



Life in Song

Kendra Hope, a Criminology and Criminal Justice major at UWI St Augustine's Faculty of Social Sciences, pours forth her voice at *UWI Got Talent*. She went on to win the competition at the grand finals, held on October 1 at Queen's Hall. *UWI Got Talent* was created to celebrate the performing arts excellence of students and enhance their personal development. At the St Augustine campus, student services that enrich the university experience, support students' needs, and contribute to their holistic growth are provided by the Division of Student Services and Development (DSSD) and the Guild of Students.

PHOTO: MICHAEL ANTHONY / WILE ANTZ PIXOGRAPHY





Join us for the live coverage of the

2022

CLASS OF

GRADUATION CEREMONIES

ST AUGUSTINE CAMPUS

Thursday 27 October - Saturday 29 October

**THURSDAY OCTOBER
27, 2022**

10.00am - Faculties of **SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY** and **FOOD & AGRICULTURE**
4.00pm - Faculties of **ENGINEERING** and **LAW**

**FRIDAY OCTOBER
28, 2022**

10.00am - Faculty of **SOCIAL SCIENCES**
(Surnames A – L Undergraduate graduands & **ALL ALJGSB** graduands)
4.00pm - Faculty of **SOCIAL SCIENCES**
(Surnames M – Z Undergraduate graduands & postgraduate graduands)

**SATURDAY OCTOBER
29, 2022**

10.00am - Faculties of **HUMANITIES & EDUCATION** and **SPORT**
4.00pm - Faculty of **MEDICAL SCIENCES**

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15 Grenada | 33 Belize (Central) | 133 Belize (Centaur) | 102 Curacao, Dominica, Trinidad & Tobago
105 Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, BVI, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and
the Grenadines, Turks and Caicos | 106 Cayman Islands | 112 Barbados | 130 Jamaica

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

‘Empowered to strike out and be your best selves’

UWI TODAY is pleased to share the address of Campus Principal Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine delivered at UWI St Augustine’s 2022 Matriculation ceremony.

On behalf of the St Augustine campus community, I am pleased to offer a special welcome to the newest members of our UWI St Augustine family and I refer, not just to our students, but to their family and friends who now form a critical support system as they journey through university life.

Congratulations on obtaining a place at The University of the West Indies St Augustine campus. Here, you will discover your passion and create your future. At the end of *this* stage of your life, you will find yourself empowered – practically and emotionally – to strike out and be your best selves.

Matriculation is where it all formally begins.

Your name is placed upon the *matricula* or roll of members of The University of the West Indies. By signing and taking the oath at this ceremony, you are agreeing to abide by The UWI’s rules and regulations, as well as codes of conduct.

Our pledge is to provide a stimulating academic and social environment so that you may grow and achieve your full potential.

In our 70 plus years of existence, The UWI’s commitment to our people has never wavered. We have always stepped up and stepped forward to lend support and guidance to Caribbean societies grappling with unprecedented challenges and change – the COVID-19 pandemic is only a recent example of this hands-on support.

We have never shirked our responsibility to the region that gave us birth. Now, as new members of The UWI community, you have joined in this responsibility. We will prepare you, our future leaders, to meet those challenges and turn them into opportunities.

Here are some of the challenges that we are facing as emerging nations, as people of the world. They are all issues on which I will focus during my tenure as Campus Principal. I plan to bring you all along with me because you are the ones who will continue the fight for justice for all, and economic and ecological sustainability.

Climate change and climate justice with regard to human rights remain top of mind as Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana move forward as oil and gas economies. We must set the example in the greening of our Campus, in our recycling, upcycling, and repurposing activities.

Our vulnerability in the area of food security was brought to the fore as we faced a global pandemic and then war in Ukraine. Rising food prices continue to affect us all. In that regard, we will especially support the work of our Faculty of Food and Agriculture, the first faculty to be established on the St Augustine campus and, in fact, predating it as the West Indian Agricultural College, established in 1921 on these very grounds.

I can tell you that, over the period since 1948, The University of the West Indies has given this region some 240,000 graduates, including 25 heads of government and 1 Nobel Laureate. There is probably no sector of Caribbean society – public or private, from the judiciary, civil society, entrepreneurs, and leaders of all the professions – in which UWI graduates are not found. Just as many have naturally risen to the top internationally, and are among our Caribbean diaspora of UWI alumni.

You should take pride – *Pelican Pride* – in being a part of one of just two regional universities in the world. The University of the West Indies stretches from Belize in Central America to right here in Trinidad and Tobago in the southern Caribbean.

This St Augustine Campus is one of five regional campuses. Even more, The UWI lays claim to being one of the world’s most globalised universities, with **10 global centres** spread across North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa and Asia.



You are now a student of a university that is ranked by the Times Higher Education ranking system as among the top 1.5 percent in the world, and number one in the Caribbean. In fact, we are the only ranked university in the Caribbean. This ranking is based on a current global field of some 30,000 universities and elite research institutes.

Times Higher Education uses such criteria as teaching, research, industry income, international outlook, and citations. Most significant among these are *international outlook and citations* since we are infinitely smaller, younger, and less resourced than many of our competitors on the list. Yet, the very high scores given us for ‘citations’ and ‘international outlook’ have placed us among the top 75 percentile of universities across the globe in those criteria.

All of this is to say that, in spite of being a relatively young institution – though slightly older than an independent Trinidad and Tobago – with limited access to financial and development resources, The UWI has punched above its weight and built a solid reputation as a higher education leader through resilience, perseverance, innovation, and entrepreneurial activity.

Now, you have come. You will, in turn, be expected to take up the responsibility for driving our region forward towards an equal opportunity society.

You will need resilience, moral strength, and compassion, for there is much that is wrong in our society that needs fixing and, too often, the will to make needed change is lacking; the courage to fly in the face of the modus operandi fails; and we prefer to turn our faces from the disadvantaged and inequalities in our midst.

Our region needs leaders at every level with a strong connection of country and region, and the emotional intelligence to make a positive difference.

You are in training to pick up those leadership roles.

At St Augustine, you will receive the skillsets and uncover vast reservoirs of excellence to begin the process of applying new knowledge to world problems. Through your total immersion in UWI life, you will make the connections and expand beyond previously insular horizons to see the beauty and grace in each Caribbean territory. As “One UWI”, you will continue to be the main unifying force of this “One Caribbean”, connected by much more than the Caribbean Sea, but by an infinite wellspring of vitality that has survived slavery, indentureship, and colonialism.

We have a fierce understanding of who we are and how much we can achieve in spite of being micro-states in a global jungle.

Remember, though, we achieve nothing in isolation.

Success here at St Augustine can be attributed to many factors: our talented and dedicated faculty; the energy, enthusiasm, and inventiveness of graduate and undergraduate students; the dedication of excellent staff; the passion of our alumni to make a difference in their communities; and the engagement of our many donors, partners and supporters.

Success also requires you to be actively participative in and out of the lecture halls.

As newly minted members of the St Augustine campus and the Student Guild, you are expected to take your civic responsibility seriously. Become involved and invested in your community – here and/or where you live. Always remember the adage, to whom much is given, much is expected.

On a personal and individual basis, it is the people who are closest to us who will keep our spirits up and hold us steadfast in our goals. Some of them are present here today.

To you, I say, know that you will walk every step of the road with your student, and you may find on occasion that your role becomes even more important than all of those mentioned above.

I offer one final welcome and best wishes to our new UWI members, as well as one final reminder: you are not on this journey alone.

I thank you.

