



UWI TODAY

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES • ST. AUGUSTINE CAMPUS

SUNDAY 5 NOVEMBER, 2017



THAT MAGIC MOMENT

It was not the usual sedate walk across the platform when Agnelia Reyes, a Theatre Arts major from the Faculty of Humanities and Education received her scroll from the St. Augustine Campus Registrar, **Richard Saunders**, at the graduation ceremony on October 28, at the Campus. Her twirl and flourish brought smiles to everyone's faces and were probably a reflection of what every graduate wants to do as they reach that special moment of their lives. PHOTO: GUYTN OTTLEY.

MEMORY LANE - 04
The Year Was 1966
■ A Student Remembers



TECHNOLOGY - 12
Helping Hands
■ Science to the Rescue



INNOVATION - 11
Man and Machines
■ Rodney's Mechanical World



HALF-MARATHON - 15
All Cancers
■ The Run of Support





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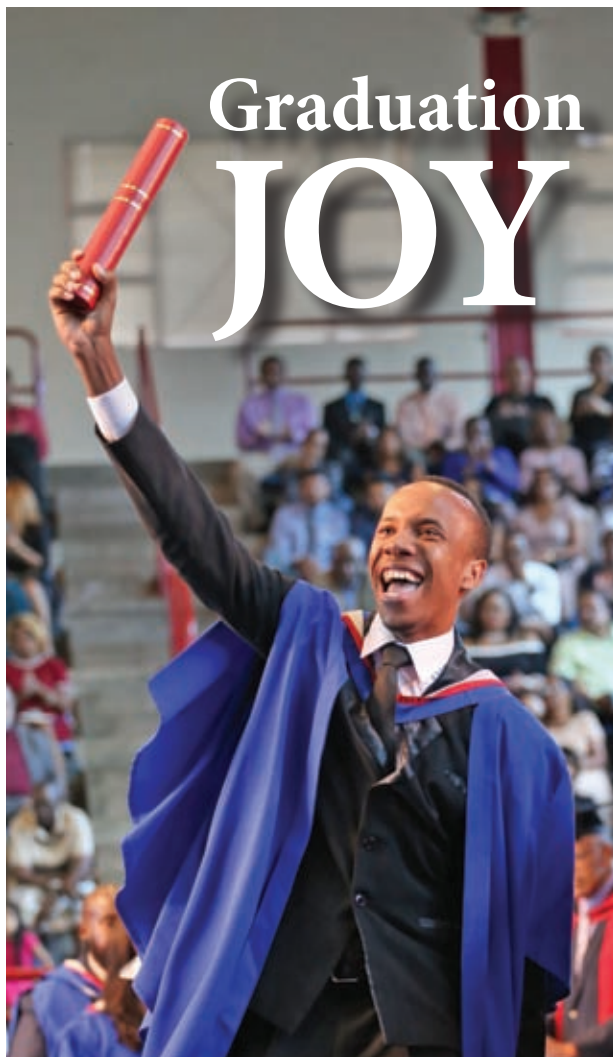
Research priorities align closely with development priorities identified by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and take into account areas such as environmental issues, health and wellness, gender equity, and the critical importance of innovation and entrepreneurship to future Caribbean growth.

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GUEST MESSAGE

The Role of the Community College

BY GILLIAN PAUL



COSTAATT was established in October 2000 as a multi-campus community college. While other Caribbean islands had adapted and introduced the north American model into their higher education systems since the 1960s, Trinidad and Tobago had relied on The UWI and a range of technical institutes to meet human resource development needs. Almost two decades and 15,000 graduates later, there can be no denying the transformative impact of COSTAATT on the national educational landscape. Understanding the role and value of the community college in the creation of a diversified, integrated and responsive higher education system is still however, a work in progress,

In the USA, community colleges account for over 45% of students pursuing higher education studies. Affordability, responsiveness and social value are three hallmarks of the community college model adopted and adapted by countries as diverse as South Africa, Chile and Japan. Known as “democracy’s college” in the US, community colleges are a major engine for promoting social equity by ensuring that all citizens who have the aptitude for tertiary level studies are provided with alternate pathways and multiple opportunities to realise their potential, enhance socio-economic mobility and improve their quality of life.

Parents and self-financing adults are able to lower the cost of obtaining a bachelor’s degree by enrolling in their local community college and completing an associate degree which, through articulation and transfer agreements with universities, can count for up to two years of a four-year bachelor’s degree programme. Agreements between community colleges and universities enable universities to reduce programme delivery costs for undergraduate education and focus more funding and resources on

strengthening post-graduate studies and research.

Responsiveness is perhaps the most valuable asset that community colleges bring to a nation’s higher education agenda. Their comprehensive mission empowers them to offer a wide range of programmes, including career education programmes for direct employment after graduation, transfer programmes that articulate with bachelor’s degrees, community education programmes and services which respond to specific needs of the community where the campus is located, professional education and continuing education, and customised training which is often done in consultation and collaboration with private sector firms and state agencies who need to re-skill or upskill their employees. For students, the associate degree enhances their employability by combining rigorous technical-vocational training with a general education component that addresses the soft skills so in demand by employers. Community colleges are critical enablers for students who, for diverse and valid reasons have not attained the required subjects to pursue tertiary level studies, a second chance at tertiary education access and success. At COSTAATT, our signature developmental education programme, COMPASS, has been the decisive factor in helping the thousands of students who annually fail to achieve a full CSEC pass acquire the necessary academic foundations to pursue the career of their choice. At the national and community level, the College has a record of designing and delivering programmes to meet specific needs and this has ensured the institution’s continued relevance and viability, even in challenging economic circumstances.

As a nation, we have been successful in achieving a 65% participation rate in tertiary education and can boast of having a more diverse range of public and private tertiary education providers. Each institution is committed to its mission and continued growth but the long-held goal of an integrated and efficient national education system that facilitates seamless movement for students from one level to the other is still to be achieved. As we look forward to celebrating our 20th anniversary in 2020, COSTAATT is resolved to creating the types of linkages that will bring us closer to achieving that goal.

Dr. Gillian Paul is President of the College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT).

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MEMORY LANE

The year was 1963 and Trinidad and Tobago was a very young nation, barely a year old. Young as well was The University of the West Indies and its St. Augustine Campus, an independent university for a newly independent region. And youngest of all was the College of Arts and Sciences.

Created in 1963, the College was the origin point for the study of arts, social sciences and the natural sciences at St. Augustine. The pioneering work of its staff and pupils laid the foundation for an edifice that today includes three faculties, thousands of students and leaders in the arts and sciences.

But the College's beginnings were quite humble:

"As in any first batch in a fledgling university there were many challenges," says Mr. Ramganie Bob Gopee. He knows those challenges well. Mr. Gopee was among that first batch of students, about 20 in total, who made up the student body of the new College. The challenges did not bother him then and they certainly do not bother him now.

"I feel privileged," he says, "to have attended UWI. I feel that I was a part of the seed that grew into the Faculty of Arts and Sciences."

Mr. Gopee is a professional accountant, auditor and businessman. He is the founder of the accounting firm, Bob Gopee and Associates, is an author of several books and has business interests in the tourism industry, including the well-known Par-May-La Inn in Woodbrook, Port of Spain. At 78, he is incredibly agile, in frame and wit.

"Although I'm this age, I'm still not a retiree," he says. "I love what I'm doing and when you work for yourself it's not likely you will retire."

It's an expression of the gentlemanly dynamism that characterised the tail end of the colonial era and powered the development of institutions such as The UWI.



First Class

A student of the College of Arts and Sciences recalls what it was like at the beginning

BY JOEL HENRY

In 1962, UWI St. Augustine consisted of the Faculty of Agriculture (the descendant of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture that had operated since 1922) and the Faculty of Engineering. This was not enough for those with ideals for the development of higher education in Trinidad and Tobago. With little in terms of resources and facilities, the College of Arts and Sciences was established.

"It was very pleasing and fortunate that the (College) was started. Neither I nor my family had the resources for me to go abroad and study so this was my chance to pursue further education," Mr. Gopee remembers.

He remembers also the drive to succeed shared by both the lecturers and students, 40 per cent of whom were women.

"We studied very hard and we received immense support from the professors. They had a very heavy commitment for it to work. I think that kind of commitment was contagious. We also felt it."

Among their teachers were giants of Caribbean life such as Sir Alister McIntyre, Lloyd Braithwaite, Dom Basil Matthews and Dr. Roy Thomas.

"They were shining lights. We were blessed to have them teaching us," Mr. Gopee says.

The strength of the personnel helped with the limits of the resources:

"In those days we did not have full access to the library. We had to go very early before the students (from other faculties) would come. Classes were the same. We had to use an engineering classroom or biology classroom when they were free."

