



## FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, UWI

### MONTHLY DEPARTMENTAL REPORT TO FST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**Department: CHEMISTRY**

**Report for the Month of: - DECEMBER 2024 – JANUARY 2025**

#### ITEMS

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1. Workshops/Conferences/Seminars/Symposia

<u>DATE</u>	<u>NAME, TITLE, AFFILIATION</u>	<u>TITLE OF SEMINAR</u>
<b>December 5, 2024</b>	<b>Dr. Trudy Thomas-Smith,</b> Associate Professor, State University of New York (SUNY) Oneonta Campus	"Teaching and Practicing Analytical Chemistry at a Primarily Undergraduate Institution: One person's perspective and experience."
<b>December 11, 2024</b>	<b>Dr. Singh-Wilmot,</b> Senior Lecturer, Chemistry Department GCLS/LAMISTAD CILAC forum satellite event entitled "Synchrotrons in the Greater Caribbean and Beyond"	"A Unique Funding Model for Scientific Capacity Building in the Global South: The crXstal Example"
<b>January 10, 2025</b>	<b>Dr. Chantal Tracey,</b> Researcher and Lecturer, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry ITMO University St. Petersburg, Russia.	"Development of advanced functional materials for application in the biomedical, food, and energy sectors".
<b>January 23, 2025</b>	<b>Dr. Christopher Hossack,</b> Pacific Northwest National Lab, Washington D.C.	"Harnessing Ligand Design to Tune the Electronic Structure, Luminescence and Single-Molecule Magnetism of Lanthanide Complexes".

<b>January 30, 2025</b>	<b>Ms. Nadesha Pinnock &amp; Daina Barrett</b> , Members American Chemical Society, Jamaica Student Chapter	“Advancing Chemistry Education Beyond The Classroom: Outreach Initiatives of The ACS Jamaica Chapter”.
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## 2. Staff Awards (Locally and Internationally)

**Dr. Raymond Reid** (25 yr) and the UWI Mona Analytical Chemistry Laboratory (UWIMAC 30 yr) were acknowledged for Long Service to the Jamaica Racing Commission (JRC), at the JRC’s annual dinner held in December 2024.

## 3. Research Grants

Congratulations to **Dr. Debbie-Ann Gordon-Smith** (Research Project Team Lead) and the FST team (principal investigators **Dr. Arpita Mandal**, Department of Geography and Geology and **Dr. Louis-Ray Harris**, Department of Physics) on being awarded a technical assistance grant of US\$909,000, from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), aimed at “Strengthening Water Resource Management to Build Climate Resilience in Coastal and Inland Communities – Jamaica”. The project will be carried out over the next 21 months and is being executed under the CDB’s Caribbean Action for Resilience Enhancement (CARE) Programme, which is funded by the European Union. The grant award was reported in the local media: <https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/2025/01/08/cdb-approves-us909000-grant-strengthen-water-resource-management-build-climate-resilience/>.

**Dr. Debbie-Ann Gordon-Smith** obtained a travel grant from International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to attend the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON) Executive Council Meeting in Seattle, USA.

**Mr. Jordan McKenzie** received US\$2,800 from the Mona Campus Committee for Research & Publications and Graduate Awards to cover cost of NMR analysis of compounds (University of Toronto) associated with the project entitled “NMR Analysis of Steroid Analogues obtained from Microbial Fermentations.”

**Mr. Onerio Cherrington** received US\$2,790.56 from the Mona Campus Committee for Research & Publications and Graduate Awards to cover cost of NMR analysis of compounds (University of Toronto) associated with the project entitled “An investigation into the secondary metabolites produced by the marine-derived fungi *Paraconiothyrium cyclothyrioides* and *Eurotium chevalieri*.”

#### 4. Professional Activities (Appointment to Boards, Civic Duties etc.)

**Mr. Newton Smith** participated in the Volatile Emissions Observation (VEO) Training and Certification programme January 2025, organised by the National Environment and Protection Agency (NEPA).

**Dr. Debbie-Ann Gordon-Smith** attended the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON) Executive Council Meeting hosted by the University of Washington, Seattle, USA from January 28-30, 2025. **Dr. Gordon-Smith** is co-chair of the GOA-ON Caribbean Hub Steering Committee and the Caribbean Representative on the GOA-ON Executive Council. The meeting focused on the identification of short-term priorities and key actions for the three GOA-ON high level goals as well as global actions and targets for the year 2025.

#### 5. Visitors

**Dr. Trudy Thomas-Smith**, Associate Professor at the State University of New York (SUNY) Oneonta Campus, visited the Department from November 14 to December 11, 2024 during part of her Sabbatical Leave. While in Jamaica, she carried out initial collaborative research examining the occurrence of Colored Dissolved Organic Matter (CDOM) in fresh water samples across the country. Plans for another exercise in the spring or summer of 2025 are being developed. Dr Thomas-Smith has agreed to act as External Examiner for the Department's courses in Analytical Chemistry.

**Dr. Chantal Tracey**, Postdoctoral Researcher and Lecturer, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at ITMO University in St. Petersburg, Russia, and a double major (Chemistry and Biochemistry) graduate of The UWI, visited in January 2025. While at The UWI, Dr. Tracey, a materials chemist, conducted research on the performance, under sunlight, of a photocatalyst she had developed for wastewater management. She had previously established its effectiveness under lamp light and ultraviolet irradiation. In addition to giving a seminar on her research interests, discussions were held with a number of faculty members and arrangements made to initiate collaborative research projects. Dr. Tracey was eager to celebrate her ties to The UWI and the faculty and participated in several interviews and a photoshoot organised by the FST Visibility Officer, **Mrs. Terry-Ann Collins-Fray**. Her professional profile can be found at

<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=KtPBXrUAAAJ&hl=en&oi=ao>.



FST Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1Dh5pRW44q/>

## 6. Other

The Department welcomed the news of the appointment of Chemistry alumnus, **Professor Navindra Seeram** (former graduate student of **Professor Emerita Helen Jacobs**) as the Dean, School of Pharmacy at the University of New England (<https://www.une.edu/news/2024/une-appoints-biomedical-researcher-lead-school-pharmacy>).

Chemistry Department's annual Christmas Luncheon was held on December 18, 2024. The HOD extended thanks to the staff for their work and effort in the Department throughout the year.

Condolences were extended to the family and friends of a former colleague Mrs. Laurianne Brown who previously worked as a Secretary III and switchboard operator in the Chemistry Department.

The Department of Chemistry noted the passing of a former colleague and alumnus, **Dr. Alfred M.W. Sangster** OJ, CD, JP, BSc, PhD, FJIM. Dr. Sangster obtained his PhD in Organic Chemistry in 1958, under the guidance of Professor Cedric Hassall (first Head of Chemistry Department). He was an Assistant Lecturer then Lecturer in Chemistry, and supervised several research projects up to 1970, before leaving to take up the position of Principal of the then College of Arts Science and Technology. Dr. Sangster assisted former PVC and Professor Leslie Robinson "in the earliest stages of the establishment of the campus in Barbados".

**Dr. Winklet Gallimore** and **Dr. Donna Minott Kates**, were members of the FST delegation, led by Dean Professor Michael Taylor, which visited the Scientific Research Council (SRC), January 22, 2025. The FST team held discussions with **Dr. Charah Watson**, Executive Director, and other members of the SRC on the research interests across the FST and possible alignment with the activities of the SRC. A tour of the research facilities and pilot plant concluded the visit.