



UWI TODAY

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES • ST AUGUSTINE CAMPUS

SUNDAY 13 OCTOBER 2019



A CARIBBEAN CELEBRATION



Kiana Gajadhar, a second-year pharmacy student at the Faculty of Medical Sciences, proudly displays her flag during the “Parade of the Nations” at UWI St Augustine’s Guild Fest 2019.

Hosted by the Guild of Students under the theme “*Daring Advocates Readily Engaged (DARE)*”, Guild Fest was a week (starting on September 2) of taste, sound, colour and above all, community, for both new and returning students.

The promotion of Caribbean society and regional Saint Lucian integration is one of The UWI’s most important roles – and successes. Even as the university works to improve every facet of its service to the region, it is important to recognise, and celebrate, its many achievements. Smiling students from across the islands celebrating together on the campus quad is one such achievement.

PHOTO: ANEEL KARIM

MATRICULATION – 04

*Citizen student
Deyzha Carr*

Top Matriculant 2019/2020



INNOVATION – 10

*Collaboration on
Innovation Lab*

UWI, TSTT and Huawei team up



PARTNERSHIPS – 11

An App for Air Travel

UWI Engineers, students and CAL

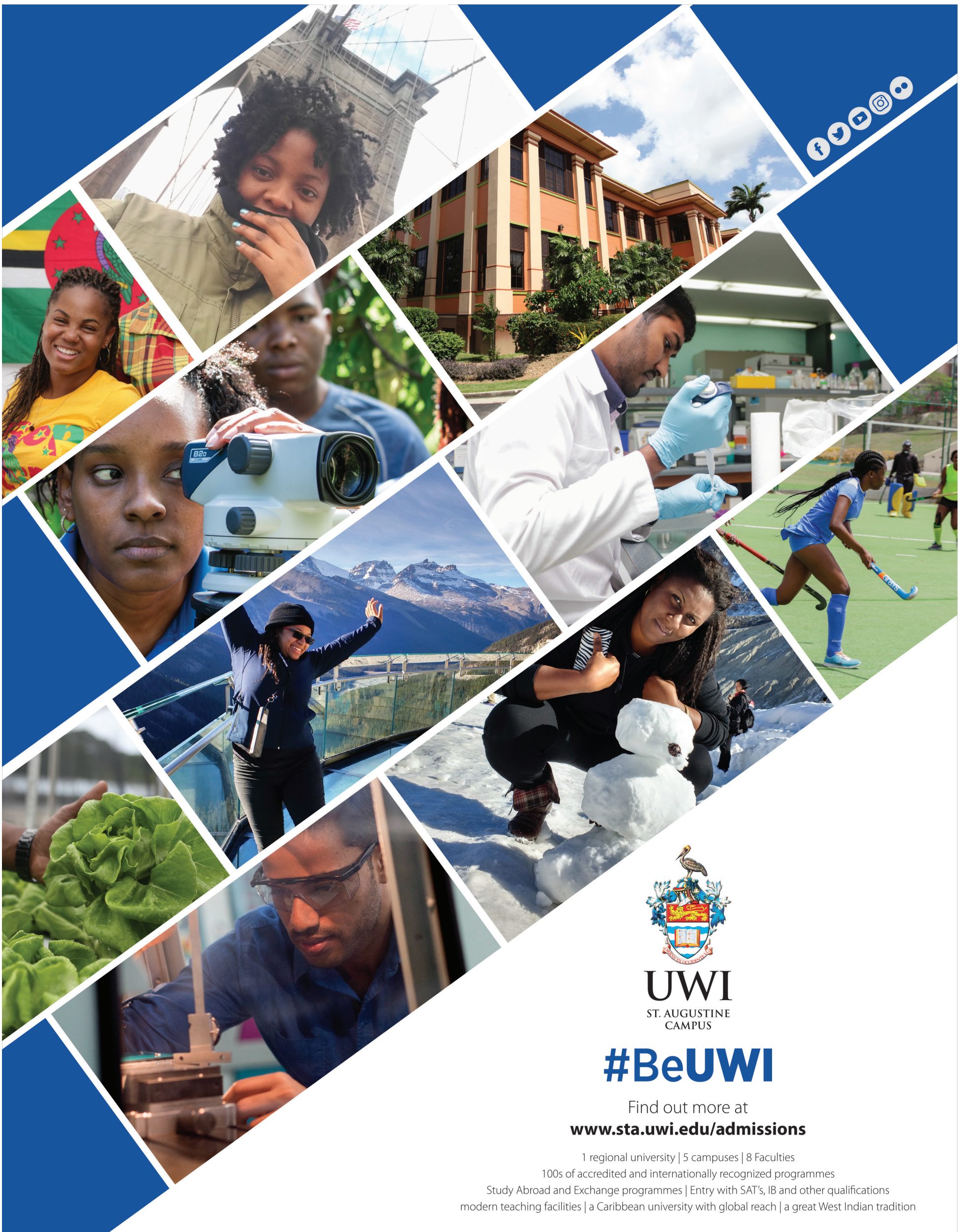
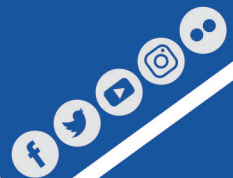


**UWI-GUARDIAN
GROUP PREMIUM
LECTURE – 12**

*Professor
Wendel Abel*

Mental Health
and Education





UWI
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CAMPUS

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Academic Year 2019/2020 Gains Momentum

October is here. This means that The University of the West Indies is preparing for graduation ceremonies across its five campuses. This year, 4,124 men and women will proudly graduate from the St Augustine Campus. There will be pomp. There will be ceremony. There will be rejoicing among graduates, their families, and friends. Beyond the special moment, however, what are their aspirations?

Our graduates are part of a great West Indian tradition whose early leaders created the motto: *Oriens Ex Occidente Lux* – “A Light Rising from the West”. For more than seven decades, our graduates have been charged with one mission – to light the way to sustainable economic and ecological development for the peoples of the Caribbean.

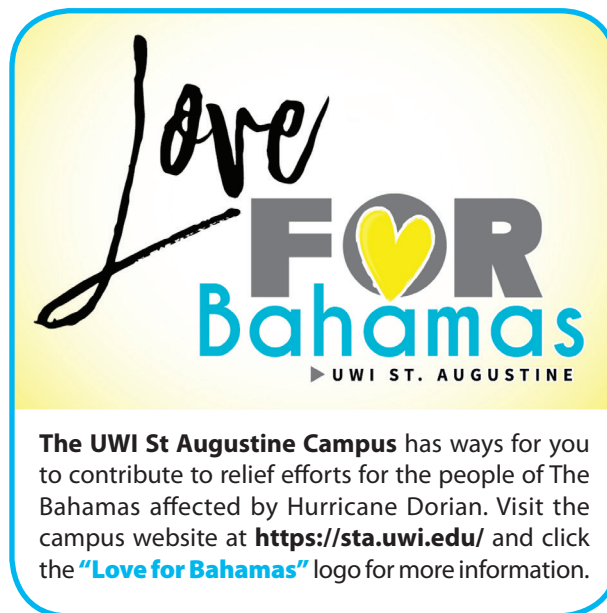
Since 1948, this university has led the way in advancing learning, creating knowledge, and fostering innovation towards a positive, sustainable transformation for this region. Changed times have required the university time and again to re-invent and transform itself and its graduates so as to offer solutions-based contributions on national and regional challenges such as poverty, crime, food security, and climate resilience.

The St Augustine Campus has deliberately created an enabling environment for innovation and entrepreneurship that, not only has the potential of shifting the campus closer to financial self-sustainability, but is critical to national strategies for the transformation of our individual economies. This entrepreneurship ecosystem is providing an effective pipeline to transform ideation to product – to use UWI’s intellectual property for the benefit of society.

In that regard, we continue to express in word and deed our commitment to serving industry, working with them to achieve greater efficiencies, effectiveness, growth and marketability. In the following pages, you will see just some examples of our success in that regard. Take, for example, the Caribbean Airlines (CAL) App, developed with the critical support of our graduates and launched right here on the campus at the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. There is also The UWI, TSTT, Huawei signing ceremony that brought us another step closer to the formal opening of an Innovation Laboratory in November. This Innovation Laboratory is yet another piece in the entrepreneurial and innovative university that The UWI is actively and purposefully building.

Then there is The UWI/Guardian Group partnership which began in 1998 and, with alternate years of Premium Teaching Awards and Premium Teaching Lectures, is even stronger today. Our guest lecturer, Professor Wendel Abel, tackled a critical point of concern globally, not just in Trinidad and Tobago – mental health issues in education.

I am also proud of our association with First Citizens Bank which has worked with us for 16 years in the staging of our Sport and Physical Education Centre (SPEC) International Half-Marathon. Collaboration with local sporting federations – the National Association of Athletics Administrations of Trinidad and Tobago and the Trinidad and Tobago Olympic Committee – allows this race to be certified locally and accredited by the Association of International Marathons and Distance



The UWI St Augustine Campus has ways for you to contribute to relief efforts for the people of The Bahamas affected by Hurricane Dorian. Visit the campus website at <https://sta.uwi.edu/> and click the “Love for Bahamas” logo for more information.

Races, and the International Association of Athletics Federations. We believe that anyone in the Caribbean that is interested in pursuing a career in sport should be able to fulfil their dream right here at home. That is the intent of our Faculty of Sport through its Academies of Sport. By building capacity in all aspects of sport, we will inevitably see improved facilities, better events, more commercialisation, and greater competition for the entire region.

