

THE UWI MONA CAMPUS

2. A RESEARCH AGENDA IMPACT

As the leading research university in the English-speaking Caribbean, the UWI pursues a research agenda whose primary goal is to respond to national and regional development imperatives, contribute to knowledge in all disciplines, while impacting teaching and learning in the academy. In AY 2015–16 our researchers acquired more than twice the amount of external grants over the previous academic year to advance the Campus’s research activity.

As has been described earlier, we entered into a number of partnerships with local Industry and overseas universities to enhance and fund our research agenda. The Western Jamaica Campus (WJC) was especially aggressive in formulating research partnerships with the Montego Bay Chamber of Commerce and Industry to spearhead research aimed at determining the causes of crime in that region. This research project is in its preliminary stages.

WJC also secured funding from the Office of the Principal under the New Initiatives Grant programme to conduct research that will lead to the production of a biography of Emile Martin, and a film featuring other key figures in the





ACTING DEVELOPMENT



development of the tourism and cultural industries of Western Jamaica.

The UWI Development Fund (UWIDEF) continued to provide financial support to the research unit, Solutions for Developing Countries (SODECO), headed by Professor Terrence Forrester. In AY 2015–16, UWIDEF paid out \$18.7M of the \$30M pledged in 2015, in support of SODECO'S research related to diabetes, hypertension and stroke.

To be in line with cutting-edge research, the UWI became members of the Global Virus Network (GVN). UWIDEF supported this initiative, providing US\$25,000 for UWI'S membership in this global endeavor. This puts the research team in the School of Medicine in direct contact with scientists around the world seeking on-going solutions for viruses such as H1N1, Chik V and Zika.

A research team from Tropical Medicine Research Institute (TMRI) that included Professor Susan Walker and Drs Susan Chang-Lopez and Helen Baker-Henningham, undertook research leading to an intervention study in Jamaica, Antigua and St Lucia that integrated early childhood

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The Hon. Dennis Lalor (3rd from left), Chairman of UWIDEF, hands over a \$25M cheque to Principal McDonald and the Hon. Dr Marshall Hall, Mona Campus Council Chairman (5th from left) for assistance in membership of the Global Virus Network (GVN). Sharing in the ceremony were Professor John Lindo, Department of Medicine, and Mrs Carla Seaga, Executive Director, UWIDEF.

development interventions with health and nutrition programmes.

Professor Michael Taylor and Dr Tennecia Stephenson led the Caribbean Weather Impacts Group (CARIWIG) which includes 15 research students, in research that focussed on Caribbean Weather Impacts. The team developed tools for examining the effect of climate extremes on life, and a web portal to provide access to Caribbean data.

In its commitment to improving its research agenda, the relatively newly established Mona School of Engineering (MSE), welcomed Dr David Parker, the second participant in its Revolving Scholar Programme, who visited the School from January 4 to March 31, 2016. A senior lecturer in Business Operations at the University of Queensland Business School, Dr Parker delivered

a public lecture titled, *Confronting the implementation gap: Why do good ideas fail to get implemented?*. In addition to contributing to the design of the new 12 months *MSc in Logistics and Supply Chain Management* programme, Dr Parker undertook collaborative research with members of the Decision Sciences and Information Systems Unit. The collaboration resulted in a number of published cases with the University of Cranfield Case Centre, and facilitated an executive education course on supply chain management and faculty development workshops that focused on case study writing.

The School's Dr Adrian Lawrence was awarded the ASTM International Journal of Testing and Evaluation's Outstanding Article Award for his paper titled, "Effects of Thermal Conductivity of Soil on Temperature Development and Cracking in Mass Concrete Footing", published in Volume 43, Issue 5, 2014.

Researchers from the Faculty of Law, Dr Shazeeda Ali, Mrs Suzanne Ffolkes-Goldson and Ms Tracey Robinson produced three books (one each) that make significant contributions to Caribbean constitutional law, and to the important topic of ethics in business.

The Faculty of Humanities and Education's desire to sustain and promote the existing robust research culture informed the inauguration of its annual *Ideas that Matter Colloquium and Distinguished Lecture* at the beginning of the academic year, under the leadership of Professor Hubert Devonish. This new effort is intended, among other things, to select broad, cross-cutting contemporary themes that can mobilise both staff





and research students across the various disciplines into a truly cross-disciplinary discourse. To inaugurate this “Series,” the FHE selected the following themes: *Humanities and Education in the Cultural and Creative Industries* and *Education and Communication in a Digital Age*. The themes were selected because they were deemed critical to the initial multidisciplinary programmes the Faculty has decided to introduce in order to enrich its offerings, rebrand the Faculty, and also increase student enrolment.

The Natural Products Institute (NPI) launched its handbook, *Potential Drug Interactions for Commonly Used Medicinal Plants & Foods in Jamaica*.

