



Open Letter

The e-newsletter of the Open Campus, UWI

Open Campus Developments

UWI Open Campus Signs MOU with Parenting Partners International & NCTVET



The Principal of the Open Campus, UWI, Professor Hazel-Simmons-McDonald (left) signs the official Memorandum of Understanding for the Parenting Facilitation Project on behalf of the UWI, at the Caribbean Child Development Centre on July 15, 2008. The project is an initiative shared among the Parenting Partners Caribbean, which is the primary promoter and regional facilitator, the NCTVET, an arm of HEART offering CVQ-work-based qualifications, and the Open Campus, UWI, which will provide facilities and courses. Looking on are Mrs. Luz Longworth, Director, Open Campus Country Sites (standing), Dr. Marigold Thorburn, President, Parenting Partners Caribbean (seated centre) and Mrs. Paulette Dunn-Smith, Senior Director, NCTVET (seated right). Belize and Grenada have started their first courses, and St. Kitts & Nevis and Trinidad & Tobago are about to offer courses.

Nineteen countries are pledged to the project, according to Professor Julie Meeks Gardner (standing, 4th from left), Head of the Caribbean Child Development Centre (CCDC), which forms part of the Open Campus's Consortium for Social Research & Development (CSRDC). Dr. Thorburn also credited Alice Lowe and Janet Brown for the preparatory work that they did on the project, especially on the training manual. She called for the training to be a part of ante-natal care across the region.

Professor Simmons-McDonald lauded the work done by the CCDC at the community level and called this initiative one of the signature programmes of the Open Campus at this time. She pledged that the Open Campus will continue to partner with other regional organisations that work to promote the transformation of the region in tangible ways as the initiative on Parenting Facilitation promises to do.



Current News

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July-August 2008

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OAS Meeting of Caribbean Education Stakeholders Concluded in Barbados

Source: www.southfloridacaribbeannews.com/story.asp?ID=4371

BARBADOS - A group of Caribbean stakeholders concluded a three-day meeting in Barbados on Friday, August 15, in which (it) discussed details of a distance course for educators entitled "Education for Democratic Citizenship in the Caribbean". The course is spearheaded by the Organization of American States (OAS) in partnership with UWI Open Campus and the Ministries of Education of six pilot (countries), and funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Over the course of the Joint Review and Implementation Meeting, representatives from the Ministries of Education of Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago—as well as stakeholders from a broad range of disciplines, including government and politics, teacher education, human rights, gender and citizenship education—reviewed the course script and discussed implementation, monitoring and evaluation issues. Participants also analyzed strategies to promote the distance course in the region to maximize its impact on local, regional and hemispheric policy in the area of citizenship education.

(Professor) Hazel Simmons-McDonald, Pro-Vice Chancellor and Principal of the UWI Open Campus, offered opening remarks at the meeting. Lenore Yaffee Garcia, Director of the Department of Education and Culture at the OAS and Kathryn Dunlop, CIDA's representative based at the Canadian High Commission, delivered the welcoming remarks.

The early 21st century finds the English-speaking Caribbean at a crossroads in the development of its democracy. On one hand, the Caribbean boasts a healthy tradition of adherence to the institutions, norms, and practices of liberal democracy. On the other hand, there is a realization that democracy is a lived reality, and its successes are not guaranteed by the presence of institutions and law, but by individual attitudes and behavior and by cultural practices which shape human interrelationships. It is in this context that teacher trainees and current classroom teachers from across the Caribbean are being called upon to participate in the "Education for Democratic Citizenship in the Caribbean" course.

The three-year project is expected to strengthen teaching practices at the classroom level so that teachers and students become more democratic and reflective. Specific recommendations emerging from this week's meeting will be used to finalize the course script and it is anticipated that the course will be piloted in January 2009.

Open Campus Staff Articulate Vision at 2008 Staff Retreat

During the summer months of July and August 2008, the Open Campus continued its transition of the former Outreach Sectors into the newest campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI) which is being established to provide a broader range of services to the UWI-12 countries and underserved communities with established campuses. In the ongoing process of integrating and engaging sectors of the current management and administrative staff of the Open Campus, the Executive Management of the Open Campus organised a two-day retreat on July 16 and 17 at the Medallion Hall Hotel in Jamaica.