Community involvement is part of this campus’ ethos. I was therefore delighted at the opening of our Psychoeducational Diagnostic and Intervention Clinic – PEDIC for short – which will contribute to that effort while offering high-quality, evidenced-based, and low-cost psychoeducational testing and intervention services to students, schools, districts, and the broader education

system to improve outcomes for students with special education needs and disabilities. It is a milestone, not just for the School of Education and the Faculty of Humanities and Education, but for all of us in this university and, in particular, on this campus.

On September 3, The University of the West Indies ceremoniously opened its fifth campus – Five Islands in Antigua and Barbuda. The opening of this campus marks a transition from the traditional 20th Century university into the development of a 21st Century UWI system that incorporates several global centres and institutes. The UWI has established partnering centres with universities in North America, Latin America, Asia, and Africa. All of these have gone into strengthening UWI’s reputation as a global resource for teaching, research, and impactful outreach.

We are an activist university, transforming to meet the needs of the Region we serve. In like manner, our graduates are encouraged to be flexible, entrepreneurial, and innovative. The 2019 graduates join some 240,000 alumni who labour at the forefront of their fields locally, regionally, and internationally. We expect our alumni to demonstrate a deep and passionate patriotism, one that begins within their families, places of work, and communities. We have consistently challenged them to display the emotional maturity, integrity, and mindfulness that will take the Caribbean forward into a sustainable future.

We are proud of them all and look forward to their individual and collective lights shining brightly for the benefit of all of the Caribbean.

Brian Copeland

PROFESSOR BRIAN COPELAND

Campus Principal

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■ MATRICULATION 2019/2020

Top matriculant is not the prize you envision when preparing for CSEC and CAPE exams, but this was icing on the cake for Deyzha Carr a year after receiving her results.

Now a first-year student of the Faculty of Medical Sciences, 17-year-old Carr was feted for her outstanding achievement at The UWI St Augustine's 17th Annual Matriculation and Welcome Ceremony on September 18 at the Sport and Physical Education Centre (SPEC).

The event formally welcomed new students of the 2019/2020 intake as members of the university. On behalf of her peers, Carr affirmed her acceptance into the academic community by ceremonially signing the Matriculation Register.

Already awed by earning the honour of top matriculant, Carr was even more surprised by the grandeur and scale of the ceremony. "I had to sign the register – I thought, yes, I can do this. And going up on stage, everybody was congratulating me; it was very surprising. Even then I didn't really know how much of a big deal it was, but I was very thankful for the opportunity."

Newly enrolled students at the St Augustine Campus were welcomed with an address by Professor Brian Copeland, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Campus Principal. Jerry Medford, President of The UWI Alumni Association, T&T Chapter also delivered words of inspiration to the undergraduates. Recently appointed Campus Registrar Dr Dawn-Marie De Four-Gill chaired the prestigious event, which masterfully imbued the theme 'Keeping the "Great West Indian Tradition" Alive.'

Carr spoke of a moment of private celebration prior to gracing the stage, where she was commended by the Campus Principal and other distinguished academic staff. "My family has this thing – when I receive good news, first I would celebrate with them, so they had a little thanksgiving thing for me."

The students united their voices with The UWI Arts Chorale of the Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA) to perform the University Song, according to ceremony tradition. President of the Guild of Students Justin Subero led the student body in a solemn recital of the Academic Vow, officially pledging their commitment to academic excellence and integrity.

An alumna of Holy Faith Convent in Penal, Carr obtained nine grade ones at CSEC level and five grade ones at the CAPE level. She shared her method for success:

"Firstly, you need to prioritise your work over everything else.... So, you need to pace yourself from day one. You can't let anyone distract you."

"Don't forget about your co-curricular activities, clubs, and volunteering. That's very important to get into UWI. They don't only want your academics. You must be well-rounded."

"You can make friends that way. You can find passions that way that can tie into your career, and also it's very important for building your résumé, and building your portfolio to submit to whatever university you want to go to," she says.

For Deyzha, these activities took the form of playing guitar, being active in the St Vincent de Paul Club, participating in NGC Sanfest and the Global Young Leaders Conference, and debating.

As per faculty entry requirements, she prepared an autobiographic sketch outlining the reasons for her career choice, and described skipping kindergarten and heading straight to primary school, always remaining two years younger than her peers.

"From a young age, my mom always used to read to me, even though I didn't understand what she was saying. But one day I just started reading. From then on they pushed me because they realised I had a talent for learning."

"I have a strong drive and I know what I want – I will do anything to get that – and of course, I thank God for giving me the ability," Deyzha says.

Well-rounded and wise

Top matriculant Deyzha Carr has discipline, focus and community spirit beyond her years

BY SABRINA VAILLO



Her self-imposed discipline derives from her academically inclined parents and siblings, and from her Holy Faith teachers – her "little HFC family."

"My teacher Miss Mohammed used to say 'pre-read and post-read'. You know your teacher is going to do this particular topic, you pre-read it, and when the teacher is done, you post-read it and you make your notes."

She's never veered from her love for medicine, and now joins all of her siblings in the medical field. The fresher's first weeks' experience has been a smooth transition. She's had the support of her old friends who are studying medicine too, and that of senior students, helpful with schoolwork and advice.

In 2018, Carr took part in the Global Young Leaders Conference, which ignited a spark of interest in her for "the merging of medicine and humanitarianism." She cites working with Doctors Without Borders as one of her long-term goals, which she hopes to do after specialising in either neurosurgery or orthopaedics.

Based on the trajectory Carr has blazed up to now, it seems that there is no limit to what she will accomplish and where she can go. Her temperate nature, well suited to her calling, matched with an extraordinary mindset for success will surely make her one to watch in the next generation of medical professionals arising from Trinidad and Tobago.



Deyzha, signs the Matriculation Register while Campus Registrar Dr Dawn-Marie De Four-Gill and Student Recruitment Officer Nigel Bradshaw look on. PHOTOS: KEYON MITCHELL

■ CAMPUS NEWS

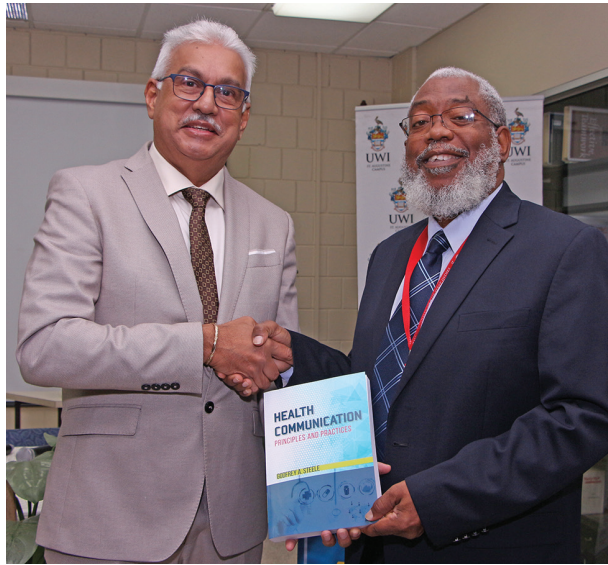
Dr Godfrey Steele launches new book on health Communication

Good communication is always important, especially when dealing with life and death matters such as health. In line with this, Dr Godfrey Steele, Senior Lecturer in Communication Studies, has released a new book for medical students and professionals to understand and apply communication skills.

Titled *Health Communication: Principles and Practices*, the book was launched on September 19 at the Alma Jordan Library (AJL) on the St Augustine Campus.

“*Health Communication: Principles and Practices* provides medical students and other allied health professionals and health practitioners with a framework for understanding and applying communication skills in the context of medical education and health education in health settings,” a synopsis by publishers UWI Press states.

The book launch at the Audio-visual Room at the AJL was attended by members of the medical fraternity, Dr Steele’s fellow scholars and colleagues at the Department of Literary, Cultural and Communications Studies, senior campus library personnel and other interested attendees. Trinidad and Tobago’s Minister of Health Terrence Deyalsingh also spoke at the event.



Dr Godfrey Steele (right), with Health Minister Terrence Deyalsingh. PHOTO: ANEEL KARIM

Health Communication: Principles and Practices is a companion to Dr Steele’s *Health Communication in the Caribbean and Beyond: A Reader*, published in 2011. His latest work “reviews the literature from an interdisciplinary perspective and considers the curriculum of medical communication skills outside of the traditional metropolitan areas,” a statement on the book says.

For more information on *Health Communication: Principles and Practices* as well as purchasing, please visit the UWI Press website at www.uwipress.com. You can go to the book’s page at <https://www.uwipress.com/9789766407230/health-communication/>

“Health Communication: Principles and Practices provides medical students and other allied health professionals and health practitioners with a framework for understanding and applying communication skills in the context of medical education and health education in health settings”

HIGH-FLYING IIR GRADUATE ASABI RAWLINS WINS CHEVENING SCHOLARSHIP

Asabi Rawlins, a graduate of the Institute of International Relations at UWI’s St Augustine Campus, has been awarded a coveted Chevening Scholarship by the British Government. Asabi is one of three nationals of Trinidad and Tobago to win the scholarship that will fund a year of study at universities in the United Kingdom.

“I was awarded a Chevening Scholarship to pursue an LLM in International Law and International Relations at the University of Bristol,” said Rawlins. “Chevening Scholarships are awarded through the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office to ‘high calibre graduates with personal, intellectual and interpersonal qualities necessary for leadership.’”