Like many of his fellow students, Mr. Gopee came from a modest background. Raised in Chatham in Cedros, he came from a family of farmers. Farming was "hard work with poor remuneration" he says, but the experience taught him resilience, a lesson that came in handy as a student. Off campus he rented a house with five other students. Among them was Dr. Morgan Job.

"When we were not studying we played sports – football, volleyball and table tennis," Gopee remembers fondly. "But there was little time we were not studying. And when we were not studying we were cooking or washing clothes. We didn't see it as drudgery. We enjoyed it. There were times, going to campus at four in the morning to find an empty class to study, we would sing 'Onward Christian Soldiers'. We were on a mission."

That mission has helped them forge bonds of friendship that last to this day. Every January they have a gathering at Mr. Gopee's home.

"I believe we turned out well. We have positioned ourselves in several places in T&T," he says modestly. Among that first graduating class are academics, writers, educators, policymakers and businesspeople. Apart from his professional success Mr. Gopee, a devout Hindu, gives back to his community by offering awards to top performing elementary school students in academics, sports and culture. This past September he gave over 40 awards at a gathering of upwards of 200 guests in Cedros.

"Although I've made a good living in my life I know where I come from and am thankful for every opportunity that has been given to me," he says.

At one point in time, education, even at the secondary level, was a rare opportunity for personal and financial growth. In 1960 there were 67 students at St. Augustine. Today there are close to 18,000. With education now in abundance, Mr. Gopee recognises a change in the attitudes of students and new graduates.

"I feel sad when I see some of the products that come out of university," he says. "As an employer I am hesitant to hire someone who, fresh out of university with no experience, wants a big position and salary. There is a tremendous difference between education and work experience."

He believes The UWI has a critical role in interfacing with the private sector through programmes such as internships, to better prepare students for their professional careers.

Nevertheless, Mr. Gopee is proud to have played a role in the development of what has become one of Trinidad and the region's most important institutions. Now if only we can recover the spirit of gentle dynamism that made it possible.



The ceremony of 1966, when Mr. Gopee (above) graduated from the College of Arts and Sciences. PHOTO: ALMA JORDAN LIBRARY

The Mark of Excellence

The UWI Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Excellence 2016-2017



Chancellor of The UWI, Mr. Robert Bermudez, and Principal of the St. Augustine Campus, Professor Brian Copeland with recipients of the Awards for Excellence. PHOTO: MARIA NUNES

Six awards were presented at The UWI Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Excellence 2016-2017. These awards recognise excellence in teaching, administration and research accomplishments, service to the university community, contributions to public service, and all-round excellence in a combination of two or more of these core areas and a departmental award for service and operational excellence. This year, two new awards were added: Excellence in Multi-Campus Research Collaboration: the One-UWI Award and Excellence in International Collaboration: the Globalisation Award. The ceremony was held at the Teaching and Learning Complex of The UWI St Augustine Campus on October 25.

The 2016-2017 awardees were:

■ Excellence Award for Teaching

Dr Jacqueline Bridge, Senior Lecturer Department of Mechanical and Manufacturing and Engineering, St. Augustine Campus.

■ Excellence Award for Research Accomplishments

Professor Chris Oura, School of Veterinary Medicine, St. Augustine Campus and **Professor Ian R. Hambleton**, the George Alleyne Chronic Disease Research Centre, Cave Hill Campus (formerly the Chronic Disease Research Centre). Professor Oura specialises in Veterinary Virology and Professor Hambleton is a Professor of Biostatistics and Informatics.

■ Excellence in International Collaboration: Globalisation Award |

Professor John Agard, Principal Investigator. The Project for Ecosystem Services, Department of Life Sciences, St. Augustine Campus was a global initiative aimed at better integrating ecosystem assessment and economic valuation of ecosystem services into poverty reduction and national sustainable development planning.

■ Excellence Award for Contribution to Public Service

Dr. Indra Haraksingh, Lecturer, Department of Physics, St. Augustine Campus.

■ Excellence in Multi-Campus Research Collaboration: The One UWI Award

Evaluation of the CARICOM Heads of Government 2007

Port of Spain Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) Summit Declaration – Dr T. Alafia Samuels, Principal Investigator, the George Alleyne Chronic Disease Research Centre, Cave Hill Campus (formerly the Chronic Disease Research Centre). The project's objective was to evaluate, seven years on, the implementation of the CARICOM NCD Summit Political Declaration in order to learn lessons to support and accelerate its further implementation. It involved secondary data analysis for all 20 CARICOM countries, in-depth case studies in seven countries and key informant interviews concerning non-communicable diseases, the leading cause of death and disability in the region.



UWI GOLF CHALLENGE – 2017

The Chairman and Members of the Board of the **UWI Development & Endowment Fund** are pleased to recognize the following companies for their highly appreciated partnership in the success of the *UWI Golf Challenge – 2017*. As a direct result of their generosity the Fund will be able to maintain the number of bursaries being awarded to deserving students at the St. Augustine Campus for the academic year 2017/18.

We look forward to your continued support of the UWI Golf Challenge on September 24, 2018.

Congratulations to our winners

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5	Emerson Technologies Limited	Rodney Phillop John Henry Robbie Narine	4.2	68	63.8
6	Shanghai Construction Limited	Bill Ramrattan Ken Pollard Dave Rajkumar	3.9	68	64.1
7	Beacon Insurance	Randy Dhalloo Fabien Lee Foon Kissoon Gannes	68	3.3	64.7
8	Alpha Engineering	Sarwan Ragbir Philroy Phillip Chris Richards (Jr)	3.9	69	65.1

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■ CELEBRATIONS

Valedictorians 2017



Mr Yenver Caezar

Bachelor of Science, International Relations (Special), Public Sector Management (Minor) First Class Honours, Faculty of Social Sciences

Mr. Caezar switched from Biochemistry to International Relations when he realized he loves global affairs, public speaking and debating.

His goal is to work with

regional bodies such as Caricom and the OECS, and eventually, to enter politics in his country, “with my eyes set on the portfolio of Minister of Tourism and my ultimate dream is to one day become the prime minister of St. Lucia.”

While some decry the state of politics and shun it, he takes a different view. “Many people try to deter the youth from political ambitions because of its unscrupulous reputation,” he says, “but I believe that the onus is on the youth to offer themselves as candidates and aim to be the change which we all dream to happen.”

In 2016, he was elected International Affairs Committee Chairperson of the Guild of Students, and in 2017, he was Treasurer.



Mr Rondelle Keller

Bachelor of Laws First Class Honours Faculty of Law

At The UWI, Mr. Keller took advantage of the opportunities available to students and that propel them beyond a strictly academic experience. He was on both the Debate and Swim teams; he learned

Chinese at the Centre for Language Learning; took advantage of the study abroad programme to spend a year in China; and was part of the team that represented the Campus at the Jessup 2017 International Law Moot Competition in Washington, DC. He says UWI has made him a “global citizen.”

He says the secrets to his success are late nights, early mornings, and surrounding himself with people who are positive and supportive. His parents are a great influence in his life.

Mr. Keller plans to attend the Hugh Wooding Law School and then be admitted to the bar. Ultimately, he would like to serve his country by entering the political arena, perhaps as a future Attorney General.



Ms Karisa Bridgelal

Bachelor of Arts, Literatures in English with Double Minors in Human Resource Management and Psychology First Class Honours Faculty of Humanities & Education

Ms. Bridgelal's love for literature began while she was a student at Holy Faith Convent in

Penal, where she was influenced by the passion of her teachers. At the UWI, she found further inspiration from her lecturers, particularly the late Dr. Giselle Rampaul, in whose footsteps she wanted to follow as she plans to lecture in Literature one day.

Karisa is currently pursuing her Master's in English Literature. This sci-fi and fantasy buff is examining the work of Caribbean writers in that genre.

“My hope is to someday add to the literary canon in the Caribbean as a critic or writer and have students use my work as a frame of reference. I am currently pursuing my thesis in Caribbean Science Fiction, a genre that is fairly new to our region and I hope I can add something of substance to this community,” she said.



Ms Zia Barnard

Bachelor of Science, Biology with Specializations in Biotechnology and Microbiology, First Class Honours, Faculty of Science & Technology

Zia Barnard attended the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in her native St. Lucia, where she developed

a keen interest in Mathematics and Biology. After graduation, financial constraints forced her to delay continuing her schooling. She spent a year teaching while applying for scholarships. In 2014 she was awarded a UWI Open Scholarship which covered tuition, fees, books and housing. Without it, she says she would have never been able to attend UWI.

