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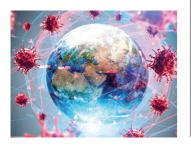


A Time to Learn



The clock on the Faculty of Humanities and Education building overlooks the Student Activity Centre. SAC is usually a hub of activity where students gather around delicious meals or decks of well-worn playing cards. But, the COVID-19 global pandemic has caused a campus and nationwide shut down. Campus life however has taken on new meaning thanks to dedicated faculty and staff who keep operations going and amazing students across the region who are committed to remote learning. PHOTO: ATIBA CUDJOE

■ NEWS - 04 Nature's Response Did human interference cause COVID-19?



CAMPUS CONTINUES - 08 *Together, Remotely* Students, staff adapt to life under pandemic



UWI CORE VALUES – 10 Building An Equal World Students fight for gender justice



PROFILE - 11 A Man of the People C. William Iton reflects



#UWIAgainstCOVID19



JOIN UWI AGAINST COVID-19

Staff, alumni and students of The UWI St. Augustine Campus, across several disciplines and in their personal and professional capacities, have been joining the fight to stem the spread of COVID-19 locally. Now, we call upon companies and the general public to join us in a special initiative to locally manufacture medical equipment to protect the public, as well as health workers, from the COVID-19 pandemic.

PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

Campus Principal, Professor Brian Copeland challenged a team of engineers from the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (DECE) to come up with a way to produce items in short supply internationally, starting with the following:

- 1. Face shields, N95 face masks for medical personnel, and face masks for citizens.
- 2. UWI-Vent, a ventilator system to assist those with acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS).
- 3. Volume manufacturing of the above items.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Since work began in mid-March 2020, the project has received support from the Ministry of Health, the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA), CARIRI, local manufacturers and companies such as Label House, Advanced Foam, ACE Printery Fed-Traders, Lensyl Products, Daisy's Exclusive, TYE Manufacturing, MIC, Peake Technologies Ltd., Thermoplas and V&S Pharmaceuticals; as well as individuals such as Ms Wendy Fitzwilliam, Mr Gregory Aboud and Ms Angela Hordatt.

Collaborate

We need plastics, foam and elastics for face shields, textiles for face masks and respirators, and mechanical and industrial components for ventilators, as well as other in-kind resources and appropriate connections in the fields of procurement and manufacturing. If you believe you can support us in this initiative or require more information on what is needed, please email **UWlagainstCOVID@sta.uwi.edu**. In your correspondence, please indicate your name, organisational affiliation (if any), contact information and how you think you can help.

Donate

Please monitor our website **https://sta.uwi.edu/covid19** where we will be posting information on how you can make a financial contribution to the **#UWIagainstCOVID19** initiative.

STAY CONNECTED

For more examples of how the UWI community has been stepping up to fight the global pandemic, look out for our next issue of UWI Today at **https://sta.uwi.edu/uwitoday**, follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using the hashtag **#UWIagainstCOVID19**, and get information on how to keep yourself and your family safe at **https://sta.uwi.edu/covid19**.

However, there is much more to be done!

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Social Distance, Collective Action

At the time of this writing it has been almost four weeks since we closed the campus in March.

This has been a strange and uncertain period for all of us at UWI St Augustine. Students and their lecturers have been required to move to virtual classrooms. Apart from their studies they no longer share a space with friends and social groups, an essential part of the university experience. Our researchers have limited access to the facilities and equipment necessary for their work. Our technical and support staff, the people who keep the campus running, can only work from afar or in some cases not at all. As Calypsonian Mighty Duke once sang, though not exactly in the same context, "de whole ting change up." Just so!

For those who are not engaged physically or virtually, the stress of the physical disconnect from work has been compounded by concerns about whether their salaries will remain intact. I particularly empathise with those who have to work and/or study in this restrained environment while having to deal with young children who are now at home and having to do domestic chores. If they were among those privileged to have helpers, that privilege no longer exists. Yet, for the most part, their challenge pales in comparison to that of custodial grandparents, clearly a more vulnerable group, with young children to look after.

On a more serious note, across the nation this sudden and unprecedented change, has induced other forms of distress, even for those who were not in regular work. Early on, our researchers and others across the world, warned of the psychological impact of social distancing and the abruptness with which it had to be implemented. They pointed to the fact that the forced, close proximity of individuals has the potential of creating friction even among the best of relationships. As reports have indicated, this has aggravated polarised and abusive relationships. With COVID-19 the stress is not just intense, it is also multi-pronged.

Yet with all the dislocation, all the anxiety, the concern for ourselves and our loved ones, the worry for the future and the daily frustrations of life under lockdown during this pandemic, there must be a resolve to meet this crisis head on and on all fronts if we are to survive its social and economic impact. 72 years ago, The University of the West Indies was created to meet our people's needs and solve their challenges through tertiary level teaching and research. COVID-19 is a challenge like we have not seen in many years. As I see it, it is our sacred duty to give of our time and expertise to support local and international efforts to save lives, care for the sick, curb the spread of this pandemic, and help our society recover from what many are now calling World War III. What good is a top 5 per cent ranked University if it cannot lend quality support to its people in a time of need?

One Of UWI's core values is "Excellence". Under that value we vow to deliver "consistently high-quality and relevant service". That is what is required from us now, and I am pleased to say that members of the campus community are doing just that. From the outset, The UWI created a COVID-19 Task Force to "inform the Caribbean response" working in conjunction with CARPHA. The Campus is also contributing by sharing its medical and biological resources and expertise, spread across the Faculty of Medical Sciences and the Faculty of Science and Technology, in testing and in exploring treatments. There has also been frontline engagement as, for example, from 50 nurses who are students at the Faculty of Medical Sciences' School of Nursing. These medical professionals are taking part in the Ministry of Health's contact tracing exercise.

More recently, our engineers joined in the battle. For example, our experts are assisting the Ministry in broadening the scope and utility of its GIS maps, critical tools in this



battle. Further, a team of engineers has embarked on a daring national effort to design and manufacture essential medical equipment such as ventilators and face masks, working in partnership with the Health Ministry, industry and the business community. This engineering initiative seeks to provide a readily accessible local fall-back in the supply of required equipment, in the likelihood of an escalation of the pandemic compounded by global shortage of these much needed items. Part of this manufacturing drive is a campaign to source donations from the national community, which will not only raise vital funds for the project, but also provide the wider population a chance to contribute to the COVID-19 campaign.

Our sister campuses are active in this fight as well. UWI Mona's Faculty of Medical Sciences is representing the University at the World Health Organisation's "Solidarity Trials" to find drugs that help in the management of COVID-19. The George Alleyne Chronic Disease Research Centre at UWI Cave Hill in Barbados is working with the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) to model the expected impact of the pandemic. Finally, the Open Campus, well-versed in virtual and distance education, has started a training programme for more than 600 educators to prepare them for teaching in the new environment.

I could go on and on, detailing the work of the groups and individuals at St Augustine and our other campuses during this crisis. The point is that we are engaging the battle despite the distance we have been forced to maintain. At the same time, we acknowledge that "just so", and as evidenced by UWI's rapid transition to online delivery and remote work, this pandemic has brought the future to our doorstep.

We acknowledge as well, that at this time the world has the opportunity to reflect on its past and use the missteps of the past to forge a new future. In past issues, I have spoken of the need for our society to develop systems that would ensure that citizens can survive and thrive in three possible scenarios: catastrophic situations, such as in the aftermath of societal breakdown consequent to manmade or natural crises; in the "normal" state as defined by the pre-COVID-19 status quo; and in a future state with effective strategies for preparing the citizen of the future. COVID-19 has brought us face to face with questions on the preparedness of our citizens to take personal responsibility in response to a crisis as well as the level of resilience and responsiveness of our societies at large.