Rose-Marie Antoine

Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine

Campus Principal

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■ CAMPUS NEWS

UWI shines at 2022 National Awards

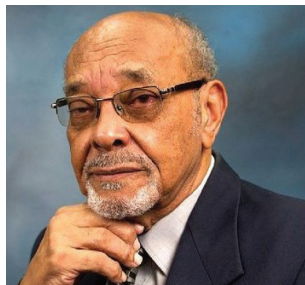
ORTT, Chaconia Gold and more for St Augustine Campus



Dr Sterling Frost



Professor Christine Carrington



Professor Edgar Duncan



Dr Gabrielle Hosein

Education, advocacy, community service, culture, research, science – on September 24, Republic Day, the nation celebrated the outstanding contributions of those in these fields and others at the 2022 National Awards. Several members of The UWI St Augustine campus community were recipients of some of T&T's highest honours at the ceremony hosted by the Office of the President of Trinidad and Tobago.

Campus Principal Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, warmly congratulated the 2022 National Award recipients, thanking them for their contributions to The UWI and the wider community.

"Your dedication and talents that you have shared with your community brought you to this point, and you richly deserve this mark of success," said Principal Antoine. "I am sure you and your families are overjoyed with this national recognition. We, in the St Augustine campus community, share in your joy and are so proud of your inspiring achievements!"

She also extended congratulations to Mr Darren Paul, an employee of the Bursary at the St Augustine Campus and father of Hummingbird Medal (Gold) recipient and sportsperson Nicholas Paul.

'A Privilege and Honour'

Dr Sterling Frost, Professor of Practice – Management Studies at UWI St Augustine and Chairman of The UWI Development and Endowment Fund (UWIDEF), received the Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for Distinguished and Outstanding Service in the spheres of banking, education and community service.

He said the acknowledgment was "a privilege and honour".

"I am humbled to be considered amongst the members of the Distinguished Society of Trinidad and Tobago," commented Dr Frost. "I continue to pursue standards of excellence wherever I serve, and having received the nation's highest award, I am strengthened in my resolve to contribute more meaningfully every day towards the improvement of our people and this country which I love."

Professor Christine Carrington, recipient of the Chaconia Medal (Gold) for her leadership in molecular genetics and virology, said she was "truly honoured and very pleased" that her body of work over the last 30 years and expertise have been valued by Trinidad and Tobago.

"The work for which I have been recognised would not have been possible without the support and hard work of many individuals, particularly the graduate students and technicians in my research group at the UWI, and our collaborators both within and outside of the UWI," she explained.

Recognition of the Importance of Knowledge

She was also very grateful for the award, she said, because her work is in basic research (seeking to advance knowledge) rather than applied research (finding a solution to a specific problem).

"Since basic research is not always of immediate and obvious relevance, it can be a particularly hard sell in a setting such as ours, where resources are limited. So, I am very grateful for the spotlight that the award shines on this type of work," she said. "In addition to the scientific insights gained through it, it meant that we had the knowledge base, expertise and capacity required to help guide Trinidad and Tobago through the COVID-19 pandemic, and to contribute to public education and to the global body of knowledge."

Professor Kit Fai Pun, Professor of Industrial Engineering and Engineering Education and Research, said his Hummingbird Medal (Gold) was "incredibly gratifying".

"I am so thankful for this recognition in the spheres of Engineering Education and Research," he told UWI TODAY, emphasising that "the award belongs to us – colleagues, researchers and everyone who devotes consistent work and commitments in our UWI community to foster engineering education and research."

Contribution to Culture

Dr Primnath Gooptar, Lecturer in Indian Cinema at The UWI Film Programme, received the Hummingbird Medal (Gold) for his singular contribution to national culture.

"It is a signal honour to receive this prestigious national award from the Government of Trinidad and Tobago," said Dr Gooptar. "I consider it a lifetime achievement award."

Dr Gooptar, who is a writer, biographer, social worker, cultural promoter, former school principal, and Hindi film scholar, thanked "all those who played a part in my journey to this point: my parents, my family, my siblings, my friends and the various organisations I worked with throughout the years."

He added, "it is with all humility that I accept this award, not only on my behalf, but on behalf of all those who have played a role in this great achievement."

Dr Jerome Teelucksingh, recipient of the Hummingbird (Gold) for education and volunteerism, said, "I am humbled by this award and glad that my years of ideas, voluntary work and writings have finally been publicly recognised."

A historian whose advocacy work includes the reviving of International Men's Day, Dr Teelucksingh said the award showed that UWI is "making a worthwhile contribution to improving our Caribbean society".

Significantly, honorary graduates of The UWI were among these distinguished national award holders, such as Chief Medical Officer Dr Roshan Parasram, who received The Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for Distinguished and Outstanding Service in the sphere of public health; and Ms Marina Salandy-Brown, Founder and President of the Bocas Lit Fest, for the Hummingbird Medal, Silver, for arts and literacy.

The UWI St Augustine's 2022 National Awards Recipients

Dr Sterling Frost

Professor of Practice, Faculty of Social Sciences – The Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for Distinguished and Outstanding Service, in the spheres of banking, education and community service

Professor Christine Carrington

Professor of Molecular Genetics and Virology at the Faculty of Medical Sciences – the Chaconia Medal (Gold) for leadership in molecular genetics and virology

Professor Gordon Rohlehr

Emeritus Professor, Faculty of Humanities and Education – the Chaconia Medal (Silver) in the spheres of literature, culture, history and education

Ms Hazel Franco

Dance Coordinator, at the Department of Creative and Festival Arts – the Chaconia Medal (Silver) for her contribution to the performing arts

Professor Edgar Duncan

Emeritus Professor, Faculty of Food and Agriculture – the Chaconia Medal (Bronze) education and research

Professor Kit Fai Pun

Professor of Industrial Engineering and Engineering Education and Research at the Faculty of Engineering – the Hummingbird Medal (Gold) for engineering education and research

Dr Primnath Gooptar

Lecturer in Indian Cinema, The UWI Film Programme – the Hummingbird Medal (Gold) for his singular contribution to national culture

Dr Jerome Teelucksingh

Senior Lecturer in History, Faculty of Humanities and Education – the Hummingbird Medal (Gold) for education and volunteerism

Dr Gabrielle Hosein

Senior Lecturer, Institute of Gender and Development Studies – the Medal for the Development of Women (Gold) for her work in the sphere of public education and advocacy

Several members of The UWI St Augustine campus community were recipients of some of T&T's highest honours at the ceremony hosted by the Office of the President of Trinidad and Tobago.

■ CAMPUS NEWS

“We cannot, must not, deny any of our bright and best the opportunity to learn, to grow, and to achieve. This country and this region need them far too much,” said Pro Vice-Chancellor and Campus Principal, Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine at the launch of The UWI Fete for a Cause 2023.

The much-anticipated fete was officially launched on Friday, September 23, 2022 at the Office of the Campus Principal in St Augustine, ushering in the physical return of this iconic event to campus grounds.

According to Professor Antoine, the main goal is to support educational development: “It is our duty to ensure that everyone in our region has full access to tertiary level education, should they so desire.”

Chair of The UWI Development and Endowment Fund (UWIDEF), Dr Sterling Frost, explained that the event helps provide “scholarships which promote academic excellence, alleviating financial hardships of deserving students, and facilitating student interchange between campuses of The UWI, while funding research in selected areas, providing endowment for chairs and lectureship in different disciplines, and funding capital projects”.

Launched in 1989, UWIDEF has been an exceptional representation of The UWI’s commitment to students and community. Its primary purpose is to establish and manage a development and endowment fund to enable the university to honour its academic responsibilities by better providing for its stakeholders. Up to 20 percent of the scholarships are awarded to regional students.

“Currently, the Fund distributes over one million dollars annually to eligible students from all faculties,” said Dr Frost.

