It would have been a particularly memorable ceremony for Professor Teelucksingh—this was his final official appearance as Public Orator—as he witnessed his son’s graduation as well as the conferral of an honorary doctorate (DSc) on Dr Theodisius Poon-King, one of his mentors. All part of The UWI Family.

This special issue focuses on graduation ceremonies at the St Augustine campus from October 24-26.

ALL GRADUATION PHOTOS: BENEDICT CLIFORD
FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Much To Take Pride In

As the year winds down, we have been celebrating achievements and recognising those who have excelled. At times like these you realize that amidst the routine, there are marvellous things being done all around you, and it is a refreshing reminder of what distinguishes a great university.

In October, the Vice-Chancellor presented six awards for excellence to staff from our regional UWI at the new Centre for Teaching and Learning on the St Augustine campus. We were thrilled that five of these awards went to staff and research centres from this campus and to embellish a momentous evening, our new Teaching and Learning Centre was used for the first time. Our campus has also just completed graduation exercises for the 2012-2013 academic year with a total of 4,092 graduates, of whom 223 graduated with First Class Honours, 1,333 were awarded higher degrees; and 21 with distinction. We also recognised six outstanding people with honorary doctoral degrees. We now have 18,473 students enrolled and combined with staff, our total UWI complement is just over 22,000. It is often difficult for people to imagine just how much planning and care goes into managing such a large enterprise, and staff members at UWI are exceptional at keeping things running.

On November 15, we held a Long Service Awards Ceremony to demonstrate our appreciation to those who have been pillars of our institution, those staff members amongst us who have contributed to the development of our campus for over 25 years. On this occasion, 249 members of staff were recognized for their dedicated service in the long process of building and strengthening our institution. I offer my personal thanks and congratulations to all of them for their contribution and for being mentors, advisors, surrogate parents and friends to many on our campus.

We must continue to work together creatively and constructively, and be willing to go beyond the call of duty for the greater good of our students, staff and institution.

To all who have contributed over the years to advancing the mission of The UWI, I say a heartfelt thank you. You have been an essential part of our journey.

Clement K. Sankat
Pro Vice Chancellor & Principal

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Doing What I Love

Mangroo Sookraj has worked with The UWI for 45 years, making him the longest serving of the 249 employees who were recognized and celebrated on November 15 for 25 years and more of service.

For five years, from the time he was just about 15, Sookraj had worked privately for the manager at UWI’s Works Department, and when he retired he got him a position as a “power-mower operator” at The UWI.

“I worked for $18 a week as a yard boy for Mr Cook,” he says, and when he got the job at UWI, it was to maintain the grounds as part of a steady group of staff whose job it was to handle all aspects, including clearing garbage. Now, he says, most of the tasks are separated and contracted out.

It is one of the many changes he has seen in those decades he spent loyally giving his gardening skills to the famous grounds of the St Augustine campus, where everyone knows him as ‘Bal.’

“I enjoyed myself,” he says. “I never miss a day work. I get up in the morning and I come to work. Me and all the staff get along, I enjoy myself.”

He marked his 65th birthday in September and now that he is on pre-retirement leave, Sookraj says he is taking it easier, but basically fills his days with the same kinds of activities that dominated his working life.

“I get up as normal at 4 o’clock every morning. I take a little walk. I cut my lawn. I take care of the flowers,” he says; and he spends time with his family. He lives with his wife and his brother is right next door.

“We live very happy,” he says. This Christmas, he is already planning a lime for the entire family to come over and have some food and share a few drinks.

He seems contented… as he puts it, he lives peacefully and happily. It has always been his way.

“Long time things was different too,” he says, “but still, I am the same Mangroo Sookraj.”

Mangroo Sookraj received his award for 45 years of service at a function held at the St Augustine Campus on November 15. Here, he poses with his wife, Indra, before the ceremony began. The UWI congratulates all our long-serving colleagues on their achievements and wishes them well.

Photo: Aneel Karim
When the Geography Department at The UWI was established in August 2012, it created an opportunity for more specific campaigns pertaining to the field. Geography Awareness Week is celebrated every third week of November, and the Department organized a series of events aimed at raising public awareness. There were displays of posters, specimens, artifacts; film shows, games, and a field trip to the Gasparee Caves to close the week on November 23.

The Department is keen to build awareness of the role of Geography and its analytic role in major societal issues. Where do we put our garbage? Where do we grow food under a sustainable development plan? Where do we obtain clean water? Where do immigrants locate and what are the neighbourhood effects? Where is transitional housing for street-dwellers optimally located? Where do we intensify our urban growth to avoid sprawl and promote food security? Where are the effects of climate change most evident?

It would surprise many that these are some of the wide variety of issues that geographers can help with; so, why not consider that when choosing a career?
A safe and reliable blood supply donated unconditionally and anonymously and used on a basis of clinical need would address many of the country’s medical needs. This is the view of Dr. Kenneth Charles, Senior Lecturer in Haematology at The UWI St Augustine. Through The University of the West Indies Blood Donor Foundation (UWIBDF), which was formally launched on October 22, Charles hopes that regular voluntary blood donation by healthy members of the national and regional community is established.

Speaking at the launch at the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex, Professor Samuel Ramsewak, Dean of the Faculty of Medical Sciences, saluted this initiative, which he says aims to “do the right thing for the right people at the right time.” He encouraged the involvement of the student body in raising awareness, which is seen as the missing component in previous attempts to achieve 100% voluntary blood donation in Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr. Bernadette Theodore-Gaandi, Caribbean Program Coordinator, the Pan American Health Organization, Office of Caribbean Program Coordination (PAHO/OCPC), delivered greetings and commendation from PAHO and the World Health Organization (WHO). She quoted data for the unequal distribution of safe, available blood between developed countries which collect the most blood due to voluntary blood donation, and developing countries which have most of the world’s population but collect least blood due to a paucity of voluntary blood donation.

Kasturi Harricharan, who suffers from thalassaemia major, an inherited blood disorder, also shared the challenges faced by her family and herself in finding blood every month.

The launch featured the performance of “Save a life,” written and performed by medical student, Erron Ramdass and accompanied by classmate, Rexanne Bobb. Kasturi Harricharan, who suffers from thalassaemia major, an inherited blood disorder, also shared the challenges faced by her family and herself in finding blood every month.

Dr. Charles, who is Founding Chairman of the UWIBDF, noted that a safe and reliable blood supply could improve the lives of patients who require repeated blood transfusions to stay alive and those, including foreign visitors, who have no relatives to donate blood on their behalf. He related the story of a UWI student who was involved in a motor vehicular accident and for whom needed blood was not readily available. He explained how donating blood only when needed by specified persons or for the right to reclaim it for named beneficiaries, could lead to blood shortages, unavailability and inequality, especially when access to donation is not equal. He also noted that there were dozens of children like Kasturi nationally who were in continuous need and could not keep pace with any requirement to provide blood donors.

He postulated that the reason for the disparity in blood donation between developed and developing countries could be that the seed of voluntary blood donation was first planted ninety years ago then fertilized by the awareness of need that came with the World Wars. This seed, he promised has now been planted as the UWIBDF and awareness will be raised through its activities.

For further information on the UWIBDF and to learn how to become a donor, please log onto http://uwiblood.com/
Notes on Caribbean Feminist Engagement

BY ALISSA TROTZ

Professor Alissa Trotz is Associate Professor in Women and Gender Studies and Director of the Undergraduate Caribbean Studies Program at New College University of Toronto. She gave the feature address at the 20th anniversary conference on Gender Transformations in the Caribbean held by the Institute for Gender and Development Studies from November 6-8, 2013. This is an excerpt.

It is an incredible honour to have been invited to share this twentieth birthday of the Institute for Gender and Development Studies. I would like to thank the faculty, staff and students for their amazing warmth and hospitality. Let me take this opportunity to also recognize Professor Barbara Bailey, whose commitment to gender equality is manifested not just in her contribution as Regional Coordinator of the IGDS, but in the work she has accomplished nationally, regionally and internationally. In particular, Professor Bailey’s commitment to education and the foundational texts in Caribbean Gender Studies that she has co-authored/co-edited are an amazing legacy for generations of scholars to come.

We know that the IGDS was a dimension of women’s and feminist activism in the Caribbean, from WAND to CAFRA, from Sistren to NUDe. We had taken our struggle to the academy, making these institutional spaces the site of our demands for recognition. Today the IGDS boasts a regional programme with a superb publication record, training undergraduate and graduate students, initiating collaborations with academic partners and communities. It extends itself to wider communities, whether it is the open access feminist journal at St Augustine, the work at Mona with Haitian colleagues after the earthquake to develop a certificate programme in Gender Studies, or the Summer Institute in Gender Studies at Cave Hill which brings together university students, farmers, civil servants, community activists and police officers from across the region.

But I do not want to run the risk of daring to name a tradition, happily an impossible task, for it is immense, non-linear and incredibly diverse. Instead I hope that the richness of the well from which I draw and the intellectual debt we owe to so many of you here today becomes evident in my reflections.