In more microscopic detail, questions on the need for greater focus on individual mental and physical health as well as the need for greater food security arise, for example. We cannot accurately predict the shape and form of the next crises. But we can say with 100 per cent certainty what aspects of our existence – physical and mental health, food and nourishment, housing and land, finances, etc – would be the targets for potentially catastrophic crises. The UWI will increase its endeavours to treat with that challenge. As 2018 Calypso Monarch Helon Francis sang, we need to "change the change for a better nation".

I close by expressing my deepest gratitude to all staff and students of The UWI ST Augustine. I thank especially those members of staff who ramped up their training in online delivery, thus facilitating a transition from 34 per cent online course delivery to a minimum of 98 per cent in short order. I offer special thanks to the student body for their patience and understanding of our efforts to restart the process of academic education. We understand very well that most of you have undergone the trauma of relocation, many to a space that does not allow you to avoid the distractions and avail you of the access you need to complete your preparation for your chosen careers. We are doing our best to ensure quality delivery even under these unforeseen circumstances.

Best of health and strength to all.

Brian Copeland

PROFESSOR BRIAN COPELAND *Campus Principal*

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UWINEWS

Nature. She is the source of our sustenance. Our serenity. Our advancements. Our pleasures and...our lifestyles.

Her bounty is responsible for the food we eat, the homes in which we live, the medicines that heal us, the fuel upon which our cities and towns run, and the ideas that advance our civilisation.

Yet we push, prod and poke. Disregard, anger and provoke. Exhaust her gifts and aid in her destruction.

Did we really think that nature would not push back?

It's been just about four months since the world got its first introduction to what may be one of the greatest threats to global health security and economic stability in the 21st century.

The COVID-19 virus was first discovered in Wuhan, China. On March 11, 2020, the outbreak was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organsation (WHO).

As of March 23, 2020, this novel coronavirus – thought to have emerged through "the sale of wild animals in a wet market in the capital that trades in a wide variety of animals including live wolf pups, salamanders, crocodiles, rats, scorpions, squirrels, foxes, bats and snakes – has infected 374,921 persons and claimed 16,411 lives," according to the John Hopkins University and shows no sign of slowing down in the immediate future.

The global outlook is grim. Governments are scrambling to stop the spread of the virus and minimise its impact on beleaguered healthcare, social and financial systems. The global economy are being crippled by crashing stock markets, destabilised supply chains, sharp dives in consumer spending and, particularly for small businesses, lack of financial backing. People are fearful over job security, access to food, and their personal safety, in fact, their very survival.

But why is all this happening? According to four academic experts at The UWI, it is a testament to the fact that our planetary health has been compromised.

"This is not new. We have ruptured nature by damaging planetary health and it (Earth) is striking back," declares Professor John Agard, Director of the St Augustine Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and an internationallyrecognised expert on environmental and sustainability issues.

Planetary health was in focus last month at UWI's Planetary Health Conference (See our coverage in the February 2020 issue: https://sta.uwi.edu/uwitoday/archive/ february_2020/article6.asp).

It is defined as "the health of human civilisation and the state of the natural systems on which it depends."

"When nature is in balance, it provides services from which humans benefit; but when we disrupt nature all kinds of things emerge," Agard explains. Citing the Centre of Disease Control in the United States, he reveals a startling statistic. Of the 335 diseases thought to have emerged between 1960 and 2004, a noteworthy 60% of them came from animals.

The cause of this emergence, he says, is environmental change as it relates to human behaviour. "We are going into places we should not be going. We are doing things that we should not be doing. We are eating everything that is alive rather than protecting it. We are disrupting forested areas by logging, mining, road building, and urbanisation." As a result, "people are in very close contact with animal species that we have never been in contact with before". Disease transference is inevitable, and as for pandemics, he says there's more to come.

Agard references some of the better known zoonotic diseases – *pathogens passed from animals to humans* – that have afflicted us in the past including Dengue, Malaria, Ebola, HIV, SARS, MERS, Chikungunya, the plague, Marsburg, Lassa fever, Nipah virus, Zika and Rabies. "So we have a long experience in things being transferred between animals and humans and there will be increasing pandemics like this because humans are invading nature."



When Nature Comes A-knocking

A cautionary tale of the impact human beings are having on our planet's health and the consequences that may lie in store for us all

BY LISA LUANA OWEN

Global Outreach Fellow at the Planetary Health Alliance, Dr Sandeep Maharaj explains further. "For us to continue to have a certain level of living, we actually impact on (our) environmental boundaries." Maharaj pointed out that these environmental boundaries can only accept and sustain so much of our impact before it undermines the "safe zone" within which we are expected to live if we are to maintain the delicate balance between man's consumption of nature's provisions.

"Basically there is a social boundary and an environmental boundary within which we live. That is what we consider to be the safe zone where the planetary and environmental boundaries all operate in equilibrium." He says that, while climate change may be the most talked about factor impacting these environmental boundaries and imperilling our planetary health, there are other significant culprits. Maharaj named a few: the rate of biodiversity loss, altered nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, ozone depletion, global freshwater usage, atmospheric aerosol loading, ocean acidification, chemical pollution and changes in land use, the latter of which he says is having a major impact on our global health systems. "In our quest for land, we have species that have been significantly depleted and a lot of these ... actually would be preventers of certain diseases coming into the human system," says Maharaj who is also the Associate Dean of Distance Education, Projects and Planning at the UWI's Faculty of Medical Sciences.

This continuous land grab that seeks to fulfil our demand for urban dwellings and raw materials for goods, as well as our seemingly unrelenting desire for the meat of exotic species, has increased the interaction between man and nature creating a big soup for new viruses to enter into the human species. This is where, he says, planetary health falls within the remit of COVID-19 and the like. "Human beings do not generally regress in their consumption patterns".

A report released by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and published in Science magazine on the State of Nature – on which Professor Agard was one of the Coordinating Lead Authors of the global assessment – estimates that ONE MILLION species of animals and plants are currently threatened with extinction. This is unprecedented in the

"When nature is in balance, it provides services from which humans benefit; but when we disrupt nature all kinds of things emerge."

PROFESSOR JOHN AGARD Director of the St Augustine Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship



UWINEWS

history of mankind and will further exacerbate the risk of future pandemics.

"Seven coronaviruses that affect humans. Four of them cause the common cold; three so far that have caused epidemics and severe disease - the original Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) virus, Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) virus and now this SARS CoV2 which causes COVID-19. I guarantee you...this is not the last coronavirus we see," warns Professor of Molecular Genetics and Virology, Christine Carrington.

To mitigate against the impacts of future outbreaks, Carrington suggests greater research to understand viral diversity, the mechanisms animal viruses use to switch from animals to humans and on development of vaccines and antivirals, and especially working towards vaccines that can protect against groups of related viruses.

'Vaccines are key. Antivirals aren't going to prevent infections; they treat infections. Vaccines prevent infections."

One thing all the professors agree on is the need for collaboration that is interdisciplinary, pan-sector and crossborder.

"If we approach these issues correctly with expertise in all the disciplines, if we get out of our silos where everybody is thinking they can do everything on their own and we actually have a really cohesive interdisciplinary approach social, economic, medical, veterinary, policy, (etc) - we will solve these problems," asserts Christopher Oura, Professor of Veterinary Virology in the Department of Basic Veterinary Sciences, School of Veterinary Medicine, at the St Augustine campus.

There is a real need in the Caribbean, where there is a lack of expertise in certain areas, to work together when these kinds of disasters occur. "So often we are quite good at responding to emergencies like COVID-19 and influenza, but the problem is that, when the dust settles, we return to our previous way of working. So what you have to instil a permanent interdisciplinary culture in the work environment."

Professor Oura understands what it takes to work across disciplines. He most recently led the European Unionfunded One Health, One Caribbean, One Love project, involving 12 Caribbean countries, that is vested in promoting collaboration at a multi-disciplinary level. He's also taken on another EU-funded initiative, in conjunction with the Pan American Health Organisation.

This time, the objective is to develop climate change and health leaders within the region following this interdisciplinary approach. He stresses the importance of developing leaders in our region who understand these connections between human, animal and environmental health. "It's a slow burner. You can't do it quickly. You have to persuade governments and people. We have done the work and it appears to be growing now so that, when things like COVID-19 (and other issues relating to climate change and health) occur, we have people in place knowing how to approach and address the problem".

