



**Building national capacity & human capital  
for national development**

UB Celebrates Sixteenth Commencement Exercises

# Building national capacity & human capital for national development

On January 26, 480 graduates received their diplomas at the Associate, Bachelor, Certificate and Diploma levels after successfully completing their course at the University of Belize Sixteenth Commencement Exercises at the University's Campus, Belmopan. Of the total, 330 were females and 150 males representing 68.75 and 31.25 per cent of the class.

The success of the graduates is a testament to the contribution of the University in national and local development and advancement of Belize through its education, research, and service roles. Graduates were trained in information technology, accounting, marketing, managerial, entrepreneurship, education methodology, health and social work to meet the needs of the country.

Receiving the Award of Academic Excellence in all Bachelor Degree Programs were Cheyenne Monique Usher who scored a 3.92 GPA with a Bachelors of Science in Accounting; and Noemi Zaiden, who scored a 3.92 GPA with a Bachelors of Arts in English Education.

The Award of Academic Excellence in all Associates Degree Program was presented to Adriana Estelita Gonzalez and Crystal Danielle Allen who both achieved the highest overall GPA score of 3.85 in Business Science. And, the Award of Academic Excellence in a Certificate/ Diploma Program was presented to Roceli Zoniah Cruz scoring the highest overall for Certificate/ Diploma with a GPA of 3.92 graduating with a Diploma in Education Methodology.

Guest Speaker, Dr. Kenrick R. Leslie, CBE, Executive Director of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Center (CCCCC) made a clarion call for graduates to become involved in finding solutions to the increasing problems climate change will exact on businesses, infrastructure and communities in Belize.

"Climate Change and its adverse effects threaten all our goals for development and social progress," said the Executive Director of the CARICOM regional agency, Dr. Leslie. "...it seems to threaten the very existence of the planet as we know it. On the other hand, it also presents us with a golden opportunity by tackling Climate Change head-on we can reduce or eliminate many of our current problems, including the threat of economic stagnation."

Dr. Leslie, one of the leading scientists that Belize has produced, explained to the Graduands that they are at a crossroad since they can choose the easy path of doing nothing and follow the business as usual approach, or they can seek ways of



Guest Speaker, Dr. Kenrick Leslie

using their training and newly acquired knowledge in supporting and enhancing sustainable development through cooperation and partnership with their community and the country.

The Head of the regional agency also remarked that the University of Belize must play two critical roles in the adaptation process. The first is to ensure that it provides the country with the academic and technical leadership needed to address Climate Change-related issues, which can be done through innovative, interdisciplinary approaches in its research and academic programmes. The second role of the University is in supporting the implementation of the Regional Framework for Achieving Development Resilient to Climate Change.

The President of the University of Belize, Dr. Cary Fraser congratulated the graduates for their dedication, commitment and achievement, and urged them to use their training and knowledge as agents of change to transform Belize. He also posed the question — how we should educate students to deal with scientific change that has continued to accelerate around the world? The President emphasized the importance of developing competence in science and foreign languages at the University level.

The Faculty with the highest number of graduates was the Faculty of Education and Arts (FEA) with a total of 246, followed by the Faculty of Management & Social Sciences (FMSS) totalling 138, the Faculty of Science and Technology (FST) 77, and the Faculty of Nursing, Allied Health & Social Work (FNAHSW) with a total of 19.

***Also at the event, 22 students from the Banana Belt communities received Certificate in Primary Education courtesy of a project primarily funded by the European Union. The EU has been a key partner in contributing to the goals of the educational sector in Belize.***

Invited guests at the event included His Excellency the Governor-General, Sir Colville Young, officials of the Diplomatic Corps, public and private sector officials, Heads of regional and international agencies, and representatives from a cross-section of the wider society.



H.E. Governor-General Sir Colville Young, and UB President Dr. Cary Fraser along with three of the overall achievers





*Congratulations to*



*to the Graduates!*

# Thank You from

# Past Presidents

This letter is to officially say goodbye as a permanent member of the staff of the University of Belize; to extend my appreciation to you and members of the Board for your support over the past two years, and to thank all those members of the UB family who I have served and with whom I have worked and at times played, since January of 2003.



During my tenure as President, I had the privilege, in the face of the many challenges we encountered and the sometimes painful lessons learned from mistakes, to work with some of the brightest minds in academia and with many dedicated professionals across the spectrum of this institution, from maintenance to management. A visit to the University's campuses in Belmopan, Belize City, Central Farm and Toledo and our Marine Institutes at Calabash and Hunting Cayes, or a survey of the many UB graduates serving in myriad fields of endeavor nationally and internationally, will provide testament to the fact that, although there is much to be done, there has been significant progress and contributions made by this University over the twelve-years of its existence, contributions and achievements attained through the hard work of all those who served.