The establishment of the IGDS offered visibility at a moment in which free market fundamentalism was the new mantra, with its well-documented and devastating consequences for women. The collapse of the Berlin Wall inaugurated end of history narratives, although in the Caribbean our end of history moment came with the implosion of the Grenada Revolution just thirty years ago last month. When a doctor gives you medicine and the reaction is not the desired one, you get a new prescription. Yet three decades later we continue to take the same bitter pill of structural adjustment.

and carefully calculated numbers of beneficiaries will increase women’s political participation, we can almost taste the backlash. Three weeks ago, a Government Minister in Barbados, responding to criticism by the female opposition leader, stated, “We’re now only left to see her strip naked and run down Broad Street in her attempt to get attention.” In Belize, a senior male parliamentarian unleashed a verbal assault on the only female parliamentarian that included references to male genitals and suggestions that she was “asking for it.” At this year’s Gender Institute in Barbados, students spoke of a calypso on the topic of women sacking men, the chorus of which begins, “Women come out and run down Broad Street in her attempt to get attention.”

This work is being done in a climate of public cutbacks, creating competition for scarce resources on a turf that is seeing NGOs playing an increasingly important role. While many NGOs are doing extremely valuable work, we know too that we have been forced to ask difficult questions about the consequences of an ever growing reliance on donor funding, requiring us to constantly navigate the script that others would write for us. The identification of gender as a ‘priority area’ brings a certain visibility, but an approach that thinks of projects with finite ends, definite boundaries and carefully calculated numbers of beneficiaries will never square with the complicated, messy trajectories of movement building.

“I am not sure that the rest of the Caribbean is so completely different from the DR in the degrading treatment that Haitians and Haitian-descendants receive. We are, after all, the very same CARICOM family that requires Haitians to have visas in hand before they set foot in many other member states, and this despite the fact that Haiti has been a full member of the Caribbean Community since 2002.”

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A UNIVERSITY PARTNERING FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

I am sure you have heard on several occasions how the University has grown in numbers and programmes and how it has continued to dedicate itself to the areas that contribute to Caribbean human development. There are three essential aspects of that development—education, health and economic growth and we can show easily how our teaching and research programmes can contribute to all three. But the knowledge that we do so is not enough and in our current Strategic Plan, there is specific focus on marketing and communication, which are not about public relations, important though that is, but also about widely disseminating information about some of the University’s products. We know that UWI is not the sole academic offering in the Caribbean. Naturally we think it is the best, but we must show potential students that we are the best.

One of our strengths is research and all Campuses now have research days to showcase their ongoing research and particularly that which is relevant to Caribbean problems. An enhanced example of that was very clearly in evidence at the Research Expo held here a few weeks ago. I hope many of you took the opportunity to visit it as the Campus collaborated with the National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago to mount what was really a historic event; for it was a truly impressive display of the wide array of activities that can be harnessed to improve human development in all its dimensions. The project demonstrations, the literature available, the seminars and the workshops represented a major effort by this Campus to demonstrate the wide and varied activities that take place in addition to the teaching and which in fact enhance the quality of the teaching. It was also encouraging to see so many of the projects that were the result of the collaboration with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago through the UWI Government of Trinidad and Tobago Research and Development Impact Fund. One of the particularly impressive aspects was the involvement of children—getting them to become familiar with some basic aspects of science and technology. I must thank the National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago for its steadfast and stalwart support.

Clearly there is a wide range of research being carried out and I note the vibrancy of the research in the social sciences. Although we stress the need for science and technology, there can be no even societal development without attention to the social sciences. I was pleased to note that in addition to the generous support from the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, the Campus attracted $35 million for new externally funded projects. We are indeed grateful to these agencies for their support.

The deep involvement in science and technology here is no accident and indeed springs from the origins of the institution. When this campus was established it was the unique locus for engineering and agriculture, both of which have a strong science and technology base. The forerunner of this campus was the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture which, as its first Principal, Dr. Watts declared, would not fulfill its mandate unless “It can make discoveries and advances in scientific knowledge.” It was heavily oriented to producing the science and technology appropriate for what was considered tropical agriculture.

There is repeated insistence in the Caribbean on the importance of science and technology for small societies like ours and there are numerous places in which there is activity in this area outside the universities, but in which we play a part. For example, we are involved with the European/ CARICOM cooperation project EUCARINET which was funded for four years with a budget of Euro 1.5 million to promote and support multi-stakeholder, bi-regional policy dialogue on science and technology between the EU, Associated States and the Caribbean. There is a Caribbean Science and Technology Council, which has piloted a Caribbean policy on science and technology. But in spite of these and several other initiatives there is the feeling that our governments do not devote enough of their attention or budgets to research and development which I link with science and technology. In at least the larger countries there are ministries of science and technology.

A natural corollary would be a policy on science and technology and I understand one is being crafted with the conviction that countries like this must bank its future prosperity on innovation that comes from science and technology. I trust that the policy considers the possible sources of venture capital which is crucial for taking forward innovation which is often stymied in the Caribbean by lack of venture capital. This is one area that merits serious discussion between the University and the private sector which has to be the source of that capital.

It is difficult to estimate the budget dedicated to research and development as it can be found in many ministries, but in an analysis done six years ago one of our staff made the following statement.

“Caribbean countries invest little in research and development (R&D). Throughout the region R&D expenditures are estimated to be an average of 0.13% of GDP. This level of investment is considered extremely low by developing countries standards. Indeed, the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology recommends that Caribbean governments should spend at least 3% on active R&D programmes which is the median between that of Small Island Developing States and developed countries”.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago spends less than 0.1% of its GDP on science, technology and innovation.

One of the aspects of science and technology development which always draws attention and was hotly debated at the last meeting of the CARICOM heads of Government is information and communication technology which is promoted as being critical for Caribbean connectivity and one of the facilitators of our development. This goes beyond the availability of cell phones although, parenthetically, there is impressive penetration of cellular
phases of diffusion of technology. What I am urging you graduands and its consequences. Another is the development and with which we come to terms with the world’s vertiginous survival mode will in great measure depend on the speed is wedded will survive. Of course we will survive, but the whether our region and the regionalism to which UWI Faculty of Law in almost idyllic surroundings. This campus has an enrolment of 18,473 students which come from 16 of the CARICOM countries and in addition there are 41 other nationalities represented here. 

During the course of the year there were several new academic programmes introduced at the undergraduate as well as the postgraduate level. We have the first cohort of students graduating in Law and in Optometry. I wish to draw your attention to an example of regional cooperation in education. We have the first graduates from the joint on-line MSc/Diploma Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development in the Caribbean. This is a joint programme The University of the West Indies has launched in association with the Universities of Belize and Guyana and the Antón de Kom University in Suriname. I believe that this is but the first of such ventures and I must congratulate the Principal on the initiative.

The building programme has been impressive. The new teaching and learning complex has made an enormous difference with the provision of new teaching space as well as needed laboratories. There has been a new Student Study and Recreation Facility at Mount Hope. I am pleased to tell you that the development at Penal-Debe, which will cost about $600 million, is proceeding apace and it should be ready for occupancy in one year when it will house the new Faculty of Law in almost idyllic surroundings.

I know that the graduating class will be told that they are entering a difficult world and in this current challenging period, it is not unusual to hear the Cassandras querying whether our region and the regionalism to which UWI is wedded will survive. Of course we will survive, but the nature of that survival and the speed with which we escape the survival mode will in great measure depend on the speed with which we come to terms with the world’s vertiginous change. One of these is the increasing interconnectedness and its consequences. Another is the development and diffusion of technology. What I am urging you graduands and those whom you influence and will influence, is that while avoiding the techno-futurism and techno-Utopianism of the dreamers, you insist that research and development, science and technology represent for us one of the mechanisms by which we can manage that change and blunt the effects of size and limitations of physical resources and foster the regional spirit. Smallness of size is not an insuperable barrier to the development of new knowledge or the development of new tools for applying existing knowledge.

I wish you well and ask of you that you be good alumni. One aspect of being good alumni is guarding the regionality of The University of the West Indies. It is not uncommon to hear of the University as being one of the last bastions of the regionalism which was so much a part of the ideals of persons like you in the decades of the fifties and sixties. There was a dream of a single West Indian nation and a single space of our own. There are many who recall the University of those days, when it was an exclusively residential institution, and recall the bonds of friendship formed between the young from the different Caribbean countries. But those days are gone and it is no use hankering after them. We have to look for other structures to foster that regional spirit. But even 40 years ago when CARICOM was born here in Chaguaramas there was the enthusiasm for regionalism. It was very apparent again in 1989 at the signing of the Grand Anse Declaration which recognized the role of the University in providing the human resources need for integration and made the commitment that UWI would remain a regional institution indefinitely.

There have been doubts about the survival of regionalism and many prescriptions for strengthening the integration process. But when I consider our past and the fact that we have remained in a regional configuration with all its warts and pimplies, I have to remember that in the last 40 years we have the fissiparous tendencies in regional groupings come to the fore in Yugoslavia and in Czechoslovakia. Even now we see Scotland making moves for separation from England. So I am reminded of the preamble to the US constitution which says “we the people in order to form a new perfect Union” and think that here in CARICOM we are still in the stage of trying to perfect our union in our own ways. There are many who see the negatives and not the steps being taken to perfect the union. There are many who are impatient at the slowness of implementation without considering the realities of economics or politics.