Dr Deirdre Charles, Director of the Division of Student Services and Development and Chair of the UWIDEF Fete Committee, made the point that, “Once we are able to understand that we are a part of the communities that benefit and thrive from educational development and empowerment of our youths, then we will understand the true purpose of this event.”

She promised gourmet dishes and premium drinks crafted by top chefs and mixologists from across the nation as well as the melodious sounds of Carnival’s best entertainers. In that regard, Freetown Collective gave guests a sampling of the music to come in just four months.

“ReLive”, the theme of the all-inclusive UWI Fete 2023, was unveiled along with UWIDEF’s new logo. It celebrates the intentionality of life and living while inviting persons to allow freedom to reign while abandoning the fears and frustrations of the past. It will be staged on Sunday, January 22, 2023, from 2:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

■ **To reserve tickets**, contact 662-2002 ext. 82326 or email uwidef@sta.uwi.edu

ReLive

at UWI Fete 2023



The much-anticipated fete was officially launched on Friday, September 23, 2022 at the Office of the Campus Principal in St Augustine, ushering in the physical return of this iconic event to campus grounds.



From Left: Dr Sterling Frost, Dr Deirdre Charles, and Campus Principal Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine unveil the theme of The UWI Fete 2023, “ReLive” at the Office of the Campus Principal.



Ms Mahalia Crichton, a BSc Nursing student at UWI St Augustine and recipient of a UWIDEF award, shares her story at the media launch.



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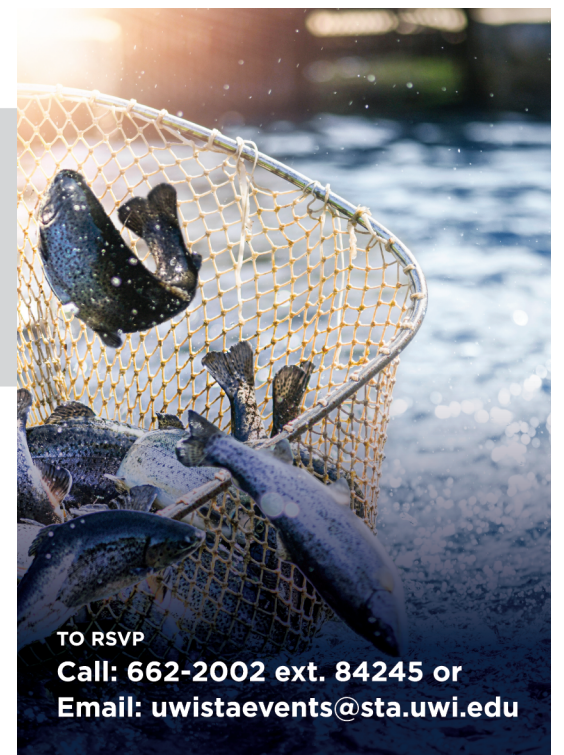


by

Dr. Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted

2021 World Food Prize Laureate and 2022 UWI Honorary Graduat

► **Wednesday 26 October, 2022**
Daaga Auditorium | 5:30 pm



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■ CAMPUS NEWS

Three outstanding lecturers from The UWI St Augustine campus were honoured on September 22 at the annual UWI/Guardian Group Premium Teaching Awards.

Dr Suzanne Burke from the Faculty of Humanities and Education, Dr Amy Deacon of the Faculty of Science and Technology, and Dr Bephyer Parey of the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES) were all recognised for their excellence as educators at the event held at the campus' Learning Resource Centre.

This year's theme was "Ready, Set, Click: Negotiating Quality in the Blended/Online Teaching and Learning Environment", emphasising the ability of the campus to successfully engage in blended/online teaching and learning. The featured speaker was Dr Camille Dickson-Deane, Senior Lecturer of Higher Education Learning Design at the University of Technology in Sydney, Australia.

Dr Parey, a post-doctoral fellow at SALISES, has been teaching at The UWI since 2008 and currently lectures on research design and statistical analysis. Dr Amy Deacon is a Lecturer in the Department of Life Sciences. Her research centres on aquatic biodiversity, invasive species, and Trinidad's most famous fish, the guppy. Dr Burke is the Head of the Department of Literary, Cultural and Communication Studies. Her research focuses on Caribbean industries in culture, creative entrepreneurship, cultural policy formulation, and cultural practice-based pedagogies.

An initiative of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CELT), the Premium Teaching Awards "is part of the university's commitment to provide a dynamic, student-centred learning environment whereby student learning is pursued as a primary goal of the academy, and excellence in teaching is recognised and rewarded," a statement from the campus explained.

Campus Principal Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine congratulated all the nominees and extended her gratitude to the team at CELT for their work during the campus closure.

"As a way of addressing teaching and learning continuity at The UWI St Augustine campus, CETL designed and implemented a number of workshops and capacity-building activities to support teaching and learning in the Emergency Remote Teaching setting. These activities served to foster a much-needed sense of readiness among faculty and students," Professor Antoine said.

Mr Marcos Rehberg, Vice President - Finance, Guardian Life of the Caribbean Limited, noted that the Guardian Group's partnership with The UWI started in 2000, and the relationship is deeply rooted in developing and promoting academic excellence, with leadership and innovation in mind.

"We can agree that quality is a value that should not be compromised, as we provide a promise to deliver, whether it be education or life insurance. Managing these expectations, while navigating through a blended environment requires a paradigm shift and agility in order to remain relevant," he pointed out.

Dr LeRoy Hill, CETL Director, said the theme of the awards "was an invitation to be ready, to be resilient – resilient in the face of uncertainty or adversity".

Educators honoured at UWI/Guardian Group Premium Teaching Awards 2022



From left: Awardees Dr Suzanne Burke, Dr Bephyer Parey, and Dr Amy Deacon.

■ The UWI/Guardian Group Premium Teaching Awards 2022 ceremony can be viewed on The UWI St Augustine Campus' YouTube Channel.

Climate change is quickly becoming a defining feature of Caribbean development. Despite its importance, theoretical and practical solutions to cope with this problem have been somewhat limited, particularly in terms of socioeconomic and political dimensions. Pressures of climate change which can intensify natural disasters, and cause sea level rise, and salination of fresh water poses a great challenge.

The IMF has labelled the Caribbean region as "one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world" based on the number of disasters given their land size and populations. More frequent and extreme weather events put the Caribbean at risk, threatening coastal communities and entire islands if the dangers of global warming are not addressed collectively and urgently today.

The Conference on the Economy (COTE) 2022, now in its 16th year, being held on November 3 and 4 has as its theme "Climate Change and Disaster Management: A Movement Towards Sustainable Development for Small Island Developing States".

COTE, hosted by the Department of Economics in the Faculty of Social Sciences at The UWI St Augustine, will bring together policymakers, academics, students, and representatives from the private sector to discuss issues surrounding climate change.

Climate change affects the entire population, particularly the most vulnerable. It endangers our achievement of sustainable development and reduces success in our goal of poverty eradication. In general, the proliferation and strength of natural disasters linked to climate change means that virtually all economic sectors in the Caribbean are being impacted in multiple ways: job losses, reduced productivity, decreased tourism demand, and damage to public and private infrastructure.

COTE 2022 to focus on climate change and disaster management in the Caribbean

BY TRAE RICHARDS AND SOLEIL SENGHOR



It is important to consider that Caribbean economies have a small geographical area and large segments of our populations are located close to the coasts. Our economies are concentrated in productive sectors that are dependent on natural resources. Persons whose livelihoods depend on agriculture and tourism may see major negative effects as a result of climate change. Prolonged exposure to consistent disruptive events can create large-scale economic imbalances, slow economic growth, increase poverty, and create social unrest.