For me it was an honour when I was asked, in 2010, to again serve as President in an interim capacity, during the search for a new President. The time has come for me to move on and I do so with a mixture of emotions and a bittersweet feeling of nostalgia and fondness for the UB Family, a term I had coined in my first Christmas Message to the Community in 2003; a Family that became my own, as its President, for four and a half years of its infant stages of growth.

I have used this past year, while serving members of faculty, staff and some students, to close off my ten-year history with the University, to say my goodbyes and to prepare for the next chapter of my life, a life in which there have been many chapters, at home and abroad. I plan to continue to support the development of this University wherever possible and to continue my volunteer work in counseling with children and adults. Last, but by no means least, I will spend time on one of my loves which I have had to put on hold because of the demands of my professional and career pursuits. That love is writing, and I am truly happy that I am able to start off this new

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

My service at the University of Belize (UB) has been brought to an end with the closing of UB for the Christmas vacations on 21 December 2012.



I wish to thank each and every one of you for the support, advice, encouragement and friendships through my tenure in higher education in Belize for the past 29 years. May I request your continuous support to the University of Belize as Belize's national university aims to provide high quality, relevant and sustainable higher education for Belizeans and for the region.

As of 21 December 2012 you may contact me via e-mail at [amhdirector@yahoo.com](mailto:amhdirector@yahoo.com)

May God continue to bless and keep you and yours as you serve Him in your own capacity for the good of our institutions.

Sincerely,

*Angel Cal*

chapter of my life with the publication of two long overdue books 'Moments in Time Volume 1 - A Collection of Poems, Short Stories and a Play, and Moments in Time Volume 2 A Collection of Poems, Short Stories & a Play for Children of Middle and Upper Divisions of Primary Schools.

I have enjoyed the challenge of leading the University of Belize for five and a half years of its twelve year history and the pleasure of working as a colleague and friend in my other assignments as counselor/psychologist for students, faculty and staff for over four years. Serving you has been an honour and I will always remain ready to be helpful to this national institution in any way I can.

To all of you, goodbye and God bless.

Sincerely,

*Corinth Morter-Lewis PhD, R.Psych.*

# Belize, Central America and the Caribbean: Past, Present and Future



Professor Victor Bulmer-Thomas from the Institute of the Americas, University College London delivered in a Distinguished Lecture on January 16 at the University of Belize. He said Belize belongs to three distinct regions; the Caribbean, Central America, and Mexico which he indicated should also be considered a region. The visiting Professor who has been Director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs since April 2001 said Belize has not succeeded in closely integrating with any of the three regions, and that the inertia may be attributed to the long standing traditional preferences in trade between Belize and Europe and North America.

Speaking to students, senior academic leaders and officials of the Diplomatic Corps, regional and international agencies, Professor Bulmer-Thomas made reference of the Treaty of Paris that was signed 250 years ago in 1763. This is the first Treaty he said, that gave the Settlement of Belize legal recognition and thus without the Treaty of Paris there would be no Belize today. In 1779, settlers and their slaves were marched to Merida in 1779 but their departure was short-lived when in the 1780s they were able to return to Belize because of the signing of a new Treaty which had confirmed the legal recognition under the old Treaty of 1763.

*"For a period of 30 years (1820-1850) Central America was the main trade partner and the main destination of Belize's exports."*



Belize's crucial trade link with its neighbours disappeared and according to Professor Bulmer-Thomas, chicle, which was shipped mainly to US (from Belize, from the logging camps established by Belizean settlers in Mexico and Guatemala) experienced a crisis in 1920s. It severely damaged the re-export trade, while at the same time tensions between Britain and Guatemala over Belize began to worsen resulting in Guatemala revoking in 1939 the 1859 Border Treaty and closing the border in 1948. All legal trade from Belize with Central America was cut.

In reference to the Caribbean as the third region, the Professor pointed out that Belize exported some products via Jamaica to the UK and vice versa and even though Belize had become a Colony in 1862, even before it had become a Settlement, there was always a weak link with Caribbean. Despite its status as a British colony, Belize developed few links with the West Indian colonies and the wider Caribbean.

*"The decision to join CARICOM was in part economic but more political."*

The full text of Professor Bulmer-Thomas can be accessed at [www.ub.edu.bz](http://www.ub.edu.bz)

# Top Overall Achievers



Top Achievers