In counterpoint I can cite numerous examples of common action which stem from the union, imperfect though it is. But I am comforted when in the recent past I have heard many students, especially our valedictorians, speak passionately about their West Indianess and how they owe it to the University. I am comforted by the conviction of our Vice-Chancellor and the Principals of the four campuses that the Grand Anse Declaration must stand. So I leave you this charge. Do your bit to perfect the union, always conscious that it is a work in progress and none of us may ever see it in its final form, but we can have the vision of what the Promised Land will be and the resolve to get there.

I also charge you as good alumni to begin the culture of giving back to the University. It does not matter how much; the important thing is that you give. Great universities measure the support of their alumni by the numbers who give and less by the quantum of the gifts, although that is important as well. Take an active part in your alumni events and insist on keeping abreast of developments in your university. We will do our part to make the information available to you.

I wish to thank your loved ones here—your significant others—for their support during your time with us. I hope you are pleased with the end result and think that it was all worth it.

This is the address given by Chancellor of The University of the West Indies, Sir George A.O. Alleyne, at the graduation ceremonies held at the St Augustine campus October 24-26, 2013. It was slightly edited for length.
HONORARY GRADUATE
DR ELISHA TIKASINGH

It was all Teamwork

“Always commit yourself to doing the best of your ability. Really, that is all you can do. In keeping with the highest tradition of your profession is your own integrity. They go together. To do this you must be honest with yourself. Don’t let other people whittle it away from you. It is your passport. Maintain it and defend it with all your might. As General Douglas McArthur once said “it is the age-old struggle—the roar of the crowd on one side and the voice of your conscience on the other.” I hope you will always listen to the voice of your conscience.”

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VALEDICTORIAN
WAINELLA ISAACS

Stand for Something

“I urge you to resolve to act on logic while simultaneously searching for passion. Note however, lack of passion is no excuse for inaction! Seek out innovative ways to share what you have learnt. Be willing to try different things. Network with others for further personal and professional development. You have a brain that works and a powerful voice to share your thoughts. We must never underestimate the ability of one person to make a difference. At the same moment, we must recognize that we do not operate in a vacuum, and it is our collective efforts which will make the greatest impacts on the global landscape.”

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VALEDICTORIAN
GRACE BHAGWANDEEN

Ordinary People Make A Difference

“Today we are celebrating all of our relentless pursuits coming to fruition. But I ask you to remember this, that a treasure chest of potential has been placed inside of you to affect this world; in tremendous ways that you cannot even begin to imagine. Always be mindful that the certificate in your hand is just a symbol of who you were born to be, the real you is inside. This degree that we walk out of these doors with today cannot do anything, except sit in a beautiful frame in our office; you are the change that the world is waiting for.”

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HONORARY GRADUATE
IAN RANDLE

Rescue the Regional Project

“While the devolution of administration to the national campuses is understandable and in many respects inevitable, and is, on balance a positive development, one can't help having the feeling that in responding to these everyday demands of survival and viability we have been too willing to give up the ideal of what UWI was and could be, in building a Caribbean nation with greater cross-fertilization of faculty, students and programmes across all its campuses. I say this because any intelligent observer will notice a clear correlation between the decline of regionalism and the decentralization of the governance structures of The UWI and the growth of the national campuses.”

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HONORARY GRADUATE
DR LAKSHMI PERSAUD

Live the Considered Life

“We are fortunate that part of our inheritance is the English language, the nearest thing to a world language. However with a West Indian flavour and colour, we will have a rich West Indian English in much the same way as there is an Australian English, a Canadian, American, an Indian, a London English and many more variations in shape and tone. … West Indian English should continue to be held on a strong foundation of grammar and syntax and should have no rule-making authority; nevertheless, its guardian could be our University through its linguistic study and research; for nothing stands still, over time we either improve or deteriorate.”

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VALEDICTORIAN
MATRECIA ALLEYNE

Dream Big Dreams

“Be fuelled by your past failures, whatever they may be, ECON 1005 - Intro to Stats perhaps or English for Academic Purposes, a missed opportunity or a failure that is in no way related to academics. Nobody said the race towards your dreams was going to be easy. But, like Jehue sometimes you just need to be prepared to physically throw yourself over the finish line to take home the gold. Most importantly, you need to believe, for yourself and all the other people who believe in you. And when your imaginings and reality finally connect, remember to say thank you.”

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HONORARY GRADUATE
BISHOP CLIVE ABDULAH

Expect More of Yourself

“You belong to a large community which expects you to bring lustre to its already noble record of service. The gains must not be lost. Expect more of yourself, and by all means have dreams! Dreams that will make the impossible become possible. For, far too often we fall into the excuse mode which successfully creates the largest sinkhole for progress, and already there are far too many victims therein. Indeed, making excuses in our Caribbean society has become endemic, and therefore a disease. I urge you therefore do not take that route; it leads only to disaster as Mordecai warned Esther.”

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VALEDICTORIAN
SHENELLE RAMJEWAN

The Joy is in the Journey

“There are so many people in our country who are underprivileged. There are people who are unable to gain access to basic needs which we take for granted: there are people homeless, people who go to bed hungry, people who cannot afford clothes and children unable to attain an education. We can be the ones to make a difference and fix these problems. Furthermore, with the education we have attained we are now able to provide services to society, so let us extend it to those in need. What we may see as a small act of kindness can be a huge relief to its beneficiaries.”

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HONORARY GRADUATE  
MARINA SALANDY-BROWN  

**Humanity is in the Arts**  

“We recognize that we have a wealth of talent and we have begun to value the arts and humanities more for what they can, and do, contribute to society because we know that a nation’s culture is an expression of what and who we are and that we cannot just ignore it because it influences us all. But as a people do we fully appreciate the pivotal role the arts play in our national development? There is a lot of work still to do to develop our cultural talent. We can help that process along by teaching and training arts administrators to run arts organizations properly…”

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VALEDICTORIAN  
SAMANTHA JACKSON  

**Social Agents of Change**  

“So, now that you have graduated, don’t be afraid to take part in society. Don’t be indifferent about reckless or drunk driving—in our time here alone, we have lost too many students to these practices. Don’t turn a blind eye to littering, bullying in its different forms and general lawbreaking. Don’t be afraid to hold people, including yourself, accountable for things they promise to do and things they should be doing. When someone says, ‘Vote for me and I will set you free,’ use those critical thinking skills FHE gave you and ask, ‘How?’ Evaluate their response and refuse to be the typical person who only remembers what they said for two weeks.”

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HONORARY GRADUATE
DR THEODOSIUS POON-KING

A Life in Medicine

“How can you become a good doctor? Medicine is an art based on the medical sciences. To become a good doctor you must practise medicine with your head, your heart and your hands. Your main concern must always be the sick patient. You must have a scientific knowledge of medicine, technical skill in clinical examination and therapeutic procedures, and experience of sick patients whom you must treat with compassionate care. As doctors, we must be well trained in scientific medicine, to think in its terms and to command its technology, but we must also think equally well about the sick patient and his disease.”

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VALEDICTORIAN
CHERISSE RATIRAM

Always See the Patient

“It is our passion that transforms the medical sciences into an art and we have been given brushes to paint the world with our knowledge and compassion. So paint. And as you paint, perfect your discipline. Remember that medicine is first and foremost a service to which you have been called, so approach it with humility. And hold fast to the words that were repeated to us time and time again: Always see the patient, and never the case. Let the world be your library and the patients your text books. Love what you do, or it will drive you crazy.”

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THE MEDIA AND ALL OF
OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS
### OPEN/INTERNATIONAL (MALE)

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**UNIVERSITY STUDENT**
1st SHIRWIN BABOOLAL
2nd LYNNDON BACCHUS
3rd WAYNE THOMAS

**UWI STUDENT**
1st SHIRWIN BABOOLAL
2nd LYNNDON BACCHUS
3rd WAYNE THOMAS

**UWI STAFF**
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2nd RUSSELL THOMAS
3rd DONOVAN WILLIAMS

**UWI ST. AUGUSTINE ALUMNI**
1st LOUIS BARRAWAY
2nd WINSTON STEWART
3rd EARL DITLLEY

**FIRST CITIZENS STAFF**
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2nd JOHN DONALDSON
3rd JOSEPH LOUIS

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2nd KADE SOBER
3rd ELVIS TURNER

**AGES 15-19**
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2nd AIXEM MARSHALL
3rd JEAN JOSEPH

**AGES 20-29**
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2nd CHRISTOPHER MITCHELL
3rd CLIFFTON SYLVESTER

**AGES 30-39**
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3rd LIONEL DANDRIDGE

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2nd WINSTON STEWART
3rd JANICE QUASHIE

**AGES 70-79**
1st RAYMOND MCAULEY
2nd ROY RILEY
3rd ROMMEL BLACKMANN

**OVER 80**
1st CHARLES SPOONER

**PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED**
1st KESTER JOSEPH
2nd DWIGHT YEARWOOD

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### OPEN/INTERNATIONAL (FEMALE)

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**UNIVERSITY STUDENT**
1st JANELLE NEEDO
2nd CELINE LESTRADE
3rd JULIET JOHN SAMBRAND
4th CANDICE ELKE-ANN BEKARO

**UWI STUDENT**
1st JANELLE NEEDO
2nd CELINE LESTRADE
3rd JULIET JOHN SAMBRAND
4th CANDICE ELKE-ANN BEKARO

**UWI STAFF**
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2nd LEONETTE COX
3rd DENNICE DEMING

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2nd TERESA ROSENMOND
3rd VANESSA BOYE
4th JUNE EDWARDS

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3rd JUNE EDWARDS
4th SAN FERNANDO

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3rd CELINE LESTRADE

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3rd RHONDA SELLEUR

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2nd RUTH FRAZER-MUNROE

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Coming from the 19 PhD students featured here who graduated during the 2013 ceremonies, is a fascinating range of subject areas for their research. Their abstracts suggest that the thesis material must be riveting and that their contribution to human understanding and development is significant. The body of work included fibre reinforced composites; what the television life can do; diabetes protection; mathematical models of crime, spiders; choosing health programmes; youth and HIV; mediation and restorative justice, and trade barriers.