A reception was held for Rawlins and the other two awardees – Akil Callendar and Carlon Mendoza – by the British High Commission in Trinidad and Tobago on August 29, 2019. High Commissioner Tim Stew congratulated the three, calling them “dedicated and deserving young people”.

Rawlins is a consistent high achiever. Earlier this year

#IAM
CHEVE
NING



British High Commission
Port of Spain

Asabi Rawlins
2019 Chevening Scholar - Trinidad & Tobago

she was a member of the four-person delegation from IIR at St Augustine to take part in the Harvard National Model United Nations (HNMUN) at Harvard University where she and her partner Nestor Garcia were awarded “Diplomatic Commendation” for their outstanding performance (See UWI Today, April 2019 https://sta.uwi.edu/uwitoday/archive/april_2019/article4.asp).

Over 1000 young scholars from more than 100 countries received Chevening Scholarships on 2019. In total more than 50,000 applications were received and 5000 applicants interviewed worldwide.

Rawlins views the opportunity as very beneficial to her professional development:

“The hope is that these ‘future leaders and influencers’ can capitalise on the experience of studying in the UK to amplify their contribution in their respective home country. I am so very grateful and excited to have received this award. My pursuit of the LLM will certainly enrich my prior academic experiences, including my time spent at the IIR.”



THE UNIVERSITY
OF THE
WEST INDIES

STILL #1

The only Caribbean University to be ranked
among the 150 best across Latin America
and the Caribbean in 2019



UWI NEWS

The Universe is a spectacular place of billions of known stars and now, thousands of recently discovered exoplanets. Exoplanets, which are planets outside our solar system, were first discovered only in the 1990s and currently number just about 4000. The ancient civilizations of Greeks, Romans, and Arabs



Dr Shirin Haque

are responsible for the names of the most well-known stars and planets. Mars and Venus are named after the Roman god of war and goddess of love respectively. The brightest star in the sky, Sirius' name is Greek in origin, meaning "glowing" or "scorching". Bright stars such as Aldebaran and Deneb have names that are Arabic in origin.

So, could there be a star and an exoplanet with a Trinbago name to immortalise us also like the ancient civilizations? Indeed, we have just that opportunity.

The International Astronomical Union (IAU) is the largest astronomical society of professional astronomers in the world. In 2019, it celebrates its 100th anniversary with several events during the year. Of special note is its initiative "Name Exoworlds". In this programme, countries around the world get to name a host star and its exoplanet. The competition is to name a designated system of the host star and its exoplanet, jointly called "exoworld". This name becomes its official name apart from its scientific designation.

It was thus a great delight when the proposal from Trinidad and Tobago was accepted for this "Name Exoworlds" initiative and a system of the host star and exoplanet was assigned to us for a national competition to name. It must represent the cultural or geographical heritage of the country.

The exoworld system assigned to Trinidad and Tobago is HD 96063 (host star) and HD 96063b (exoplanet). The system is 515 light years away. Our fastest probes would take over ten million years to get to it. The star HD 96093 is a yellow, giant star located in the Leo constellation. While it

A STAR AND EXOPLANET WITH A TRINBAGO NAME?

Yes, Indeed!

BY DR SHIRIN HAQUE

cannot be seen with the naked eye, it is easily visible using small telescopes and binoculars. HD 96093 is as massive as our Sun; however, it is almost four times larger in size and has an effective temperature of 5308 K (Kelvin, the base unit of temperature in the International System of Units). Calculated to be twice as old as our sun at 9 Billion years, HD 96093 has at least one extrasolar planet in orbit around it – exoplanet HD 96093b.



HD 96093b was discovered in 2011 orbiting around its star at almost the same distance the Earth orbits around the sun. With a mass of 1.27 Jupiters, it takes 362.5 Earth days to complete one orbit around its star.

The public can submit names, as part of the competition, which is open until October 15, 2019, via the online portal at <https://www.nameexoworldstt.com/>. The national committee which is chaired by me (Dr Shirin Haque) is overseeing the competition. I have been appointed as the National Outreach Coordinator from the IAU and the national committee has members from The UWI, Trinidad and Tobago Astronomical Society, Caribbean Institute of Astronomy, Trinidad and Tobago Astro Club, The UWI Star Gazers, Trinidad Radio Astronomy Community, and NIHERST.

A shortlist of 10 pairs of names for the host star and the exoplanet will be voted on by the public from October 30 to November 5, 2019 and the final decision will be announced by the IAU in December 2019. The grand prize is a telescope, with hampers for runners up and tokens for finalists. The grandest prize for all of us is the honour of a star and an exoplanet having a Trinbagonian name. What an opportunity to be immortalised among the stars! Move over Greeks, Romans and Arabs, here comes a Trinbago star and planet! **Interested persons can contact Dr Shirin Haque at shirin.haque@sta.uwi.edu**

Dr Shirin Haque is Astronomer at The University of the West Indies.

BPTT donates remotely operated vehicle for deep sea research

Oil and gas company BPTT has donated an OUTLAND 2000 ROV (remotely operated vehicle) to UWI St Augustine's Department of Life Sciences (DLS). The presentation was made on September 25 at the company's Queen's Park Plaza headquarters in Port of Spain.

"BPTT's generous support has signalled their investment in local marine scientific research within the Department of Life Sciences and the University of the West Indies, St Augustine Campus," said Dr Judith Gobin, Senior Lecturer and Head of the DLS. Dr Gobin is extremely excited about this valuable piece of equipment and all the supporting material received as this will take her deep sea research "to even deeper depths".

Dr Gobin has been collaborating with fellow researchers for several years on deep sea habitats. Her work with fellow marine biologist Dr Diva Amon has led to the discovery of 83 species in the almost mile-deep waters off Trinidad.

Under Dr Gobin's leadership the DLS, within the Faculty of Science and Technology, is already working on a pilot project to employ the ROV. It is expected that results will continue to reveal surprises in our "deep sea backyard", said Dr Gobin.



Rafael Mohammed, Subsea Engineer with Subsea Production Operations, BPTT, explains some of the features of the ROV to Dr Judith Gobin, Head of the Department of Life Sciences.

OUR CAMPUS

“The world always seems brighter when you’ve just made something that wasn’t there before,” Neil Gaiman, famed novelist and comic book writer, once said.

Starting this new academic year, the world of education and scholarship that resides in the Frank Stockdale Building, the main headquarters of UWI St Augustine’s Faculty of Food and Agriculture, has a new and distinct source of illumination. A massive, exquisitely painted mural adorns one of the foyer walls.

The painting of the 22ft x 9ft mural was the inspiration of FFA Dean Professor Wayne Ganpat. Its execution was carried out by 19-year-old Keera-Marie Mohammed, a first year visual arts student in the Faculty of Humanities and Education.

“The foyer is officially the entry to the Dean’s office. It is the centre of everything,” says Professor Ganpat, explaining his motivation behind the painting. “You come into the FFA you need to see visible expressions of food, agriculture and nutrition. I decided that we needed to reflect this in some visible way that will last for a long time.”

He was introduced to Keera’s work by agricultural economist Omaidath Maharaj, who was impressed by an environment-themed mural she completed for a school project at Holy Faith Convent in Couva.

“I saw something she did which was along the lines of environmental awareness and I thought this is a young person who has talent. So I engaged her,” says Ganpat.

Keera, who is from California in Central Trinidad, was more than happy to do the mural. “I thought it was a great opportunity to have my work displayed at UWI. I was honoured.”

And Ganpat, in turn, along with many students, staff and visitors to the Frank Stockdale Building, are more than happy with the result.

“It was beyond my imagination, the skill of this young lady,” the Dean of FFA says. He points to the incredible “detail in the cocoa” and “colours of the Chaconia”.

Detail and immersion are the two strongest feelings when looking at the mural. There are several rich hues of green, layers of blue in the sky and wispy white and intricate lines of the clouds. Ganpat wanted the mural to reflect “a wide array of food and agriculture in as many forms as possible”. Depicted are fishermen, hydroponic farms, cocoa and breadfruit trees, beekeepers at an

WORLD IN A MURAL

Student artist Keera Mohammed captures food and agriculture’s rich reality

BY JOEL HENRY



apiary, people enjoying an outdoor cook-up, aquaculture and on and on. It’s a world of food and agriculture.

The mural is obviously the product of painstaking work. Keera worked on it through the month of August, receiving some technical guidance from Ganpat as well as support from her father Kerryn Mohammed, who is also an artist.

“He is used to doing large-scale work so after I conceptualised it he helped me to expand,” she says of his assistance in creating a piece of art that massive.

Keera is proud of her accomplishment and glad to be able to

“make her mark” on campus. She is a prolific and hardworking young artist. At the time of this writing she has an exhibition of her work at Nichossa Restaurant, Bakery and Desserts in San Fernando.

The FFA is satisfied as well with the mural and wants people to see it and recognise the power and potential in food and agriculture.

“I hope that it will awe all of the people that come to the Faculty of Agriculture, lovers of traditional or new agriculture, the students in particular,” Ganpat says. “I want it to show them what is possible.”

Every year, **World Tourism Day** is celebrated on September 27 to bring global awareness of tourism’s social, cultural, political and economic value. This year, the theme was “Tourism and Jobs: A Better Future for All” and on Thursday September 26, 2019, the Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Unit (THSU) of UWI St Augustine’s Department of Management Studies (DMS) celebrated World Tourism Day by hosting an award ceremony to honour 20 key stakeholder organisations, spanning more than 10 sectors, for their longstanding contribution to the development of the hospitality and tourism industry in Trinidad and Tobago.

