impact the society in this way.” Dr. Pooransingh is excited about the prospect of doing more work with the visually impaired community. In fact, he said that the newly appointed Dean of Department, Professor Stephan Gift has shared his plans for an Innovation Centre which will see even more innovative ideas emerge from the Faculty of Engineering.

■ The MAVERICK app is currently available for download on PAVI’s website: www.pavitandt.org

INNOVATION PARK

BY VANEISA BAKSH

In the late eighties, 200 acres of land at Orange Grove in Trincity was promised, and nearly three decades later, tangible results are about to be seen. Within the next few years, Orange Grove will be the site of an Agricultural Innovation Park that will be known as The UWI's east campus. The AIP, one of a kind in the region, will occupy all of the 200 acres provided by the State, and it will feature a wide range of agricultural concepts and activities that will stimulate both insiders and outsiders.



Corn being prepared for planting at Orange Grove in Trincity

In faraway days, when the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture was the place the world's academics flocked to for training and research, ICTA was a sizeable landowner. The College had 860 acres, spread over Mt Hope, River Estate in Diego Martin and Santa Cruz by 1960.

But after the Agricultural College gave way to the St. Augustine Campus of The UWI, it began to lose its acreage. River Estate went to housing, and a significant proportion at Mt Hope was given over to the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex, which also houses the Faculty of Medical Sciences. The 100 acres that supported the University Field Station was trimmed to facilitate the Uriah Butler Highway.

A lot of land had been lost, and the State offered to compensate.

In the late eighties, 200 acres of land at Orange Grove in Trincity was promised, and nearly three decades later, tangible results are about to be seen.

Within the next few years, Orange Grove will be the site of an Agricultural Innovation Park that will be known as The UWI's east campus. The AIP, one of a kind in the region, will occupy all of the 200 acres provided by the State, and it will feature a wide range of agricultural concepts and activities that will stimulate both insiders and outsiders.

How it came about is an interesting story.

It is on 200 acres, just north of the Piarco International Airport and it is irrigated by three individual water systems: east, west and middle of the site. It doesn't look like much more than grass and trees these days, but when it is finished, it will be a fascinating addition to the Caribbean landscape as the first agricultural innovation park in these parts.