Both Professors Oura and Carrington are part of The UWI's COVID-19 Task Force - a team of regional experts from across the five campuses who are working to provide accurate information about the pandemic and find solutions.

Dr Maharaj is also trying to solve the planetary health problem by building the next generation of Caribbean leaders. "We need to have champions who will actually implement these solutions at the end of the day and make it an everyday mechanism by which we live and operate. Only then will our lifestyle change to possibly looking at planetary health issues rather than just getting up and living life as

"Seven coronaviruses that affect humans. Four of them cause the common cold; three so far that have caused epidemics and severe disease." CHRISTINE CARRINGTON Professor of Molecular Genetics and Virology

normal. COVID-19 has shown us that life can drastically change very quickly."

So, what has COVID-19 taught us?

For Professor Agard, it is the revelation that when placed under severely adverse conditions, the people of Trinidad and Tobago are capable of acting at their best. "That is quite remarkable, humans can behave when they want!" he quips.

This shows, he says, that there is the will to act differently when people feel that it is important to do so, a behaviour that will, hopefully, remain entrenched in us long past this current crisis, "to remember to act in the best interest of society and not in individual interest or vested interest".

The situation similarly demonstrated to Professor Carrington that we all have the capacity to change our patterns. "I do believe it will force people to realise that making what they thought were impossible changes to the way they do things is not impossible. Everyone is having to learn now."

Ultimately, we have to realise, Professor Oura states that the effects of climate change are going to cause so much more economic hardship and death in our societies than COVID-19. It is therefore imperative that we learn from the current COVID-19 situation and force similar levels of behavioural change to reduce CO2 emissions and save our planet from the impending devastation caused by global warming."

Lisa Luana Owen is a freelance writer, event coordinator, public relations strategist, and traditional and new media marketing consultant.



We've risen from last year's debut positions in both the **Latin America** and **World Rankings**, while maintaining our position as the only Caribbean university to be ranked among best in the world.

The prestigious Times Higher Education (THE) University Rankings are regarded as the definitive lists of top universities. For more on The UWI's ranking performance https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/university-west-indies

BEYOND COVID-19: A Mission Critical Campus Council 2020

BY AVAH ATHERTON

"The days are very dark, but this is when we have to shine brightest." These were the opening remarks of Professor Brian Copeland, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Campus Principal for the St Augustine Campus of The UWI at its annual Campus Council meeting.

This 2020 Council on March 17 met remotely via teleconferencing. Participants included Minister of Education Anthony Garcia represented by Carol Bickram, The UWI Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, Campus Council Chair Sharon Christopher, members of the St Augustine Campus Council, and other specially invited guests.

"Perseverance' (the theme chosen for this year's Council) highlights the Campus' resilience in the face of challenges and setbacks," remarked Campus Chair Sharon Christopher. This theme could not have been more fitting as the world battles the onslaught of the new Coronavirus, now classified global pandemic, COVID-19.

Despite the uncertainty and anxiety about the future, Professor Copeland highlighted Campus successes over the past academic year, 2018/2019, and detailed plans for the upcoming academic year, 2020/2021.

Successes included Donald "Jackie" Hinkson's 110-ft mural near the Alma Jordan Library celebrating Carnival; UWI Ventures, a business hub for innovation and entrepreneurship to encourage sustainability; industry agreements with Lake Asphalt to commercialise products as well as with Bmobile and Huawei for a Technology Innovation lab. There was also the NameExoWorlds competition's winning entry "Dingolay" and "Ramajay", the nation's first locally named star and exoplanet, submitted by Head of the Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics, senior Linguistics lecturer Dr Jo-Anne Ferreira; and a partnership between Mondelez International, parent company of Cadbury, and the Cocoa Research Centre at The UWI. Many of these noteworthy accomplishments were mere goals in 2019's Campus Council, "Bold Strokes", with the aim of making the St Augustine Campus a catalyst for innovation and entrepreneurship.

Professor Copeland referenced The University's *Triple A Strategy 2017-2022*, *"Access, Alignment, Agility,"* specifically the Vice-Chancellor's "5 planks." These were established under the 10 in 2 strategy under the strategic plan for the continued development of the Campus.

- **Digital UWI**, developing technologically optimised systems and processes for a robust Campus
- Multilingual UWI, promoting the acquisition of foreign languages to create globally-incentivised graduates
- **Climate-smart UWI**, facilitating climate action and advocacy to become a global leader
- Entrepreneurial UWI, supporting and enhancing

economies to improve standards of living in the region

• **Global UWI**, UWI global online, offering courses online and internationally to reach a wider audience

The Triple A Strategy is in line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals as well as Vision 2030 of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and with the institution's mission: "To advance learning, create knowledge and foster innovation for the positive transformation of the Caribbean and the wider world".

Copeland made the point that "we've been asked to educate students and we've done so.... At the same time, we are looking at how best we can prepare students as they leave our University.... Wherever our students are, wherever our graduates are, they must be as well prepared as possible for the challenges that they will [encounter]...."

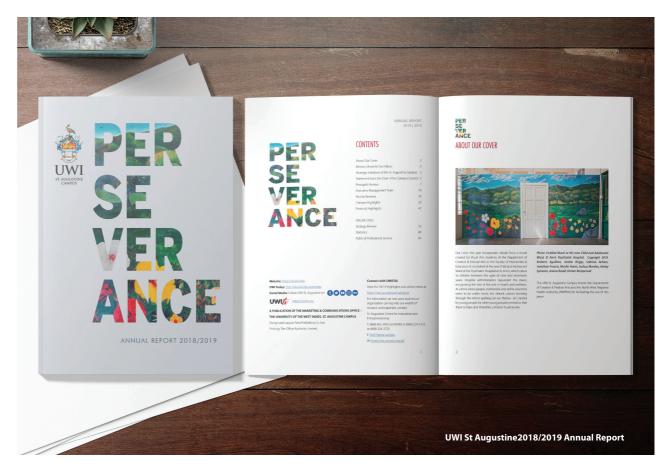
Sir Hilary reiterated Campus Chair Sharon Christopher's titling of the Council meeting as "mission

critical" in response to the COVID-19's effect on students and the larger Caribbean community. He pointed to the University's "research function in helping to find an answer to this problem, as quickly as possible... in much the same way we were imagining the Caribbean economy beyond the IMF, we now have to imagine the Caribbean economy beyond COVID-19 — the new normal."

Council meetings are considered the annual business meetings of the regional University and are fundamental to its accountability. The Vice-Chancellor and Principals of each of the five campuses report to their Council memberships and larger stakeholder community on activities over the previous academic year.

The 2018/2019 Annual Report for the St Augustine Campus can be found on The University's website under: *https://sta.uwi.edu/news/reports/default.asp.*

You can also view Annual Report highlights at https://sta.uwi.edu/annualreport/report.php



The Annual Report cover this year incorporates details from a mural created by Visual Arts students of the Department of Creative and Festival Arts in the Faculty of Humanities and Education. It is installed at the new Child and Adolescent Ward of the Psychiatric Hospital at St. Ann's, which caters to children between the ages of nine and seventeen years. Hospital administrators requested the piece, recognising the role of the arts in health and wellness. At a time when people, institutions and entire countries seem to be under stress, the vibrant colours spelling out our theme – and this art created by young people for young people – remind us and all who see it, that there is hope and, therefore, a reason to persevere.

A Safe Space for Ideas

UWI Ventures Supports Caribbean Entrepreneurs

The myth of the solo entrepreneur, bravely launching groundbreaking innovations looms large in our cultural conscience.

We adore tales of the Gates, Bezos, Stuart, and Sanders of the business world. But for every entrepreneurial trailblazer there are millions that fail.

Why? Because no entrepreneur is an island, and an entire ecosystem is needed for great ideas to move from planning to full-fledged execution.