The following organisations were honoured:

ACCOMMODATION AND RESTAURANT SECTORS: Trinidad Hotels and Restaurant Association (THRTA), Tobago Hotel and Tourism Association, Small Tourism Accommodation Owners of Trinidad and Tobago (STAOTT), Tobago Unique Bed and Breakfast and Self Catering Association, (TUBBSCA).

TRAVEL TRADE SECTOR: Trinidad and Tobago Incoming Tour Operators Association (TTITOA)

ADVENTURE TOURISM SECTOR: Tobago Hospitality and Tour Operators Association, Trinidad and Tobago Tour Guides Association (TTTGA), Tobago Certified Tour Guides Association, Association of Tobago Dive Operators

TRANSPORT SECTOR: Trinidad and Tobago Tourist Transport Service Association (TTTSA), Tobago Port Taxi and Maxi Drivers Federation of Association, Caribbean Airlines, Yacht Services Association of Trinidad and Tobago (YSATT)

TOURISM RESEARCH AND EDUCATION SECTORS: The UWI – Department of Management Studies, Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute (THTI), Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute (THTI)

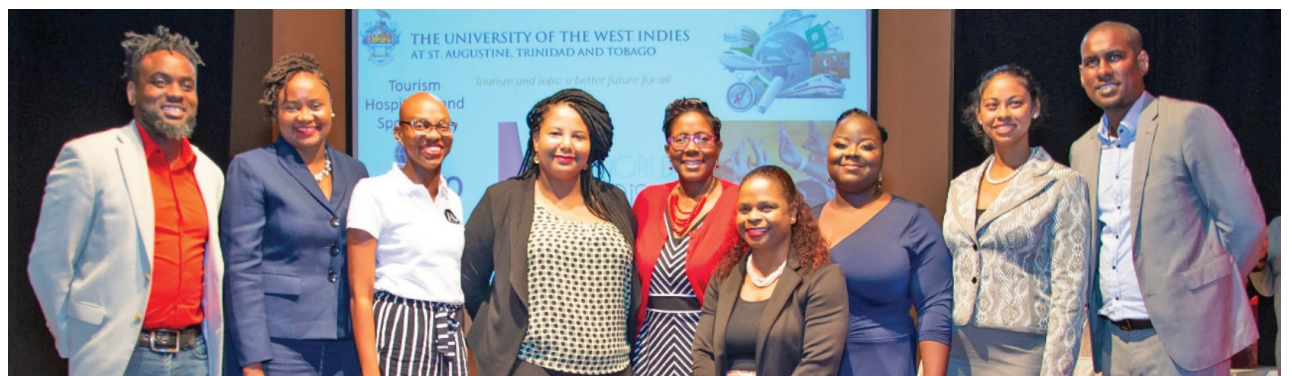
EVENTS AND TOURISM SERVICES SECTORS: Caribbean Tourism Publishers, MEP Publishers

ATTRACTIONS AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT SECTORS: National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago, T&T Crafts and Arts Producers Association

TOURISM AND JOBS

UWI’s Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Unit celebrates World Tourism Day

BY DR LESLIE-ANN JORDAN-MILLER



ENTREPRENEURS: From left to right, Brendon Brathwaite, Kimberly King, Ain Earle, Jay Smith, Dr Leslie-Ann Jordan-Miller (Coordinator, THSU), Tenisha Brown-Williams, Deborah Stewart, Renée Deane-Gangapersad and Jason Radix.

This ceremony also afforded the THSU an opportunity to highlight the diversity of jobs available in the sector by showcasing nine of its past graduates, many of whom are now entrepreneurs and making a significant impact in the industry:

Kimberly King (King and Associates), Deborah Stewart (Pepe Events), Jason Radix (Eureka Natural History Tours), Shinelle Smith (The Travel Taxi), Arielle Du Quesnay (RoamTT), Renee Deane-Gangapersad (Airports Authority), Tenisha Brown-Williams (ShareHome Caribbean), Brendon Brathwaite (BUZZ Concepts) and Ain Earle (The Fashion Arch).

Tourism accounts for about one in 10 jobs globally and in Trinidad and Tobago, tens of thousands of nationals are directly and indirectly employed by the industry. All stakeholders agreed that they needed to continue to work together to create more awareness of the positive impact that tourism can have on Trinidad and Tobago’s economy. The THSU is committed to playing its part in advancing tourism education and research to support the future growth of the tourism industry.

Special thanks to our sponsors: Faculty of Social Sciences, Angostura Limited, Tourism Trinidad Limited, HADCO, AMCO and the Institute of Service Quality Management (ISQM).

■ GUILD FEST 2019



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Guild Fest 2019

A Daring...

BY JOEL...

“An explosion of passion and culture that is how the organisers described the event, drawing in returning students for Academic Bazaar, a bazaar of tents, music and a throwback to the days of the Quadrangle in the heart of the St. Augustine campus.”

Hosted by the Council of the UWI Guild Fest ran from Monday, September 23 to Tuesday, September 24, both days and nights with activities designed to enliven the university experience, and to bring students together on the campus.

“During this week the Guild of UWI students and staff, along with non-governmental organisations, will be working together to educate and inspire students to become active citizens of the world and society,” a statement from the Guild Council highlighted creativity, teamwork, activism and social responsibility, and gives true meaning to Pelican Island.

The theme of this year’s festival is ‘Dare to be Engaged’, and that theme will be the focus over the week. These activities include Academic Bazaar (Dare to be Enlightened), Parade of the Nations (Dare to be Cultured), and even a flag-raising ceremony.

Guild Fest began with a flag-raising ceremony on September 23. The event was a constant feature at the normal activities of the festival, and also enjoyed foods from throughout the Caribbean, badminton, hockey and more. The event was held at the Sports Village at UWI SPEC, and was a great opportunity for student entrepreneurs.

Student performers got to show their talents, and campus resident students showed their support.

In their note of thanks to all stakeholders, the Guild Council gave a message of appreciation.

“Guild fest would have been a success without your support and participation. We are delighted to have you here, and are Dare to be Engaged, Ready to be Daring Advocates, and Ready to be Daring Advocates of the West Indies.”



Wild Fest 2019

Endeavour

HENRY

ture, and a celebration of diversity,” described Guild Fest 2019. New and Year 2019/2020 were greeted by a g of people at the John F Kennedy Augustine Campus.

UWI St Augustine Guild of Students, member 2 until September 7, packing designed to welcome new students, and foster the spirit of community

collaborates with internal partners, and corporate sponsors to engage, some holistic members of The UWI the Guild says. “Guild Fest fosters a sense of belonging to The UWI Pride.”

al was “DARE” (Daring Advocates was reflected in all of the activities included Spiritual Night (Dare to be ons (Dare to Represent), Cultural ven “Fresher’s” Fete (Dare to Pump). ising (of Caribbean flags) and then and the vibrant Guild Village Expo ally sparse Quadrangle. Attendees at the region at Taste UWI; football, many other sporting activities at the even an Entrepreneurial Expo for

w their talents on Open Mic Night. ved their pride on Hall Spirit Night. sponsors, UWI staff and other e a special message to the students: incomplete without your presence d that you have been well oriented Engaged. We wish you a successful engaging period at The University



- 1** Students from Grenada wave their flag proudly during the Parade of the Nations.
- 2** Guild Council President Justin Subero speaks at the opening ceremony.
- 3** Getting a proper line-up at the Entrepreneurial Expo.
- 4** Representatives of Trinity Hall display their sports trophies. Hall Spirit Night was one of the major activities of Guild Fest.
- 5** Getting down on some Caribbean cuisine at Taste UWI on Thursday, September 5.
- 6** The 2019/2020 Student Guild Council enjoys a moment in the sun.
- 7** The Jenga tower takes a tumble. Games and other entertainment were part of the fun at the Village Expo.
- 8** Jewelry for sale. Students showed they know how to do business, selling their high quality items and services.
- 9** Bang the drum. Art and culture were a major part of Guild Fest – at the Village Expo, the Cultural Night and Open Mic Night.

PHOTOS: ANEEL KARIM

PARTNERSHIPS

bmobile, Huawei, The UWI Partner for Multimillion-Dollar R&D Lab

BY SABRINA VAILLOO

Ours is a generation of technological revolution, and students of The UWI, its future masters.

The St Augustine Campus is now home to the English-speaking Caribbean's first innovation hub of its kind. The bmobile-UWI Innovation Laboratory, Powered by Huawei is currently under construction at the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

A media launch and ceremonial MOU signing marking the official partnership of the three entities was held on September 26 at the Office of the Campus Principal.

Dr Fasil Muddeen, Head of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering served as Master of Ceremonies. He reminded the audience that in 2015 The UWI had signed on to Huawei's Seeds of the Future Programme, and that the latest innovation lab in 2019 would see the tech company's continued commitment to student research and development.

Delivering opening remarks, Professor Stephan Gift, Pro-Vice Chancellor for Graduate Studies and Research, and former Dean of the Faculty of Engineering gave context to the negotiation process for this "truly momentous occasion."

Talks began in March 2015 between himself and Dr Ronald Walcott, CEO of TSTT, who he said did not hide his enthusiasm "to explore network-improving ideas and new frontiers in technology." Chinese telecom giant Huawei – today the world's number one telecom equipment supplier and number two smartphone manufacturer– soon joined the discussion.

"This agreement represents an important step in fulfilling its objective. It is consistent with the strategic direction of the university, and the Pro-Vice Chancellor's vision for its development," Professor Gift said.