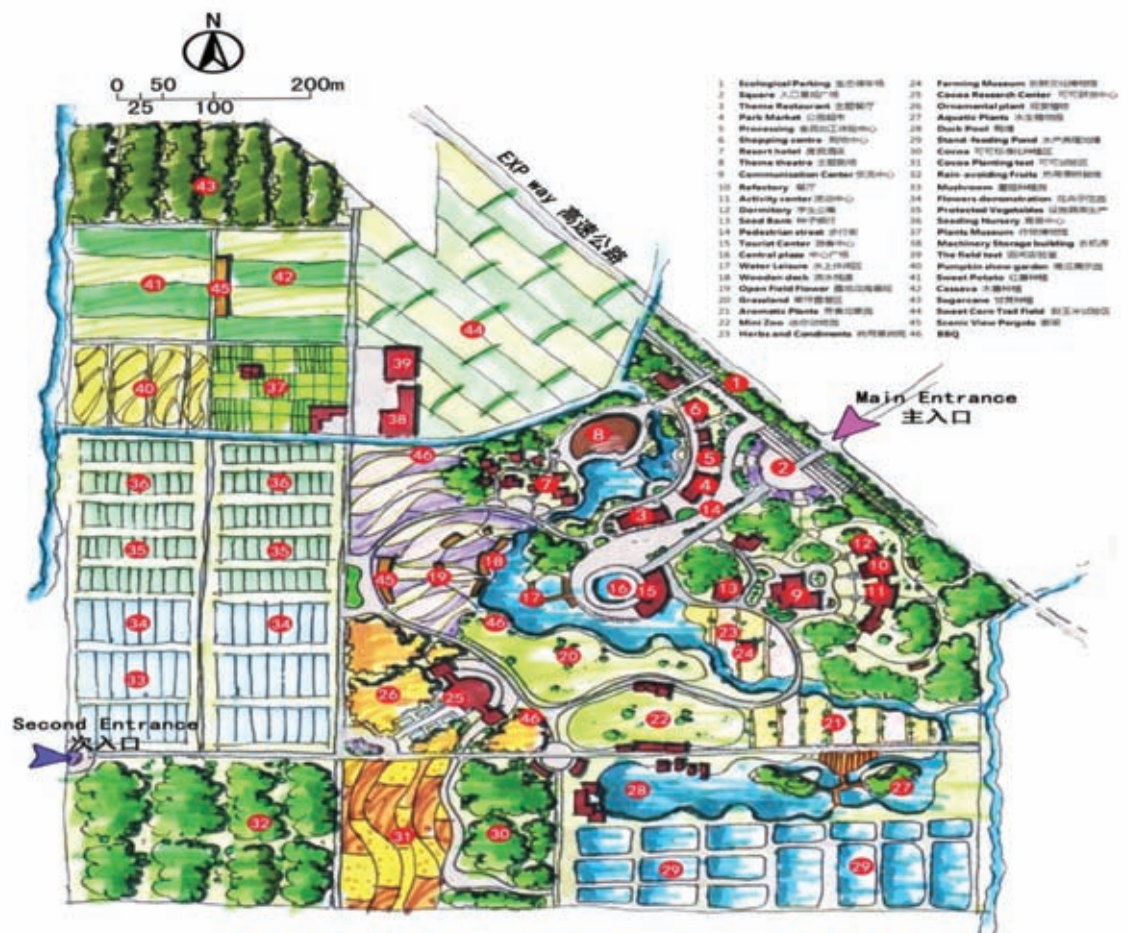
This is the main component of the UWI-CAU Agricultural Innovation Park (AIP), a joint project of The UWI and China Agricultural University, which is currently being constructed at Orange Grove in Trincity. According to the design, The East Campus site is to be divided into seven areas, technology service (Region 1); aquatic production; leisure and recreation; commercial, mini zoo and the two largest allocations, crop (45 acres) and horticulture (60 acres).

While some of the teaching and learning will take place on the 15 acres allocated to

Region 1 which will house the main building, a video conference facility; a library; multi-function labs and classrooms, most of the space enables an outdoor, practical learning environment.

The 45 acres for crops will support production and demonstrations for root vegetables, corn, pumpkin, etc, and a plant museum. Similar use will be made of the 60 acres for horticulture which is allocated for greenhouse production. The leisure and recreation areas (science popularization Zone) earmarked for 35 acres will be the spaces where most of you, the public visitors, will become most familiar with, as you walk through avenues and gardens lit with solar lamps or wind energy ones, or enter a photovoltaic building that is the tourist centre on your way to check out the mini zoo, or the duck pool or even the cocoa museum. In this contemporary mix of the rustic and the urbane, you will find that man and nature can cohabit in peace, if only humans would cherish and respect nature's gifts.

AGRICULTURAL Innovation Park



70TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

■ AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION PARK – ISSUE ARCHIVE MAY 2015

For some time, the Faculty of Food and Agriculture (FFA) had quietly been making its wish list but found it challenging to find resources to actualize it. Managing the 200 acres as farming land had been quite a stretch due to limited resources to support the development. However, as the Campus sought external partnership for the development of AIP, the Faculty has focused on transforming the Orange Grove field into a productive farm land primarily to support training of students and research while utilizing revenue generated to offset cost and acquire new technology.

“Growing crops on 200 acres needs to be done with caution since it can affect the livelihood of small holder farmers. As the farm further develops through acquisition of value addition technologies, it will start making seeds of certain crops available to farmers for planting ensuring more symbiotic relationship in pursuit of advancement of food security objectives of the country and the CARICOM,” says Dr. Isaac Bekele, Dean of the FFA.

Students have also been going there to do practical research and to get hands-on experience. It has been key as a teaching support and a site for experimentation and internship.