Professor of Practice – Innovation and Entrepreneurship Gerry Brooks wants everyone to know that UWI Ventures *is* the innovation and entrepreneurial hub which anyone with a business idea can use to help them succeed, and it's right here on The UWI St Augustine campus.

UWI Ventures was born out of the recognition that the regional entrepreneurship ecosystem is inefficient and misaligned. Brooks stresses that alignment of our national ecosystem is critical to consistently spawn successful enterprises throughout the region.

"The Caribbean has fallen behind in economic development and entrepreneurship growth globally. It is small and mediumsized enterprises that drive economies and power export earnings—just take a look at economies such as Germany with its Mittelstand, which has been at the top of the list in the SME entrepreneurship space for many years".

A former Chairman of the National Gas Company (NGC) Group of Companies and former Group Chief Operating Officer and Sector Head, Manufacturing, ANSA McAL, Brooks is passionate about the ability of UWI Ventures to transform entrepreneurship.

"If one looks at innovation and entrepreneurship from a regional perspective, this programme will ignite growth, employment and diversification by aligning and leveraging the work of The UWI with the SME and other sectors throughout the region."

The UWI Ventures wants to encourage people to apply for its development service and become entrepreneurial, particularly in this transformative COVID-19 era. They also want to attract investors who are interested in supporting regional projects. These new partnerships will create opportunities regionally for young people, women, retirees, manufacturers, social entrepreneurs and business itself.

How does it work? UWI students, staff and alumni can submit their projects and inventions to UWI Ventures. Applications will be open to the wider public. The Caribbean diaspora will also be encouraged to send in submissions.

But, be prepared, according to Brooks, "entrepreneurship



UWI Ventures wants to encourage people to apply for its development service and become entrepreneurial, particularly in this transformative COVID-19 era.

is hard work". Proposals will be interrogated by the UWI Ventures team for business validity, commercial rigour and marketing sustainability and effectiveness. The mandate, he says, is to help fill the gaps that most entrepreneurs miss in their efforts to get their product to market – rigorous assessment of ideas, proper business planning, financial forecasts and consideration of marketing options.

Brooks says entrepreneurs must be fully committed. Not every idea may be commercially viable, but every fledgling entrepreneur will benefit from the team's wisdom and experience.

Incorporated in May 2019, UWI Ventures is led by the Board including Brooks as Executive Chairman; Campus Principal Professor Brian Copeland and Director of the St Augustine Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (StACIE) Professor John Agard. The team also includes Julian Henry, Programme Manager, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Department of Management Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences; Hemwatte Lakhan, Operations Coordinator; along with members from Campus IT Services (CITS) and other areas that will provide collaborative, management and operational support.

They understand the need to have a dedicated physical space where people can socialise, nurture entrepreneurial ideas and feel supported. Architectural drawings have been developed for a customised Innovation and Entrepreneurship (I&E) Centre. Appropriate funding is being sought. With the support from the UWI Ventures' I&E Digital Sub-Committee, the team is also excited about their soon-to-launch virtual business accelerator; a digital ecosystem where anyone can log on, indicate the nature of their project and immediately begin interacting confidentially with an online business coach to advance their project regardless of what stage they have reached in their business and marketing plans.

What will distinguish UWI Ventures from other entrepreneurial incubators, Brooks says, is its connection with industry and academia. Entrepreneurs will have access to technical experts, business coaches and mentors drawn from industry through Memoranda of Understanding and partnership agreements. The UWI Ventures Executive Chairman points out that a cornerstone of this process will be the confidentiality provisions. They are also ready, he says, to engage businesses on patents and prototypes developed by students that will radically change the industry.

Future goals include the launch of their digital ecosystem by the second quarter of 2020. This will include a call for viable projects. The objective is to stress-test the ecosystem at St Augustine and then roll it out regionally. In the words of Campus Principal Copeland, the aim is to have "at least two innovations ready by 2021, and one every year after... a very, very aggressive timeline, but one that can only bring forth positive results". Pro Vice-Chancellor Sir Hilary Beckles describes UWI Ventures as "a game changer that can and must help reshape the region's growth fortunes".

When asked if UWI Ventures had any challenges, the Professor of Practice says, "There are many. But we don't see challenges, we see the wonderful

opportunity to create an integrated system which will enrich the development experience for potential entrepreneurs and innovators leading to innovative outcomes that we can monetise for their benefit, the university's and ultimately the region. This is a transformative imperative for the region where success is our only option."

The UWI has begun to forge an Innovation and Entrepreneurship (I&E) Ecosystem for nurturing potentially innovative ideas from first concept to commercial start-up. The establishment of UWI Ventures completes the St Augustine Campus I&E Ecosystem framework. UWI Ventures works in tandem with StACIE and the Entrepreneurship Unit. For more information, please email hemwatte.lakhan@sta.uwi.edu



CAMPUS CONTINUES

A carpet of fallen poui blossoms and leaves covers the campus grounds. This time last year, it would signal "Matta Season" – the time when students are readying for their exams. Now those bright pink pathways reveal the loud absence of students and staff.

"A global pandemic is something I never would've foreseen happening in my final year at UWI. COVID-19 has come and swept so many students off their feet. The entire situation is downright scary", one final-year student said. Students anonymously shared their thoughts with UWI TODAY, barely grappling with the upheaval of the virus known as COVID-19, and the measures put in place to stop the spread.

Following the directive issued on March 13 by Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Dr Keith Rowley for the one-week closure of schools and universities, UWI St Augustine suspended classes on March 14 until March 21. The campus was officially closed.

Campus Operations however continued remotely on Monday, March 16 with staff arranging meetings to discuss critical planning. Only essential services inclusive of Campus IT Services; the Occupational, Health, Safety and the Environment Unit; Health Services Unit ; Halls of Residence (inclusive of hall supervisors, assistants and cleaners), Estate Police services, and the Division of Facilities Management would continue with staff members physically present. Cleaning and sanitation efforts were ramped up in and around the Halls of Residence and, as suggested by the Prime Minister, the gathering of groups more than 25 was discouraged. The uncertainty and unsettling nature of the new situation stands out in the mind of Director of the Division of Student Services and Development, Dr Deirdre Charles, "When we were advised that the COVID-19 virus had gotten to Trinidad and Tobago, my concern then and now remains, the well-being of students and our preparedness as campus management to support them under the circumstances."

UWI immediately implemented a plan of action for students; one which had the foresight to imagine the rippling repercussions students would face. According to Deputy Principal Professor Indar Ramnarine, "We suspected that the closure would continue beyond one week and activated training by the Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning for staff to switch to online teaching. Some staff were already trained and switched to online teaching without skipping a beat".

A hunch that proved to be right. The Prime Minister announced a five-week closure of all schools and universities a few days later with the hope that all institutions of learning would reopen on April 20. There was also a further mandate to stay at home and practise social distancing, keeping at least two-metres distance between yourself and anyone else.

Prompt measures to curb the spread of the virus among students living on the Campus' Halls of Residence were enacted. Students from Trinidad and Tobago were advised to go to their homes, only to return when the campus officially reopened. Non-national students who could safely return home were encouraged to do so, leaving behind the contents of their dwellings in storage.