Next, Pro-Vice Chancellor and Campus Principal Professor Brian Copeland brought welcome remarks stating that: "The UWI's commitment to the positive transformation of the Caribbean has been a constant theme and its driving force for more than 70 years," and that the agreement "fit nicely into the Access, Alignment and Agility themes of 'The UWI Triple A Strategy 2017–2022' with the theme 'Revitalizing Caribbean Development'.

Noting the "immense possibilities for innovation and entrepreneurship," Prof Copeland said that The UWI was "already exploring the work plan agenda for the lab." Key areas identified for research and development are ICT for disaster recovery; security and safety; education; finance; and agriculture.

CEO Jeff Jin took the floor next to deliver remarks on behalf of Huawei Technologies T&T with his theme "A Single Spark Can Light a Fire." Jin likened Huawei's involvement in the project to "the power of one small action to inspire other actions, which then cause a chain of actions and reactions." The 32-year-old ICT company has, in 2019, captured 29 per cent share of the global telecom equipment market.

The company has announced a global R&D budget of US\$20 billion, and "has already begun research into 6G." Jin pointed to collaboration with universities as the way "to revolutionize this industry so fast." This thrust is consistent with Huawei's mission and vision "to bring digital to every person, home and organization for a fully connected, intelligent world."

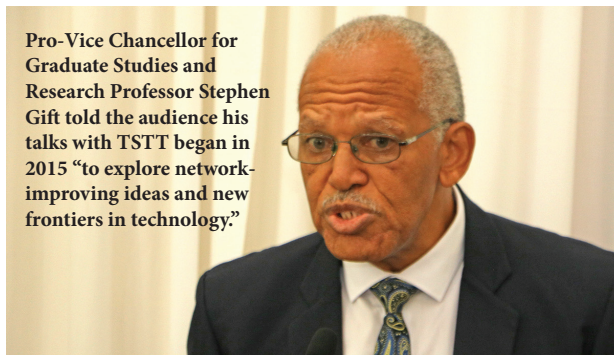
Huawei has "invested over US\$2 million worth of equipment" for the facility. When completed, it will be equipped to "facilitate commercial and academic



From left, TSTT CEO Dr Ronald Walcott, Campus Principal Professor Brian Copeland, and Huawei Technologies T&T CEO Mr Jeff Jin displaying their signatures on the MOU for the innovation lab. PHOTOS: ANEEL KARIM



Dr Fasil Muddeen, Head of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering.



research and development in the areas of fixed and mobile networks, optical transmission, IP networks, and core IT infrastructure."

TSTT is no stranger to the UWI St Augustine Campus either. The company has supported the Guild of Students and invested in campus-wide tech and student activities, among others. The signing of the MOU, according to Dr Muddeen, "demonstrates a deepening of The UWI's relationship with TSTT."

CEO Dr Ronald Walcott took to the podium to bring remarks. There is a "direct correlation between ICT development including high-speed broadband penetration and economic growth," he said, and "the need to accelerate digital competence and capabilities of the human capital in Trinidad and Tobago."

He noted that as the world has entered a technological revolution where new technologies are replacing older ones with rapid application and diffusion, the lab would lead the way in TSTT's "quest for digital competence."

The lab is "a replica of TSTT's mobile, fixed, wireless, cloud and enterprise networks," called an 'out of band' network. This will allow for "innovation, simulations, testing and learning." In addition to contributing access to TSTT's network model, the company has pledged approximately US\$2.5 million, which includes support for three years.

Miss Nicolette Duke, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Public Utilities delivered the feature address on behalf of Senator Robert Le Hunte. "The Government of Trinidad and Tobago applauds TSTT's unwavering commitment to improving the lives of citizens through the provision of technology that continues to bridge the digital divide."

The development of the Innovation Lab, she said, is consistent with Trinidad and Tobago's National ICT plan and ICT Blueprint 2018–2022, which "declares a bold vision... characterised by the theme 'Empowered People. Competitive Businesses. Transformational Government.'"

The moment of anticipation having arrived, the MC invited Prof Copeland, Mr Jin and Dr Walcott to the MOU signing table which stood next to a 3D scale model of the lab.

After the signing, guests viewed a virtual walkthrough presentation of the lab. The first of its kind in Trinidad and Tobago, the 1,600 sq ft training facility features a smart classroom with a 55" interactive touchscreen whiteboard for presentations and video conferencing, and seating for 15.

The bmobile-UWI Innovation Laboratory, Powered by Huawei will welcome its first students after its opening launch slated for November 2019.

PARTNERSHIPS

If you have travelled anywhere in the world in the past decade, you have probably been caught up in the changes and innovations associated with air travel. Due to efforts to cut costs, provide convenience and safety, as well as keep up with the expectations of the modern day traveller, flying is not the same experience of decades ago.

In recent years, Caribbean Airlines (CAL) has embraced the parade of options which has become typical of contemporary airlines. The latest upgrade is the Caribbean Airlines Mobile Application that was launched in July 2019 at the UWI St Augustine Campus' Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (DECE). The location was a deliberate choice as UWI graduates and faculty have developed a relationship with the airline, and their input has been crucial to the app's development.

"Our team was tasked with developing several critical services that were made available in-app to provide users with tools to enhance every step of their travel experience," explain CAL engineers Hannah Abdool (a UWI alumnus) and Vikash Ramkumar in a joint e-mail outlining the work of the software development team.

Dr Akash Pooransingh, lecturer in charge of the programming stream of courses for the undergraduate level of the DECE notes, "Digital transformation in the airline industry is of critical importance. There is a shift from electronic data toward digitised data where all information is live and available to the user in real time."

Android and iOS users can access features like booking Caribbean Vacation tours, flight scheduling and flight status checking. "These services, in conjunction with our booking portal, provide a clean, simple and easy-to-use forum...with customers being supported every step of the way via all-round flight monitoring services and real-time reminders," explain the engineers.

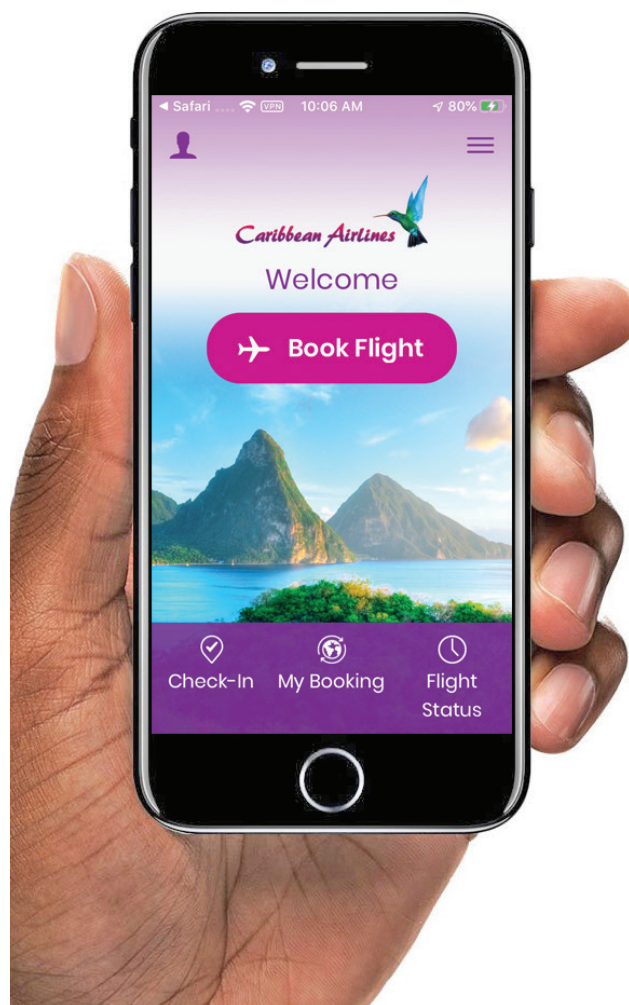
This app for the Caribbean's biggest airline benefits from home grown developers. The development team consists of nine engineers, eight of whom are UWI graduates. Many CAL interns from UWI were also able to gain from the experience of working on the app.

"These students, although they did not work directly on the application, were able to work on side projects and benefit from the workflow interaction and were part of the intense environment associated with the development team at CAL," explains Dr Pooransingh. "The CAL engineers provided and continue to provide mentorship to these students with three of them working on relevant final year projects with the development team."

This is the second wave of UWI interns working with CAL.

Engineering Department and Airline, a long and rewarding relationship

BY DIXIE-ANN BELLE



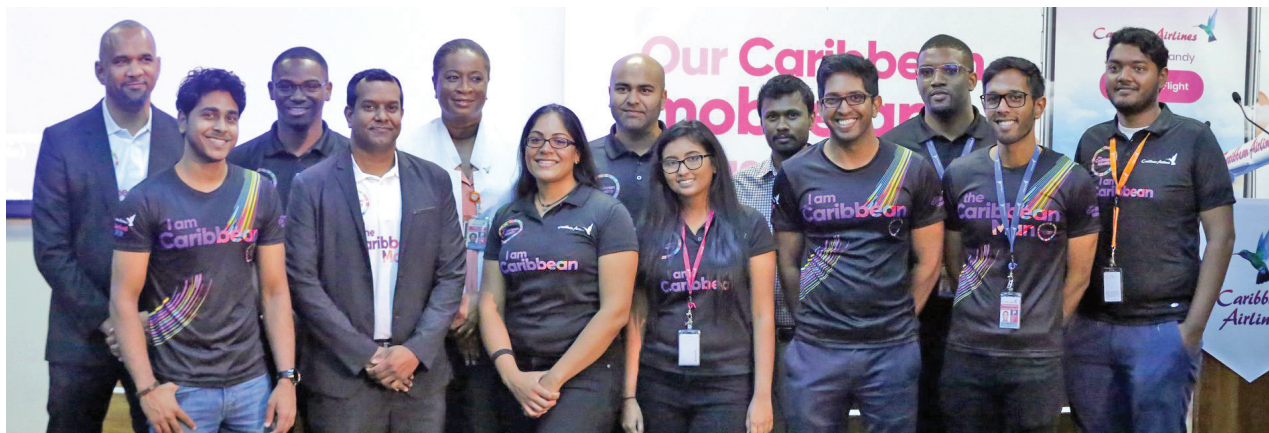
"We have partnered with UWI, specifically the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, to provide a summer vacation internship programme," recounts Randy Ram, Head of Software Engineering at CAL. "These students have all worked on innovative projects that are changing the way Caribbean Airlines operates internally."