The last of four children, Zia says her generous, caring and goal-oriented older sister, Zanna, is her ultimate mentor. With her love of nature adventure, between 2007 till 2011, she was a member of the Youth Environment Forum of the St. Lucia National Trust, advocating for the conservation of her country's natural biodiversity. Her environmental work combined with her academic studies helped her understand the biological purposes of plants and animals in the food chain.



Ms Amy Victor

Bachelor of Science, International Relations (Special), Spanish (Minor) Second Class Honours (Upper Division) Faculty of Social Sciences

While at Naparima Girls' High School, Amy Victor developed an interest in languages, but her fascination with International Relations began shortly before

entering the UWI when she participated in a model United Nations seminar.

She is still uncertain of where she will go now that she has done some of both.

“Many persons would like to believe that as a university graduate they must have their future all figured out. This is the biggest myth because only upon graduating, I realised that is impossible to have it completely figured out.”

What she does know is that she wants to make a difference to this world.

One issue she is working on in the short term is the lack of affordable child care, which limits the economic opportunities available to single women. Her first step will be to launch an early childhood centre that provides 24-hour child care at affordable rates.



Ms Sofiyya Hassanali

Bachelor of Science, Optometry Second Class Honours (Upper Division) Faculty of Medical Sciences

Service has always been a part of Ms. Hassanali's life. Born in Trinidad, she grew up in Florida, where she worked with Islamic and non-profit organizations.

In Trinidad, she organized the Barakah Foundation Free Medical Clinics, which take place every four to six months in Chaguanas. At UWI, she and her classmates conducted a Vision Mission trip to Jamaica, providing eye care to people in need. She strives to be a good role model, and believing in the importance of inspiring children, she hosts a television show, ‘Story Time with Sofiyya’ on the Islamic Broadcasting Network. She also works with the Islamic Home for Children in Gasparillo.

While she wants to make a difference in the world, she believes in setting realistic goals. “I believe in fixing my own backyard first,” she said. “I want to help our people of Trinidad and the Caribbean reach a higher standard of living.”

Go Follow Your Dreams!

This is an excerpt of the address given by Chancellor of The UWI, Mr. Robert Bermudez, at the Graduation ceremonies at the St. Augustine Campus from October 26-28, 2017.

I've been told that the graduation ceremonies at the St. Augustine Campus have been growing steadily over the last decade. In the academic year that just ended, 18,327 students were enrolled, but there is something else that caught my eye.

Trinidad and Tobago is well known as a place of many cultures. It is a meeting place of nations, and the St. Augustine Campus reflects this.

Here we are, rounding off the southern tip of the chain of islands, and we manage to attract 562 students from countries that are not part of the contributing territories. In fact, those 562 students come from 55 different countries! It is no wonder that this campus and this country are so rich in diversity.

You are leaving here today with a higher degree of appreciation of the diverse cultures that surround you; it will stand you in good stead.

As this phase of your life comes to a close, so does another begin, this is the natural course of things. You are now about to set off on the greatest of adventures – your life! What you make of this adventure is entirely in your hands. You will only be limited by your ambition. I advise you to aim for the stars – nothing else will do! The only regrets you are likely to have in life are not the things you did, but the things that you failed to do.

You are now independent. You have the tools to make your way in the world. For many, this will be the time when you begin rearranging the strands of your life. You may be leaving home, finding a job, asserting your independence.

You have been described as millennials; as having a sense of entitlement, as not having discipline, as being self-absorbed. I know better. You suffer from a wonderful affliction, it is called youth. You will prove your critics wrong; you will be the best of generations.

You have now completed this phase of your formal education and will soon have that piece of paper for which you have toiled so hard. The piece of paper is of little consequence; what is of immense value is the education which you have obtained from attending university. The ability to think critically, to learn, is of far greater value than any material possession, as it is an asset which can never be lost or taken from you. It should be the foundation upon which you will build your life.

Do not allow anyone to ever tell you that you can't achieve your ambition, or to discourage you from your dreams. Walk away from that advice. Believe in yourself. Go follow your dreams!

There will always be obstacles in your life, but you can overcome them.

The story of a young woman who is graduating this year with First Class Honors, Dahryn Augustine is a compelling example. At the beginning of her final year at the Faculty of Science and Technology, her sister was diagnosed with cancer, Dahryn dropped everything to be with her. Sadly, one year later she passed away. Dahryn was so devastated that she considered not completing her degree. In her words:

"Despair, disappointment and sadness had filled my heart, and I no longer wanted to continue. I was confused



"There is strength in knowing where you have come from, but we cannot allow ourselves to be paralyzed by our historical circumstance."

and felt that my leave of absence was to no avail. I did not help her; I did not save her." She pulled herself together. She did not give up.

Dahryn is from Dominica and cannot be with us today as she has been dealt another blow, but we can be certain that she has the strength to rise to the challenge. She is an inspiration!

We must become more assured of ourselves and not be afraid of change. We are a talented people but our past too often follows us to our detriment. There is strength in knowing where you have come from, but we cannot allow ourselves to be paralyzed by our historical circumstance. We all came to these islands under different conditions. We are no longer who our forefathers were; we are what we make of ourselves.

You are about to enter an exciting world, full of possibilities; a place where you can make your dreams come true. To be successful you have to be curious, innovative, analytical, to communicate well, be a team player and most importantly, you must have strong ethical values.

To be successful you have to be curious, innovative, analytical; you have to communicate well, be a team player and most importantly, you must have strong ethical values.

Always define yourselves by the substance of your character. As an educated West Indian you hold a responsibility to your community to provide assistance to those who have been less fortunate. I would like to encourage each of you to mentor a young person who without your help might fail. That way you will make our communities stronger and our societies better.

As the poet has said, "The greatness of a person is not in how much wealth he acquires, but in his integrity and his ability to affect those around him positively."

I would like to see a renewed sense of civic responsibility. Our geography, our history, our size, our culture and our economies give us reasons to consider each other as family.

This University, spread as it is across the region, represents all of our commonalities and all of our differences. You are now part of the UWI family, use it to your advantage.

Your graduation is a time to rejoice, to celebrate your success with your family and friends. It represents a crossroad in your lives, and the lives of your parents, your guardians and all those who have played a part in getting you to this point.

Those who supported you on this journey have much to be proud of today, this is as much their success as it is yours; never underestimate the huge contribution that your family and friends make to your success.

We should reflect for a moment on the damage that has been done to our sister islands as a consequence of

Hurricanes Irma and Maria, along with the massive flooding in Trinidad. It reminds us of how susceptible we are to climate change and natural disasters.

The responses to these crises have reassured us that we are a caring people.

In Grenada, after the graduation ceremony for the Open Campus, I was asked to sign a graduation booklet for Tessa Flavien, a St. Lucian graduate who did not attend the ceremony. Tessa, who graduated with a BSc in Social Sciences, First Class Honors, donated the money she had set aside to come to her graduation to the relief effort in Dominica. Tessa has set an example for all of us, of selfless leadership, and we all congratulate her today!

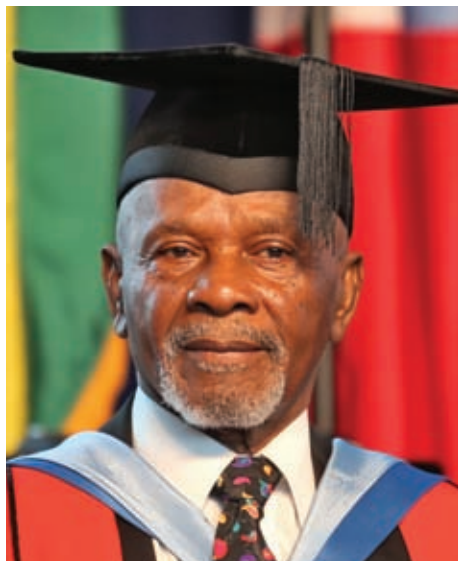
We know the rebuilding process will be long and hard, but acts like these keep us strong.

You are inheriting the problems and the blessings of your countries; the responsibility is now yours to shoulder.

Today as graduates of this University, you are proud West Indians. Be prepared to give to your community, your country, your region. You have the power and opportunity to build the countries of your dreams.

I wish you well.