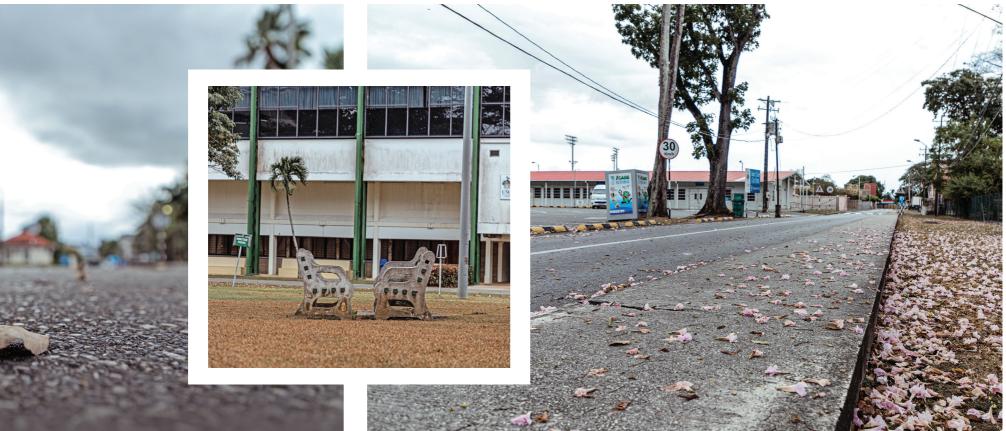
"We suspected that the closure would continue beyond one week and activated training for staff to switch to online teaching." Professor Indar Ramnarine UWI Deputy Principal







B Y



THE TIME OF **ID-19**

TEG.AWAI





"The fluid nature of this pandemic is a true test of leadership for all persons affected and is a teachable moment for us all." Dr Deirdre Charles, Director of the Division of Student Services and Development

Many international students were unable to leave before their countries' borders closed and remained on hall. In a few cases, students turned to their faith:

"I decided to remain in Trinidad despite the many communications that urged me to return home. My faith afforded me peace in the midst of this global crisis. While I am fully aware of the widespread impact this pandemic has, I am STILL (a posture of peace and sobriety) and reliant on the sovereignty of my God."

The decision taken for students to return to their home countries came as a result of the Government's critical pronouncements in managing COVID-19 at the national level.

Dr Charles has nothing but empathy for the students affected. She stresses that the decision taken to urge students from staying in the Halls of Residence was meant to protect the students. "In every challenge lies opportunity. Given the student feedback received in this instance, areas of improvement will be addressed going forward. It would be remiss of me however not to reinforce the need for our students to exercise exemplary leadership qualities and responsibility in every possible instance. The fluid nature of this pandemic is a true test of leadership for all persons affected and is a teachable moment for us all."

Important decisions continue to be made, such as the

postponement of exams with possible consideration to conducting alternative assessments, always, with students' best interest in mind. DSSD's departments continue to offer their services to students remotely, including Financial Services, Counselling and Psychological Services, support for Students with Disabilities and Medical Conditions.

At the time of this interview, both Professor Ramnarine and Dr Charles were working to ensure that all international students were able to find safe passage home.

Students and campus leaders are showing great resilience by adapting to changes as they come.

"I truly was comforted by the response of everyone on the STA campus, students and administration alike, that together we can get through this. Let's comfort each other and work with one another as we have so far, and we will be able to beat this current issue". - A Student from Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr Charles echoes this sentiment, "We are in this together and we all have a personal responsibility. Let us remain proactive, responsible, connected and let us really work together towards restoring the level of normalcy we desire in each of our individual circumstances."

The poui trees on the campus flower without pause every year, leaving a carpet of blooms. So too does The UWI community continue, with an undaunted spirit to thrive.

UWI CORE VALUES

Second-year students Kelsie Joseph and Tia Marie Lander of the Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS) decided they had to do something about sexual harassment they saw happening around them.

Kelsie and Tia Marie translated their classroom knowledge into action with the creation of @catcallsofuwi – an Instagrambased cyberfeminist campaign inspired by @catcallsofNYC.

This is also in keeping with The UWI's core value of Gender Justice, whereby The UWI pledges to actively create and sustain a social, academic, and administrative culture that supports and promotes gender equality and justice within its environments. This policy will require systematic research into its effectiveness with a view to taking appropriate actions of a corrective nature.

Kelsie and Tia Marie may not have known they were enacting The University's mission when they were moved to translate their classroom knowledge into action with the creation of @catcallsofuwi – an Instagram-based cyberfeminist campaign inspired by @catcallsofNYC.

@catcallsofuwi functions on three principles: to collect empirical evidence that people are harassed on campus in an effort to advocate for better safety and security measures; to redefine the conversation on what harassment is, providing the nexus between harassment and violence; and, to create a safe space for stories to be shared.

If you follow the page on Instagram, you would see the harrowing anonymous recounts of harassment experienced by persons, mostly women, on campus. To a new follower, it is easy to wonder – why are these disturbing posts being made?

"Everybody hopes for a big outcome where everybody probably turns a feminist... [but] it's the small steps," Kelsie says. "It's about opening a pathway for dialogue and conversation, and letting people see that this is not only a problem in society but right here on campus."

This is the fundamental philosophy that keeps Kelsie and the team going, even on Sundays. They come to The UWI St Augustine Campus to chalk out the messages of sexual harassment and assault in a bid to raise awareness.

Dr Gabrielle Hosein, Head of the IGDS, St Augustine Unit states that, "@catcallsofuwi is almost the pinnacle of the kind of student that can be mentored both out of our formal curriculum and out of our mentorship programme beyond the classroom."

She explained that IGDS integrates academic learning with a mentorship programme known as IGDS Ignite, a student-led, undergraduate club focused on activism and social justice.

This is merely a component of the wider IGDS mandate to produce graduates who are committed to social justice and the promotion of gender-responsive human relations and development.

In this context, it comes as no surprise that a host of students and staff from the IGDS joined a coalition of organisations to honour International Women's Day (March 8) at the Annual Women's Rights Rally & March at the Queen's Park Savannah.

A Catcall and Response

IGDS Students Show Up for Gender Justice

BY VISHANI RAGOBEER



Students join hands to show their support for women and gender justice



@catcallsofuwi cofounders Kelsie Joseph and Tia Maria Lander 'chalk' the campus with stories of student sexual harassment



"This is feminist activism around women's issues... it isn't like charity or a leadership programme, its teaching students that organising and advocacy work is political work that requires creatively challenging the status quo" On that sunny Saturday afternoon, persons marched around the Savannah to exemplify this year's theme: "Power in Action". They came equipped with their placards in hand and energies focused on publicly demanding an end to the myriad of injustices meted out to women.

Whether it was highlighting the societal ills of domestic violence, discriminatory workplace practices or sexual harassment, the message was clear: these injustices need to end and they need to end now.

Added to that, the stakeholders working in the different spheres of women's rights converged on the savannah grass to showcase their work and find more ways to collaborate across sectors.

This event was microcosmic of the kind of values that the IGDS hopes to instil in each student.

"This is feminist activism around women's issues...it isn't like charity or a leadership programme; its teaching students that organising and advocacy work is political work that requires creatively challenging the status quo," Dr Hosein affirmed.

Movements like this and @catcallsofuwi are just a few examples of proactive approaches needed to effect relevant positive change for the conventionally uncomfortable topic of sexual harassment. The result is ultimately the creation of safe spaces for young people to take an active leadership role.

While the students of IGDS represent a cadre of young leaders being equipped to effect positive social change, there remains a lack of critical thinking skills about social justice and gender across the student population. The IGDS Head believes that is simply because they are not exposed to gender analysis in a significant way.

"If students were more systematically exposed to a gender analysis beyond the IGDS, then it would help to build a generational movement in which these issues have greater buyin and a greater number of people understand the importance of the work."

And the important work continues on the ground, in digital spaces and everywhere where students refuse to remain silent on issues of gender justice.

PROFILE

Man of Contrasts

UWI Today sits down with former University Registrar C William Iton BY JOEL HENRY

"When I came [to UWI St Augustine] I was still young. I wasn't as mature. I didn't understand that both sides have to win."

C William Iton, the former Registrar of The University of the West Indies (UWI), recounts the story of his early days in industrial relations at the St Augustine Campus.

Even though the "sides" he was referring to were employer and workers, he might as well have been talking about himself. Iton, or "Will" as he has become known to the cross-campus community, is multifaceted, almost to the point of seeming contradictory.

Lean and with a penchant for buttoned-down shirts, he looks more like a former musician than one of the most senior of academic administrators. He held the post of UWI St Augustine Campus Registrar for five years starting in 1999, and retired from the position of overall University Registrar in 2019. Dr Maurice Smith, the current University Registrar, was interviewed in the last issue of *UWI Today* (https://sta.uwi.edu/uwitoday/article7.asp).