The benefits of the experience for the UWI interns have been considerable. Abdool and Ramkumar observe, "The students were able to work on projects that go beyond the software development life cycle (of understanding customer needs, design, coding, testing and implementation) to being involved first hand in digital transformation, data mining and business analytics projects." They see the app as a chance "to showcase the skills and talent that are fostered at the university, and shows how students are able to apply what they have learned in real-world, meaningful ways that serve our country and region."

Caribbean Airlines not only gains by investing in local talent, but they were able to complete the time sensitive app project more efficiently because of their choice. Ram points out, "Having engineers locally enables us to provide swift turnaround times for feature development, first-line troubleshooting and enables the company to communicate clearly the needs and features required for the application to the developers."

Surely this contributes to the pride these creators have in the finished product which Ram asserts is "definitely on par, if not better than other international airlines". The development team echoes his sentiments. "This app is the first of its kind for the company and is iconic in the company's digital transformation... it reaches a much wider audience and caters to the more dynamic, contemporary lifestyle that makes the mobile app a huge convenience for many of our users. It is compact, attractive, easy to use, and functions great, making it a huge milestone for the company."

With such an ambitious project under their belts what other sophisticated advancements could appear next from this partnership? The app is going to continue to roll out new features in phases. The airline has expressed its commitment to improving on the internship programme, and the faculty and staff of the DECE are embracing the advantages of working with the airline and indeed many other opportunities to benefit from industry-led mentorship, internships and projects. In the years to come, many engineering innovations in this country will most likely be conceived by the imaginative minds of UWI engineering graduates.



The software team from Caribbean Airlines that developed the CAL mobile app, along with company Chief Executive Officer Garvin Medera (back row, left) and Chief Information Officer Aneel Ali (front row, second from left). Most of the members of the team – including Medera and Ali – are graduates from the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (DECE). The other members are (from left) Avikash Harriram, Quinley James, Joanne John, Hannah Abdool, Riaaz Hosein, Darlene Bachoo, Avinash Rambeharry, Randy Ram (Head of Software Engineering), Jevon Alexis, Vikash Ramkumar and Shiva Ramdeen. PHOTO: COURTESY CARIBBEAN AIRLINES



From left, Campus Principal Professor Brian Copeland, CAL CEO Garvin Medera, Head of the DECE Dr Fasil Muddeen and Dr Akash Pooransingh at the launch of the app in July 2019. PHOTO: ANEEL KARIM

As we learn more about the human brain and mental health, we are making more connections between facilitating mental health care from a young age, and creating a brighter future for Trinidad and Tobago, the Caribbean and the world as a whole.

Professor Wendel Abel, Professor of Mental Health Policy and Head of the Department of Community Health and Psychiatry at The UWI Mona Campus, has dedicated much of his life to dealing with a range of mental health issues. On September 27 he held a lecture titled “Making a Difference in Education: Tackling Mental Health Issues” at The UWI St Augustine Campus. The occasion was the 2019 UWI-Guardian Group Premium Open Lecture.

According to Professor Abel’s research, one in four persons will struggle with a mental health disorder during their lifetime. But many of them will not get the support they need. Professor Abel is hoping to change this by educating the region on mental health issues and fighting the stigma against mental illness that so often stops people from getting help — as well as working on the structural issues that can hinder the average person’s access to care.

In his packed lecture at Daaga Auditorium, Professor Abel particularly focused on the mental health of the younger generation, who are at risk of not getting the help they need to combat issues like stress, depression and the effects of early life trauma. In Trinidad and Tobago, suicide rates are highest in males aged 25-34 and females ages 15-24. This is something that Professor Abel thinks we can change— but first it starts with changing our perspective on issues like addiction and trauma.

He referenced an adverse childhood experience (ACE) study that found that 59 per cent of adults were exposed to an ACE, and this affected their ability to learn, to control their emotions and impulses, and to succeed academically. It even meant a higher likelihood for lifestyle diseases like obesity, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. So how can we as a society, and our academic institutions, support people who are at higher risk for mental health issues because of their environments or genetic predispositions?

Professor Abel pinpoints early education as the ideal tool for youth intervention. Instead of focusing solely on academic achievement, he suggests that our education system needs to pivot more to a holistic approach to learning that also nurtures the mental well-being of our children. A simple act like making a child feel that they have a voice and a sense of agency can have a great impact on their life— instead of punitive responses. All research points to positive outcomes when parents and teachers reinforce kindness, patience, acceptance and a non-judgmental approach to children’s behavior.

It can be difficult to break the cycle of a negative home environment. Many who grow up in unstable or unsafe homes often pick up the same behaviours, and this creates a cycle of generational trauma. But Professor Abel and others like him are working to give individuals the support they need to break these cycles and raise a new generation with love and understanding rather than humiliation, violence and fear. This can do wonders for a child’s self-esteem, coping skills and mental health on a whole.

In his lecture, Professor Abel outlines the importance on the first thousand days in a child’s life, and how it can affect the person they will grow up to be. Children who feel safe and stable, and who have a wealth of positive experiences with their parents and those around them, have a greater chance of becoming well-adjusted adults. Those who live in an environment of chronic stress, violence and instability have been found to finish fewer grades in school, earn less and have poorer health.

But parents cannot do it alone— as Professor Abel notes, “it takes a village to raise a child”. He notes that it is vital to focus on parenting education, and invest in early childhood education to give both parents and children the tools they

Kindness, patience, acceptance, *the sooner the better*

*Prof Wendel Abel says early education key
for youth mental health intervention*

BY AMY LI BAKSH



Professor Wendel Abel PHOTOS: GARTH MURRELL

need to deal with this early stage of life and development. In schools, there needs to be a push to increase awareness of mental health issues, reduce stigma and discrimination, and foster an environment of acceptance and safety where children can feel heard and understood.

As Samanta Saugh, Vice President of Finance for Guardian Life of the Caribbean said in her address at the lecture, “It is critical that all strata of society and persons sitting at various levels of our organisations become more sensitised to this issue and are able to interact with individuals suffering from mental health illnesses to bring the balance that is so needed for us to function cohesively.”

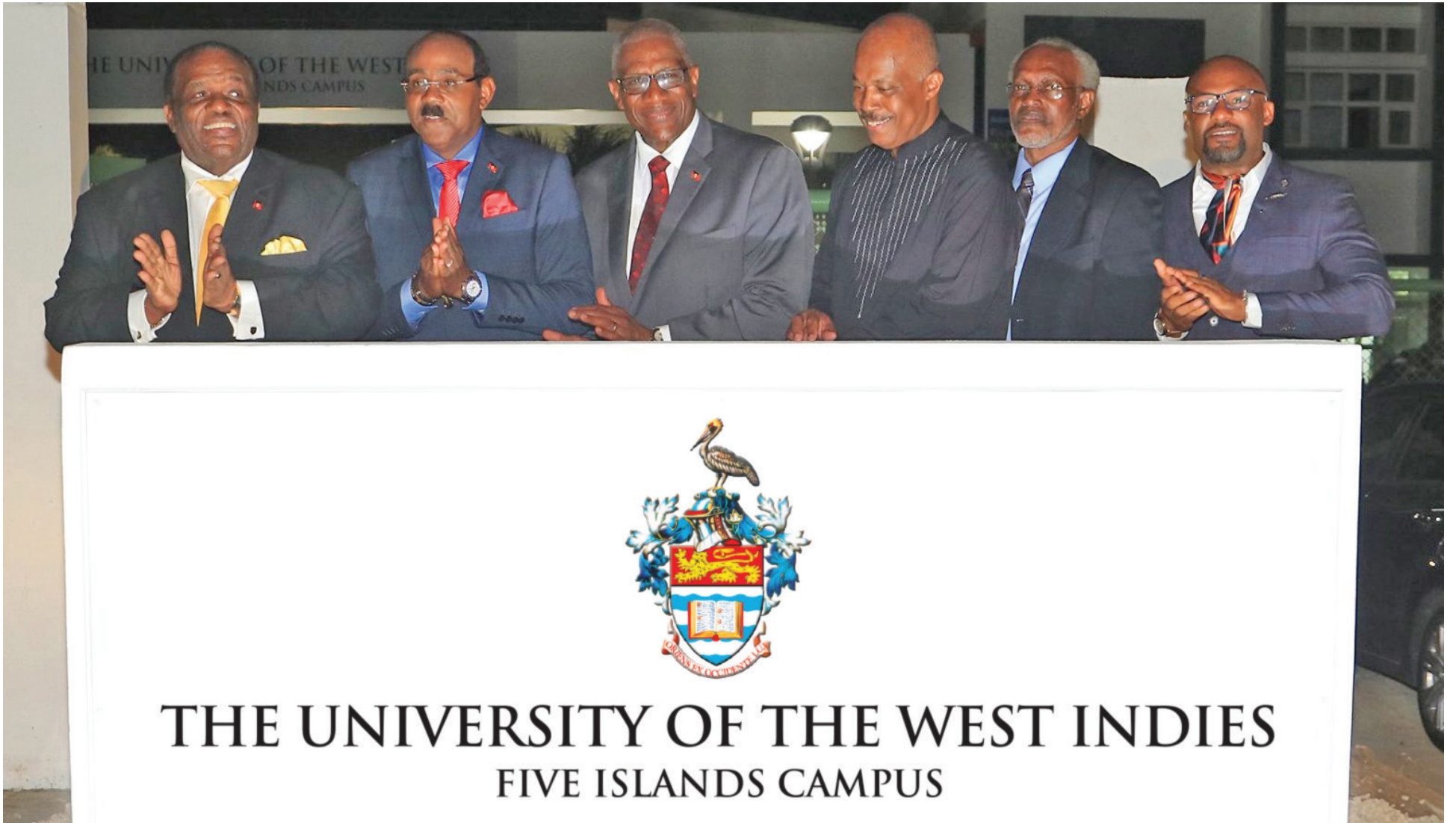
To deal with such a widespread issue, there needs to be an entire culture shift in how we treat our children, how we treat each other, and even how we treat ourselves. Our future may depend on it.