**FACULTY OF ENGINEERING**

**RICHARD A. BACHOO**

The High Frequency Vibration of Fibre Reinforced Composites

Fibre reinforced composites (FRCs) form an important class of materials that are used extensively in applications that exploit their high strength to weight and modulus to weight ratios. Statistical energy analysis (SEA) is the most common tool used for the high frequency vibration problems of complex structures. One critical parameter required by SEA is the modal density. In this study analytic expressions, independent of boundary conditions, are derived for the modal density of thin and thick FRC beams cross coupled in bending and torsion. The variation of the modal density with fibre orientation is investigated, showing that there exists in every frequency band an orientation that corresponds to a minimum modal density. The variation of the modal energy levels across the modal spectrum is also investigated.

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND EDUCATION**

**KAREN ECCLES**

Trinidadian Women and World War 2

This thesis examines the contributions of Trinidadian women to World War 2. The lopsided version of their experience, the *Jeins and Dinahs*, painted mostly by calypsonians and male observers at the time and perpetuated to this day, is by no means the whole truth. It looks again at this derogatory reputation and reveals the violence, abuse, murders, rapes and sexual slavery which also occurred. It also examines the role middle and upper class women played in the war and the organizations they formed, including the Auxiliary Territorial Services, the female branch of the British army. Other women formed groups, organizations and guilds, and worked from clubs, borrowed halls and their homes. With the support of hundreds of women they engaged in raising funds, in food security, in assisting wounded soldiers and in organizing for their entertainments.

**MARSHA PEARCE**

Caribbean Ventilation: Experiencing Television as Window in the Angophone Islands

The dissertation is a qualitative study of the phenomenon of screen media reception in an Angophone Caribbean context, with the aim of illustrating how television and audience operate in Caribbean culture. Specifically, it looks at audience engagement with TEMPO, a cable television channel launched in 2005 for a primary target market of Caribbean people. The research argues that in the reception of TEMPO, an Angophone Caribbean audience engages with the television as a virtual window that facilitates a complex, multidimensional experience of what I call “Caribbean ventilation” – ventilation, in one sense, referring to a scrutiny and interrogation of notions of “Caribbean” (ventilating what Caribbean means) and in another sense, as a flow between a represented, on-screen Caribbean and a lived Caribbean.

**ROBERTHA EVANS**

An Examination of the Language Use Patterns and Practices of the Legal System in St Lucia

This thesis focused on human rights; it addressed the right to freedom from discrimination. Linguistic discrimination is a pervasive global issue, particularly in post-colonial jurisdictions, which accord de jure or de facto standing to one language in the legal system. This is usually an ex-colonial language that is often not the primary language of the majority of the persons it serves. The language gap between this language and the language competence of some persons could have far-reaching implications for issues of justice. The study examined the use of English as the sole official language of the legal system in St Lucia, looking at how the system operates to provide access to justice for people of various language backgrounds, especially Kwéyòl-dominant speakers.

**INSTITUTE OF GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

**CATHERINE ALI**

Navigating Empowerment in Mediation and Restorative Justice in Trinidad

This study researches transformation in mediation and restorative justice. It focuses on gang crime conflicts in two masculinities transformation projects: Bail Boys Court at San Fernando Supreme Court and Men’s Forum: School for Tabanca in Point Fortin. Structures, interactions, identities and kinship boundaries shifted as empowered change agents facilitated discovery. Men who said they were “not made human” discovered how to fill human development gaps in their sons’ lives. Character and gender identities expanded, and former gang members “turned their lives around” with positive implications for women and children. Findings include new cultural mediation models for youth justice and restorative justice that transform criminogenic masculinities and structures. Methodologies for anchoring the fluidities of empowerment and transformation demonstrate the importance of situated gender research for human security, and for social and criminal justice policy development locally and globally.
**FACULTY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES**

**ARLENE WILLIAMS**
The role of *Leonotis nepetifolia* as a hepatoprotective agent against acetaminophen-induced toxicity in vivo

This study utilised an orally administered acetaminophen-induced mouse model of hepatocellular damage to determine the hepatic effect of *Leonotis nepetifolia* leaf extracts. Pre- and post-treatments of the methanol and aqueous extracts were carried out and a comparison done to measure the level of protection observed in blood and liver tissue with matched histopathology. The novel hepatoprotective properties of *Leonotis nepetifolia* leaf extracts showed a significant reduction in serum ALT and AST levels in both pre- and post-treated mice and an overall reduction in liver enzyme activity compared to the acetaminophen-induced control group. Matched histological sections showed hepatoprotection with maintained hepatocellular architecture. We were able to quantify and observe architectural as well as biochemical changes in the liver with pre- and post-treatments.

**DEBBIE HIAXIRE**
Burden of Chronic Non-Communicable Disease and Lifestyle Behavior

among University Staff: Effect of a Lifestyle Intervention

Staggering increases in health insurance claims by University staff suggested a significantly high burden of disease, with NCDs and their risk factors suspected as major culprits. The overall aim therefore was to assess disease burden, identify associated risk factors and formulate a culturally appropriate intervention. A cross-sectional study was conducted on 273 randomly selected University staff. Standardized measurements of anthropometry, dietary intake, biochemistry and lifestyle were made. Intervention included standardized protocols for promoting healthy eating, increased physical activity, close monitoring and monthly workshops that resulted in mean decreases in weight, BMI and waist circumference for females. The significant improvements in anthropometric and certain NCD risk factors highlight the value of culturally appropriate intensive lifestyle interventions in reducing disease burden.

**SHAMJEET SINGH**
Cardiac gene and protein expression in sucrose-fed rodent models of insulin resistance: preventive effect of anthocyanins

Type 2 diabetes mellitus (DM) contributes to several illnesses, including heart diseases, stroke, cataracts and kidney failure. It is characterized by high levels of glucose (sugar) in the blood and is normally preceded by a “pre-diabetic” stage. Our research utilized rodent models and sought to understand changes that may occur in cardiac cells during pre-diabetes—a period when reversal of defects is theoretically possible. We identified specific genes and proteins in the heart, liver and muscle tissues that are altered during this period. These were associated with changes in the expression of contractile proteins, which suggest contractile inefficiencies. This can aid techniques to detect diabetes, intervention strategies and drug development for heart disease, and work in nutrient-gene interaction and systems biology.

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**HENRY BAILEY**
A Framework for the Prioritization of Health Programmes for Trinidad and Tobago

This study seeks to identify a suitable framework to optimize healthcare resource allocation decision-making for Trinidad and Tobago. Based on a review of the local context, theoretical issues, and international experience, Programme Budgeting and Marginal Analysis (PBMA) using Cost Utility Analysis applying the EQ-5D descriptive system is presented as an ideal initial framework for T&T. A new visual analogue scale (VAS) protocol and two discrete choice experiment (DCE) designs are developed and tested. The VAS and the D-Efficient DCE are found to perform as well as methods used in other countries involving much larger respondent samples and requiring highly trained interviewers. An EQ-5D Value set is developed for T&T using the DCE data. An implementation agenda for T&T is also presented.

**TRACIE ROGERS**
In the Silence of their Skin: Negotiating HIV Disclosure and Young Adulthood in Trinidad and Tobago

This thesis was a participatory action research study that partnered with youth to investigate HIV as a psychosocial reality. Research on HIV risk and youth have characteristically treated young people as two mutually exclusive sub-populations, namely HIV negative and HIV positive. This dichotomy ignores the reality that these sub-populations are part of each other’s social world. Data was generated through in-depth interviews, photography and youth-led data analysis with cohorts of HIV positive and negative young people. Youth participants were involved in every aspect, from design through data analysis and dissemination of findings. Two original contributions to the literature resulted: a youth-in-environment theoretical perspective for understanding the impact of HIV on psychosocial wellbeing of youth and a responsive social work practice model with a focus on HIV disclosure within an ecological framework.

**CHUKWUDI DAVID ANYANWU**
The impact of technical barriers to trade on small and medium enterprises in Trinidad and Tobago

This research focused on the impact of technical barriers to trade on small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Trinidad and Tobago and the process of improving their trade-related capacity to meet product standards and regulations in export markets. The thesis argued that the impact of technical barriers applied as standards and regulations on food and beverage exporting SMEs in developing countries is more damning because in many respects they lack the necessary trade-related capacity to meet the various product-related requirements in export markets; a prerequisite for international competitiveness. This study provides a useful framework for the development of a Trade-Related Capacity Building Approach (TRCBA) in standards towards international competitiveness for SMEs in the food and beverage industry in Trinidad and Tobago.
JOANNA SOOKNANAN
Mathematical Models of Crime
Gang-related crime is becoming an increasing problem in Trinidad and Tobago. Modelling offers a means of testing the suggested solutions by varying conditions so as to conduct social experiments; but without the ethical concerns and costs attached to experimenting on humans. In this research, mathematics and numerical simulation form a dynamic duo in the modelling process and crime-fighting initiative. The growth of gangs, the infiltration of gangs into the police service and the switching of territory by marauding criminal gangs with their capture by police were studied using models adapted from Mathematical Biology. The dynamic behaviour of these systems was investigated with stability and bifurcation analyses. The models are useful in exploring the effect of different crime prevention strategies and may be used to identify thresholds that determine the establishment or disappearance of criminals.