Most of the senior academic and administrative staff in attendance came from all across the region to ensure participation from a

broad constituency of the former Outreach Sectors - The School of Continuing Studies (SCS), the UWI Distance Education Centre (UWIDEC) and the Tertiary Level Institutions Unit (TLIU) that are being integrated to form the Open Campus.

It has been acknowledged that the three former entities have their own unique culture and the merging of these entities will require special attention to the different cultures. Further, within each country where the Open Campus is located, different sub-cultures exist.



The two-day retreat was organised for the purpose of orienting staff to the strategic objectives of the Open Campus, to discuss these objectives and to generate action plans for achieving them within the time frame of the strategic planning period set by the University.

The main objectives of the staff retreat were to provide staff with a forum for discussing their vision of the Open Campus; to ensure a common understanding of the issues that are related to the formation and successful operation of the Open Campus; to delineate an action plan for the next academic year and to identify goals for the longer term of the strategic plan period; to discuss the management of the change process and seek the commitment of staff to this process; to discuss the integration of former units into the new campus and to seek a common alignment among staff of the various sectors to the vision and goals of the Open Campus.

Ninety five members of staff from the UWI Open Campus attended the retreat. The activities on the first day were facilitated by the company, Growth Facilitators, which reported that the engagement of the participants was high and the group dynamics were good. The results of the evaluation indicated that 80% of the participants were highly satisfied.

"The fact that all parties involved in the process were brought together to meet and to express their vision and thoughts on the implementation of the Open Campus was much appreciated by the majority of the participants, as was the interactive and participative nature of the session. Participants welcomed the interaction with all team members regardless of position and background, and the fact that all views could be expressed and were valued."

In their recommendations to the UWI Open Campus Management team, the facilitators noted that the Open Campus staff had articulated the need to be heard as being important to their feeling of being valued and empowered. They also recommended that "considering this and the diversity of the group and number of persons affected and involved in the merger process, we recommend that UWI Open Campus should have a team of Change Managers. They should be trained in managing change and in the facilitation of meetings and decision making methods, to be more effective in addressing resistance to change and in leveraging the knowledge and expertise of the group."



On the second day of the retreat, staff participated in an in-house exercise which built on the issues and key actions that had emerged on the first day of the retreat. It gave the Open Campus staff an opportunity to work as functional groups to interrogate the vision and to determine the actions that would be required to enable them to achieve the goals that had been set. The day concluded on a lighter note with talented members of the Open Campus staff engaging in various performance activities at a concert. The following goals for the Open Campus were articulated by the staff who attended the retreat.

By 2020, the UWI Open Campus will be the ultimate choice for human development

- enabling the UWI to be a highly ranked, internationally accredited premier institution, in the top 10 for open and distance learning.
- contributing to positive transformation of Caribbean people & society by enabling social, economic, political, regional integration & overall well-being.

The UWI Open Campus will offer

- open access for all with increased intra- and extra-regional enrolment of the UWI Open Campus.
- innovative, relevant programmes enabled by state of our technology.
- internationally acclaimed research agenda influencing Caribbean socio-economic development & policies, & training & education globally.

The UWI Open Campus will be

- staffed by a highly trained, motivated, professional, knowledgeable and flexible team of high international repute.
- financially viable based on endowments, investment and cost efficiency.

Highlights from the Open Campus 2008 Staff Retreat and Staff Conference - July 14-18, 2008

Work Hard!



Professor Meeks Garner, Head, CSDR/CCDC, addresses staff at the break-out session of the Consortium for Social Research & Development



Open Campus staff members listen attentively to the University Registrar, Mr. C. William Iton, as he addresses them on leadership.



Open Campus staff members listen keenly to the facilitator's instructions



A prize from the retreat facilitator, Marguerite Orane to Gillian Glean-Walker, Open Campus, Jamaica Eastern

Play Hard! The Playful Side of the Open Campus!



Dramatising a typical day in the hectic life of a regional Head of an Open Campus site!



Having a good belly laugh



Demonstrating the Punta Rock, a Belizean dance move!



The Principal evokes the spirit of Billie Holiday!



Taking serious things and making jokes - a wonderful time was had by all, enjoying the performances of the talented Open Campus crew after a hard week of work!