While we cannot prevent natural disasters, we can mitigate the consequences of global warming and extreme weather events if we address climate change and specific coastal adaptation and resilience challenges today. Working toward a comprehensive climate-change agenda entails not only ensuring the survival of Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS), but also coordinating efforts to create a more secure, resilient, and prosperous hemisphere for the benefit of its citizens and future generations across borders.

■ **More information about COTE 2022** can be found at the Department of Economics homepage at <https://sta.uwi.edu/fss/economics/>

■ BOOKS



Prof Andrew Jupiter

chronicles T&T's, and his own, 50-year energy industry journey in *Red, White and Black Gold*

BY PAUL HADDEN

"Petroleum is in my DNA, and it is also in the DNA of this nation, but there are so many people, even leaders in the field, who do not truly appreciate the history of our industry. For this reason, I thought that it was necessary to share where we came from and to give readers a better appreciation of the history of the energy industry here in Trinidad and Tobago."

So says Professor Andrew Jupiter as he discusses his recently released book, *Red, White and Black Gold*, which chronicles his 50-year journey in the energy industry in Trinidad and Tobago.

To describe Professor Jupiter as accomplished would indeed be an understatement. He has been one of the most influential figures in the development of the local energy industry and his accomplishments in the field have earned him several honours, including the Chaconia Medal Gold in 2016 for Public Service. He was also among 50 public servants who were honoured at the Outstanding Public Service Awards Ceremony and Gala organised by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago for the country's golden 50th year anniversary of Independence. In his capacity as an oil and gas expert, Professor Jupiter has accompanied, on various overseas missions, almost all Prime Ministers of this country since Independence.

Born in the oil town of Point Fortin and deeply shaped by his environment from youth, Jupiter was never far away from the country's most precious natural resource. He writes, "I was surrounded by petroleum. I would pass the pumping jacks every day on my way to and from school. I was fascinated by the flares from the refinery and the process of extracting crude out of the ground. The smell of oil was in the air, fueling my curiosity."

He explains that, like most families in Point Fortin at the time, his was also a family where working in oil had become something of a tradition. "Almost every person in my family, including my father, stepfather, and uncles, worked in the oil industry and I was proud to be entering the petroleum industry where I would find the answers to questions about petroleum that had enlivened my curiosity all my life."

His new book, however, offers not only a treasure-trove of information on the rich history of the local oil industry, but is also a testament to his own personal struggles and triumphs. His was a journey of constant upward movement, which saw him move from humble beginnings in Point Fortin and Grande Riviere, to working as a trainee lab technician at Shell, to Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Energy, President of the National Energy Corporation, and finally to the halls of The UWI where he is now both a Distinguished Fellow and Professor of Practice. His main reason for relating these personal successes in his book is to offer hope for those now starting out in life, and show them just how much can be accomplished through hard work and dedication.

"I felt that it was necessary to share my experiences with the next generation and to pen my 50-year journey so that the story could be told of how a young guy from a country area was able to move up in all areas of life. I wanted young people, perhaps those now starting out their journey at secondary school, to have a sense that they can move beyond where they are. I wanted to give them hope that all is not lost in our country, and let them know that they have a bright future if they put in the hard work."

A true patriot, Jupiter relates that one of the pivotal moments of his life was the joint decision made by his wife and himself to decline offers to remain at a prestigious American university, where they were both studying at the time, in order to return home to Trinidad.

Prof Jupiter and his wife
Dr Clarise McMillan-Jupiter

"I was at Penn State on scholarship and my wife and I had been offered a chance to stay on, but we decided instead to return home because we wanted to give back to our homeland. The people of Trinidad and Tobago had given my wife and I a total of five scholarships, and we felt very strongly that we needed to show our appreciation for this by going back to serve the country which had given us both so much."

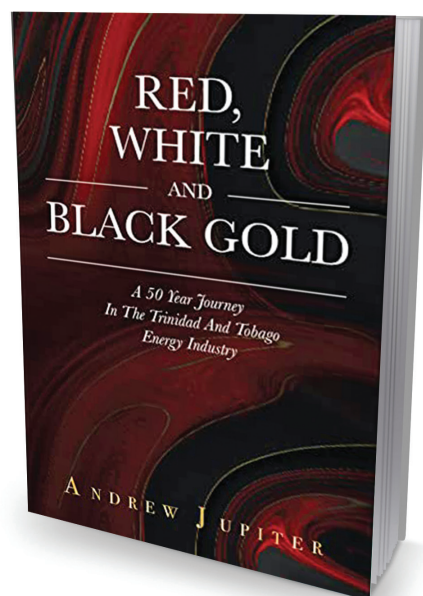
It was not the first, and certainly not the last time that Jupiter's wife, Dr Clarise McMillan-Jupiter would play a fundamental role in his major life decisions. "For 44 years of my 50-year journey, my wife has been there by my side, and after God, she has been the most instrumental person in my life."

While discussing his new book, Jupiter also reflects on the role that the UWI has played in both his personal life and the energy industry in general.

"UWI has played a tremendous role in my life and was really the starting point for my journey. It gave me my first undergraduate degree and also a postgraduate diploma in Petroleum Engineering. Looking out from my own personal journey to society at large, I can also say that UWI plays a pivotal role in the energy industry as it has successfully been able to link academia to industry. The research that is done here at UWI is truly relevant to the field, and it is something of which we should be very proud."

Red, White and Black Gold was officially launched on September 22, 2022, a choice of date not without significance.

"I planned the book launch to be right after our country's 60th year of independence. I wanted the book to be my gift to the nation, and hope that readers would be able to better appreciate the vital role that the energy industry has played in our history and development."



I felt that it was necessary to share my experiences with the next generation and to pen my 50-year journey so that the story could be told of how a young guy from a country area was able to move up in all areas of life.

■ MATRICULATION 2022

Top matriculant, future lawyer SOLANGE JOSEPH

BY ZAHRA GORDON

Being chosen as the top matriculant surprised first-year Faculty of Law student, Solange Joseph. Not only was she not expecting to be chosen, but Joseph nearly missed the Matriculation Ceremony's RSVP deadline. In the end, however, Joseph made it to the ceremony and was able to be recognised for her academic excellence, and sign the Matriculation Register on behalf of her class. It's an opportunity Joseph appreciates, and a tradition she hopes to continue to uphold.

"UWI recognised how much effort I put into my academics, and I am grateful to have been selected. I wouldn't be here without God, my parents, my brother, and everyone who supported me along the way," she said.

"It was nice to hear from the Principal and Vice-Chancellor; to enjoy the performance, and to be the representative on behalf of the matriculants felt rewarding, but also like a big responsibility. I feel some pressure, not particularly external pressure, but from myself. I know that since I've made it this far, I can keep achieving. It's just a matter of me concentrating and doing what I have to do."

The Arima born-and-bred, St Augustine Girls High School alumna said she chose UWI because of its ranking as one of the top universities in the world in addition to its location. "I knew that going abroad was an option, but I don't think that, at this stage in my life, I would've been able to stay away from parents for so long and survive on my own in a completely different environment, so UWI was the best option to meet both academic needs and personal needs."

UWI was also a perfect fit for Joseph for following the family tradition. Her brother is currently a year-three BSc Agriculture student, while her mother received a Master's in Small and Medium Enterprise Management from the Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business in 2021.

Law felt like a good avenue to make change

Although Joseph doesn't refer to herself as an environmentalist, she practices sustainability, and wants to practice law to positively impact the environment in T&T and the wider Caribbean.

"I do try my best to be as environmentally conscious as possible, but it is difficult in this society, where to a very large extent not much emphasis is placed on protection and preservation. I have a home garden and do a bit of composting as well," she noted.

"Law felt like a good avenue through which I could make a change.

I feel that not enough energy is being focused on trying to find alternative sources of energy, and we just need more help in that area, and I think that law would be the best area to do it," said Joseph.