LORALE JEANINE LALGEE
Synthetic Ion Transporters: Membrane Activity of Amphiphilic Cobalt-Cage Complexes with Aza Crown Spacer
Membrane transport underlies the research into the molecular basis of diseases such as cancer, epilepsy and cystic fibrosis. The function and mechanism of transmembrane ion channels is extensively studied in modern biological chemistry and validates a growing thrust to investigate synthetic systems capable of regulating ion flow across biological membranes. These model systems contribute to understanding the behavior of naturally occurring ion channels, and have numerous practical applications in fields such as drug delivery and nanomedicine, and biosensor development. We investigated the ion transport potential and biological activity of a homologous series of cobalt-cage metallosurfactants. We characterized the molecular interactions between these novel metallosurfactants and a range of (phospholipid) membrane mimetic systems; to gain insight into their suprastructural membrane activity and mechanisms of action.

MARISSA MOSES
Genetic Variability of Capsicum chinense
I investigated the genetic variability of the small but charismatic vegetable, Capsicum chinense, commonly known to West Indians as hot pepper. This species is indigenous to northern South America and the Caribbean, which provides a unique genetic reservoir for building better pepper varieties. Hot peppers are known throughout the world for their attractive glossy berries, distinctive flavour profiles, record-breaking levels of pungency, and resistance to diseases. These superior physical attributes are a direct result of the high levels of genetic variability in the Caribbean cluster or gene pool that I determined using molecular (DNA) fingerprinting techniques. As part of the research team at The UWI, I am pleased to contribute to the continuing efforts of local researchers, in developing a profitable hot pepper industry in the Caribbean and a global seed industry.

CURTIS BOODOO
The motion of complex biological fluid in the human body
We developed a mathematical model for blood flow in arteries and capillaries. A Non-Newtonian fluid was used to model blood flow and the glycocalyx layer within capillaries was modeled as a porous region. We also modelled peristaltic transport in the large intestine. The successive contraction of a Peristaltic wave was modelled using a sinusoidal waveform. This waveform travelled along a porous tube containing biological fluid. Then we modelled oral drug delivery using porous microspheres. In oral drug delivery specific drugs are embedded within the porous region of the microspheres and when consumed these drugs slowly assimilate within the body. We found that optimal drug delivery occurs with a porous sphere of low permeability and the optimal microsphere shape is a whole porous sphere and not a porous shell.

JO-ANNE NINA SEWLAL
Contribution of Habitat Diversity to the Biodiversity of the Spider Families Araneidae, Nephilidae and Tetragnathidae in Trinidad, WI
The biodiversity of three orb-weaving spider families, Araneidae, Nephilidae and Tetragnathidae were compared among thirteen natural habitats and three habitats that experienced increasing degrees of human disturbance; secondary forest, cocoa fields, and farmland, respectively. Both vegetation structure and plant species composition influenced spider biodiversity, especially abundance and species-richness in natural habitats, with four habitats (savannah, mangrove woodland, littoral woodland and herbaceous swamp) possessing distinct species assemblages. The increasing amount of secondary and agricultural vegetation as a result of land-clearing raises the question of how disturbance affects biodiversity. Overall, disturbed habitats were not significantly different from natural habitats in terms of biodiversity. Conserving biodiversity in the tropics is more than protecting rainforests; all habitat types need to be protected to preserve spider biodiversity.
FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

NIGEL JOHN
The Development and Optimization of a novel UWI/BP/Strata Polymer Cracking Reactor to study Depolymerisation of Polystyrenes
My research involved modifying/redesigning a reactor (with others) to produce a working reactor: the UWI/BP/Strata polymer cracking rig. The advantage of this rig is in its greater cracking flexibility: a wider variety of products can be obtained by varying independently process parameters: temperature, stirring rates, residence times and cracking in the semi-batch and continuous flow sections of the reactor. The modified rig was used to study the depolymerisation of polystyrenes. The secondary products are useful solvents and can with scale-up of the plant produce potentially economically viable alternative energy/fuel sources from waste polystyrene (Styrofoam), that is “energy on tap from waste plastics” in addition to the obvious “green alternative” to environmentally unfriendly usual solid waste management of waste (plastic) polystyrene.

RACHEL WYSE-MASON
Biodiesel from Used Cooking Oil: Evaluation of Production Methods and Engine Emissions
The impact of vehicular emissions on climate change has boosted global research into alternative fuels such as biodiesel. This renewable diesel fuel can be produced from any lipid, with vegetable oils being the most common feedstock. It generates more than 50% less emissions than petroleum diesel, improves the condition of the engine and can be used without any major engine modification. In this study, the conversion of waste cooking oil into biodiesel was investigated for different types of restaurants in Trinidad and Tobago. The best feedstock and production methods were then identified considering four properties; waste oil characteristics, conversion into biodiesel, biodiesel fuel properties and emissions characteristics.

SIMONE F.A. WALCOTT
Phytochemical Investigation of Croton species from Trinidad
Croton species from the Euphorbiaceae family are best known for the tiglianediterpenes which are tumor promoting. More recently, various other diterpene types have been isolated from Croton. The latex of C. gossypifolius along with the leaves and stems of local Croton species, Croton gossypifolius and C. hircinus, were investigated for their secondary metabolites. A novel cyclic nonapeptide, Crotogossamide, was isolated from the latex of C. gossypifolius along with the flavonoids, quercitrin, myricitrin and afzelin and the amino acid derivative tyramine. Brine-shrimp bioassay-guided fractionation of the crude extract of the leaves of Croton gossypifolius led to the isolation of the known vomifoliol, dehydrovomifoliol and hypoleucolide methyl ester, as well as pinoresinol and kaempferol as minor components. Three novel clerodanediterpenes, Crotohircin A-C were isolated from the leaves of C. hircinus along with the flavonoids artemetin and kaempferol.
Every year, the University sends out thousands of new graduates into the world—this year it was 4,092, and each year we mark their milestone with the graduation ceremony that is the light at the end of the tunnel for many a student.

This year was no different for the six ceremonies and as we feature some images from those special moments, we wish all our alumni nothing but the best, and hope they will keep close to the campus that they called home.
UWI GRADUATION CEREMONIES 2013: SPECIAL MOMENTS
EXPERIENCE
THE UNIVERSITY INN

Tucked away amidst greenery is the welcoming facade of this boutique bed and breakfast. The Inn offers top quality accommodation not only to visiting academics and guests of the University, but also to the public. Furnished to make it feel like home, its tranquil air is guaranteed to repair even the most frayed of nerves. The excellent service doesn’t hurt, either.

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"I happened to be walking through my alma mater [St Mary's College] about two to three weeks ago and as I walked along the corridor I peeped into every class and every single class had a female teacher," he says.

It intrigued him because when he was a student, a female teacher was a "novelty... and you can imagine during adolescent years all that that implied."

He is illustrating a point he had begun making about the significance of the absence of male figures in the lives of boys, and how dramatically the situation has turned.

"I grew up being taught largely by men," says Dr Ian Hypolite, psychiatrist, coach and mentor, making a distinction between male and teacher. "I also remember being strongly influenced by male teachers."

"I say that to emphasise a growing pattern in society where our young men are no longer coming under the influence of males outside of their households, and in many instances, maybe there is no male in the household. I coach a sport where that is very common."

Dr Hypolite coaches at the Memphis Pioneers Athletics Club—people will easily connect him to 400m hurdler Jehue Gordon, the gold-medallist—where he meets youngsters from various social circumstances. It has placed him well to observe behaviours, and his training in psychiatry provides him with the tools to analyse what he sees.

"I am not being misogynistic by any means, but I see the necessity for us to function as men, and I've seen instances where we've had to correct young men and seen their response to a male challenge and it is not always appropriate, and it speaks to the importance of male role models in our society."

The club is essentially run by men and is more than a running club, he says, as it "has managed to guide well over 40 young people to scholarships in the US worth millions of dollars. We sometimes talk about ourselves as wealth influencing and by that we don't necessarily earn money, but we provide experiences that are a part of wealth and we emphasise that education is an important part of wealth generation."

"But even more important is the impact we have in terms of keeping young people off the streets, and imparting our value system on to them and essentially helping them to develop as young men and women. Jehue is now very prominent, but there are so many others apart from Jehue whose lives we've impacted upon."

Agreeing that many studies and anecdotes point to the decline of the young male, he believes that two factors need to be addressed from a societal level.

One is the education system, and the other is the need for social workers. He feels we have possibly erred in the way we pair boys and girls and how we teach them.