THE UWI ST. AUGUSTINE HONORARY GRADUATES 2017



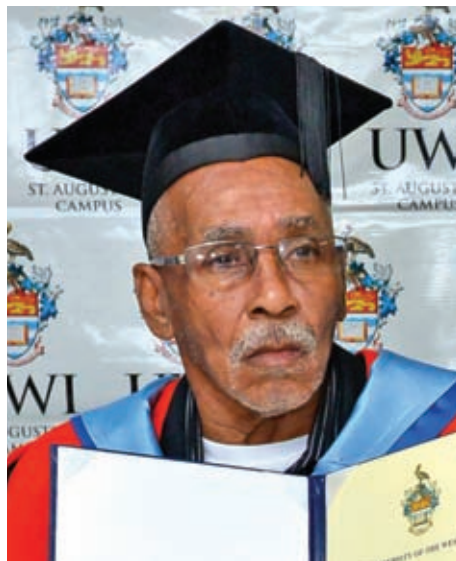
**Mr Andrew Marciano,
“Lord Superior”**

Honorary Doctor of Letters (DLitt)

Originally from Rio Claro, Mr. Andrew Marciano made his calypso debut at the Victory tent in Port of Spain. As the “Boy Wonder” he shared the stage with some of the biggest names in the business: Spoiler, Spitfire, Cypher, Pretender, Lord Blakie and Lord Melody. The year was 1954 and he was just 16 years old – the youngest calypsonian to perform locally. He was an advocate for calypso through action and in song. At the age of 19 he helped to organize a boycott of the 1957 Calypso King Competition. His calypso Brass Crown outlined the main points of contention: the racial and class discrimination that saw the Calypso King receive just \$40, while the Jaycees (Junior Chamber) Carnival Queen winner received significantly more. The following year, the Calypso King’s prize was \$1,000.

Lord Superior was the first calypsonian to protest against the practice of radio stations and the society of refraining from playing and singing calypso during the Lenten season.

In 2004, Lord Superior was honored by UNESCO for his 50 years in calypso and the Trinbago Unified Calypsonians Organization’s (TUCO) counted him among the Top 50 Calypsonians of all time. In 2012 he was honoured by the National Carnival Commission (NCC) and by the Trinidad and Tobago Publishers and Broadcasters Association’s for his role in the liberalization of local broadcasting in Trinidad and Tobago. He was awarded the Hummingbird Medal (Silver) in 2015.



Mr. Winsford “Joker” Devine,

Honorary Doctor of Letters (DLitt)

Mr. Devine grew up in Morne Diablo in South Trinidad where he played the steelpan with his cousin’s band and learned the basics of reading and writing music notation. Apart from that however, he is a self-taught musician. He attended the Morne Diablo R.C. School, then the San Fernando Technical College. In his mid-twenties he moved to Port of Spain where he continued to play pan and began to write songs.

Mr. Devine would write his songs and pass them to artistes who came to him if he thought it was a good fit. He read widely from different genres and has always had a keen interest in current affairs: class issues, environmental destruction, history, culture, and politics.

He gave himself the sobriquet “Joker” because he originally intended to sing his songs himself. He recorded a few; the prophetic Progress, was originally written for himself but eventually he passed it on to King Austin and the rest is history. That masterpiece continues to resonate with audiences decades later and was hailed by the Trinbago Unified Calypsonians’ Organisation (TUCO) as the song of the last millennium.

Although ill health prevents Mr. Devine from writing as much as he used to, in 2016 he shared his talents with young songwriters as part of the Culture Division’s Mentoring by the Masters programme. He received the Hummingbird Medal (Silver) in 1998 for his contributions to music and the arts.



Ms. Hazel Brown

Honorary Doctor of Laws (LLD)

Ms. Brown’s activism began in Diego Martin in the late 1960s, when she formed a neighbourhood group. Curiosity led her to join the Housewives Association of Trinidad and Tobago (HATT), which educated consumers and advocated for their rights. She became a founding member of the Telephone Users Group, which represented consumers at the hearings for telephone rates in 1971. She took part in similar hearings on electricity rates, bringing about changes to the rate structures for both utilities.

Ms Brown was a founding member of the Network of NGOs of Trinidad & Tobago for the Advancement of Women. The Network was created in 1985 to coordinate a national position for the End of Decade Conference in Nairobi. Thirty years later, the Network represents more than 100 non-profit groups focused on women’s and family issues.

She is a former Secretary General of the Commonwealth Women’s Network. She co-founded TIBS – The Informative Breastfeeding Society. Her own health challenges led her to form a network of medical, immigration and other officials to help cancer patients in Guyana have access to care in Trinidad. She spearheaded the rejuvenation of the East-Side Plaza in Port of Spain, which provides entrepreneurship opportunities for lower-income women.

Her publications include A Study of Diabetes and Hypertension in Women 25 years and over in Trinidad and Tobago and she co-authored the Role of Working Women in Early Childhood Education in Trinidad and Tobago.



**Professor Emeritus
Clem Secharan**

Honorary Doctor of Letters (DLitt)

Born at Palmyra Village, Berbice, Guyana, Professor Secharan attended the Sheet Anchor Anglican School, the Berbice Educational Institute, and Queen’s College. He received his BA (Social Anthropology) and MA (Social Anthropology/History) from McMaster University in Canada, and then taught Caribbean Studies at the University of Guyana. He attained his PhD at the University of Warwick, where he was the first doctoral graduate of the Yesu Persaud Centre for Caribbean Studies. He was the Head of Caribbean Studies at London Metropolitan University from 1993 to 2012 and also lectured on the History of West Indies Cricket. In 2003 he was awarded a Certificate of Distinction by the Guyana High Commission (London). In 2002, he was awarded a Professorship in History at the London Metropolitan University, where he is now Emeritus Professor of History.

Professor Secharan’s publications include “Tiger in the Stars”: The Anatomy of Indian Achievement in British Guiana, 1919-29; Bechu: ‘Bound Coolie’ Radical in British Guiana, 1894-1901; Muscular Learning: Cricket and Education in the Making of the British West Indies at the End of the 19th Century; From Ranji to Rohan: Cricket and Indian Identity in Colonial Guyana, 1890s-1960s; Mother India’s Shadow over El Dorado: Indo-Guyanese Politics and Identity, 1890s-1930s; Finding Myself: Essays on Race, Politics and Culture.

His Sweetening ‘Bitter Sugar’: Jock Campbell, the Booker Reformer in British Guiana, 1934-66, was awarded the prestigious Elsa Goveia Prize by the Association of Caribbean Historians in 2005.

Cumuto–Toco Highway Project

A ‘mortal blow’ to our ecosystems?

BY LINTON ARNEAUD

Like many citizens of Trinidad and Tobago I believe that the Cumuto–Toco highway can be built with minimal negative impacts on the environment. As a concerned ecologist and a PhD candidate, I believe that protecting our ecosystems is not only the responsibility of our governments, but a privilege from our predecessors, compelling us to protect and maintain our livelihoods.

The National Infrastructure Development Company Limited (NIDCO), on behalf of the Ministry of Works and Transport, is constructing the Churchill–Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla (CRHEM). This extension should eventually intersect at the site of the proposed Toco ferry port which would link Trinidad to Tobago. The proposal is for three phases: from Cumuto Junction to Sangre Grande–Ojoe Road; from Sangre Grande to Toco; and from the Churchill–Roosevelt Highway extension to Cumuto. This multi-billion dollar project has been in the making for over 11 years; hence, it would be logical to think that there has been ample time for the government to evaluate possible impacts on the immediate ecosystems, like the far-reaching ecological effects of roads through space and time.

Ecosystems are both living organisms and physical components functioning as an ‘ecological unit’. Wetland ecosystems provide food, water purification, nutrient cycling, carbon sequestration and climate control. Coastal ecosystems (coral reef habitats and mangroves) complement this individually and through functional linkages. These ecosystems can be easily seen along the Cumuto to Toco road. Their functional value indicates how important a particular habitat is to a particular process, for example, mangroves and coral reefs have a higher functional contribution to primary production than seagrass beds and sand flats.

The Aripo Savanna Environmentally Sensitive Area (ASESA) is the only remaining natural savanna in Trinidad and Tobago and contains many rare flora species such as the carnivorous sundew plant (*Drosera capillaris*) and eye-catching ground orchids. It is the home for the sedge (*Rhynchospora aripoensis*) and the plant (*Xyris grisebachii*) which is only found in Trinidad and nowhere else in the world. It also provides a habitat for rare and threatened bird species such as; the Moriche Oriole bird (*Icterus cayanensis chrysocephalus*), the Sulphury Flycatcher (*Tyrannopsis sulphurea*) and the Fork-tailed Palm-swift (*Tachornis squamata*). The ASESA plays an important role as a wetland as much of its characteristic vegetation (Marsh Forests and Palm Marsh Forests of *Mauritia flexuosa*) provides ecological services. The carbon/nitrogen decomposition rate of organic matter in Marsh Forests is considerably higher than in semi-evergreen seasonal forests; moreover, marsh forests sequester carbon dioxide. As a matter of fact, *M. flexuosa* stands in South America are known to act as carbon sinks, mitigating or deferring global warming and avoiding dangerous climate change. The ASESA provides the same function, just at a much smaller scale.