Currently an experiment evaluating various irrigation technologies is being undertaken in collaboration with Dr. Dave Goorahoo, a visiting professor from the Center for Irrigation Technology (CIT), California State University, Fresno.

Dr Govind Seepersad, Deputy Dean of the FFA, tells of the concept of ‘precision agriculture’ which will be evaluated by an interdisciplinary team. The precision comes from the use of remote sensing and drone technology, exciting innovations in the field that allows for optimal use of land and ideal observation in order to fine-tune crop management.

“These two pieces of technology [the irrigation systems and the drones] put us on par with the best universities in the world,” says Dr. Seepersad, adding that they are also working with the University of York in Canada.

According to Dean Bekele, the initial planning exercise for the AIP was undertaken by a team of academics and engineers from partnering institutions of the Chinese Agricultural University (CAU) and the FFA in April 2014. The implementation of the plan has been underway in a staggered mode. For instance, a fruit orchard is being set up on about 10 acres at Orange Grove in addition to specially designed greenhouses of 2000m² for testing and evaluation for the humid tropics. The Faculty has already established a citrus orchard in Debe on 8.5 acres; following a Brazilian model.

“We may be the originators of the Julie mango in the world,” says Dr. Seepersad, recalling that Caroni Ltd had a mango orchard at La Gloria in Princes Town, but it no longer exists. Mango is moving away from being one of the non-traditional Caribbean food basket items, he says, for instance, “the Israelis and Australians have been doing a lot of mango research and are large in mangos.” These initiatives contain enormous potential for advancing the Trinidad and Tobago agri-food sector’s sustainable development agenda. However, the Faculty is well aware there needs to be investment in research and technology for the realization of the goal. With

investment in research and technology and the partnership already in place, a strong foundation has been laid for sustainable advancement. It is for this singular goal that in December 2014, Professor K.E. Bingsheng, President of the China Agricultural University and Professor Clement Sankat, Principal of The UWI St. Augustine Campus signed the implementation agreement of the UWI-CAU Agricultural Innovation Park.

“In order to further develop agricultural education, research, experimentation and demonstration in agriculture, the Parties will test new varieties, facilities, equipment, technologies, concepts and models at the Park. The Parties will also demonstrate cropping patterns and production flows of distinctive crops currently cultivated in Trinidad and Tobago,” says the agreement.

The agreement also covers collaboration between the parties in training graduate students at the master and doctoral levels, and work on the possibility of the award of joint or double degrees to the successful candidates through a split-site engagement.

Dean Bekele says they are evaluating and testing new crops from China: Chinese squash, peppers, bitter melon, ten varieties of corn and pumpkin while they are waiting for the infrastructure to be set up.

“As part of partnership in training, two students are currently at CAU pursuing the MSc degree in plant breeding. Then they will return to pursue the PhD programme in crop breeding and improvement in FFA through joint CAU/FFA supervision in the AIP facility. Currently, Cameedra Ram and Kezia Blackman are engaged in this programme and we are making arrangements to recruit three more candidates to join the scheme from August 2015.”

He is proud that the AIP will be technology-driven at every stage of the production post-harvest chain. He says that although the AIP is referenced as tied to the East Campus, it encompasses the three UWI farms – Orange Grove, Debe and the Field Station at Mt Hope – totaling 305 acres of farm lands falling under the management of the FFA. However, the Dean expressed the need to further expand the farm land area to facilitate hands on training of our students as part of the University’s commitment and our effort to prepare work-ready graduates. “We have communicated this need to the relevant authority and we await a response,” he said.

The food security agenda of the country and the region is tied to the presence of technology-proficient, entrepreneurial and dedicated agricultural graduates interested in pursuing the business of agriculture, operating in a venture capital environment suitable for agribusiness development. The development of the AIP will provide the technology resources needed for the training and the extra land will provide a useful input for students to develop critical farming skills utilizing technology while honing their entrepreneurial skills.

“Let us make this happen, it is within grasp,” says the Dean.