"I also want to stress the significance of the absence of male figures in our education process and how that has an impact on young men and how they interact with other young men. I have recognized that young men can no longer readily handle challenges from males in an appropriate manner generally, and invariably, if it is a peer then there is no longer a process of talking things out or arguing things out. It's a process of acting things out, and if it is a superior then they get cowed. Neither of which is desirable."

He believes the absence of the male figure is germane to any discussion of saving our youth from self-destruction, and that it is linked to helping them escape limitations imposed by poor social circumstances.

"That cycle of poverty generates miscreants," he says, and it needs to be broken.

"My own feeling is that a major part of our crime thrust has to be the employment of many, many social workers. Everybody is talking about jails and police. I think we need social workers in abundance. We need a lot of social case work that goes into communities and identifies people in need—in emotional need—identifies them and makes recommendations as to how those needs are to be addressed.

"I think then and only then will we break the cycle of crime."

If we could attract young men back to teaching, it would help at many levels, he thinks. Apart from providing role models up close, with whom they could share their issues, it would also enable them to see education as manly an option as gangster life.

"Education confers on you the ability to reason and to talk things out. The absence of education generates quite the opposite, the tendency to act things out; so there's one way to settle differences," he says.

"We've also noted the whole question of learning disability among young men and the impact on crime," he says, noting that a significant proportion of young men who are learning disabled, fall out of the education system because it neither recognizes them, nor has facilities to accommodate or nurture them. It is part of the reason they turn to lifestyles that validate them and give them a sense of worth.

"I've never felt inferior to anyone—as a coach, student, professional—and that kind of self-belief was generated by the male mentors I had," he says.

He grew up under what he describes as poor circumstances, in a family he considers "clearly ambitious."

His father was a tailor, his mother a nursing assistant (both deceased), and he watched his uncle's "progress from poverty to degrees." One obtained his Master's and was Director of Surveys in Trinidad and Tobago; another was a Roman Catholic priest.

"The interesting thing is that between them there were so many books. I read so many books early in my life that I was not supposed to read. Books that were then considered subversive literature, I was already putting my hands on them by the time I was 15. So there was that element and that emphasis on education even back then when we lived under poor circumstances. So by no means were we well off but I think there was a significant emphasis on education in the household."

It was education and sport for him—two partners that moulded him for the life he embraced.

"Sport was always in my blood. I grew up in East Port of Spain and I can't remember doing anything but playing sports. I was recalling the other day how easy it was for 8- and 9-year-olds to pick up themselves, leave home and go and run around the race track, run around the Savannah or go up to the Botanical Gardens and then go back home in the evening, unperturbed. It's not something that you see happening now."

It isn't something you see because people are afraid to let their children out of sight, and indoor life breeds an unhealthy lifestyle, a further stress to all systems.

It's complicated, and even if Dr Hypolite is right, the question is how to get the absent male to return?
The civil war in Syria that had its genesis in peaceful, non-violent protests against the Assad regime in 2011 has degenerated into what is now recognized internationally as the "Syrian Crisis." It has been a period marked by death and displacement of the Syrian people, the decimation of their property; disregard for international law allegedly by the Syrian government in its use of chemical weapons against its people; and the disunity between the two "veto power" factions of the Security Council of the "United" Nations (UNSC)—allies and adversaries of the US.

Fate or fortune might have led to the termination of US President Barack Obama’s planned attack on Syria against the wishes of Americans and civilians across the globe and without the approval of the UNSC. His seemingly politically wise decision to pursue the route of diplomacy—facilitated and proposed by his Russian counterpart—sent a strong message to the global community that even in the face of strong political and ideological differences, diplomacy and co-operation might be playing a very important role.

The non-resident Russian Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago, Nikolay d. Smirnov, at a recent ‘diplomatic dialogue’ on Syria—held at the Institute of International Relations (IIR) at UWI’s St Augustine campus—speculated that there might have been the possibility of Syria’s chemical weapons getting into the hands of Al-Qaeda, had there been a military strike on Syria.

What might have been the implications of this? Might the war have spread to other countries in the Middle East? Might this have affected the ‘political conscience’ of countries of CARICOM, the European Union, and other world leaders who were not providing the ‘political and diplomatic’ support that Obama sought for his proposed military strike on Syria, and might they then have provided military support? What role might the UN have played in preventing the ‘Syrian Crisis’ from transitioning into a ‘Global Crisis’?

The averted negative impact on the fragile global economy (slowly recovering from the Global Financial Crisis of 2007-2008) vis-à-vis the increase in the price of oil that there were a military strike on Syria must also be considered as a benefit of the diplomatic approach. While we speculate on what might or might not have been, the humanitarian crisis evolving in Syria worsens daily. Britain’s Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago, Arthur Snell, at IIR’s ‘diplomatic dialogue’ on Syria, admitted that there is a sectarian conflictual element to the political unrest in Syria that is fuelling the crisis; it has added to its complexity because of their varying perspectives on what should be the outcome. Resolution and relief might be on their way, but it’s difficult to predict when they will arrive in Damascus.

The attempt to address the chemical weapons issue in Syria via diplomatic means might be viewed as a triumph for both multilateralism and collective security. Effectively, the UN—by virtue of the UNSC’s resolution (Resolution 2118 (2013)) that has initiated the ongoing mission in Syria to destroy its chemical weapons stockpile and production capability—has avoided another incident that might have further eroded the confidence of the international community in the legitimacy and credibility of the UN. It also might have led the international community to question the usefulness of international law.

Were the US to have attacked Syria without the approval of the UNSC, it would have once again acted illegally in its use of force against a sovereign state, essentially, it would have violated the Charter of the UN because as pointed out by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, “…the Security Council has primary responsibility for international peace and security, the use of force is lawful only when in exercise of self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter and or when the Security Council approves such action.” The US on the other hand, was spared further acrimony from its global detractors in relation to its ostensible interventionist foreign policy, especially when it acts unilaterally or without the sanction of the UNSC.

Critics contend that Syria is of strategic interest to the US. Besides its resource wealth, Syria is geographically situated between various disputed nations and can be useful as a buffer zone and a strategic point for ideologically promoting “peace in the Middle East” by the democracies of the West. Syria has strong military alliances in the Middle East: Russia, which provides it with military assistance and access to the global market via financing; Iran, offers tactical advice on security measures while purchasing Syrian oil to replace European demand and ensures its other Arab allies (Iraq and Lebanon), defy the Arab League’s trade embargo on Syria. Syria’s allies are predominantly anti-US states with strong military forces such as Venezuela, North Korea, China and Iran; in some cases nuclear forces that can threaten the US claim to hegemony. Herein lies the context for the determined actions of the US to ensure that this crisis is contained and ultimately the Bashar Al-Assad regime is defeated.

This “security dilemma,” created by alliances as they seek to maintain the balance of power, and political divisions that are still pervasive although the Cold War has ended, will continue to render the United Nations inequitable, inconsistent and ineffective in the fulfillment of its peace and security mandate, and subordinate to the political will of those members of the UNSC who have the privilege of absolute veto power: USA, China, France, Russia and Great Britain. History has proven that the use of the veto in the UNSC stymies timely action by the Council. What is required is a reform of the UN Charter to either eliminate the veto or find a way to lessen its use (neither of these will be easy, given the formula for amendment of the Charter).

Can the UN provide the solution to alleviating the plight of the Syrian people? The spotlight continues to be on the UN’s capability to peacefully and speedily resolve this issue and other international crises of varying complexities using mechanisms for which the Charter provides; history will soon arbitrate on the sufficiency of those mechanisms.
Once again, the role and responsibility of CARICOM is part of public debate as the region tussles over the September 23rd ruling of the Dominican Constitutional Tribunal that “foreigners with no residence permit in the country must be equated with the category of foreigners in transit, under which their children are not eligible for Dominican citizenship, even though they were born in Dominican territory.”

Some members of the Caribbean Community have been vocal and unambiguous in their positions. Prime Minister of St Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph Gonsalves, has written to President of the Dominican Republic, Danilo Medina, not once, but twice since then, urging him to act swiftly “to correct the Court's prejudicial denial of the human and citizenship rights of persons of Haitian descent born in your country.”

UWI Professor Emeritus Norman Girvan, a former Professorial Research Fellow at The UWI Graduate Institute of International Relations has been an outspoken advocate for CARICOM action.

“It is very important for CARICOM to act as a single bloc—a bloc of 14 states which has voting power in several regional and international fora—to exert the maximum effort to see that this ruling is reversed,” he said. “The ruling is inconsistent with several international conventions and rulings to which the Dominican Republic is a party, and especially a 2005 ruling of the Inter American Court on Human Rights which reiterates the principle of jus soli—the right of citizenship to persons born within a country.”

“CARICOM is in a position to influence the course of events in this matter by blocking the DR’s application for admission to CARICOM and the Caribbean Development Bank and pressing for suspension of the DR from Cariforum and PetroCaribe,” he said. “If the ruling is implemented it will render stateless and vulnerable thousands of native-born Dominicans, who have lived and established families in their country of birth for up to 83 years. These persons will find it increasingly difficult to send their children to school, access medical services and secure employment.”

“It is a repugnant and racist situation which the regional community should vigorously oppose,” he said.

Professor Girvan also attended a demonstration on November 6, staged by the UWI-based arts group, Jouvay Ayiti, outside the Office of the Prime Minister. Using masquerade in a strategy they call “mas action,” the group depicted several traditional mas figures that were adapted for the particular message.