Yet what seems most contradictory about Iton is his essence. Outwardly, he fits the prevailing stereotype of old school masculinity - until you hear him speak. In his words, and throughout his career, he is focussed on empathy, compassion and connection to people.

"My best moments," he says of his time at UWI, "have to do with the people I met and the people I helped."

The Caribbean Man

At the time of our interview, Iton was in Trinidad and Tobago for the 2020 Carnival season. His retirement from UWI, he says, has been very good.

"I knew that the day would come when I'm no longer University Registrar," he remarks, "so I was always psychologically and emotionally prepared, and it's been great."

He has been able to spend more time with family, including his young children. When recounting his 37 years at UWI – relationships are the waypoints in his story. Whether it be his parents, who first carried the family to Guyana from their native Saint Vincent when he was in his early teens, thus introducing him to the wider region; his elder brother Andre Iton, who went to UWI Mona in Jamaica before him; or his twin brother C Wainwright "Wain" Iton, who is one of the closest people in his life.

"My twin brother Wain and I are extremely close," he says.

Close as well are his chief mentors, the late Jamaican scholar and UWI Vice-Chancellor Professor Rex Nettleford, who introduced him to the trade union movement; and government minister and trade union leader Carlisle Dunkley (who passed in 2017). Still a very young man and recent UWI graduate at the time, Iton says the experience of being a member of Jamaica's powerful



C Will Iton with Chancellor of The UWI Mr Robert Bermudez (centre) and Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles

National Workers' Union transformed him.

"Being a trade unionist showed me what it is to stand up for those who are not accorded the dignity they should have. It led me to where I ultimately went."

Among his destinations was UWI St Augustine, where he became the Head of Industrial Relations before eventually becoming Campus Registrar in 1999. Although he says Trinidad and Tobago (along with Jamaica) has a special place in his heart, his time at St Augustine had challenges; in particular what he calls the "Mother of All Strikes" in 1998 between the campus administration, headed by then Principal Professor Compton Bourne and the workers, represented by the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union.

"It wasn't a tea party. It was war," remembers Iton.

For three months the workers were on strike, setting up camp outside of the campus grounds because they were locked out. There was vandalism, death threats and even the bombing of Professor Bourne's home. Even though he had strong relationships with campus employees, Iton led like a general. The battle, which eventually involved the police and army, ultimately ended in the Campus' favour.

The advantage he had, Iton says, is his firm understanding of the Industrial Relations Act and IR practices in Trinidad and Tobago. He fought hard, but not with animosity:

"It was awful. But you had to be strong. I was the principal

target but there was no personal malice. I was doing my job."

His recollection of this tense time is yet another contradiction. "It wasn't one of the best times in my career, but I would say I was at my best," he says.

Leadership is learning

After stints outside of UWI, including another IR post at TSTT, he took up the University Registrar's position in 2007. Unsurprisingly, his vision for the post was to use it to uplift the workers.

"I wanted to make the university a more caring place," he says. It was a people-centred model, shaped by the lifelong influence of several personal development thinkers and writers.

Currently, he is studying the work of Genos International, an Australian group that focuses on emotional intelligence.

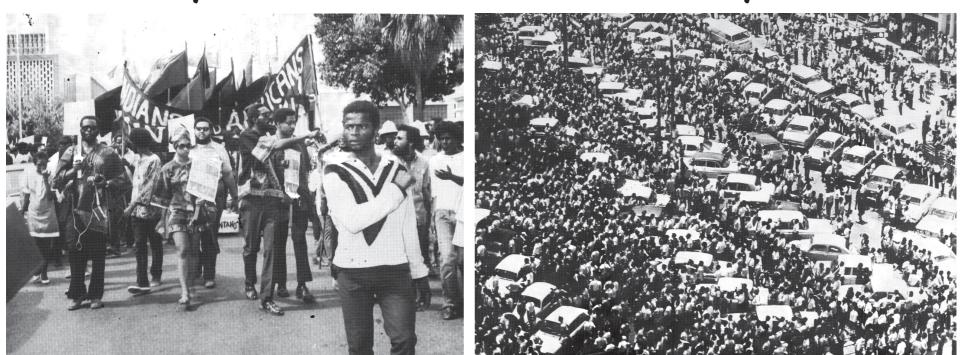
"Leaders are learners," he says. "I'm not sure if leaders understand how central the awareness of how we impact others is. Most of our leaders don't appreciate how they show up."

And they should show up, Iton says with compassion:

"The university has been good to me. The university is the amalgamation of good faculty, good students, and good workers. So, we have to come together as a community. But most importantly, we need to become a more caring and a kinder organisation. Once we take care of our people, everything will be alright."

UWI LOOKS BACK

History Fest Revisits Our Revolutionary Roots



Protestors at the 1970 March to Caroni

T&T's revolutionary milestones were in focus last month when the Department of History in the Faculty of Humanities and Education hosted its sixth annual History Fest themed The Many Shades of Resistance.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the 1970's Black Power Revolution, as well as 30 years since the attempted coup by the Jamaat-al-Muslimeen in 1990. Both historic moments were re-examined in two notably different discussions.

The five-day History Fest centred on paradigm-shifting events such as the 45th anniversary of the labour revolt known as Bloody Tuesday — with surprise guest panellist, former Prime Minister Basdeo Panday; a documentary screening celebrating the 100th anniversary of the birth of Hindu activist, politician and businessman Bhadase S. Maraj; and a panel discussion on the 100th anniversary of the abolition of Indian Indentureship.

Activities culminated with a spoken word poetry competition in the auditorium of the Centre for Language Learning (won by Tsehai Ze Ollivierre from Scarborough RC Primary and Rochelle Rawlins from Holy Name Convent, PoS), and a cricket match between lecturers and students where History Department students narrowly defeated the 'History Hitters'.

Inter-generational perspectives

History Fest 2020 also placed a spotlight on intergenerational perspectives. While early events were in large part nostalgic trips by movers and shakers of the times, later discussions saw students grappling with significant national episodes that had occurred before their birth.

At the festival's official launch on March 10, political activists, trade unionists and cultural aficionados gathered in the AV Room of the Alma Jordan Library to look back on 1970, the consciousness-raising era that sparked much social upheaval in the post-independence era.

One of the leaders of the 1970 movement, Khafra Kambon, Senior Advisor on Pan African Affairs of the Emancipation Support Committee of TT (ESCTT) and

BY GILLIAN MOORE

Shades of Resistance

former director of ESCTT, described how members of the Guild of Undergraduate Students at The University of the West Indies, "in alliance with trade unions and grassroots organisations," joined to form the National Joint Action Committee (NJAC), and led a "revolutionary struggle that reverberated through the Caribbean".

Through mass demonstrations, they beckoned to the youth of the country to rebel against the "Colonial hangover" that saw political, economic and social power remain in the hands of the white minority.

One notable demonstration saw the largely Afro-Trinidadian protesters marching to Caroni in a gesture of solidarity with the Indo-Trinidadian citizenry.

Kambon relayed how these activities took place "within a global context" that included white students of Marx and Lenin struggling against imperialism, the push for independence among nations in the so-called "Third World", and young Black Americans militantly advocating for rights. Among these latter was another T&T son, Kwame Ture (formerly Stokely Carmichael), a student activist in Canada credited with coining the term Black Power, who "touched a chord" here in T&T and around the world, inspiring millions.

He said their movement kindled "a progressive undercurrent that despite some reversals, still remains".

Montsho Masimba, NJAC General Secretary, stirred controversy during his remarks when he claimed the organisation "was not an African organisation" at its genesis, but focussed on the concerns of "the person" above economic machinery.

He said he hoped society could "embrace the lessons of revolution and pass them on to today's children".

No dichotomy

Both Kambon and fellow panellist, poet and cultural activist Eintou Springer, vocally disagreed with Masimba, stressing that their uprising always had African identity at its core.

Springer said, "Young Black people joined NJAC

because it was perceived as African. It was a place for African pride.