Re-Engineering a New Citrus Industry

Two years ago, The UWI began a project aimed to re-engineer the local citrus industry, which has been decimated by abandonment and low profitability.

Under the supervision of the St Augustine Campus Principal, Professor Clement Sankat and researcher Dr. Govind Seepersad, Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Food and Agriculture, a high-density citrus orchard was set up at the Debe campus with funding from the Trinidad and Tobago RDI Fund.

New field architecture involves spacing of 2 metres within the row and 7 metres between the rows. This is geared at high levels of mechanization, from weed control to harvesting.

Faced with a shortage of plants, researchers also decided to plant rootstock directly in the field and graft in-situ. This technique has two direct benefits (i) it speeds up production and (ii) it secures your plants against thieves.

Grafting in the field also had some new advantages in tree training where arching the branches generated strong shoots from the new buds.



Dr. Govind Seepersad checks out the first citrus yields at the Debe campus.

A Global We

The Facebook sense of belonging

BY DARA WILKINSON BOBB

“I am very much the beneficiary of the sense of belonging that one gets when one is from a very specific small place,” said Maxine Williams, Global Director of Diversity at Facebook. “This concept of community is something we have had the benefit of. We know who we are. There are less variables involved.”

Williams was the feature speaker at a Distinguished Open Lecture on Social Media and the Creation of Global Communities. The well-attended address was presented on April 10, 2017 at the Teaching and Learning Complex of The UWI, St. Augustine, as an initiative of The Office of Institutional Advancement and Internationalisation.

Speaking in a register that deftly blended formality and informality as well as Standard English and Creole, Williams immediately created a sense of connectedness with her audience and her childhood home, Trinidad.

She shared a personal narrative of having the sense that there was something “beyond” when you looked out past Wrightson Road (beyond the waters of our shores), something that made you wonder about it, but something that ultimately you are entitled to. We have a sense of adhering to these national boundaries that we never set up. Indeed, as a former Rhodes Scholar who has practised law in the UK, been a broadcast journalist and presenter, and has worked on development and human rights issues internationally, Williams has never hesitated to challenge that.

“I developed a sense that everything else was mine too,” she said.

“The sense of community, for me, it was here and it was there (too).”

It is understood that Facebook is all about building communities that enable connections, among them supportive connections, not limited by traditional boundaries of geography, financial constraints or technological divides. Indeed, in some of the cases that Williams shared, knowledge was no longer aspirational yet elusive, but a mere click away.

There were students using Facebook to form global study groups even where natural disasters or lack of wireless access would typically impede their academic progress. There was one case of a woman in the mountains of Columbia learning to compost by being connected to an agricultural entrepreneur in China through Facebook. In 2014, when there was an outbreak of Zika in Latin America, Facebook provided aggregated data about public conversations around Zika that ultimately enabled UNICEF to strategically reach out to the public. There is a Facebook service called Safety Check which can be



Maxine Williams: “I developed a sense that everything else was mine too.”

accessed if there is a crisis somewhere in the world so that those affected can let their friends and family know, through Facebook, that they are safe.

Williams said Facebook seeks to think globally and act locally. The global communities created provide a place and a space – a sense of belonging. Indeed, said Williams, someone may be suffering and feeling alone, and where scale is an issue there may be no one around to support, but certainly there are others around the world.

She noted that for every ten people connected to the internet, one is trying to rise out of poverty, and 140 million new jobs could be generated just by enabling such an internet connection. As such, Facebook is promoting a project called internet.org including Free Basics to provide connectivity in traditionally under-served areas.

Williams said with Facebook there are no barriers to entry and it is free. Indeed, she said, having a tool like this would be particularly useful, for we recognize that there are things which are beyond us, but which ultimately connect us.



Bloggers busy at it during the lecture.