She also plans on attending Hugh Wooding Law School after completing the LLB. "In the long run, I'd like to maybe become a judge, and overall, I hope that during my time in the law field, I'll be able to contribute to legislation to regulate the impact of industry on the environment and try to steer T&T in a direction away from the path we're on right now."

Her passion for environmentalism was inspired by studying about issues such as climate change and participating in programmes like the Carbon Zero Initiative of T&T.

"Throughout secondary school, learning about climate change and actually being able to experience increasingly hotter temperatures made me do research and realise that, while we cannot reverse the deterioration of the earth, we can mitigate it to some extent. It also opened my eyes to the extent of the severity of the state of the environment."

These lessons solidified Joseph's commitment to making changes to environmental legislation. "As a society, presumably because of our dependence on oil, I don't think enough is being done to make the general public more aware of their effects on the environment. Furthermore, the exploitation of and disregard for wildlife and marine life, locally and internationally, made me want to contribute in some way toward humans being able to exist without further infringing on animals and their natural habitats. We need to realise that the more we destroy the environment, we indirectly destroy ourselves, as we cannot survive without it."

An all-rounder who has been involved in charity work, sports and the arts, Joseph said she intends on joining the Student Guild in the near future. Joseph believes that success isn't achieved with talent alone, but also conscientiousness.

"If you put your mind to anything, you can achieve it," she says. "I don't think of myself as extraordinary, but I work hard. There's a quote that I like that goes something like, 'You didn't reach this far to only get this far', so try and push forward."

Welcome

"Student Centredness". It's one of The UWI's five core values. university student experience goes beyond learning, exams and grades. For many, higher education is an important part of their personal development. They form new relationships, learn life lessons, and grow as people. It's an exhilarating and sometimes frightening time, especially for new students. The First Year Experience (FYE) was created by UWI St Augustine's Office of Student Services and Development (DSSD) to help new undergraduate and postgraduates adjust to campus life and make the most of their time. It includes a host of events and activities - from sessions to familiarise students with their faculties, the library, and the technologies available to them, to sessions on health and wellness, career planning, and even volunteerism.



Solange Joseph signs the Matriculation Register with UWI St Augustine Campus Registrar and Assistant Registrar Ms Simone Roberts looking on. PHOTOS: ANEEL KARIM



The UWI Arts Chorale delivers a thrilling performance at the ceremony.



Campus Principal Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine and Guild President Kobe Sandy light the flame to represent the union of the campus administration and the student body, in support of new students.



to Student Life

BY JOEL HENRY

And the graduation. development. ple. It's an students. 's Division graduates their time. It them with o sessions

Students also receive enormous support from the Guild of Students, their official university representative body, that hosts a whole slew of events and activities to enrich campus life, including Guild Fest (see article in this issue). For students with special needs, FYE also includes an orientation for students with disabilities to ensure they are aware of the resources in place for them. The Matriculation Ceremony, highlighted here, is the event that formally recognises new students to UWI St Augustine. Their acceptance into the academic community is marked by the signing of the Matriculation Register. Formalities aside, it is a way of warmly welcoming new students to a new, and very important, chapter of their lives.



Dr Dawn-Marie De Four-Gill (left)



Students, art, and engineering combine for a Flame of Excellence

BY ZAHRA GORDON

This year's matriculating class was not only able to witness the ceremonial lighting of the Flame of Excellence, but was also able to participate in a meaningful activity thanks to a project from the Department of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering (DMME).

In addition to the traditional candle, DMME constructed a mechanical flame which served as a symbolic repository for students' fears and hopes. After the candle was lit, it was inserted into the external flame which remained on campus for one week following the ceremony. Students were invited to write down their fears and hopes and deposit them into the flame.

Designed and built by a six-member team, led by Department Head Dr Jacqueline Bridge, the flame was a motor-driven, rotating structure made from plexiglass, PVC piping, crepe paper, and LED lights. The crepe paper and plexiglass were cut into different sizes to create conical shapes, and a fan was stationed in the centre for the flame to move continuously. The LED lights were positioned to both reflect and transmit light, giving the entire structure a glowing effect.

Dr Bridge said the project provided a unique opportunity for students:

"From my point-of-view as an educator, I think it was a good opportunity for the students to see the phases of a project like this. To see how you might start with a concept, but once you take into account all the constraints you have to work with – time, money, fabrication techniques and sourcing materials – you end with something different yet having the same fundamental characteristics."

It took two weeks to complete from concept to construction and was commissioned by the matriculation ceremony planning committee. The flame consisted of one central flame and eight surrounding structures to represent each faculty. The design represented the connectedness and community of The UWI, and was a symbol of commitment to excellence. The three undergraduate students involved – Irfaan Ali, Kiana Eversley and Nabilah Mohammed – were responsible for design and fabrication drawings, and assisted with construction. They were mentored by postgraduate student Ezekiel Yorke. Also involved in the construction were engineering technicians Lionel Hanumansingh and Marlon Dolloway.

Hanumansingh said he was proud that a group of mechanical engineers could undertake such an artistic project and is hoping that they will be able to create a permanent structure for future ceremonies.

Dr Bridge added that, "The students were very happy to be part of it, and it opened their eyes to things you wouldn't normally think of in terms of mechanical engineering, because it was artistic but still mechanical."

This sentiment was echoed by undergraduate student Kiana Eversly, who said participating in the project allowed her to get to know her classmates better and displayed engineering's true purpose.

"This was the first time I helped create something in a team that would actually help other people. It also felt special to see others make use of our creation. In my opinion, that is the heart of engineering, so it really helped me feel like an engineering student for the first time."



From left: Engineering technician Lionel Hanumansingh, postgraduate student Ezekiel Yorke, and undergraduate students Kiana Eversley, Irfaan Ali, and Nabilah Mohammed at work on the Flame.

Zahra Gordon is a poet, freelance writer and communications lecturer.

■ OUR STUDENTS



Kyle Bisnath, Guild Vice President, and Shenelle Vincent, Guild Public Relations Officer, welcoming attendees to Guild Fest.
PHOTOS: COURTESY UWI ST AUGUSTINE GUILD OF STUDENTS

The level of excitement was palpable as UWI's Guild Fest returned triumphantly to campus this year. After two years off campus due to the pandemic, new and returning students were ready to fully embrace this year's theme "We Out and Back", participating in events and activities like Club Pop Up, Spiritual Night, Entrepreneurial Expo, and Faculty of Medical Sciences (FMS) Fest.

Jointly organised annually by the Guild Council and the Guild Administrative Office within the Division of Student Services and Development (DSSD), Guild Fest has been a highly anticipated student event.

Kyle Bisnath, Vice President of the Guild of Students, explained that it was conceived to foster cooperation among clubs and societies; to improve student affairs through collaboration and increased participation; and to enhance the overall student experience.

Amanda Best-Noel, Manager of the Guild Administrative Office, declared that, "The main goal of Guild Fest remains to orient new students to out-of-classroom engagement opportunities while welcoming back returning students to campus life."

This year's event also helped with the rejuvenation of student campus life.

"For our culture night of Guild Fest, the membership turnout exceeded expectations, which was an amazing sight to experience," said Bisnath.

First-year student Xaviella Millette declared that she enjoyed visiting the many booths with her friends and eating free food.

The choices of festival events were made to appeal to a wide range of students, said Best-Noel.

"There is an engagement opportunity for every student given their interest presented annually in one space. We work to marry the efforts of academia with student support services, campus clubs, associations and NGOs as out-of-classroom opportunities that can further ignite students' passions."