Current threats to the plants and animals of ASESA include sporadic fires, hunting, poaching of the Red-bellied macaws (*Orthopsittaca manilatus*) and deforestation for squatting and agriculture. If these activities continue, the ASESA would no longer be capable of performing one of its most important ecological functions, which is to act as a natural sponge trapping and slowly releasing surface and flood waters.

In November 2014, we were forced to appreciate the role wetlands play in Trinidad and Tobago (in particular the Nariva Swamp) when parts of the Manzanilla–Mayaro road were destroyed due to rainfall and flooding. We are seeing ever-increasing tropical depressions and storms this year.

‘PREDICTIONS’ AND ‘CONSEQUENCES’

The good, the bad and the ugly

The good- proper management practices together with the reconstruction of cultural concepts

It is paramount that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago commit to our environmental policies, and citizens need to work together to reconstruct old cultural concepts. The way forward could be as simple as providing meaningful information.



An effective wildlife corridor or animal crossing linking critical habitats. Wildlife Corridors and their Importance (2011)

The bad- live for today... deal with the consequences tomorrow

Cutting through the heart of the forest is not without consequences. Let’s stop individuals from overexploiting our ecosystems and conserve the environment; by teaching individuals how to sustainably manage our ecosystems, we are advertently conserving our ecosystems for a lifetime. In today’s fast-paced society, many live for today, hence our leaders need to take the initiative of enforcing and monitoring environmental regulations.

The ugly- little policing and monitoring

If we don’t practise sustainable development, the beautiful Toco-Cumuto’s forest (and all surrounding ecosystems) as we know can be destroyed in the wink of the eye. Freeholders such as squatters, loggers and hunters can destroy our beautiful landscapes. Take our South American neighbours and the impacts from the construction of the ‘TransAmazon Highway’ in Brazil; where we see ‘loggers’ free riding on the construction of roads and the lack of legislation to exploit lumber extraction. This is a result of established squatter-communities (amongst other negative activities) which continues to further exploit the environment.

The million dollar question would be: Are we as a people ready to commit to sustainable forest management to prevent this from happening to us?

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Even though, engineers are using a 100m buffer zone between the ASESA and the highway, I recommend that they use an alternate route or at least increase that buffer region to 200m simply because all past and present governing bodies of Trinidad and Tobago have failed to execute the full enforcement of environmental laws. I cannot recommend effective monitoring of a highway next to this sensitive area, as the risks can be disastrous.
2. Wildlife corridors have been effective, especially in the USA where one in every 25 accidents involves an animal. Wildlife corridors aren’t cheap, and implementing ineffective corridors simply just isn’t good enough. It’s like a taxi with a CV-1.2 litre gas engine on the hills of Paramin – bound for failure – when what is needed is a commercial V6-3.5 litre SUV.

3. Wild-life fines for illegal hunting are remarkably low and should be increased. Additionally, the cost of hunting permits for seed-dispersing mammals such as the Red-Rumped Agouti should be increased in an attempt to maintain species richness within our forests.
4. The Government should designate the edges of selected forest areas of the highway as mini-reserves and implement exorbitant fines for squatting (such legislation should be passed before construction of the highway), as a large number of squatters live in Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) and compromise their functions and services.

PREDICTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

1. If proper wildlife corridors are not implemented, Trinidad’s animal biodiversity will decrease considerably.
2. If legislation is not upheld by the court in prohibiting individuals from squatting on state lands and empowering relevant authorities to stop the construction of shanty houses (*note I said ‘STOP’ and not ‘BREAK DOWN’ as individuals will not even be given a chance to build houses if daily patrols are being done). Once qualified foresters and game wardens conduct hourly patrols, illegal logging and hunting will not be an issue.
3. Environmental sustainability through long-term and credible scientific research after the construction of the highway should be considered: this project should be funded by the government and spearheaded by citizens in the 13 villages that lie between Cumuto and Toco. After 10 years, the programme should aim to be self-sustaining through ecotourism.

In closing, the government of Trinidad and Tobago and its people have the ability to sustainably manage its beautiful landscapes; however, only time will tell if the ‘Cumuto-Toco highway’ would be a mortal blow to our ecosystems or an ‘Eco-Highway’.

■ INNOVATION



The Mechanical World of MR. HARNARINE

Move over, Kitchen Aid

BY JOEL HENRY

“We have to be more nationalistic in our approach,” says Mr. Rodney Harnarine.

Mr. Harnarine is a mechanical engineer, an inventor and builder of machines. For the last ten years he has been a lecturer in the Faculty of Engineering, a molder of students with an aptitude or interest in innovation. Before that he was an entrepreneur in food processing. And he was born and raised in a family of farmers.

Innovation, education, entrepreneurship, food production – if you have followed the discussions over the past decade and a half about the needs of the T&T economy you would have heard these words many times. These are solutions for an economy incarcerated in its dependence on oil and gas. And for almost his entire life, Mr. Harnarine has been quietly working and promoting these solutions both within and outside the gates of UWI St. Augustine.

His approach is deeply nationalistic.

“I want to see Trinidad grow,” Mr. Harnarine says, speaking from a conference room in the Department of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering. He turned 70 in January of this year and no longer lectures full-time. He now comes to the campus one or two days per week.

Mr. Harnarine’s work was featured in the April 2015 issue of *UWI Today* https://sta.uwi.edu/uwitoday/archive/april_2015/article11.asp. As supervisor for students’ final-year engineering projects, he (and his colleagues) oversaw the development of a remarkable cache of innovative machinery. There were items such as a coconut water extractor, a chataigne shredder, a papaya pulping device and a soursop seed separator.

It was exciting to see the potential in the Department and its students. But the work was unrecognised, with little support and little pathway to take it beyond the campus. Mr. Harnarine made it his mission to change this circumstance.

From 2014 to 2016 he organised three exhibitions of student projects as a way of exposing their work to the industry. He has also acted as a liaison between the campus and the manufacturing sector.

“We graduate 120 students in this department every year,” he says. “If we could develop five businesses for the year and those five go out there and are successful they can employ more students.”

At present, like-minded personnel at UWI St. Augustine, both within the department and the campus administration have made innovation and entrepreneurship a major priority.

Mr. Harnarine has focused much of his energy on development in the food production sector – agriculture and agro-processing. His ideal is agro-processing based, export-oriented companies that will revitalise local agriculture and add value to crops.

“We came from agriculture,” he says. “Agriculture has answers to a lot of our problems.”

Mr. Harnarine spent his formative years in a rural community called Agostini Settlement just south of Chaguanas. His family worked a one-acre plot of land provided by the Ministry of Agriculture. It was not an easy life.

“On that one-acre plot we used to grow vegetables and rear animals. We didn’t have water. We didn’t have electricity. Because our father was a labourer he didn’t have much cash, so when we went to the grocery he bought the bare minimum. The rest of the money went to education, clothing and so on for the family,” he says.

These conditions did not discourage either him or his siblings. Among them is an accomplished statistician with the Government of Canada, a senior doctor and of course, Harnarine himself, who became an engineer in the burgeoning manufacturing industry.

His accomplishments in the field are impressive. In 1973 he became a project engineer with CARIRI, designing and building a 200-tonne press for steel pans. From there he moved on to the

Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards where he developed standards in automotive and mechanical engineering. Then he went to Neal and Massy as technical manager, in the days when cars were being assembled in Trinidad before the rise of the Japanese automotive industry.

It was in the early 1980s that he first became a lecturer at The UWI St. Augustine, spending a decade. It was during this period as well that he saw the changes taking place in the local economy. He recognised the vulnerability of T&T’s reliance on oil and gas and the potential of food-based products.

“I kept telling my students there were opportunities in agro-processing,” he says. “I looked at what Matouk’s was doing. They were bottling pepper and mauby and shipping them overseas. I said why can’t we do this but extend the backward links to agriculture even further.”

For engineering students eyeing a career in the energy sector, it was a risk they were not willing to take. So he did it himself.

If you were a youngster in the 1990s you might remember “Sun Pick,” a juice drink sold in powdered form. It was one of several products manufactured by Chase Foods Limited, Rodney Harnarine’s agro-processing company. Chase Foods was established in 1993, an almost total one-man operation that manufactured beverages, canned fruits and vegetables, peanut butter, jams, sauces and condiments for both the domestic and export markets. Much of the operation’s machinery was designed and built by Harnarine himself, including a 200-pound capacity peanut roaster.

During this period as well he became Chairman of the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO), an agency tasked with the commercial expansion of food production.

At its core the idea of Chase Foods was strong. There was demand for his products both at home and abroad. The banks approached him to support the venture. There was buy-in from the

groceries and supermarkets. But ultimately, after about a decade, he had no choice but to sell the company and get out of the business.