The group presented a petition of 800 numbers to the Embassy of the Dominican Republic and the Office of the Prime Minister.

JOUVAY AYITI takes a position. PHOTOS: CAMILLE QUAMIN, AN MPHIL CULTURAL STUDIES STUDENT AND PART-TIME LECTURER AT THE DEPARTMENT OF CREATIVE AND FESTIVAL ARTS AT UWI, ST AUGUSTINE.

On November 26, a CARICOM statement was issued after a meeting in Port of Spain, which condemned the September ruling, calling it “abhorrent and discriminatory.”

It called on the Government of the Dominican Republic “to take the necessary political, legislative, judicial and administrative steps urgently to redress the grave humanitarian situation created by the ruling,” and asked “regional and hemispheric countries and organisations to lend their voice to urge the Dominican Republic to right this terrible wrong.”

“The Community welcomes the intervention by Venezuela to assist in resolving the issue but given the grave humanitarian implications of the court ruling the Community cannot allow its relationship with the Dominican Republic to continue as normal. In that regard, the Community, at this time, will suspend consideration of the request by the Dominican Republic for membership of the Caribbean Community. Furthermore, the Community will review its relationship with the Dominican Republic in other fora including that of CARIFORUM, CELAC and the OAS. It cannot be business as usual,” said the statement.

“It is very important for CARICOM to act as a single bloc—a bloc of 14 states which has voting power in several regional and international fora—to exert the maximum effort to see that this ruling is reversed”
Deep Sea Explorers

Life is never dull for UWI Lecturer Dr Judith Gobin, who was part of a team of international scientists on a 6-day, deep-sea exploration of the Kick‘em Jenny volcano and Trinidad Tar Seeps on board the EV Nautilus in November.

Crew were thrilled to find what appears to be cold seeps with typical chemosynthetic biological communities at a depth of 2000 m (approx. 6000ft). “Chemosynthesis is the breakdown of chemicals (possibly methane here) to provide energy and food whereas photosynthesis uses sunlight,” she explained. “The biological community included: giant mussels, tube worms, scale worms (and other marine worms), gastropods, and many other organisms. The seeps were located in the ‘debris avalanche deposit’ to the west of Kick‘em Jenny volcano in the Grenada Basin.”

She writes of working for hours to prepare the samples for preservation, storage and further analyses. “The mussels are not only impressively large (approx. 33cm but interestingly the 8 large specimens collected each had a large scale worm (polychaete living inside it). There appears to be a symbiotic relationship between these two species.” She rejoiced that she was the first to “recognise and extract the marine worm from the very large mussels.”

Dr Gobin, who teaches Marine Ecology at The UWI is also a well-known polychaete (marine worm) expert and previously described a new species for Trinidad and Tobago (Mackie and Gobin 1993). The Corp Explorers (including Dr Gobin) and partner institution scientists will be collaborating during the next few weeks and will be producing scientific papers (over the next year or so) of this, and other interesting finds from the exploration.

The UWI’s School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM) in Trinidad is the only veterinary school within the region that directly trains English-speaking Caribbean nationals to become veterinary surgeons. The SVM is located on the same site as the schools of Dentistry, Medicine, Pharmacy and Advanced Nursing Education at the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex.

Because of their expertise, veterinarians play critical roles in the health of animals, humans, and even the environment. Veterinary medicine is the only profession that routinely operates at the interface of these three components of One Health. About two-thirds (60.3 %) of emerging infectious diseases result from zoonoses; the majority of these have their origin in wildlife (71.8%) and have been increasing in recent years. Veterinarians, regardless of their field of practice, all play a significant role in human health and animal health.

The majority of Caribbean islands and territories are small, resource-poor and have little capacity to respond to human, animal, zoonotic and plant disease outbreaks. This lack of capacity, combined with the high burden of human, animal and plant infectious diseases, clearly point towards the relevance of pursuing a One Health approach. The high burden of animal and zoonotic infectious disease across the region makes the plant, animal and human populations, as well as the tourism-dependent Caribbean economies, extremely vulnerable. A One Health approach can be used to develop strategies to survey, predict and respond to food and water-borne disease outbreaks that threaten public health and tourism, which is the most important industry in the Caribbean.

The One Health concept is a strategy for expanding interdisciplinary collaborations and communications in all aspects of health care for humans, animals and the environment and is recognized as a best practice by international health organisation around the world. The threat to people, wildlife and domestic animals across the world is increasing as climate change, human population growth and changing land use cause pathogens to emerge and spread. One Health seeks to promote, improve, and defend the health and well-being of all species by enhancing cooperation and collaboration amongst physicians, veterinarians, other health and environmental professionals by promoting leadership and management to achieve these goals.

Dr Chris Oura is a Senior Lecturer in Veterinary Virology, School of Veterinary Medicine, UWI.
Universities are the brains of the economy

Professor Juma says economic growth should come from tertiary institutions

BY CHRISTINE NANTON

Professor Calestous Juma first visited Trinidad in 2001, and the following year, he visited The UWI. The changes from then, especially visible in the infrastructure, struck him, as he also observed the expansion of tertiary education.

Juma, Professor of the Practice of International Development and Director of the Science, Technology, and Globalization Project at the Harvard Kennedy School, was again at the St Augustine campus in November, this time at the invitation of a cluster of tertiary education bodies: The UWI, CARISCIence, the University of the Southern Caribbean (USC) and the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT).

His Distinguished Open Lecture, “How Nations Succeed? Higher Education, Research and Technological Leapfrogging in Emerging Economies,” focussed on the importance of investment in higher education research; diversification of the economy through genomics and nanotechnology; and leapfrogging to accelerate national development.

Tertiary education’s expansion is key towards building an innovation-based economy, he says, and universities play a large role in this development. Universities are shifting towards a more entrepreneurial role and are thus repositioning themselves in national economies. He cited the Cocoa Research Centre’s work in genomics, under the leadership of Professor Pathmanathan Umaharan, as a striking example of how successful such a shift can be. The CRC has been doing internationally acclaimed work in the sequencing of the cocoa genome.

For Trinidad and Tobago, he saw the agricultural sector as one that represents an enormous opportunity for technological growth.

Professor Juma said universities now see themselves as engines of economic development, and that should be welcomed. The next step should be that institutions support the creation of enterprise so universities can function as incubators. A student’s time on campus could be spent towards the creation of new businesses so that when they graduate, they use their university experience as an opportunity to create their careers and build their future.

At his lecture, Professor Juma described how he helped the Sultanate of Oman, an Arab state, create its National Research Council. An important aspect was using some of the oil and gas revenue to create a research fund. That fund would then be used to develop new technology into products, goods, services and enterprise. Oman’s National Research Council, which focuses on helping the country diversify through technology, is funded by their oil and gas revenue research.

Much of Professor Juma’s work is centred on the dynamic role of technological innovation in economic transformation. New knowledge, he believes, is embedded. Economies grow over time and as they grow, they learn to do things differently. He compared economies to human beings—as we grow in age, we gain knowledge and are able to do more; our knowledge becomes more sophisticated and more diversified. For him, the measure of economic growth lies in diversification. Universities, therefore, are the brains of the economies, as they are the centres from which high levels of knowledge emanate.

Professor Juma noted that a strategic direction for a nation, particularly in a democracy like ours, should form part of the political platform for any party seriously interested in governance. This strategy should focus on innovation for economic development. If innovation does not form part of the strategic vision, he believes that governments often become confused on what direction to follow. As a result, they are not committed to the development of any one initiative long enough for it to create the necessary impact. While they may remain in office, they often have very little time to show for their performance during their term. It therefore becomes harder to govern, because what takes place is the absence of a mechanism to rally the population around a few specific industries.

He defined leapfrogging as the seamless movement to the adoption of a new technological system, citing the movement from landline to mobile phones—as mobiles became cheaper and more readily available, there was an almost seamless movement towards their use. He believes the challenge for Trinidad and Tobago lies in identifying the sectors where the same type of leapfrogging can occur, as has been the case with telecommunications.

He identified the movement to online learning in higher education, whereby students have access to large quantities of content, as one such area. In many online systems, the programme is reversed and students pay attention to lectures online and then are able to explore their own interpretation of the information in the classroom. This is referred to as the “flipped classroom.” Students come to the classrooms equipped because they have already listened to the lecture on their own time and it is now the lecturer’s job to facilitate discussions with a wider pool of readily available information and student knowledge in the subject area.

Professor Juma spoke of the need for a movement in our educational systems, focussing more on learning as opposed to teaching and empowering students to use the available pool of information to solve problems in real life situations. Teachers help students to “learn how to learn” and empower them, as opposed to pumping information into them. Teachers are responsible for showing students how to improve their learning skills.

Professor Juma, who has won several international awards for his work on sustainable development, is currently Faculty Chair for Innovation for the Economic Development Executive Program and directs the Harvard Kennedy School’s Agricultural Innovation Policy in Africa Project, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. He is a former Executive Secretary of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and Founding Director of the African Centre for Technology Studies in Nairobi. He is co-chair of the African Union’s High-Level Panel on Science, Technology and Innovation and a jury member of the Queen Elizabeth Prize for Engineering. Professor Juma is former Chancellor of the University of Guyana. His latest book, The New Harvest: Agricultural Innovation in Africa was published by Oxford University Press in 2011 and he is currently writing books on engineering for development and resistance to new technologies.