Kareem Marcelle: The First Scholar

BY REBECCA ROBINSON

“He represented the best that East Port of Spain had to offer,” said an outgoing minister of government. The line could easily describe Kareem Marcelle, a young man who has set aside his own turbulent life to serve others in the East Port of Spain region and who, because of his activism, has earned the Makandal Daaga Scholarship to study Law at The UWI, St. Augustine Campus this academic year.

Kareem is the last of four children for his mother and father who respectively earned \$700 fortnightly as a kindergarten teacher, and \$1,500 monthly working in the market. “But we were rich in morals and good values,” he says.

He recalled that in Standard Four, just before the start of the new school year, his father said quite suddenly, that he was going to the US for three months. With two children in secondary school and two in primary school, emotional and financial upheaval ensued. His two older brothers stopped school to take jobs to help provide for the five of them. It came to light later that his father was not returning. Unknown to them, he had a wife and she had sent for him.

Kareem moved through Sacred Heart Boys R.C. to Daniels Community College, which went into receivership shortly after he started, making his hard to come by books and one shirt abruptly obsolete. He was transferred to Trinity College in Maraval, where, in spite of the choppy start he became president of the debate club and the 2012 National Youth Parliamentarian.

At home, he began to get involved in the life of the community. He is still the PRO for the Beetham Gardens Village Council, which organizes inter-community sports and cultural competitions aimed at uniting factions in the area. For three months (June-August) every year, young ladies who enter the queen show are trained not just to walk on a stage, but also to be role models, and the netball and football competitions end with a grand family day. Kareem is also the PRO for the Positive Impact Organization, another community-based initiative that provides mentorship and counseling services for schools in the area without guidance counselors.

Another community outreach organization Kareem is part of is BEYOND, which is the Beetham Estate Youth Outreach Network Development. He is the Youth and Education Officer and assists in running after-school programmes, one of which organizes for students to complete their SBAs.

“It’s really easy not to hand in SBAs, the cost of a colour print is one dollar a page, plus the cost of trips to Internet cafes. When you hand it in and the teacher



Kareem Marcelle, the first recipient of the award.
PHOTO: ATIBA CUDJOE

marks on it, where is more money coming from to re-print a whole project? Many children from this area do not have access to these resources, so they do not hand in SBAs. This was my struggle too. I know,” he says.

Because these factors are the reality for children from the area, volunteers, usually graduates of the programme, come back and help current students stay on track to handing in SBAs, frequently helping with the cost of printing. BEYOND also helps annually by gifting 25 families with completed booklist items that include uniforms – the scarcity of which is also familiar to him.

How does a self-made successful young man deal with the society-imposed stigma attached to people from the Beetham? Kareem: “The bad elements in my community represent 1% of the people who live there. Most people are law-abiding and hard-working citizens. And personally, I try to tell people where I am from early! I think I am a good example of a Beetham resident and I am not running away from it.”

He wants to be an attorney-at-law as he sees law as the foundation of his community, the place that has filled gaps in his family life and where he continues to thrive.

Every year he personally hosts a children’s Christmas party for about 1,500 on Christmas Day, as he knows “what is it like to not have a gift to go outside with on Christmas morning among other children.” Kareem seems motivated to give and to do by all the deficits he experienced in his earlier years. As PRO for the Beetham Gardens Village Council he is currently organizing the area’s first community career fair, which will come off in November.

Kareem was a facilities assistant at NIDCO for the three years prior to winning the scholarship. He has since relinquished the position for a combination of reading for his Law degree and continuing to work in his community. It is really fitting that this young, bright star wins the first offer of the Makandal Daaga Scholarship in Law.



Ganja farmer Junior Gordon from Westmoreland, Jamaica (at left) is reputed to grow some very high-grade marijuana, with THC content in excess of 23 per cent. That compares to the 9-13 THC content normally found in Jamaican ganja. Gordon is a premier ganja grower in Jamaica. Here he talks with musician and herbalist Christopher “Birdheye” Gordon (at right) during a tour of Tender Buds Farm. In 2015, Jamaica decriminalised small amounts of ganja for personal use, legalised medical ganja, and allowed folks to grow up to five ganja plants in their households. Rastafari adults can use it for sacramental purposes. Many farmers and others are looking forward to increased ganja tourism. PHOTO BY MARTEI KORLEY VIA LARGEUP BLOG SITE (<http://www.largeup.com/2017/03/27/birdheye-all-peoples-medicine-jamaica-tender-buds/>).

