



Open Letter

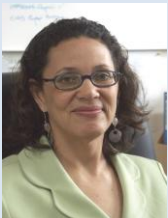
The e-newsletter of the Open Campus, UWI

Open Campus Developments

Open Campus Divisions Meeting Strategic Objectives for 2008/2009

Professor Hazel Simmons-McDonald, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the Open Campus presented an update on the developments in the Open Campus to the participants of the Vice Chancellor's Strategic Planning Retreat, held on 8 – 10 September 2008 at the Mona Visitors' Lodge in Jamaica. Even with the predictable financial and organisational challenges still facing the Campus, the Principal spoke with optimism about the achievements to date and the projections for the Open Campus, including growing student numbers by 20 -30%.

Among the other projections, the Principal hoped that work would continue into 2009 to complete the migration of all staff to UWI Open as well as the reconciliation of all outstanding human resource management issues. The Principal also spoke of the work being done currently to systematically renovate and upgrade Open Campus country sites around the region, especially to improve their technological infrastructure, general learning and teaching environment and their financial sustainability. A complete review and discussion of the UWI franchising policy is also to be undertaken in 2009, as well as an increase in community-based cultural activities in Open Campus countries, according to the Principal.



CSDR: Professor Julie Meeks Gardner, Head of the Consortium for Social Development & Research (CSDR), also presented the Consortium's progress to the participants. The CSDR of the Open Campus is composed of the former 'specialised units' of the former School of Continuing Studies (SCS) organised under one division. Each unit will continue its individual unit activities, but with increased collaboration and cooperation. The units of the Consortium are the Caribbean Child Development Centre (CCDC), the Hugh Lawson Shearer Trade Union Education Institute (HLSTUEI), the Social Welfare Training Centre (SWTC), the Women and Development Unit (WAND), the Human Resources Development Unit (HRDU), and the yet-to-be formed Cultural Studies Unit (CSU), and Radio Education Unit (REU).



The main aims of the CSDR are to contribute to the social development of Caribbean societies, strengthen the human potential of citizens and promote the University of the West Indies, especially in non-traditional areas, through research, training and education, curriculum development, development projects, technical assistance, information management and community outreach and public service.

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Over 2008/2009, the achievements of the Consortium have been multi-faceted as it worked to establish and position itself within the formal structure of the Open Campus. The major action areas within the formal plans of the CDSR remain focused on research and innovation, teaching and learning, service to the UWI-12 countries and other under-served communities; strengthening Caribbean regionality and national engagement as well as international partnerships. Advances have been made in the areas of curriculum reform, inter-faculty collaboration and international partnerships.

Professor Meeks Gardner also spoke of the challenges facing the Consortium at present in terms of the shifting of the existing culture, staffing, research funding, administrative capacity, improved utilisation of buildings, infrastructural upgrading, IT hardware upgrading and communications improvement. Despite the shortfalls, the CDSR has executed some successful activities for 2008/2009 in the areas of research, information dissemination, teaching and technical assistance.

More specifically, the CDSR has conducted community-based interdisciplinary research and determined the most pressing specialised research needs especially in the UWI- 12 countries. The first Consortium research conference is being planned for November 2008, which will bookend the year-long "Celebrating Caribbean Women in Trade Unions" regional lecture series.



Mr. Lincoln Williams
Head, SWTC



Mrs. Desna Robinson
Acting Head, SWTC



Dr. Judith Soares
Head, WAND

In addition to the updating of its several libraries, databases and websites, the Consortium also produced publications, including the SWTC's *Journal of Social Work*, CCDC's *Caribbean Childhoods*, and the newsletters of the HLSTUEI & WAND. Head of the Consortium's Units also participated in regional conferences for social workers and Caribbean child researchers. Ongoing programmes continued to be offered by the CSDR, including the 40+ year-old Four-Month Social Work course and the CYP Diploma in Youth Work. New programmes which have been developed include an ILO course and Child Rights Education and Parenting Education courses.

Professor Meeks Gardner also highlighted the ongoing technical assistance programmes offered by the CDSR through the OAS; the Antiguan Government's request for assistance with increasing gang problems; and the legislation, curriculum development and financing of early childhood programmes in 6 Caribbean countries, which is funded through the CDB.