OUT AND BACK

Guild Fest, UWI St Augustine's signature student-led event, returns after two-year hiatus

BY DIXIE-ANN BELLE



(In white shirts from left to right in centre) Amanda Best-Noel, Manager, Guild Administrative Office; Dr Deirdre Charles, Director of DSSD, and Jarell Alder, Manager of Student Engagement with Guild Council members.

■ OUR STUDENTS

This year's addition of an entrepreneurial showcase helped with this aim. Businesses like Nika's Cake Shoppe TT, Packaged Online Grocery Ltd, Flower Boi Nurseries, Fashion DuJour, Rhean's Virtual Assistance Services, and many more illustrated the diversity of the UWI community. The organisers anticipated that the venture would not only support student business owners, but empower them and encourage innovation.

The student response to it all exceeded expectations. "The consensus of the membership is one of excitement as they thoroughly enjoyed being back on campus," said Bisnath.

Best-Noel agreed. "Our students both new and returning expressed their delight and excitement having been welcomed back to campus by the Guild."

Xaviella revealed that her friends from previous years recommended that she attend Guild Fest, and she was glad she did.

"It's important to hold such events so that all years, especially first years, become integrated into The UWI life and experience," she said.

After all their efforts, the response has proved to be reward enough for the event coordinators from the Guild and the DSSD.

"Conducting Guild Fest was an amazing experience, and after having the campus physically dormant for two years, seeing it explode as a firework of student engagement, innovation and entrepreneurship could not have been more satisfying," said Bisnath.

Best-Noel expressed her satisfaction with the outcome, and hopes that the next Guild Fest will feature the return of one of the campus' signature events: fan favourite Taste of UWI, an exhibition of international cuisine. She also hopes that the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be represented in the future.

"I would like to see intentional awareness efforts, and action on zero hunger and no poverty goals by way of an orientation service learning project," she explained. "I think it is important that we create a framework for awareness of the SDGs within Guild Fest and how these goals can be supported in student programming."

After the invigorating experience, Bisnath said he encourages the next Guild Fest organisers to carry on celebrating the diversity of the student culture and to "continue to ensure the bright flame that is the student experience at the St Augustine Campus continues to burn for the years to come".



Jointly organised annually by the **Guild Council** and the **Guild Administrative Office** within the **Division of Student Services and Development (DSSD)**, Guild Fest has been a highly anticipated student event.



■ OUR STUDENTS

As this year's UWI Got Talent winner Kendra Hope took her bows, it was clear that we were witnessing the end of a transformative journey.

"This win means so much to me and reminds me that I matter, and that my voice and gifts are valuable," Hope, a vocalist, said.

A few months ago, this year's crop of student performers courageously took the first steps, auditioning in the categories of Dance, Voice, Music or Performance Art. The judges had the difficult decision of choosing 16 finalists for the grand finale scheduled for Queen's Hall on October 1.

Produced by the Division of Student Services and Development (DSSD) and the Student Guild, UWI Got Talent was created to celebrate performing arts excellence within the campus' student population. Jarell Alder, Manager of Student Engagement at DSSD, emphasised that it is a programme designed to inspire and empower participants to use their creative talents, gifts and artistic expressions for social healing and to unite people from all walks of life.

Many ambitious performers came forward in the programme's first outing in 2019. A large contingent of students contended for the chance to be this year's winner.

"I think events like this provide a very useful and needed breath of fresh air for students, and gives them something to look forward to and participate in other than classwork," said Luc Corbie, an instrumentalist and one of the 16 finalists.

Alder explains that emotions ran high during this year's auditions. In 2019, candidates brought fellow student supporters who sat in the bleachers cheering, an atmosphere of excitement and camaraderie. The 2022 mood was a bit different. After the difficult years of the pandemic, many students were not as familiar with the campus, and some were a bit nervous. Many brought family members to give support. Pent-up feelings found release during the spirited performances.

"We had a few instances where persons broke down in tears just before their audition or during their performances. Just a rush of emotions for many different reasons," he said.

Even Alder and the judges were moved. "I felt that 2022 was more than persons sharing their talent. It felt to me like a moment of freedom, freedom of expression."

During the preparations for the ultimate test of their abilities, the finalists were mentored by the UWI Got Talent coaches, musician and vocalist, Vaugnette Bigford; actor, Kevin Soyer; choreographer, Sherma Burke; and talent manager, Marlon Pierre Grant.

"I have learned how to effectively use vocal techniques that I did not previously have the confidence to use, and I have also gained a greater understanding about examining multiple aspects of the performance of a song," explained vocalist and finalist Rex-Anne Bobb.

"My coach has not only given me ideas for how to structure my performances, but he has also given me tips on how to improve my stage presence," said Luc Corbie.

The organisers hoped that participants would end their journeys transformed and fired up to continue to explore their talents. The 2019 winner, pannist Emmanuel Joseph, had already distinguished himself as a performer even before his win. He went on to become an ambassador for the brand.

"I think he realised the title came with a level of influence. He used that for all the right reasons," observed Alder proudly, noting that Joseph has used the platform he achieved to educate others in the steel pan.

Alder also related how the programme has captured the minds and hearts of the campus community. The coaches committed wholeheartedly to their roles, and the participants rose to the occasion.

"You might know a shy student in engineering, but on that night, you don't see a shy student, you see a performer," observed Alder.

"These events also create a space for students who have

A moment of freedom through performance

UWI Got Talent's successful return gives students a much-needed release

UWI Got Talent winner Kendra Hope.
PHOTOS: MICHAEL ANTHONY/WILE ANTZ PIXOGRAPHY

BY DIXIE - ANN BELLE

hidden talents to come out of their shells, gain courage, experience and exposure," said Rex-Anne.

The corporate community has also shown enthusiastic support. Sponsors included TTT Media Limited Network, and Digicel Trinidad and Tobago.

As all involved in this year's event recover from the exhilaration of the grand finale, plans are already in motion for the next production. Alder revealed that UWI Got Talent has inspired an initiative at the university level, which will not only seek out performers among students, but staff

and alumni from across campuses. This inaugural event will form part of The UWI's 75th anniversary celebrations.

Besides seeing the programme evolve, Alder hopes that it will continue to motivate students to embrace their time at UWI.

"Through my work in student engagement, I genuinely hope to empower and propel students to really maximise their university experience by connecting them to diverse experiences, activities and developmental opportunities that will aid in their holistic growth."



From left: Jarell Alder, Kendra Hope, Campus Principal Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, Director of DSSD Dr Deirdre Charles, Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts Randall Mitchell, and Student Guild President Kobe Sandy.

Dixie-Ann Belle is a freelance writer, editor and proofreader.

■ UWI IN SOCIETY

If it appears that anxiety is a growing health statistic – it is. In September 2022, the US Preventive Services Task Force issued a draft recommendation urging all adults under the age of 65 to be screened for anxiety. Some career choices can exacerbate anxiety, and anyone who has ever faced stage fright would understand that musicians face anxiety far more frequently in their work than in many other fields of endeavour.

On September 22, the ANSA McAL Psychological Research Centre, in collaboration with the Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA), hosted Dr Daniel Ramjattan for a virtual seminar on Music Performance and Anxiety (MPA). The seminar brought musicians, students and media members together with other members of the campus community for a theoretical understanding of MPA and some practical ways to deal with it.

Dr Ramjattan is a Doctor of Musical Arts at the University of Toronto, an Instructor at Wilfrid Laurier University in Canada, and a classically trained guitarist. He is Canadian but also a second-generation Trinbagonian. Dr Ramjattan received the University of Toronto New College's Senior Doctoral Fellowship in 2021-2022 for his research into cognitive-behavioral psychology for managing MPA amongst guitarists. He shared several explanations and insights into MPA gleaned from his studies.