Open Campus People



Miss Sheryl Whitehall, Campus Bursar

The University is pleased to announce the appointment of Ms. Sheryl Whitehall as the Open Campus Bursar, effective October 1, 2008. A Trinidadian national, Ms. Whitehall has risen through the ranks of financial management and enjoyed a varied and fulfilling career as a certified accountant.

Ms. Whitehall is joining the Open Campus after a distinguished career with the international firm, Aureos Advisers Ltd in London since 2001. This company is the subsidiary of a global private equity fund manager in emerging markets and a joint venture between CDC Group PLC and Norfud. As the Group Financial Controller and Company Secretary of Aureos Advisors Ltd., Ms. Whitehall was responsible for a group of just over 20 subsidiaries, and managed just as many private equity funds in Africa, Central America, South-East Asia, South Asia, the Pacific and China.

Throughout her career, she has worked with many other international and regional accounting firms and agencies. She received her start at Coopers and Lybrand in Trinidad & Tobago as a trainee accountant, before earning her ACCA. As Finance and Administration Manager at the Trinidad and Tobago Export Development Corporation in 1984, she designed and implemented all the accounting and internal control procedures and the computerisation of the accounting system of the corporation.

She also worked at Ernst & Young in Barbados where she honed her post-ACCA skills and in 1992 was seconded for a year to one of the firm's clients in the manufacturing sector as Corporate Services Manager and Corporate Secretary. She returned to Trinidad & Tobago for a while to work for the UWI as a finance officer on an \$82m regional project, which was funded by a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the Caribbean Development Bank. She then decided to gain experience in the growing area of private equity, by joining the CDC Group PLC as the Finance Manager of its Caribbean operations. Ms. Whitehall has now come full circle back to the UWI to work for the Open Campus, where we welcome her international experience within our international university.

Open Campus New and Acting Appointments

Barbados – Mr. Ian Austin will be on study leave for Semester I. Dr. Dan Carter has been appointed to replace Mr. Austin for the period August 18-December 31. Dr. Carter may be contacted at the Barbados Open Campus site or at danc@yahoo.com

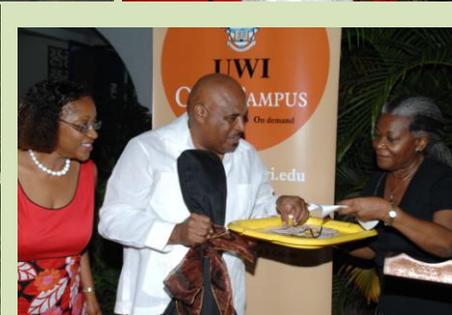
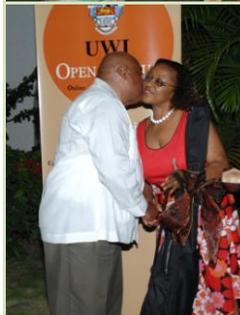
British Virgin Islands – Ms. Patricia Hodge will be acting as Head of the BVI site as of August 2008. She may be contacted at patricia.hodge@uwi.vg

Cayman Islands - Mr. Robert Geofroy has been temporarily appointed as University Representative for the Cayman Islands. Mr. Geofroy may be contacted at rgeofroy@ucci.edu.ky

CSDR (SWTC) - Mrs. Desna Robinson has been appointed to act for Mr. Lincoln Williams as Head of the Social Welfare Training Centre (SWTC) while Mr. Williams is on sabbatical leave for 2008/2009. She may be contacted at desna.robinson@open.uwi.edu or swtc@open.uwi.edu

Saying a Fond Farewell to One of Our Own - Mr. Matthew William, Former Head, Open Campus, Bahamas

The Open Campus had a very busy week during UWI's Convocation Week, the peak of the celebrations of the University's 60 years as a regional higher education institution. In addition to all the formal UWI activities, the Open Campus also held its first annual staff conference and retreat to plan our new path to the future. We also gathered together for the first time as Open Campus staff members to say a fond adieu to Mr. Matthew William who has been, since 1990, a very special part of the former School of Continuing Studies. Matthew is known to many of us as a gentleman, a scholar, an academic leader, a diplomat, a Caribbean man, and an astute observer of Bahamian politics and lifestyle. We at the Open Campus are proud to honour his work and commitment to service, leadership, and advancing higher education for all in the Bahamas. All his former colleagues wished him well at a special appreciation function on July 29, 2008. Please enjoy some of the highlights of the function.



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.