APAD: Dr. Roger Powley, Acting Director of the Campus's Academic Programming & Delivery Division (APAD), now Consultant, Special Projects, revealed that in Semester I of the 2008/2009 academic year, the Open Campus had received 10,948

applications online as of September 9th. The current enrolment for Associate of Science students (face-to-face) and other online students is now 8,637. According to the numbers, 123 courses and 38 programmes are being offered by the Open Campus this semester.

Dr. Powley also informed the participants that several academic & administrative positions had been filled and ongoing coordinator and tutor training has been implemented across the region.

Over the year, the APAD Division has worked to successfully implement a standardised site orientation for all of its learners and the Online Moodle Introduction for all learners is now up and running. The Open Campus has branded its Moodle learning pages as "The Learning Exchange" (TLE) and Open Campus students have completed their orientation to the site and are now online using the system.

	Open Campus Student Portal my.open.uwi.edu		Open Campus Learning Exchange courses.open.uwi.edu
	Open Campus Student Email mail.my.open.uwi.edu		Open Campus Staff Portal portal.open.uwi.edu

Dr. Powley pointed out that the APAD Division is building on the success of the Academic Support Team and is also working with multiple external agency contracts to ensure quality assurance and variety in its offerings. Even so, some issues still remain to be resolved by the Division, including the recruiting of qualified programme coordinators and curriculum development professionals; merging the former UWIDEC and SCS courses and programmes into a unified approach; partnering with other faculties at the UWI; converting old courses while trying to build new ones with limited staff; and analysing the sustainability of some courses and programmes with low student populations.

As the heart of the Open Campus, the future of the Division remains bright, according to Dr. Powley, as he projects the Campus's future vision of itself as including, applied graduate programmes; partnership with international institutions; the laddering of all programmes; programme leaders in each discipline; sustained growth in UWI-12 registrations; creation of an APAD online collaborative site and being a regional leader in the use of technology in support of educational design & delivery.

The Fancy Story - WAND Project Wins International Award



Fancy, St. Vincent & the Grenadines

Head of WAND, Dr. Judith Soares, has revealed that WAND's community development project in Fancy, St. Vincent and the Grenadines has received an award for "Women's Creativity in Rural Life" from the Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF). The WWSF is an international, non-profit, non-sectarian empowerment NGO, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

WWSF has United Nations consultative status, and is also a humanitarian organisation. The organisation is committed to the development of a new paradigm for women and children. Created in 1991, it works towards the implementation of the rights of women and children and the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). According to Dr. Soares, the Fancy Community Help Group of 22 women was among the 13 laureates worldwide who received this award and one of the two who received it in the Americas. The others were from Africa, Asia and Oceania and Europe. The women of Fancy were particularly recognised for their "Indigenous Community Banking for All" project in a community which has no local access to commercial banking.

WAND's work in Fancy began in 1997 on the advice of its community consultant in St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Ms. Christobel Ashton. She had done work in the community as an adult educator and understood the social dynamics, needs, possibilities and potential of the women of that community. WAND initiated, funded and guided the project under its programme of Community Intervention Initiative. WAND continues to use participatory research methodology as a tool to positively impact women's community development efforts.

Caribbean Women in Trade Union Regional Lecture Series Continues Its 2008 Run



St. Vincent & the Grenadines was latest stop in the year-long regional lecture series dedicated to Caribbean women in trade union development under the theme, *Forever Indebted to Women*. The series is one of the main activities Hugh Lawson Shearer Trade Union Education Institute (HLSTUEI), a part of the Open Campus's Consortium for Social Development and Research (CSDR).

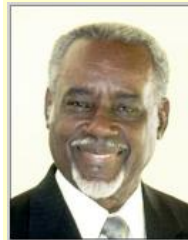
Seated at the head table at the lecture on September 23, 2008, are: Dr. Adrian Fraser, Head, Open Campus, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, who gave the opening remarks, Ms. Marva Phillips, Head, HLSTUEI, who welcomed participants, Professor Julie Meeks Gardner who delivered the lecture, and Mrs. Joy Cato, who extended the vote of thanks.

Staff Winner of a Blackberry from Digicel



Mr. Richard Wallen, Chief Office Attendant in the Hugh Lawson Shearer Trade Union Education Institute (HLSTUEI), receives his Blackberry prize from Dr. Vivienne Roberts. Mr. Wallen was declared the winner of an internal competition held by the Open Campus for a new slogan. Mr. Wallen's entry was judged by the Executive Management team to be the one closest to the final slogan – Online, On site, On demand. The Open Campus uses this opportunity to extend its great appreciation to the marketing team at Digicel Barbados in general, and Ms Marquita Sugrim in particular, for providing us with the highly-desirable prize of a Blackberry phone.