Held every two years, The UWI-Guardian Group Premium Open Lecture Series is an initiative of UWI’s Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) in partnership with the Guardian Group. The series hosts internationally renowned educators to present on learning and teaching in higher education. The UWI-Guardian Group Premium Teaching Awards was also established through the partnership.

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■ UWI FIVE ISLANDS CAMPUS LAUNCH



May 27, 2019

The University Finance and General Purposes Committee approved the establishment of Five Islands Campus as The UWI's 5th Campus at Five Islands in Antigua and Barbuda.

August 25, 2019

Five Islands Campus officially began operations and registering students for programmes.

September 1, 2019

Ecumenical Service of Thanksgiving at St. John's Cathedral, St. John's

September 3, 2019

Ceremonial Opening of The UWI Five Islands Campus

■ CAMPUS NEWS

Young leader Alliyah Jackson attends Hesselbein Student Summit

“Honestly, I don’t like to lead,” says 21-year-old Alliyah Jackson, a final-year communications studies student in the Faculty of Humanities and Education. “I like to be in the background. But sometimes you look around and realise nothing is being done and you have to be the one to take up the responsibility.”

It’s this conscientiousness, this willingness to lead for the collective good - not personal ambition - that makes Alliyah stand out. She stands out so much, in fact, that in July 2019 she was given the rare opportunity to join a select group of young people from across the globe to take part in the Hesselbein Student Leadership Summit. From July 20 to 23, Alliyah stayed at the University of Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania on scholarship for what the summit organisers call “an intensive four-day experience”.

“Delegates participate in interactive workshops, receive mentorship from government and business leaders, and take part in hands-on problem solving sessions,” a statement from the Hesselbein Global Academy for Student Leadership and Engagement states.

The academy, “aims to produce a cadre of experienced, ethical leaders equipped to address critical issues throughout the world.” They want “the student leaders of today (to) become the business, community, and government leaders of tomorrow.”

Alliyah calls the experience, “a defining moment for the rest of my life”, and recounts how shocked she was to be selected. “I didn’t think I would be accepted because they only approve 50 students.”

She was however encouraged by the support of Guild Administrative Office Manager Ms Amanda Best-Noel, who first brought the Hesselbein Summit to her attention.

“She was an outstanding student leader and she has phenomenal ideas,” says Best-Noel, who worked with



Alliyah Jackson at the Hesselbein Student Leadership Summit in Pittsburgh.

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Alliyah when the student was the Guild Publications Committee Chairperson in the 2018/2019 Student Guild Council. “She came up with the branding manual for the Guild. In addition, she ran her own business on the side.

Best-Noel says she wants to “change the landscape of student leadership on campus” and is presently working with Alliyah on a project called “UWI Mentors” towards that goal.

Alliyah, who comes from Arima, credits her church for the sense of personal and collective responsibility that drives her. “We have a strong youth leadership programme.”

The Hesselbein Summit has strengthened that drive even further. Her packed days began at 8am and ended close to 10pm every night. They included numerous presentations from mentors from academia, industry and even the military. One of the most rewarding activities of the trip for Alliyah was working with non-governmental organisations.

The students worked with the renowned NGO Rise Against Hunger, and carried out an assignment for the Pittsburgh-based refugee support NGO Hello Neighbor. They also found time for sightseeing, entertainment and making friendships that have lasted well after the summit’s completion.

Alliyah and the others were also able to have a video conference with Frances Hesselbein herself, “one of the most highly respected experts in the field of contemporary leadership development”, former CEO of the Girl Scouts of America and the winner of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honour in the US.

“She told us leadership is not a matter of how to do,” Alliyah said. “It is a matter of how to be.”

With her experiences at UWI and her inclination to improve society, this final year student clearly has some of that know-how.

World Cocoa Day 2019 brings international investors to T&T’s chocolatiers

Over 30 cocoa entrepreneurs from Trinidad and Tobago met with buyers from Canada, France, Japan, the UK and the US on October 4, 2019 at the World Cocoa and Chocolate Day (WCCD8) Expo 2019 and Inbound Trade Mission. Some 12 international buyers met with homegrown chocolatiers, and manufacturers and sellers of other cocoa-based products.

Hosted by The UWI Cocoa Research Centre (CRC) and held over two days at the Hyatt Regency Trinidad in Port of Spain, WCCD8 is an annual celebration of cocoa and chocolate. The event was created to “showcase the vast potential the industry holds for local and regional economic diversification,” says a statement from CRC.

“We had more than 50 exhibitors this year,” says CRC Director Professor Pathmanathan Umaharan. That included mainly chocolatiers but also exhibitors of soaps, cosmetics, cuisine and others. Over 3,000 people passed through the expo.”

Umaharan said the external buyers were very excited about the expo and at the time of this writing many of them were still in Trinidad on tours that include cocoa estates and chocolate factories.

“A major part of WCCD8 is to exhibit the chocolatiers that the CRC has trained” and help them find international opportunities, he said.

WCCD8 included business to business meetings, mini workshops and even live entertainment.

The CRC Director was also very appreciative of the support by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Trade and Industry Minister Paula Gopee-Scoon and Agriculture,



From left, CRC Director Professor Path Umaharan, Agriculture Minister Clarence Rambharat, Trade Minister Paula Gopee-Scoon and Cocoa Development Company Chairman Winston Rudder at WCCD8. PHOTO: ANEEL KARIM

Lands and Fisheries Minister Clarence Rambharat took part in WCCD8 over the two days.

2019 is the first year that WCCD8 was held at the Hyatt Regency Trinidad. In its first six years the expo took place at the JFK Auditorium before growing past its confines and moving to UWI’s Sport and Physical Education Centre (SPEC) in 2018.

This year’s expo also included a Chocolate Demo and Sampling with renowned French chef and chocolatier Régis Bouet, a Chocolate Flavours of the World cocoa tour and an Angostura Rum and Chocolate Pairing event.

“We really could not have achieved this without the support of our sponsors,” says Umaharan, citing



Campus Principal Professor Brian Copeland sampling a piece of chocolate alongside Agriculture Minister Clarence Rambharat at the Chocolate Demo and Sampling event.

funding from an International Development Fund-Multilateral Investment Fund (IDB-MIF) project, the Cocoa Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago, National Flour Mills, the Caribbean Industrial Research Institute, Export Import Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, the Agricultural Development Bank, and Memory Bank.

The CRC Director also praised his team: “They did an excellent job. Staff always pulls through. They are a well-oiled machine.”

Created by the International Cocoa Organisation and the Académie Française du Chocolat et de la Confiserie, World Cocoa and Chocolate Day is commemorated on the 1st of October.



Linton Arneaud

BY JOEL HENRY

Many of us have a family elder – perhaps an uncle or a grandparent – who knows trees. They can name them. They can give the lore surrounding them. They can tell you the home remedies of which they are ingredients. That knowledge is dying.

“When I ask people about trees, they know hardly anything,” says Linton Arneaud. “I cannot blame them because they were not exposed to that knowledge. But think about it. Think about your grandchildren. If we continue the way we are, they won’t know anything about trees.”

Arneaud however, knows a lot. An environmental biology PhD candidate and teaching assistant in the Department of Life Sciences, he is extremely passionate about plants – trees in particular.

“I guess it’s just a natural calling,” he shrugs.

Speaking to him is like being transported into a green realm where the society is made up of trees and plants and marshes. He’ll walk you over to the trees in your vicinity, trees you haven’t given a second thought, and explain their lineage (phylogeny) and the magic of their existence.

“I grew up in the country, Rio Claro,” Arneaud says. “As a child, I would be involved in all sorts of outdoor activities – fishing, camping and many other things. And all the trees and plants put questions in my head.”

He wanted to learn about the green world he inhabited. This led him to become a scientist. Since then he’s earned his degree in environmental and natural resource management (with minors in biology and marine biology). His PhD work is focused on the moriche palm, a wonder tree with many uses (including ecological) that is indigenous to Trinidad and South America.

But with that knowledge has come great concern for our natural environment and native trees.

“We have to understand that in the cycle of life, trees come before animals. Plants are simpler organisms, and

they photosynthesise, creating oxygen. This oxygen is what we need to survive. If you don’t take care of the trees, ‘too late, too late’ will be the cry and we will suffer the loss of their ecosystem services,” Arneaud says.