Butterflies in the stomach and bad habits

"Music Performance Anxiety is defined as the presence of persisting, distressing apprehension, and/or actual impairment of performance skills in a public context, to a degree unwarranted given the individual's musical aptitude, training, and level of preparation," (Salmon, 1990, pg. 3) he detailed in his presentation slides.

Dr Ramjattan likened it to the sports phenomenon of "choking under pressure" though it is more commonly referred to as "stage fright" by musicians. He pointed out that when creatives and musicians enjoy their work, they refer to it as "flow". MPA can be considered negative arousal and the opposite of flow.

"Flow is a kind of rapturous feeling that we get where we feel we could not make a mistake if we tried. With MPA, it's the other end of the spectrum. No matter how prepared we are, we feel anxious. And this happens at several levels, creating three levels of symptoms. There are physiological symptoms such as tachycardia (higher heart beats per minute) or sweaty hands. There are cognitive symptoms like difficulty focusing, and also behavioural symptoms such as over eating or under eating, over practising or under practising and of course, substance abuse as a coping mechanism."

Dr Ramjattan also led virtual attendees on a shortened breathing and meditation exercise to retrain and refocus the mind via daily practice or before a performance.

Mr Jessel Murray, Senior Lecturer of Music Arts and Head of the Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA), noted that his department is keen to continue this learning modality.

"This seminar was a welcome addition to the support needed for students in our performance activities, especially those who are solo performers. It was the perfect complement to the DCFA Music Unit's Performance Ready series which stopped due to the migration to online course delivery. Dr Ramjattan had an earthy and humorous approach to his presentation

The SCIENCE of STAGE FRIGHT

Dr Daniel Ramjattan explores music performance anxiety from a psychological perspective

BY KIERAN ANDREW KHAN



Some career choices can exacerbate anxiety, and anyone who has ever faced stage fright would understand that musicians face anxiety far more frequently in their work than in many other fields of endeavour.

that allowed for the processing of this matter that bedevils so many students. The Department has already petitioned the ANSA McAL Psychological Research Centre for follow-up sessions," he said.

A resource for research on the human condition

Established at the St Augustine campus through the ANSA McAL Foundation, the Psychological Research Centre has conducted several national research projects on social norms and values, gambling, and crime victimisation, and has undertaken numerous surveys and polls for many agencies. The Centre also collaborates with researchers regionally and internationally, and has been hosting virtual seminars, including a webinar in 2021 on Family Violence.

Derek Chadee, Professor of Social Psychology and Director of the ANSA McAL Psychological Research Centre, noted that Dr Ramjattan is a "pracademic" or a practising musician and academic, and that he was able to use the "discipline of psychology to understand the dynamics of performance anxiety in musicians".

"The ANSA McAL Psychological Research Centre was happy to host this seminar with the DCFA. The blend between psychology and other disciplines brings a refined understanding and analysis of behaviour. Dr Daniel Ramjattan's presentation is a case in point. The ANSA McAL Psychological Research Centre, as part of its remit, will continue to explore multidisciplinary approaches to understanding and analysing important issues and problems."

■ OUR GRADUATES

UWI graduates are everywhere – politics, business, the arts, and as public intellectuals. In the coming months, **UWI TODAY** will profile some of our high achieving alumni who have made or are making a positive impact on society.



Maven of Waste Management

Sian Cuffy Young expands our understanding of conservation

BY KIERAN ANDREW KHAN

We need to learn to sort the waste in our homes and businesses. That way we can move away from the current policy of simply dumping everything in landfills.

Sian Cuffy Young believes we can transform our country's understanding and use of waste. And she is on a mission to do that through her social enterprise and tireless advocacy across T&T.

"Growing up, my father was (and still is) a Cub Scout leader. He taught me the conservation laws in scouting and always believed in leaving a place better and cleaner than we met it. So, we picked up after ourselves and also after others in camps and hikes. That was my first intro into preservation and conservation."

With her father's involvement in scouting, she also had a unique perspective. She was allowed to join the then male-only Cub Scout movement on their trips and camps, and had to participate in all the same activities that the boys did. In a way, she was one of Trinidad and Tobago's first (but unofficial) female Cub Scouts. She was also an active Girl Guide but enjoyed the chance to be the only girl among males – something that would prepare her for her career.

As the daughter of a teacher (father) and a social worker (mother), it was also almost assured that she would emerge with a strong love of both teaching and helping people. An avid reader as well, learning was intrinsic to her being. She would often sit and devour the children's encyclopaedias at home before moving on to the larger tomes in her parent's bedroom.

Science, environmentalism and dance at UWI

After completing her double major in Physics at UWI St Augustine, she continued at the campus with a master's in Environmental Engineering.

"I always loved sciences – languages too – but I appreciated Physics and the sciences. Environmental Engineering studies allowed me to apply the principles of science to the environment in ways like environmental contouring. So, it paired my loves and offered me a career path I didn't know existed at the time."

Sian also excelled at UWI through another of her passions – dance.

"I have been dancing since I was about five years old. I joined UWI Dance Theatre early on as I had danced at the primary and secondary school levels. My father was also a Best Village dancer so I grew up with Caribbean folk dance and African dance around me as a love and passion. I thoroughly enjoyed my time with UWI Dance, including the dance productions we staged. It was my relief and my release during my studies – no matter how tired I was – I found joy through dance."

Sian first explored her love of the environment as a career with The Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL). It wasn't long before her then-boss (and, in her words, office "dad") noticed her particular skillsets could be better utilised.



Teaching students about the importance of conservation and the value of waste.



The cover of her book *Ky's Magical Adventures: Where the Garbage Goes*

"Alban Scott, who was also my mentor, discovered that my strength was in waste education. Whenever there were presentations to be delivered to the public from primary schools to corporate offices, he would send me. I loved seeing people make small changes in their lives that added up over time and across communities."

Her passions for helping and teaching people were emerging.

Transforming the way we think about waste

Founding her own business and social enterprise, Siel Environmental Services, in July 2015 allowed her to become a tour de force in the industry. Her experiences as the lone girl among boys in Cub Scouts allowed her to flourish as one of the few women in the waste management sector in T&T.

The company specialises in three areas – waste education and literacy, online courses and programmes for businesses and individuals in waste reduction, and organic waste eco-system management for businesses.

As part of her waste education programme, Sian authored a children's book titled *Ky's Magical Adventures: Where the Garbage Goes*, available at local bookstores and on the Amazon Kindle app. She also actively seeks speaking engagements to share her experiences and knowledge, and to showcase the many different aspects of waste.

"We need to transform the way we think and act towards waste here in T&T, and it goes beyond just the basics of littering, but also extends to how we can better make use of waste as a resource. We need to learn to sort the waste in our homes and businesses. That way we can move away from the current policy of simply dumping everything in landfills. This is a major under-utilisation of a resource that happens every day."

Sian is also an avid campaigner for the recognition of social enterprises in T&T.

"I didn't want to be an entrepreneur exactly. But I also didn't want to create an NGO. I believe we need to recognise social enterprises as a legal entity here. That way, we can create more businesses tied to missions that benefit people and the planet while also earning a profit."

As a wife and mother of three, she has committed to continue "spreading the waste management gospel like warm peanut butter". Her passion for improving people's lives and the environment through education would have it no other way.

Sian's work was also featured in the global waste management magazine *Waste Management World* (WMW), and her company was awarded Winner of the Best Waste Education Company in the Caribbean 2019. You can discover more at:

www.sielenvironmental.com.

Kieran Andrew Khan is a freelance writer and digital marketing consultant.

■ OUR PEOPLE

As a child, pharmacologist Dr Arlene Williams-Persad developed a love for science and research to help satisfy her desire to know why things operated the way they did, especially the human body. Since 1996, she has crafted her scientific research skills at The UWI St Augustine campus.