WAITING TO EXHALE: It’s time to reform our ganja laws

We can learn a lot about enlightened cannabis policies from Europe, says Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine at the recent EU Law conference.

BY SHEREEN ANNALI

“Law reform for marijuana can no longer be ignored,” says Prof Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, who believes our current prohibitionist approach is “ineffective, incongruous, obsolete and deeply unjust.” Speaking at the recent EU-CARICOM Law Conference held at the University Inn on September 26-27, she said the European Union has “led the way in rethinking the issue of marijuana, and more broadly, drug control. Europe has provided the intellectual leadership and the rest of the world is now following.”

In an interesting presentation (see her full speech at UWI Today online), Prof Antoine said scientific research, empirical data and Caribbean public opinion all now support a serious overhaul of our outdated laws on cannabis. Our current laws criminalise both

the plant and its users, and even patients taking the drug for medical reasons such as pain relief. Current laws also excessively and often unfairly punish small-level, lower income users who have received longer jail sentences than those meted out to people committing more serious crimes.

Prof Antoine recently completed a two-year exercise as part of a team reviewing Caribbean Community policies on cannabis. She was Chair of the CARICOM Commission on Marijuana, which submitted its report to CARICOM heads in July 2018. The full findings of the downloadable report are online (see Caricom website, Report of the Caricom Regional Commission on Marijuana).

Rather than treating cannabis use as a criminal

offence, it should be dealt with as a public health issue and/or a human rights issue, said Prof Antoine. Just as alcohol and tobacco are not deemed “dangerous drugs” but are controlled substances which are legal and regulated, so, too should cannabis be decriminalised and regulated, she advocated.

Prof Antoine said medical evidence establishes that cannabis is less harmful, or no more harmful than some other substances that are currently not prohibited or criminalised under law, such as alcohol; several studies have established this.

That’s not to say that cannabis has no harmful effects. Prof Antoine said evidence shows it has had negative effects on adolescent brains, affecting memory, learning and attention, and may put some

70TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

■ EU-CARICOM LAW CONFERENCE: MARIJUANA AND THE LAW PRESENTATION – ISSUE ARCHIVE OCTOBER 2018



At right, Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine at the recent EU-CARICOM Law Conference held September 26-27 at the University Inn and Conference Centre, St Augustine. Seen to her left is Ambassador of the European Union to T&T, Arend Biesebroek. PHOTO: ANEEL KARIM

youth at risk for early onset of psychosis. Therefore cannabis is not recommended for young people whose brains are still developing.

But for adults who use cannabis, the CARICOM Commission on Marijuana found that on balance, the proven medical benefits of cannabis in several areas outweigh the risks.

Marijuana has been used for medicinal purposes for more than 3,000 years. Medical marijuana is used for treatment of glaucoma and epilepsy. There are at least two active chemicals in marijuana that can have medicinal applications. Those are cannabidiol (CBD) and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). THC has pain-relieving properties and is largely responsible for the high. People take cannabidiol by mouth for anxiety, bipolar disorder, a muscle disorder called dystonia, seizures, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, and schizophrenia. THC extracts are used to treat nausea from cancer medicines, to increase appetites in AIDS patients, and for other uses.

For most of our Caribbean history, marijuana was a free substance, grown naturally and easily throughout the region, and part of many people's ethnic cultural heritage, noted Prof Antoine. Current draconian ganja laws were responses to international treaties which deemed cannabis a "dangerous drug" without any value, medicinal or otherwise, she said. "Harsh, criminal penalties were then imposed on cannabis in all its forms within a context of strict liability, meaning

no discretion or mitigation is allowed. This was despite the lack of scientific or medical data to support this classification," said Prof Antoine.