"I feel betrayed by the notion that it is not African. There is no dichotomy between standing strong in who you are and holding the hand of your other brother and sister."

She recounted the inspiring and at times painful history of the Black Power movement in the form of a rousing, rhythmic poem.

By contrast, the Student Forum on the 1990 Attempted Coup, held on March 12 at the same venue, featured few reminiscences, as the participants only had their research to go on.

History Department scholars Michael Reyes, Teja Persad and Andrew Jodhan shared their perspectives on the coup attempt.

Reyes described "those fateful six days" that "brought our innocence to a close", drawing the historical, political, economic and social picture that created the backdrop for the overthrow plot.

National trauma

Persad delved into the psychological and social effects of the rebellion, the lingering trauma that followed the shock of killings, looting, fires in the capital, the arming of child 'soldiers' — and an atmosphere of mass uncertainty and terror.

Jodhan examined the aftermath of the insurrection, the legal battle that went all the way to the Privy Council of the United Kingdom and saw the participants in the uprising ultimately walk free.

Journalist John Victor, who moderated the Commission of Inquiry into the 1990 Attempted Coup in 2014, shared his general impressions remotely via internet feed.

But it was the students who had to come to grips with the final question: should the participants have been forgiven?

Taking into account the economic and social factors, including the potential for retaliatory activity, the consensus was in the affirmative.

OUR STUDENTS



National Pride Finds New Meaning

BY VISHANI RAGOBEER

Regional students attending UWI spend about 30 weeks away from home each year. During that time, some are unable to participate in their national celebrations at home, but that has also allowed students to garner a greater appreciation of their culture and nationhood here in the twin island republic.

In February, three of the national associations on campus managed to do just that. There was a Grenada Week, a Guyana Week and a Saint Lucia Month, where all festivities allowed for students of each country to commemorate their country's national celebrations while inviting their larger Caribbean family to participate.

"At home, you take these celebrations for granted because it's always there, but here (in Trinidad and Tobago), you realise just how important it is, and just how much they are part of you," says Atonia Andall, the President of the Grenadian Students Association (GSA).

Andall, a third-year student, related that being away from home, especially when these momentous occasions are being observed, can make you feel misplaced and sometimes even frustrated.

There is more that binds people to their culture than just being in the space where that culture exists. Andall also stressed that the GSA continues to endeavour to make all the Grenadians at UWI St Augustine feel that sense of belonging.

This year's Grenada Week was a five-day feature of "all things nice from the Island of Spice" from February 2 to 7, the last day being the 46th anniversary of Grenada's Independence.

Sharing Andall's sentiments was another Grenadian student, Akino Romain who highlighted that he felt more

There was a Grenada Week, a Guyana Week and a Saint Lucia Month, where all festivities allowed for students of each country to commemorate their country's national celebrations while inviting their larger Caribbean family to participate.

'Grenadian' while in Trinidad and Tobago because, at The UWI, there is a litany of cultures and nationalities coexisting, in contrast to at home where everyone is, well, Grenadian. As such, he developed a deeper sense of pride in his Grenadian identity.

For him, the cultural sharing that GSA provides is also important. They sensitise the Campus community as to why the Grenadians celebrate in the way they do.

Over in Guyana, the country celebrated its Republic Jubilee, a grand celebration of the 50th anniversary of Guyana becoming a Cooperative Republic, on February 23. At The UWI St Augustine, Guyana Week was organised by the Guyana Students' Association of Trinidad and Tobago (GuySATT). Guyanese members of the student population to not miss out on the festivities that would be overtaking Guyana and the country's diaspora at that time. Whether it was dressing up in Guyanese apparel, or playing Guyanese games on the Campus's Learning Resource Centre greens after 'lashing' a hot plate of cook-up rice, GuySATT's President Felicia Collins posited that these small activities were done to make the Guyanese proud of where they came from and, indeed, they achieved just that.

"GuySATT really gave us that opportunity to feel like we were part of Guyana's 50th Republic Anniversary and weren't missing anything from home," Dinesa Campbell, a third-year Guyanese student remarked.

Beyond the week of events organised by GSA and GuySATT, the Saint Lucian Students' Association of Trinidad and Tobago (LuSATT) spread their activities out across the entire month of February. The culmination of this was on February 22, when the Lucians celebrated their 41st Independence anniversary.

Lincoln Francis, a second-year student from Saint Lucia shared that, "Whenever we have limes and meetups with the other Lucians, it feels all the more patriotic."

Kem Immanuel, LuSATT's President, emphasised that the Lucian celebration has a two-fold purpose. "It helps not only with our feelings of homesickness or being left out, but it also brings awareness to Saint Lucia, what we celebrate and what we stand for," she said.

Immanuel shared her hope that soon more of the Campus community would celebrate these observances and seek to advance the regional integration agenda alongside LuSATT and the other national associations After all, The UWI is the region's university.

Much like the GSA, this week of activities enabled the

UWI IN SOCIETY

We all know the age-old adage about dog being man's best friend. But they can also be man's best co-worker. For centuries, dogs have helped shepherds guard their fields and, in the last 100 years, they have taken on the roles of service animals, assisted in search and rescue, and been part of the police forces. As Dr Karla Georges, Director at The University of the West Indies School of Veterinary Medicine (UWI-SVM), points out, "Dogs are very intelligent, and aim to please. They can be trained to find almost anything."

UWI-SVM held training workshops on two consecutive Saturdays, February 1 and February 8, for officers of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service. They centred on improving knowledge of canine health to help the officers learn more about caring for the health of their furry companions.

While several of the officers had prior exposure to veterinary practice before at the School's small animal clinic, this is the first time they have had formal training. But after two sessions, the officers unanimously requested that the Veterinary School conduct these sessions at a minimum of twice per year, and include more contact hours—especially in terms of practical sessions.

Many of the topics – general canine health and recognising normal from abnormal, dealt with issues that even pet owners at home may come across, like heatstroke or tick fever. Some, like wounds and bandaging, were more focused on issues that police dogs may be at higher risk for because of the nature of their jobs.

"Police dogs are trained to find narcotics, ammunition, missing persons, and immobilise targets," says Dr Georges. "They also protect borders from customs to find illegal food and smuggled animals. They warn their handlers of danger and survey hardto-access terrain to find targets." With all of these jobs to do, there are different breeds of dogs that are used in different capacities. Dr Georges shares that our police force uses breeds of Labrador Retrievers, German Shepherds and Belgian Malinois, based on their capacity for intelligence, skill, obedience and confidence. Our prison officers work with Shepherds, Malinois, and some crosses. "It all depends on what is needed. Other dog breeds with those skills are used, like Beagles and Cocker Spaniels. More aggressive-type dogs may be used as canine officers to immobilise a suspect."

"Canine officers are an integral part of law enforcement activities – it is important that their handlers are equipped to recognise deviations in health and behaviour," says Dr Georges. With this in mind, five contact hours consisting of a mix of didactic and practical sessions was delivered to 27 officers – the sessions were lively and dynamic, affording officers the opportunity to describe their experiences and gain the tools necessary for recognising common conditions of working dogs.

Dr Georges coordinated and conducted sessions along with her team Candice Sant, Gillian Williams, Sabrina Thomas, Tennille Auguste, Ansarah Hosein,



Jayde Felician, Lisa Benjamin and Teola Noel. "We would like to thank Sgt David Prince and Anil Ramnanan [former UWI-SVM graduate and veterinarian] from the Prisons and Police Service and the canine officers who patiently allowed the demonstration sessions."

The lessons learned during these two sessions can be crucial for civilian pet owners as well. "Some dog owners do not realise that dogs require appropriate conditions for their welfare. Environmental conditions that affect us also impact them. Hot surfaces can burn the pads of their feet. They need shade and should not be left in the sun or a hot car," recommends Dr Georges. "They should not be chained or kennelled extensively."