In June, the Latin American and Caribbean Congress of Immunology (ALACI) awarded those skills at an immunology conference in Cuba.

In a recent interview with UWI TODAY, Williams-Persad shared what inspired her as a pharmacologist to do immunological research, the importance of her research and why ALACI's recognition was a milestone achievement.

Chronic Granulomatous Disease, fatal if untreated

While talking to a colleague in late 2020, Williams-Persad learnt of a condition known as chronic granulomatous disease (CGD), a genetic disorder that leaves white blood cells unable to kill several types of bacteria and fungi. CGD patients are vulnerable to bacterial and fungal infections that are fatal if left untreated.

Williams-Persad told UWI TODAY, "That's where the door for immunopharmacology opened up for me and I joined the West Indian Immunology Society."

"I started to do some research on chronic granulomatous disease, and I presented at one of the society's symposiums which was held during the pandemic."

But Williams-Persad wasn't always involved in immunological work. In 1996, she started her BSc in Biochemistry at UWI St Augustine.

During that time, she worked as a library assistant with the Medical Sciences Library in Mt Hope.

"Because I went there to work, I ended up falling in love with medicine, biochemistry and research even more."

"While I was doing that, I also volunteered as a research assistant in Biochemistry at Med Sci," she said.

From the library to the lab

After finishing her undergraduate studies in 2001, Williams-Persad started working as a lab technician with the Faculty of Medical Sciences' (FMS) School of Pharmacology.

"Most of my career was spent between Biochemistry at Natural Sciences on Main Campus and here (where I'm currently based) at Medical Sciences."

She added that, "Being in the environment all the time, I ended up falling even further in love with research, and I went on to sign up for an MPhil in Pharmacology. I realised I like to see how drugs work in the body, so pharmacology opened that door for me."

In 2007, Williams-Persad started her MPhil which was upgraded to a PhD given the quality of her then ongoing pharmacological research with the FMS.

Upon completing her PhD in 2013, Williams-Persad was resolute to expand her academic and professional qualifications even further. Learning about CGD and venturing into immunology by joining the West Indian Immunology Society in 2021 provided the perfect opportunity.

Founded in February 2021, the society aims to create a network of immunologists and other related researchers who are passionate about furthering research in the Caribbean.

"I was invited to the 13th Latin American and Caribbean Congress of Immunology Conference hosted in Cuba, on June 6-10, where I presented the work that our team of researchers did so far."

Based in Argentina, ALACI's main objectives include improving immunological education, the training of students and professionals in the field, and improving interactions between members for global collaboration.

Distinguished woman in immunological research

Williams-Persad also presented about her CGD research at the conference and was awarded – along with nine other women at the conference – as a distinguished woman in immunological research.

She explained that the main takeaway from her research is that CGD has an advancing treatment schedule that now allows patients longevity and a better quality of life.

"The pathology of CGD provides a platform for pharmacologists to develop new drugs against clinical conditions such as drugs to treat inflammatory conditions like osteoporosis."

"This award was not just for me...it's for the whole West



Dr Arlene Williams-Persad with her award as a Distinguished Woman in Immunological Research. PHOTOS: NAVIN SHASTRI PERSAD

"The journey is worth it"

Pharmacologist Dr Arlene Williams-Persad's dedication to her field pays off with regional research award

BY TYRELL GITTENS



Dr Williams-Persad paid a courtesy call to Cuban Ambassador to T&T Tania Diego Olite before attending the 13th Latin American and Caribbean Congress of Immunology conference in Cuba.

Indian Immunology Society because, through the society, I was able to represent TT and The UWI at the conference."

Immunology and pharmacology are undersubscribed

Describing her CGD research to this point as just the beginning, Williams-Persad has committed to further research on treatment options for the disease. But she doesn't want to do it alone.

She lamented, "Both fields of immunology and pharmacology are undersubscribed. I will tell young people who have the desire to learn about the fields that they are very fulfilling fields."

"Once you have the drive, determination and desire, you will go far, because I've been working here for 21 years, and I've been a student since 1996... the journey is worth it."

"We need more immunologists and pharmacologists. We need more people who are doing research in the area so that we can investigate the drugs on the market, standardise the pharmacosurveillance strategies, and also to hopefully develop new drugs."

A huge UWI advocate, Williams-Persad wants to improve on the university's offerings in both fields, and help market them to attract more prospective students.

"In the end, I'd like the Trinidad and Tobago community to be educated about how medication works in our body, as well as the importance of using medicines as prescribed, and the importance of reporting side effects to your physicians."

UWI Calendar of Events | October – November 2022



Conference on the Economy (COTE) 2022: Climate Change and Disaster Management - Towards Sustainable Development for Small Island Developing States November 3-4

ONLINE

This landmark annual conference, hosted by the Department of Economics in the Faculty of Social Sciences, will share research findings on the pressing economic and developmental issues facing Trinidad and Tobago and the region. This year's conference will explore:

- The economics of natural disasters, disaster management, risk management, and policy implementation.
- The Economics of climate change, adaptation and mitigation.
- Economic issues facing Caribbean countries and the region.

COTE will bring together academics, policymakers, financial institutions, tertiary level and sixth form students, public servants, members of private sector firms, the labour movement, and members of civil society.

To register and for more information, visit <https://sta.uwi.edu/fss/economics/cote-2022>, or email sta-cote@sta.uwi.edu



Distinguished Lecture Series: Open Lecture with Dr Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted October 26 | Time: 5:30 p.m. Daaga Auditorium UWI St Augustine Campus

Dr Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted – 2021 World Food Prize winner, Global Lead for Nutrition and Public Health at WorldFish, and 2022 UWI Honorary Graduand – will give an open lecture titled, “Transforming Food Systems: Building Resilience, Nourishing People and Improving Livelihoods with Aquatic Foods”.

Dr Haraksingh Thilsted is internationally recognised for her groundbreaking research, critical insights, and innovations in developing holistic, nutrition-sensitive approaches to aquatic food systems. She was awarded the 2021 Arrell Global Food Innovation Award for research innovation. She is a member of the Steering Committee of the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) of the United Nations Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and Vice Chair of the UN Food Systems Summit 2021: Action Track 4 - Advance Equitable Livelihoods.

She plays a pivotal role in promoting aquatic food systems for nourishing nations and achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To RSVP for this event, call 662 2002 ext 85488 or email uwistaevents@sta.uwi.edu.



UWI St Augustine Graduation 2022 October 27-29 Centre of Excellence Macoya

Once again it is time to celebrate one of the most cherished moments in students' life journey – graduation. This year, UWI St Augustine's graduation ceremonies return to a fully in-person event. The ceremonies will be held over three days at the Centre of Excellence in Macoya.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27

10.00 am

Faculties of Science and Technology and Food and Agriculture

Honorary Graduand and Guest Speaker
Dr Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted

4.00 pm

Faculties of Engineering and Law

Honorary Graduand and Guest Speaker
Ms Ingrid L-A Lashley

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28

10.00 am

Faculty of Social Sciences, Surnames A - L Undergraduate Graduands | Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business ALJGSB Graduands

Honorary Graduand and Guest Speaker
Ms Rosalind Gabriel

4.00 pm

Faculty of Social Sciences, Surnames M - Z Undergraduate Graduands | Faculty of Social Sciences Postgraduate Graduands | Institute for Gender and Development Studies | Institute of International Relations | Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29

10.00 am

Faculty of Humanities and Education | Faculty of Sport

Honorary Graduand and Guest Performer
Lord Nelson

4.00 pm

Faculty of Medical Sciences

Honorary Graduand and Guest Speaker
Dr Wayne Al Frederick

For more information, visit The UWI St Augustine Graduation site at <https://sta.uwi.edu/graduation/>