A Candle for the Chimney

BY DR ISAAC BEKELE

We live on a planet where each hour approximately 920 persons die due to hunger. This, in a nutshell, means roughly 2% of the population of staff and students of UWI in St Augustine perishes each day for lack of food. These persons die because they cannot access food for whatever reason. The irony of it all is that over 1.6 billion persons alive today are overweight and face lifestyle health risks. These are victims of unhealthy diets. As we stand here, there are nearly 7.2 billion persons alive today and the population grows annually at a rate of 64 million. The state of the global population is not where it should be in terms of access to food, nutrition and healthy living as well as size in relation to food production and productivity.

Although there is a chance of bringing more arable land under cultivation globally, nearly 5.5 million hectares of land is lost due to soil erosion and another 9.5 million lost to desertification annually. Over four million hectares of forest is cleared each year and nearly 7.5 million tonnes of toxic waste is released into the environment annually. The planet has become a ‘chimney’ spewing almost 27 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide annually and, by 2030, close to 50% of the world’s population will live in areas of high water stress. The environment, which sustains our life, is itself under stress.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, at the 20th General conference of member countries in November 1979, declared October 16, the day of the formation of the Organization in 1945, as a day for annual observance of the World Food Day. As we ponder on the significance of this day, we need to do so with a collective belief that the challenge of feeding the world, however daunting it may appear, is ultimately surmountable through commitment, dedication, involvement and mobilization of global resources and sustained effective action. The aim is to achieve food and nutrition security through sustainable food systems by overcoming environmental and natural resource challenges.

As we light candles and walk around the circular road in front of this historic building, the site of the former Imperial College of Agriculture, let us ponder on the somber challenge humanity faces to meet the deficit in food and nutrition in order to sustain a growing and healthy population no matter where they reside and to cater for the well-being of future generations.

This World Food Day candlelight vigil is organized in collaboration with the FAO Trinidad and Tobago country Office. I would like to recognize their collaboration and input in this worthwhile event. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mr Barton Clarke, the FAO mission Head in Trinidad and Tobago for his support and commitment to this cause. I am also grateful to Principal Sankat for his enduring support and advocacy for agriculture.

IICA has also been part of World Food day vigils and this year is no different. I would like to express my gratitude to Mr Gregg Rawlins, the Head of IICA in Trinidad and Tobago through his colleague, Mr Edric Harry who represents him on account of his absence from the country.

The St Augustine Campus of The UWI marked World Food Day on October 17, 2013, with a candlelight vigil. This year’s theme was “Sustainable food systems for food and nutrition security.” The event was organized by the Faculty of Food and Agriculture, where Dr Isaac Bekete is Dean.
I did it! All 13.1 miles. It took almost three and a quarter hours, but the feelings of accomplishment, pride, success and pain were worth it. I embarked on this journey 12 weeks before the half-marathon date, with a training plan, guidance from the SPEC gym staff and supervisor and the sheer will to complete this daunting task. It was never easy: the training, the sacrifices, and the commitment took a lot, but it was harder because here I was, deeply involved in planning a race I would ultimately run, but I could play no part in the final product coming together on race day.

Those 12 weeks did a lot for me as a Johnny-come-lately marathoner; for my colleagues who joined me on many runs around the football field and campus; for my boss who made one trek with me to the gym, dutifully providing verbal support; and for the numerous UWI staff members who bought supporter t-shirts, texted money and who came out on race day to shout their lungs out as I passed them on the route and neared the finish line.

On the Sunday before the race some of us from “The 10” decided to do our last big run along the route that took us to the Five Rivers Junction. That was a sense of accomplishment for the likes of JW [Jason Williams] and James Saunders, but on the prodding of Jeremy Bellamy, a Sir Arthur Lewis Hall resident, we did the return leg. It was harder than we thought, and it was only through the constant encouragement from each other that we made it back to the St Augustine campus. We thought then we were ready… if only we could do something about that early morning hot sun.

True to the project management style that I have become known for, in the days leading up to the race I had numerous briefing meetings, made detailed plans and reiterated roles to ensure that the Marketing Events Team were prepared for the half-marathon and would be alert at 4.30am when they were required to get to the venue.

The sounds of “eye of a tiger, you will hear me roooaar!” would mean more to me than ever as the same Marketing Events Team made sure I was prepared for my 5:55am start with their shouts of support and their words of encouragement and pride before I made my 13.1 mile journey.

I didn’t sleep well the night before, but got up on time and as instructed had pasta as I was in carb-loading mode all week. I managed however to get to the venue only a few minutes to the start. Jean-Paul, my trainer, seemed frantic to ensure I was ready and had stretched enough, giving me last second tips before the start pistol went off. And so it was just as we did so many times before we started the journey, that this time would take me to La Resource, D’Abadie and back.

Would it make it now? Only time would tell. Running, I felt lucky to not only be part of planning this race but also in experiencing it along the route—something the planning team would never really do. As I ran from one point to the next I heard the cheers and claps, I thought how amazing it was that these people—complete strangers—got up so early to make sure that we didn’t make the journey alone.

My family followed me on the route, taking photos, clapping, giving me that extra boost to soldier on and ensuring that I knew they were there for me.

Did I hit the wall? I did. Many times.

My return leg was slower as the pain kicked in but as I passed each landmark, whether walking or jogging, my strategy was to conserve my energy for the last stretch. So when I left the Priority Bus Route to join the St Augustine Circular Road, I went into turbo gear, propelled by the familiar faces patiently waiting.

And so as the journey started, it crescendoed with the words... you will hear me roooaar! Really the finish line was a blur, but what remains indelibly printed in my mind is the cheers of relief, joy and excitement as I crossed; from my loved ones, my office team mates, my boss, UWI colleagues and other members of The 10. Thank you to all those who made this possible and saw it through with me to the end. You may never know how much your calls of support, words of pride, $10 to my charity, tears of joy, thoughts, prayers and presence from overseas and here gave me the extra vigour I needed to overcome the wall and complete my first half-marathon. I did it! We did it and we should be proud that it was all for the Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Renata Sankar is a member of the Marketing and Communications team at UWI St Augustine.
UWI CALENDAR of EVENTS
DECEMBER 2013 – JANUARY 2014

4G TECHNOLOGIES & NETWORK DESIGN BOOT CAMP
December 2-6
UWI St Augustine Campus

The Faculty of Engineering of The UWI, St Augustine, in collaboration with CelPlan Technologies, Inc., will host the Caribbean Edition of CelPlan’s 4G Technologies & Network Design Boot Camp. The Boot Camp is designed to give CEOs, CTOs, managers, engineers, and technical staff the practical knowledge and expertise to deploy and optimise LTE and WiMAX 4G networks.

For more information, please visit www.celplan.com/training/4gbootcamp_trinidad.asp

SCHOLARSHIP FOR EUROPE!
Deadline: December 15

A scholarship for full Master’s and PhD funding, as well as one month mobility flows for Academic and Administrative staff, could be yours, with the ANGLE, DREAM and MUNDUS ACP II (3rd Cohort) projects. Programme-specific eligibility requirements may apply. Application deadline: December 15.

For further information, please contact the International Office, 2nd Floor, Student Administration Building, at 224 3707/8, 662-2002 ext. 84184 or 84151, or internationaloffice@sta.uwi.edu

2ND CARIBBEAN COMPETITIVENESS FORUM
Call for Abstracts
Deadline: January 10, 2014

The UWI Caribbean Centre for Competitiveness (CCfC) invites submissions of papers and presentations for its 2nd Caribbean Competitiveness Forum, “Beyond the Solutions: Competitiveness through Global Value Chains, Clustering and Innovation”, to be held March 18-19, 2014, at The University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Jamaica. An abstract of no more than 350 words must be submitted to the CCfC by January 10, 2014.

For more information, please visit www.uwi.edu/ccfc

UWI AFTER-SCHOOL CARE CENTRE CHRISTMAS CAMP
December 16-20

The UWI After-School Care Centre presents its Christmas Vacation Camp from December 16-20, for children aged 5-12 years old, from 8.30am-4pm daily. Cost: $300.

For further information and for registration forms, email: abigail.montique@sta.uwi.edu or ascc@sta.uwi.edu

D’ SWEETEST PARANG LIME
December 6
UWI Staff Social Club
St Augustine


For more information, please contact Ms. Alicia Richardson at 662-2002 ext. 83834

MAGNIFICAT!
7pm
December 13
Santa Rosa RC Church
Arima

The UWI St Augustine Arts Chorale, directed by Jessel Murray, and the UWI Steel, co-directed by Mr Murray and Khion De Las, will perform their Christmas concert Magnificat. Tickets for Magnificat are $150 and are available at the Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA) at Agostini Street and Gordon Streets, St Augustine and the Santa Rosa RC Church, Arima.

For more information, call 663-2222, 645-0873, 747-7340 or email uwi.arts.chorale@gmail.com or uwi.steel@gmail.com

CONFERENCE ON SPORT AND HIGHER EDUCATION
January 15-17, 2014
Learning Resource Centre
UWI St Augustine


For more information, please visit www.sta.uwi.edu/sportsstudiesconference

UWI TODAY wants to hear from you

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