There were many reasons, some common to all small or medium-sized businesses. But there were others that help explain the almost aggressive malaise that has impeded diversification. Put simply, there are powerful, well-placed players in the marketplace. Harnarine calls them “the big fellas”. Any strategy for diversification in areas such as manufacturing or food production must reckon with these forces. What kind of impact do they have on the business environment? How are they influencing economic policy? If the nation needs its manufacturing sector to grow and earn foreign exchange and the big fellas need a liberalised trade environment to maintain or increase profits, how are these interests reconciled?

During that 1990s period many agro-processing business rose and fell because of the challenges in the environment. It was the kind of new economic activity that business associations and policymakers claim to want and they were smothered in a hostile marketplace.

“We need new thinking but the system does not allow that,” Harnarine says.

Yet he hasn’t given up. It has been a decade since his return to UWI and even as his time on campus has been reduced he still believes in the potential of agro-innovation and the university’s role in fostering it.

And even with more free time he is still busy. Mr. Harnarine is an elder in the Presbyterian Church and a member of its various boards, including those of its network of 75 elementary schools and five colleges. He’s also still planning new ways to take advantage of agro-processing opportunities.

“Now that I’m out of the system I will start building machines and producing,” he says.

After working so hard for so many years, how does he maintain this pace?

“I grew up on a farm. It was hard work. It became a part of me.”



Cocoa bean grinder
PHOTO: AMIR ALI

RESEARCH



Kiran Ragoo

Kiran Ragoo refuses to be set back by a physical impairment. Following the surgical removal of a tumour on the left side of his brain in January 2013, this aspiring Mechanical Engineering student struggled with reduced motor functions on the right side of his body.

While physiotherapy helped, he still walks with a limp due to a compromised right foot instep. There is limited mobility in his right hand, preventing him from

opening his fingers, writing and typing. Undaunted by his physical challenges, Kiran began his mechanical engineering studies at The UWI St. Augustine in September 2013. With the help of ASDLU at UWI (the Academic Support/Disabilities Liaison Unit), he obtained a sound recorder to assist with classes and received extra time for exams. He graduated in 2016.

Armed with that indefatigable spirit, Kiran is now applying his intellect to help others like himself. He is the team leader of the Assistive Device Research Group convened by Dr. Chris Maharaj, a Senior Lecturer within the Department of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering; Professor Boppana Chowdary, the Department Head, and two other Mechanical Engineering graduates serving as associate professionals.

With technology transforming virtually every aspect of our lives – how we communicate, socialize, learn, travel, shop and do business – one of the biggest emerging applications is in the provision of health care.

The World Health Organization defines assistive devices and technologies as “those whose primary purpose is to maintain or improve an individual’s functioning and independence to facilitate participation and to enhance overall well-being.”

Some of these devices are universally known and used: wheelchairs, prostheses, hearing aids, visual aids, and specialized computer software and hardware that increase mobility, hearing, vision, or communication capabilities.

Access to assistive technologies is limited in low and middle income countries, with just an estimated 5-15% of people benefiting. Closer to home, the statistics are not much different; and State assistance has dried up with the economic decline.

“Previously people would have applied and received assistance from the State for prosthetics and assistive devices but now they are unable to obtain funding from Social Services... They would have gone to foreign institutions to have prosthetic devices made,” explained Dr. Maharaj.

With Kiran as his inspiration, Dr. Maharaj assembled a team who could respond to the need for easier access to prosthetic devices.

“With budgets being slashed, we saw the need to create this research team... we decided to develop our own capability, our own intellectual property and reduce the spending on imported devices,” Dr. Maharaj said. “What we are doing is pioneering the manufacture of locally developed assistive technology devices for persons affected by health conditions.”

With Kiran as their first test subject, the team set about developing assistive devices to restore some of his lost right arm motor functions. Over four months, they fine-tuned their ideas, developing concepts, designing the prototypes and then tested the devices. 3D printed devices were developed to assist the right arm with writing/typing.

Two devices were made for writing and two for typing. The writing device that consisted of a two-ring connected design (where one finger fits into one ring and the writing utensil into the other) was 12% quicker and more comfortable than without any aid on the right hand.

With respect to typing, the design, consisting of a ring with pointer (with three fingers fitting inside the ring), was found to be 43% faster than using no assistive device on the right hand.

Kiran uses these assistive devices to improve his productivity and quality of life.

“Previously he could only type with one hand and now he uses both. With writing he is now trying to regain use of the right hand and this will improve,” Dr. Maharaj said.

Kiran is the lead author of the paper, “The design and

Helping Hands

Team Devises Assistive Technology Devices

BY SHERRY ANN SINGH



development of 3D printed writing and typing assistive devices,” which was published in collaboration with Professor Chowdary, Dr. Maharaj, and Mr. Vashish Sirjoosingh, in the journal, “*Assistive Technology*.”

His vision is to make affordably priced and aesthetically pleasing 3D printed prosthetics and accessories available to those who would not otherwise be able to obtain them.

“Current prosthetics in T&T are ugly. I want to make them much more attractive,” he said.

Kiran does not consider himself having a disability and says his only fear was getting employed in an industry.

“Safety is a big issue in mechanical engineering. Shaking of hands is a personal fear. I put out my right hand as normal but also use the left hand to support it and make it warmer.”

He encouraged physically challenged persons to never give up.

“Even if you have lost a limb, it’s not the end of the world. There are opportunities out there to help you stand out in a positive manner.”

While applications for financial assistance have been made to the European Development Fund and The UWI, the work of the Assistive Devices Research Team is as yet unfunded. Dr. Maharaj is especially grateful to a local company, Qualitech Machining Services Ltd, which created Kiran’s prosthetic devices with a 3D printer.

“We had to make do with what we have. In this case we relied on QualiTech to produce the part and the Associate Professionals’ intellectual capability. We have links with companies and other departments in Trinidad and have asked them to be part of this philanthropic effort,” Dr. Maharaj said.

The research team is now working with a second candidate: a former high-ranking national pool player who suffered a debilitating illness, resulting in loss of function in one of his arms and the inability to play.

“These are bespoke custom devices and every candidate is unique. For the second candidate, most likely we will use 3D printing again. We also need the HR capability which comes from our Department. These are scholarship recipients, now graduates from Mechanical Engineering, who are required to give back a year of service to any Government or State agency. At this juncture, we did not need any medical input, but if there is a case where we need medical advice we will seek.”

For this team, the next steps are clear: With their work published, they are now proceeding with developing prosthetics for the second candidate. Then they want to start 3D printing their own prosthetic devices. Through an arrangement with the Solid Waste Management Company (SWMCOL), they can obtain waste plastics at no cost and they have applied for funding to purchase a 3D printer.

“Our longer-term goal is to move to over and under the knee prosthetics. The main intent is to help those in the low income brackets. However, if there are members of the upper income population who want to use our capabilities, we have no problem with that, as long as they make a contribution,” Dr. Maharaj said.

If you need this kind of support, please contact **Dr. Chris Maharaj** at chris.maharaj@sta.uwi.edu and mechanical.engineering@sta.uwi.edu

Discovering China

BY RITA PEMBERTON



The group of 13 left Trinidad with such great anticipation of the visit to China that the 13 ½ hour flight seemed inconsequential. A warm welcome from Ms. Ayesha Wharton, Charge d'Affairs of the Embassy of Trinidad and Tobago and Mr. Nolan Holder, the Financial Attaché greeted us in Beijing. They guided us through the processes, important cultural practices, and provided a survival package complete with pollution masks. On the journey to the Jianguo Hotel, we got our first images of the City with its architectural projections reaching for the sky and dominating the landscape.

The following day we were given a lecture on China, its economy and culture, by Professor Jiang Shixue at the Embassy of Trinidad and Tobago, and then we hit the sight-seeing road to the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square. We passed through several squares where senior citizens played card games, sang, danced and exercised – and we joined some of them. As the tour proceeded, we were surprised to find ourselves instant celebrities (some more than others) with a stream of requests to pose for pictures. It was difficult to cope with the demands of stardom!

On the second day we visited the Ming tombs and the Jade Emporium where the process of manufacturing items from jade was explained. After jade shopping and lunch, we went to the Great Wall of China. This was an experience beyond imagination; the climb, the view, the engineering feat were all mind-boggling. Tired and enthralled the group went off for the carnivores' high point: Beijing roast duck which was viewed in various stages of preparation before it became a culinary delight.