She explained: "This is significant given that the harshness of the law was premised on this supposed egregious harm. There is credible evidence that its acquisition of an illegal status was also due to attempts to stifle competition with alcohol, which had just emerged out of prohibition itself. This classification, first in international treaties, was spearheaded by the US and was automatically followed domestically. Documents declassified and released to the public in 2002 illustrate that the US Shafer Commission, established by Nixon to cement marijuana laws, came to the opposite conclusion. Its 1972 Report to the US Congress challenged this classification, finding that marijuana presented little harm and could 'not justify the intrusion by the criminal law into private behaviour'."

Prof Antoine said the CARICOM Marijuana Commission found that "the existing prohibitionist regime induces more harm than any possible adverse consequences of cannabis/marijuana itself."

She noted we can learn some lessons not only from the European Union but also more close to home, from Jamaica, which decriminalised ganja three years ago in 2015. She said "there has not been any discernible increase in use, or in psychosis cases. Further, criminal arrests have decreased, and Jamaica has begun to reap benefits from the cannabis industry."



What is Cannabis?

Cannabis is a psychoactive drug from the Cannabis plant used for medical, recreational or spiritual purposes. The main psychoactive part of cannabis is tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), one of 483 known compounds in the plant. Cannabis can be used by smoking, vaporizing, within food, or as an extract.

Countries that have legalized the **medical** use of cannabis include Australia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom. About 30 states in the US have legalised medical marijuana.

Canada (effective 17 October 2018) and Uruguay are the only countries that have fully legalized the consumption and sale of **recreational** cannabis nationwide. In the United States, nine states and the District of Columbia have legalized sales and consumption although it remains federally illegal.



Recommendations

- CARICOM Member States should act together to formulate a formal, regional position with a clear, informed roadmap, to give credibility to policy reform initiatives. Consider partnering with powerful allies like those in Europe, Canada, Uruguay and other Latin American states, to press for amendments to the Conventions.
- In the interim, Member States should declare that the treaties contravene human rights principles in CARICOM states to ground a justification for avoiding treaty obligations.
- Dismantle cannabis prohibition. Replace it with a regulated framework akin to that for alcohol and tobacco, which are harmful substances that are not criminalised.
- Classify cannabis as a "controlled substance", and not a "dangerous drug" with "no value".
- Legalise marijuana use for medical purposes.
- Remove all criminal penalties from marijuana laws. In this way, cannabis sales and profits will no longer be treated as proceeds of crime under anti-money laundering and proceeds of crime legislation.
- Protect children and young people from cannabis by prohibiting its use for certain age limits, except for medical reasons.
- Pass drug-driving laws.
- Decriminalise possession of small amounts of ganja for use in private households and for personal use. This means allowing limited home-growing for a small number of plants.



For adults who use cannabis, the CARICOM Commission on Marijuana found that on balance, the proven medical benefits of cannabis in several areas outweigh the risks.

70th ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE



And that's a wrap!

It was a year-long celebration of the 70th anniversary of The UWI, and it hits a grand finale on December 19 at the regional headquarters in Mona called, "Opening The UWI to the World: The Next 70 Years. All through The UWI territories, events were organized to mark the milestone and there were so many that on any given day it was possible to find something happening at the different spaces.

At St. Augustine there were several as well, too many to mention here, but we thought we should close this commemorative issue with a glimpse at our hallmark productions. One is the annual UWI FETE. This year's Secret Garden continued the tradition established in 1991 of providing a wonderful occasion to truly launch the Carnival season while raising funds for The UWI Development and Endowment Fund which provides scholarship to undergraduate students. The next Fete, Champagne and Gold takes place on February 3, 2019, and you can attend and support our students while having a ball.

On a more formal note, a Black Tie dinner was hosted by the Human Resources Department to celebrate 70 years of beautiful people. Held at the University Inn and Conference Centre, it was an evening worth waiting decades for. PHOTOS: ANEEL KARIM AND ATIBA CUDJOE.