The moriche palm is a prime example. Used for everything from food colouring, to medicine, to wine and even sexual enhancement for women (“not scientifically proven” he says about this last one), in Trinidad it serves important ecological functions. The palm provides natural floodwater retention, replenishes aquifers, and purifies water. And it only grows (naturally) in six areas in Trinidad.

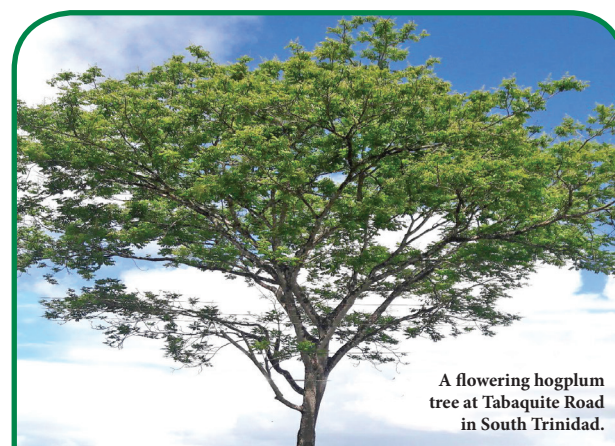
Local (not localised – many trees, such as the pink poui, silk cotton and water immortelle, that we think are indigenous are really well-adapted imports) trees are cheaper to maintain, more resistant to disease and have adapted to our unique environment for thousands upon thousands of years. Why are they at risk? The easiest answer is deforestation. But deforestation is not the only threat. Imported trees such as the acacia are also a danger.

“It’s an invasive plant from Australia,” says Arneaud. “We are planting the tree alongside buildings, highways and within commercial developments. It is going to reproduce. It is going to go into our forest edges, and it will dominate our species. And then we will have real problems. Our species will be displaced.”

Why would developers and planners use acacia? Because they don’t know the risk. And this brings us back to the beginning. We are losing the knowledge of our trees.

“In 1946, Dr John Stewart Beard and fellow botanists identified a total of 384 species of trees in Trinidad, by the late 90’s, only 130 tree species were known by naturalists (Quesnel & Farrell 2000). Today, this list has dwindled even further to well below 100 persons being able to identify native trees,” he says.

Arneaud is on a mission to teach the public about local trees and sensitise them to the risks they face. He



A flowering hogplum tree at Tabaquite Road in South Trinidad.

Linton Arneaud’s ‘Top Five’ List of Indigenous Trees of Trinidad and Tobago

(*based on density and distribution)

- 1. Hogplum**
(Anacardiaceae—*Spondias mombin*):
A large spreading tree (40m) that thrives within wet areas on the islands and is used for various medical conditions.
- 2. Cocorite Palm** (Arecoideae—*Attalea maripa*):
The most abundant palm species in Trinidad that grows in variable soil types and habitats at elevations between 50–700m.
- 3. Yellow Poui**
(Bignoniaceae—*Handroanthus serratifolius*):
This tree represents one of the largest (>40m) and strongest (hardwood) tropical forest trees in the world. Its exuberant yellow flowers can be spotted from miles.
- 4. Bios Flot**
(Bombacaceae—*Ochroma pyramidale*):
The wood of this tree is considered to be the lightest worldwide. It is a fast-growing light-demanding tree that appears in undisturbed areas throughout both islands. The fluffy cotton-like material that surrounds its small seeds is dispersed by wind, some of which ends up inside the homes of many Trinbagonians.
- 5. Bois Canon** (Urticaceae—*Cecropia peltata*):
This species is the only member of the *Urticaceae* family existing in Trinidad. It is most noticeable in areas that have sufficient light, for example, houses throughout the islands.

has written several articles (one published earlier this year in UWI Today https://sta.uwi.edu/uwiToday/archive/march_2019/article13.asp) and intends to do much more.

“Last year, I won a scholarship to study tropical biology at Florida International University. That added yet another layer to my love and passion for plants,” he smiles. “But it also showed me I need to get this information out.”

Arneaud is planning to specialise in grasses, as he sees the need for a grass specialist (agrostologist) in the country. He believes the ecological service grasses provide (soil stabilisation and protection) will be of great importance in the near future.

He adds, “we have to make sure that 100 years from now they don’t have a tree in a museum and say ‘this is what a tree looked like.’”

You can meet Linton Arneaud (and other experts in animals and microorganisms) at the 2019 Bioblitz event, which will take place at the Tabaquite Secondary School on November 2 and 3. **For more information please visit <https://www.facebook.com/TandTbioblitz/>**

UWI Calendar of Events

OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2019



One Day Left to Register! UWI SPEC International Half-Marathon October 20 The UWI SPEC

The 16th Annual UWI SPEC International Half-Marathon is almost here. This is your last chance to register online individually or as a relay team. There will be no registration on race day. Proceeds will support sport scholarships. On your marks, get set...

For more details, please visit: <https://sta.uwi.edu/spec/marathon/>.

Celebrate International Creole Month! October 31 UWI St Augustine

The Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics (DMLL), in conjunction with the Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA), hosts Mwa Kwéyòl Entenasyonnal – International Creole Month – in celebration of the 150th anniversary of John Jacob Thomas' The Theory and Practice of Creole Grammar. Look out for presentations, discussions, film screenings and more from 10am to 4pm at the Centre for Language Learning (CLL) Auditorium.

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



The UWI St Augustine 2019 Graduation Ceremonies October 24 to 26 • The UWI SPEC

Celebrate the Graduating Class of 2019 at this year's Graduation Ceremonies which take place as follows:

Thursday, October 24

- **10am** – Strictly for the Faculties of Science and Technology and Food and Agriculture. The honorary graduand will be Professor Harold Ramkissoon, who will receive a Doctor of Science (DSc).
- **4pm** – Strictly for the Faculties of Engineering and Law

Friday, October 25

- **10am** – Strictly for the Faculty of Social Sciences surnames A-L undergraduate graduands and all Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business (ALGSB) graduands.
- **4pm** – Strictly for the Faculty of Social Sciences surnames M-Z undergraduate graduands and all postgraduate graduands from the Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute for Gender and Development Studies, Institute of International Relations, and the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies. The honorary graduand will be Mr Ewart Williams, who will receive a Doctor of Laws (LLD).

Saturday, October 26

- **10am** – Strictly for Faculty of Humanities and Education. The honorary graduand will be Mr Pelham Goddard, who will receive a Doctor of Letters (DLitt).
- **4pm** – Strictly for the Faculty of Medical Sciences

For more information and updates on all of The UWI's 2019 Graduation Ceremonies, please visit <https://sta.uwi.edu/graduation/>.

Cash is King – Entrepreneurship Unit Workshop November 7 UWI St Augustine

The Entrepreneurship Unit of the Department of Management Studies in the Faculty of Social Sciences invites potential entrepreneurs and innovators to participate in its upcoming workshop, "Cash is King". This one-day workshop will be held from 9am to 3pm at the Institute of Critical Thinking. The workshop will focus on how to source and manage cash for your small business. The registration fee is \$200 and can be paid at the Bursary Cashier, Main Admin Building, account number 5CIE, or via Linx at the Department of Management Studies.

For more information, please visit the Campus Notices and Announcements page at <https://sta.uwi.edu/news/notices/> or email Hazel.Adiah@sta.uwi.edu.

The Art of Corporate and Diplomatic Communications November 11 to 14 UWI St Augustine

The Diplomatic Academy of the Caribbean (DAOC) hosts a four-day training module on "The Art of Corporate and Diplomatic Communications" with facilitator Ms Sharon Welch, Communications Consultant and Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University. These sessions will cover adapting to cross-cultural audiences; speaking with competence, credibility, and control; serving as a corporate or diplomatic representative; and more. Register for the training happening from 9am to 4pm at the DAOC. Registration costs US\$800. There will be special rates for staff and students.

For more information, please visit the DAOC page at <https://sta.uwi.edu/daoc/upcoming-modules> or email diplomaticacademy@sta.uwi.edu.

Ryan Recalls – Selwyn Ryan: His Memoirs Book Launch October 30 • UWI St Augustine

The Alma Jordan Library (AJL) hosts the book launch of Ryan Recalls – Selwyn Ryan: His Memoirs by Professor Emeritus Selwyn Ryan and celebrates the donation of his collection to the University of the West Indies. The collection contains manuscripts, correspondences and scrapbooks highlighting his career. Among the manuscripts are: The First Citizens Bank Story; Dr. Eric Williams: The Making of a Prime Minister; From Colonial to Republic: A History of Barclays Bank in TT from 1837-1981; and Conversations with Gerard Montano, former Cabinet Minister.

The launch takes place from 2pm at the School of Education Auditorium.

RSVP by calling, 662-2002 ext 82134
or email elsa.hamilton@sta.uwi.edu by October 21.

Addressing Student Mental Health and Wellness December 4 to 6 Johannesburg, South Africa

Higher Education is facing an increasing crisis in student mental health: one in four students are affected by depression and anxiety, student dropouts have trebled, and student suicide rates have reached record highs. South African company AlintaCorp hosts the Student Mental Health and Wellness Conference to address these issues and more. Find out how you can recognise concerning behaviours, increase your mental health literacy and more at the conference happening at the Protea Hotel Midrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. This conference is open to higher education professionals, health professionals, diversity and inclusion officers, school security, students and other interested persons.

To register, please visit: <https://www.alintacorp.com/>.

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TO HEAR FROM YOU**

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