Day Three's activities began with a visit to the Temple of Heaven and the Silk Emporium. We saw the processing of silk from the silk worm and we emerged financially weakened, but enriched by our silken acquisitions, including pillows which guaranteed silky sleep. The next stop was the Huton Houhai, where we were taken by rickshaw to lunch in a traditional home. After lunch was a snap visit to the 798 Modern Art Centre, then we were hosted by the Caricom Caucus of Missions in China at the home of its Coordinator, Ambassador for Guyana, Mr. Bayney Karran. There we met the Ambassadors for Suriname, Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica and staff from the embassy for Trinidad and Tobago.

The next morning was spent at the Old Summer Palace, and after lunch we visited the Olympic Park and Water Cube which are further examples of Chinese architectural creativity. For dinner, it was the Hot Pot experience which



we all relished. The Sunday shopping day was mostly spent at the nearby Silk Market Mall.

After an early-morning flight to Chengdu, we checked into the laps of luxury at the Tibet Hotel with its extensive breakfast buffet and daily choice of scented, health and personalized pillows.

We visited the Sanxindui ruins and museum and then an outdoor tea house where we had a lecture on its history and culture. Next was a visit to the Dujiangyan irrigation system where we had the novel, and for some, nerve-racking, experience of crossing a swing bridge, and the Qingcheng Mountain. Then we went to Jinli Street for a Sichuan meal for which this province is famed and later we saw a changing face performance at the Chengdu Opera house.

Day Nine was full of wonder as we were introduced to the panda world. At the sprawling Panda Base we saw pandas at breakfast, baby pandas in their neonatal unit, panda cubs in sibling revelry that got tense at points, adult pandas, some of which posed for pictures, the red pandas and the nursery for the giant pandas. Then we walked along Kuanzhaqangzi Cultural Street for a spot of shopping and for the more daring, a taste of exotic Chinese preparations.

We had a city tour of Guilin, which was followed by a three-hour cruise down the Lijiang River, with its variety of landscapes that was unforgettable. While the rain prevented a close visit to Elephant Trunk Hill, the visit to the enchanting Reed Flute Cave with its fascinating stalactite and stalagmite formations and dramatic lighting system, was a journey into a world of fantasy.

We sped to Shenzhen on the Bullet, the speedy train that cut the journey to three hours, and spent some time hearing about the development of the city and visiting a museum. On the last day of the tour we visited the impressive Southern University of Technology, and a city tour, a visit to the park and shopping, mainly for electronics, followed.

It was a valuable learning experience, much knowledge of the history of China was quickly acquired from the expert professors with supplementary information from the professional tour guides, the distinctions and cultural variations between the different provinces were understood and Chinese respect for their history and heritage were admired. Most impressive were the facilities provided for senior citizens, the respect shown to them and their recreational space and the strong culture of outdoor activity in which members of this group happily participated.

Then satiated, tired, penniless, and overloaded with shopping acquisitions, the group ambled home with fond memories of the Great Wall, luxurious hotels, pandas, the river cruise, pearls and jade and their short-lived celebrity status to New Jersey and the cramped flight back to Trinidad.



The 'UWI DISCOVERS' series of international study tours is one of the University's strategic activities for contributing to the enhanced competitiveness of our Caribbean. These immersive experiences provide an opportunity for academic, cultural, social, political and economic exposure to some of the world's most rapidly advancing countries. Each study tour is designed to foster critical thinking and increase awareness through a series of carefully arranged and academically guided activities. Many participants have commented about the transformational impact of their experiences.

The series started in 2012 and groups have visited Brazil, India, Cuba, South Africa and now, China. **UWI DISCOVERS** is open to students, staff and faculty of The UWI (all campuses) as well as students and staff of all regional higher education institutions. Alumni of The UWI as well as members of the public who are active in fields related to the study tour theme are also welcome to apply.

For further information on **The UWI DISCOVERS** and our upcoming 2018 tours, please contact Afiya Francis at +1-868-662-2002 ext. 84280, +1-868-224-3707 or email discover@sta.uwi.edu

OVER THE CROSSBAR

Rugby a game for everyone

BY CHRISTON SANDY

The UWI Rugby Club is one of the elders of the sport clubs at the University, and this year, the Club celebrates 90 years since its inception.

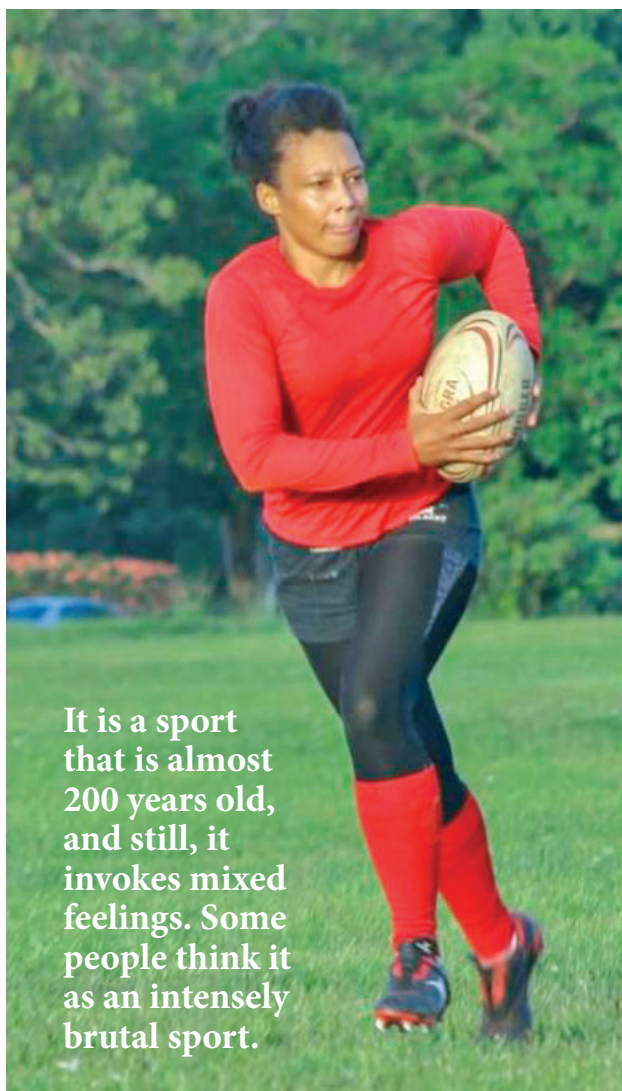
It is a sport that is almost 200 years old, and still, it invokes mixed feelings. Some people think it as an intensely brutal sport. Maria Thomas, a seasoned member of the UWI Rugby team, insists that there are rules to manage this.

“In rugby, safety... and overly violent tackles are dealt with very seriously by referees,” she says.

Although people are sceptical about their suitability for the game’s toughness, Maria says that once they understand it, they realise that in rugby, there are positions for everyone.

“It is not necessarily a matter of being the biggest and strongest. There are some positions that require faster, more agile, persons. You need to understand and respect the level of intensity that rugby is played with. However,” she adds, “once you learn the skills properly, you protect yourself and are less likely to get injured, as with any sport.”

Maria, who is a national female rugby player and Honorary Secretary of the Trinidad and Tobago Rugby Football Union (TTRFU), spent years playing numerous sports at the University of Western Ontario in Canada, while studying for her Degree in Anthropology with a Specialization in Sociocultural Studies. She reminisced happily about her initial training days with the UWI Rugby Club during the vacation period until she became a permanent member following her migration to Trinidad.



It is a sport that is almost 200 years old, and still, it invokes mixed feelings. Some people think it as an intensely brutal sport.

Her passion for rugby can be seen in her volunteer work as a coach in several developmental camps throughout the country, as well as in her contributions towards the development of the sport at The UWI. Last year, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed between the TTRFU and The UWI. She said the MOA will provide more opportunities for the game to be played within the University, and strengthens the support from the TTRFU in the assistance of officiating, and player and coaching development. The agreement also gives The UWI an opportunity to play against international teams, which ensures that UWI players are granted the highest level of exposure.

On November 18 and 19, 2017, the second annual Professor Clement Sankat Challenge 7’s Trophy competition takes place. (It was named after the former Principal of the UWI St. Augustine Campus.)

Maria hopes that the Campus community and the public will be attracted to the sport to experience what she has labelled as “one big family,” highlighting the levels of sportsmanship beyond the playing field. She remembered the moments the UWI Rugby family helped her get through times of hardships and says that “beyond me coming to training and games they really looked out for me, even those who are not involved in UWI Rugby any more still keep an eye out for me.”

Maria started playing rugby when she was 18. She overcame a career-threatening knee injury that took her out of the game for three years and went on to play for the national team.

She hopes to recruit many students for the UWI Rugby team this year and urges persons to go for it.

“There will always be obstacles both in life in sport but just give it your best shot.”