Geoff Brown Passes On



It was with great shock and deep sadness that the Open Campus of the University of the West Indies, learnt of the sudden passing on Monday, 22 September 2008, of Mr. Geoffrey (Geoff) V. Brown, O.D.

Mr. Brown was a distinguished member of the former School of Continuing Studies (SCS), and served for many years as a senior lecturer in the Social Welfare Training Centre (SWTC) until his retirement in 1993. He still lectured on occasion at the SWTC in addition to his other activities as a human resource development and management consultant.

The Director of the Open Campus Country Sites, Mrs. Luz Longworth states that "as a staff member and as Head of the SWTC, Mr. Brown initiated much of the groundwork and was instrumental in providing financial assistance for some of our early specialised units, which provide social development training for the region. On behalf of the staff of the University of the West Indies Open Campus community, the staff at the Social Welfare Training Centre and on my own behalf, I wish to extend heartfelt sympathies to his bereaved family on the passing of an eminent and distinguished gentleman, who served his country, the Caribbean and the hemisphere with distinction."

Online Teaching & Learning Conference



This is a professional development opportunity occurring in October that requires no travel. Jossey-Bass is hosting their second annual Online Teaching & Learning Conference, which is a total online event. The conference will be October 7 & 8, with a special pre-conference on social presence hosted by Fielding Graduate University, on October 6.

Conference attendees will learn practical hands-on techniques for how to teach an online class with a focus on adult learning. In addition each conference attendee can create an instant library by choosing three books from the Jossey-Bass Online Teaching & Learning series. To find out more about the conference, and to register, go to www.onlineteachingandlearning.com

Open Campus People



Miss Marva A. Phillips, Head, Hugh Lawson Shearer Trade Union Education Institute (HLSTUEI), Consortium for Social Development & Research (CSDR)

One of the most recognised women in Caribbean trade union training and development, Ms. Marva A. Phillips has had extensive experience and technical expertise in working with trade union and international labour organisations and personnel in the Caribbean and around the world. She holds a Certificate in Organisation & Community Systems, as well as a Master of Science in Applied Behavioural Science, both from Johns Hopkins University.

Ms. Phillips has been honoured nationally and regionally for her work in the advancement of trade union education. Most recently in 2006, she was the recipient of the Order of Distinction from the Government of Jamaica for outstanding service in the field of Trade Union Education, locally and regionally. That same year, she also received the award for Dedicated Service to the Caribbean Trade Union Movement from the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL).

As Head of the HLSTUEI since 1990, Ms. Phillips is involved in ensuring that the Institute continues its work with trade union personnel in the Caribbean assisting them to function more effectively and efficiently in their various areas of responsibility within the trade union movement. Included among her teaching activities are human relations and interpersonal communications.

Over the years, she has devoted considerable time to the design and development of a *Certificate in Labour Studies*. This successful course has been on offer in the region since 2002. The programme is designed to deliver foundation level education and training in labour studies to meet UWI matriculation requirements.

Ms. Phillips has also represented the Caribbean region and the UWI on numerous occasions as a delegate to international and regional conferences and symposia at which she presented papers related to trade union matters and on union women in particular.

In addition, she has created a series of symposia to honour Caribbean trade union leaders and a regional lecture series as a complement in honour of Caribbean union women.

Included in Ms. Phillips's contribution to public service are the following: Member of Jamaica's National Council on Education, Council member of the Jamaica Confederation of Trade Unions (JCTU), JCTU representative to the Women's Committee of the Inter-American Regional Organisation of Workers, Chair of the JCTU Women's Committee.

New Appointments at the Open Campus

Ms. Karen Lequay, Campus Librarian



Mr. Tommy Chen, Chief Information Officer, Computer and Technical Services (CATS)



Mr. Derrick Thompson
Country Sites Telecommunications Manager, (CATS)



Dr. Olabisi Kuboni, Head of Department, Graduate Programmes, Academic Programming and Delivery Division (APAD)



Dr. Yasmeen Yusef-Khalil
Head of Department, Undergraduate Programmes, APAD



Your Feedback is Welcome

We welcome your comments on the Open Campus, UWI, and encourage you to send your comments on the *Open Letter* to us via e-mail @ marketing@open.uwi.edu.