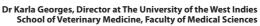
Like their distant cousins, wolves, dogs are social

The UWI School of Veterinary Medicine Helps Police and Prison Officers Care for their Canine Colleagues

creatures. Part of keeping them healthy, is keeping them mentally and physically engaged. As Dr Georges notes, this helps to prevent stress behaviour, because as people may not know, "They can and do experience stress-related disorders. They need socialisation, exercise, and good nutrition." She also pointed out that it is important to be mindful of regular household items around pets. "Certain medications routinely used for humans are toxic for dogs."

Whether they are at work alongside our police force or at home in the backyard, there are lessons to be learned from these sessions on how to take care of our furry friends. In fact, much of their care is similar to care for ourselves — regular mental and physical activity, proper nutrition, and being social for a healthy, happy body and mind.

"Some dog owners do not realise that dogs require appropriate conditions for their welfare. Environmental conditions that affect us also impact them. Hot surfaces can burn the pads of their feet. They need shade and should not be left in the sun or a hot car"





UWI INTERNATIONAL

Actually, he's a dog named Trini and this is a love story. Let's start at the beginning. Staff and students of Drexel University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania visited our shores as part of a study tour, co-coordinated with The UWI St. Augustine's International Office and two Drexel lecturers from the LeBow College of Business: Dana D'Angelo, Clinical Professor of General Business and Andy Macaleer, Adjunct Professor in Experiential Learning.

The International Office offers customised study tours for groups of students and faculty that are interested in Caribbean academics and culture, and is headed by Study Tour Coordinator, Afiya Francis. Out of her collaboration with Drexel, the *Winter Break in Trinidad & Tobago: Commerce, Culture, Cuisine and Citizenship* two-week study tour was born.

In December 2019, the Drexel group learned about the commercial aspects of Carnival by visiting Lost Tribe's mas camp. They held fresh cocoa pods in their hands to experience the different stages of chocolate production at the Brasso Seco Cocoa Estate in Paria. Service-learning was also part of the short curriculum; Drexel students volunteered to help with adult literacy through the nonprofit organisation ALTA (Adult Teachers Learning Association).

On one of their many excursions, they toured the North Coast in Grand Riviere and it was there they saw him. A dark brown dog with black accents, just your average 'pothound,' but his friendly demeanour made him stand out from the pack. According to D'Angelo, "There were a few dogs around, but Trini seemed to really like us. He followed us to our cabin and stayed with us all day around the resort; he even watched as we played cards at night. The next morning, he was still sleeping on our porch".

Dog is a Trini BY JEANETTE G. AWAI



Trini and his Drexel University family

It was a match made in foreign exchange heaven the charming local had won over the hearts and minds of everyone around him. But this love affair had an expiry date, and it was soon approaching. Would Trini be relegated to the distant memory of just a cute dog encountered on a twoweek study tour? "That morning, we made a quick decision to see if we could bring Trini back to the US. After several phone calls, we found June, Trinidadian woman who helped rescue local dogs. So we drove two hours back into Port of Spain where a veterinarian met with us and gave Trini shots."

The happy ending, however, was yet to come, D'Angelo continues, "Sadly, because it was December 22 and we had to be on a flight in eight hours, we had to leave Trini at the vet and in June's care. We could not get the paperwork needed in a day because agencies were closed. So Trini stayed for a week."

June turned out to be a dog-lover's godsend. She sent the Drexel team photos, made reservations, bought Trini a travel crate and even took him to the airport for his impending flight. The Drexel team picked him up in New York City on New Year's Eve. Were the sparks still there? Absolutely. "He kissed us as soon as we got him. He remembered us for sure."

Trini now lives in Philadelphia with both study tour coordinators, Prof D'Angelo and Prof Macaleer, and loves his new family. Like a true Trini, he now has devotees who encourage everyone to come to Trinidad and fall in love with its culture and people: "We now belong to a few 'potcake' groups on Facebook and just love these dogs...more people should adopt them. It was easy".

For more information on how to be a part of UWI St. Augustine's study tours, please email the International Office at: studytour@sta.uwi.edu or afiya.francis@sta.uwi.edu.

ADVOCACY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE - A GREAT CAMPUS TRADITION

Throughout history, university campuses have almost always been centres for progress and protest against the established order. From racial and gender justice, to anti-war and imperialism, to political and economic transformation, university students have been a perpetual resource for the advancement of society.

On March 10, 2020, student representatives from the University of Louisville visited the St Augustine Campus during their semester break and participated in a roundtable discussion titled "The Role of Student Engagement in Advocacy and Social Justice". The discussion was held at the Centre for Language and Learning (CLL).

"Social justice movements require voices and leaders 'inside' and 'outside' the infrastructure of power in our society," says Amilcar Sanatan, social activist and lecturer in the Department of Geography, who moderated the roundtable event. "Sustainable movements have committed activists and well-positioned advocates."

The panel included UWI student representatives Meshonn Persaud, Jensen Samaroo, Nathaniel John and Nikolai Chin Hong. The University of Louisville's panellists were Tiffany Murray, Diamond Davies, Caitlin Powell, Leondra Gully and Shwanzya Rivers.

The panellists shared their experiences with social justice and explored the difference between charity and social justice. One Louisville student expressed her belief that "if the intent is to help and foster social development



UWI student panellist Meshonn Persaud shares her initiative to aid with literacy in Guyana alongside Jensen Samaroo.



A moved Louisville student shares how they fought against injustices in their community.

in a fair way, it is social justice".

Speaking on his efforts as a student advocate, UWI's Nikolai Chin Hong said, "I strive to ensure all students are granted the best opportunities and they are equally available for all."

Nikolai also described how he benefited from student engagement, particularly through UWI St Augustine's Division of Student Services and Development (DSSD):

"The financial assistance they offered me allowed me to continue school when I needed it most. When I realised what they offered and how little students know about it, I began encouraging students to explore the various opportunities and amenities available for them at DSSD."

Arising out of the discussion was a need for campuswide awareness around volunteerism because sometimes students are not sure of where their passions lie and how to pursue them.

Discussants spoke about actions students can take to stand against inequality and oppression on campus in creative ways. One student from the audience highlighted the importance of volunteerism and advocacy in multicultural and multi-racial societies like Trinidad and Tobago.

The visiting students from Louisville, as well as students from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill were hosted in Trinidad and Tobago by the Careers, Co-curricular and Community Engagement Department in the DSSD.



Every month, this space, the back page of **UWI TODAY**, holds our calendar of events. It's a resource for our readers, on campus and in wider society, to see and partake in what UWI St Augustine has to offer.

Ordinarily, by this time our calendar would be filled with Faculty-driven events for the public. We might have lectures with leading academics from within the university as well as international institutions on the most scientific of topics or the most applicable to our daily lives. In this space we offer shorter educational programmes and even opportunities to work and study abroad. The calendar invites our readers to live performances and films from our student and staff artists. Regularly, this happens.

These, however, are not regular times. As institutions worldwide have been forced to adapt to COVID-19, so has The UWI. The risk of contracting the virus at mass gatherings is too great to allow activities that bring people together in the same physical spaces. The campus has shut. The events that fill our calendar have been postponed and in some cases cancelled. So our back page is an empty one – a very rare (possibly unique) circumstance in the history of **UWI TODAY.**

There's no denying that this situation is not good. We can't pretend that a massive disruption to the campus isn't happening and that we're not saddened by what will hopefully be the temporary loss of our activities. But we are not discouraged. And we are certainly not defeated. This institution was created to develop the Caribbean, ensure its survival and growth, and to find solutions for its challenges.

It's an outlook that allows us to look at an "empty" page as an open page. So this month our calendar is open. The same applies for most of us beyond the campus and the island. The adventure is to fill it in new ways. Find remote sources for work and study. Plan and attend virtual meetups with your favourite groups. Enjoy streaming performances and entertainment. Learn or resurrect a hobby or routine that deepens the self. Or simply be here in this moment. Appreciate the people and things that are so easy to take for granted – now that we see how easy they are to lose.

The Calendar of Events will return. For now, let's create a new page.