New Director of Sport



Olympian Grace Jackson is the new Director of Sport at the St. Augustine Campus. PHOTO: ALLAN V. CRANE

Jamaican Olympian Grace Jackson has been appointed Director of Sport at The UWI St. Augustine Campus effective September 30, 2017.

A celebrated track and field athlete, Ms. Jackson won silver in the 200m at the 1988 Seoul Olympics Games and competed in the 1984, 1988 and 1992 Olympic Games. She also won gold in the 4x400m relay at the 1989 World Games.

She was Jamaica’s Sportswoman of the Year in 1986 and 1988. In 1989 she was awarded the Order of Distinction (OD) by the Government of Jamaica.

Ms. Jackson was formerly at The UWI Mona where she held the position of Sports Development Director from 2010. Before this, she served as Student Services and Development Manager, Sports from 1998 to 2009 also at the Mona Campus. She graduated with a BA in Accounting from Alabama, Agricultural and Mechanical University in 1982 and then completed a MA in Computer Science at Queens College in 1987. In 2007, she graduated from the United States Sports Academy, Mobile Alabama with a Master of Sports Science and Sports Management.

“I am no stranger to The UWI and when I consider advancements at the institution like the establishment of the Faculty of Sport I am pleased with the high priority we are placing on the discipline. It’s a good time to take up a leadership position in sport at The UWI and I look forward to making a significant contribution,” she said, commenting on her new appointment.

Ms. Jackson has been a regular commentator and analyst on television and radio since 1992 and has acted as lead analyst on athletics at the Olympic level for ESPN Caribbean.

She follows Major David Benjamin who was appointed Director of Sport in 2014 and demitted office earlier this year.

■ CAMPUS NEWS

Meet the Half-Marathon Winners

For the third time, Trinidad and Tobago's Tonya Nero was the first female in at the 14th edition of the UWI SPEC International half-marathon on October 29. She clocked a time of one hour, 16 minutes and 31 seconds. She had previously won in 2012 and 2013., and she finished tenth overall in the race which had more than 1300 entrants.

Cuban Richer Perez Cobas was also a repeat winner of the half-marathon, coming in with a time of one hour, six minutes and 51 seconds. He had been the winner in 2015 and last year, was the runner-up in the men's division.

Kenyan Kenneth Rotich came in second with 1:10:43 while his compatriot Godffrey Mbihia came third in 1:11:30. Trinidad and Tobago's Matthew Hagley edged Curtis Cox to the line, coming in three seconds ahead in 1:13:44 while Cox clocked 1:13:47.

The UWI SPEC International half-marathon began 14 years ago when Dr. Iva Gloudon, was the Director of Sport at The UWI. She worked with Raffique Shah to produce what has become the Caribbean's premier long-distance event. From its inception the race has followed the same path which stretches along the Priority Bus Route to La Resource Junction in D'Abadie, and back to the starting point of UWI SPEC.

The half-marathon has expanded from 300 runners to just about 1300 and includes participants from all over the world. It is a highly anticipated event on the National Association of Athletics Administrations of Trinidad and Tobago's calendar and is recognized by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF), which means that records are globally recognized. This year the UWI Half-Marathon has continued its partnership with First Citizens as main sponsor of the event. The UWI will donate parts of the race's earnings to the Trinidad and Tobago Cancer Society (TTCS) and has themed the race this year, "All Cancers."



Top 10 Men

1. Richer Perez (CUB) 1:06:51
2. Ken Rotich (KEN)..... 1:10:43
3. Godffrey Mbihia M Ke..... 1:11:30
4. Matthew Hagley (TT)..... 1:13:44
5. Curtis Cox (TT)..... 1:13:47
6. Alexis Pena (VEN) 1:15:20
7. Shirvan Baboolal (TT) 1:15:30
8. Junior Aston 25 (VC) 1:15:34
9. Kelvin Johnson (TT)..... 1:16:17
10. Jassette Bromfield (TT) 1:17:29

Top 10 Women

1. Tonya Nero (TT) 1:16:31
2. Yeisy Alvarez (CUB) 1:25:00
3. Mercy Chebwogen (KEN) 1:25:30
4. Cécilia Mobuchon (MF) 1:26:07
5. Katerine Gonzales Cabell (VEN) 1:27:30
6. Laritza Milacatl (MX)..... 1:27:30
7. Sharma Maraj (TT) 1:29:05
8. Linda Mcdowll (VC) 1:32:23
9. Céline Lestrade (TT) 1:32:44
10. Samantha Shukla (TT) 1:33:00



Winners: Senior and Junior!



Tonya Nero



Richer Perez



PHOTOS: ROBERT TAYLOR

UWI CALENDAR of EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2017



DONATE BLOOD
9am to 4pm
November 7
JFK Auditorium
UWI St. Augustine

It's your turn to give blood at the Sir Frank Worrell Memorial Blood Drive. According to the Red Cross a single donation can save the lives of up to three people. The American Journal of Epidemiology suggests that the life you save can be your own as blood donors are 88% less likely to suffer a heart attack. The drive takes place from 9am to 4pm at the JFK Auditorium.

For more information, please visit the Campus Events Calendar at www.sta.uwi.edu/news/ecalendar

FMS FACULTY RESEARCH DAY

9am to 4pm
Amphitheatres A and B
November 9
Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex

The Faculty of Medical Sciences (FMS) presents their Faculty Research Day – One University, One Health, One Faculty. Check out displays, presentations and posters by the Faculty's schools and departments.

For more information, please visit the Campus Events Calendar at www.sta.uwi.edu/news/ecalendar

LEARN PROTOCOL, DIPLOMACY AND BUSINESS ETIQUETTE WITH DAOC

November 13 to 15
The UWI St. Augustine

The Diplomatic Academy of the Caribbean (DAOC) presents the Executive Certificate in Protocol, Diplomacy and Business Etiquette programme with Gail Guy, Protocol Consultant and Retired Diplomat. The programme takes place from 9am to 4pm at DAOC. The cost is US\$500/TT\$3,395.

For more information, please visit <http://sta.uwi.edu/daoc/>

PROFESSORIAL LECTURE

6pm
November 16
Noor Hassanali Auditorium
The UWI St. Augustine

The UWI Open Lectures Committee presents the Professorial Inaugural Lecture by Professor Paula Morgan. She is a Professor of West Indian Literature and Culture and will speak on the topic "Healing the Hurts of my People Slightly: Discourses of Societal Violence and Trauma."

For more information email UWISTAevents@sta.uwi.edu or call 662-2002 ext. 83635

A TRIBUTE TO CLL

6 to 10 pm
Learning Resource Centre
November 17
The UWI St. Augustine

The Centre for Language Learning (CLL) celebrates their 20th anniversary with The Golden Twenty – A Tribute to CLL: The End of Year Concert. Tickets are \$50 and available at the CLL Office.

For more information, please visit the Campus Events Calendar at www.sta.uwi.edu/news/ecalendar

HURRICANE HELP STILL NEEDED

The UWI St. Augustine

The Guild of Students in collaboration with Division of Student Services and Development (DSSD), continues ongoing relief efforts to aid Caribbean nations that have been devastated by hurricanes. Items such as toiletries, female sanitary products, baby supplies and medical supplies are needed. All contributions can be placed in collection boxes that can be found at: DSSD Office (Lloyd Braithwaite Student Administration Building, First Floor), Guild Office, All Faculty main offices, All Hall lobbies and the Institute of International Relations (IIR) Secretariat Office.

For more information, please visit the Campus Events Calendar at www.sta.uwi.edu/news/ecalendar



DISTINGUISHED OPEN LECTURE BY NOBEL LAUREATE

6pm
November 23
The UWI St. Augustine

The UWI St. Augustine Campus and CARISCIENCE presents the Distinguished Open Lecture by Nobel Laureate, Professor Françoise Barré-Sinoussi. Professor Françoise Barré-Sinoussi a French virologist is Director of the Regulation of Retroviral Infections Division (Unité de Régulation des Infections Rétrovirales) and Professor at the Institut Pasteur in Paris, France. She performed some of the fundamental work in the identification of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) as the cause of AIDS. In 2008, Professor Barré-Sinoussi was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, together with her former mentor, Luc Montagnier, for their discovery of HIV.

For more information, please visit the Campus Events Calendar at www.sta.uwi.edu/news/ecalendar

UWI-SRC MALL TOUR

Noon to 5 pm
November 25
Gulf City Mall
San Fernando

The UWI Seismic Research Centre (UWI-SRC) continues their Outreach Campaign for persons to learn more about earthquakes, volcanoes and tsunamis; understand the behind the scenes of Earth Science and related careers and win prizes. Be there from noon to 5pm at Gulf City Mall!

For more information, please visit the Campus Events Calendar at www.sta.uwi.edu/news/ecalendar

UWI TODAY WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU

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