The handbook, is a practical guide to avoid adverse drug reactions. The expectation is that physicians, pharmacists, other health care professionals and patients will use this handbook which includes approximately 70 potential interactions by 30 herbs and foods commonly used in Jamaica. It summarises a decade of



research conducted at the NPI. The information from the handbook has been applied to form an app that can be used easily by the medical community for quick reference. Additionally, NPI will create a webpage to update new findings emanating from the institute. The authors hope that the handbook will help increase awareness of this public-health issue, and mitigate potential adverse drug reactions in the country.

Research activity at the Mona Campus is not only initiated at the level of the Faculty. For instance, through the operation of the Campus’s

ISO ACCREDITED PESTICIDE RESEARCH LABORATORY



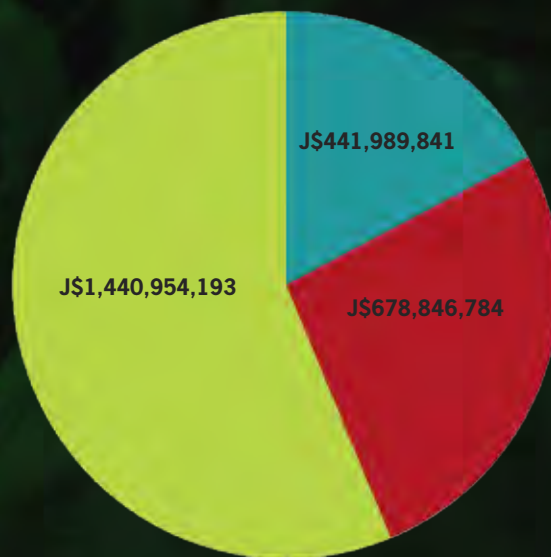
Professor Paul Reese, Dean of the Faculty of Science and Technology addressing the gathering at the function to recognise Jamaica National Agency for Accreditation’s granting the ISO certification to the Pesticide Research Lab





• RESEARCH •

EXTERNAL FUNDING
ACQUIRED BY STAFF FOR
RESEARCH



2013/14 2014/15 2015/16

Wastewater Treatment Plant, the Estate Management Division (EMD) identified limitations in the wastewater quality monitoring programme that is enforced by local regulatory and monitoring agencies. The EMD engaged departments within the Faculty of Science and Technology (FST) in discussions aimed at developing an improved wastewater quality monitoring programme for use by the Campus and at other treatment plants in Jamaica.

The objectives of the collaboration were to:

1. Establish a more sustainable wastewater quality monitoring programme for the campus.
2. Create an avenue for wastewater treatment research and development.
3. Create an avenue for the reduction of the

Campus's environmental footprint through ICT utilisation.

4. Improve methods used for the monitoring of wastewater quality.
5. Utilise the university's resources through a multidisciplinary approach to solve a global issue.
6. Demonstrate climate change resilience in the UWI's operations.

The result of the discussions was the development of a working Automated Wastewater Quality Monitoring Unit-prototype. Version 1 of a web-based data management platform was also developed and tested with data received from the prototype monitoring unit. With the prototype fully developed, funding is needed for the production units.

Faculty Research Recognition



Thirty-two (32) members of faculty had their research recognised in the Principal's Research Awards Ceremony, and highlighted in the awards booklet produced for Research Day 2016. Professor Hopeton Dunn (*front row, second from right*), who is leading a team in a major energy project to improve personal practice and overall understanding of Energy Conservation in Jamaica, was one of the awardees.



RESEARCH GRADUATE STUDIES

In its ongoing effort to grow its complement of research graduate students, the Campus in AY 2015–16, initiated a number of measures. It introduced several new research degrees, among them, the *MPhil/PhD Ageing Studies*, *MPhil/PhD TVET and Training and Workforce Development*, *MPhil/PhD Applied Physics*, and *MPhil/PhD Law*.

The Office of Graduate Studies and Research (OGSR), collaborating with the Office of Student Services and Development, the Marketing, Recruitment and Communications Office, the International Students' Office and the Faculties initiated a General Orientation programme for new graduate students. A component of this orientation was a workshop for new research students titled, *Getting Started*. This was in response to the need for early initiation of student researchers into the community of scholars and the research culture of the Campus, while providing information about the facilities for study and funding that are available.

OGSR held a Discussion Forum at the Mona Visitors' Lodge and Conference Centre aimed at formulating strategies for recruiting graduate students and marketing graduate programmes. A key deliverable of this forum was the development of *A Toolkit of Best Practice Strategies* for recruiting graduate students and marketing graduate programmes. This toolkit covered five critical areas: Pre-Application, Post-Application, Post-Acceptance of Offer, Post-Registration, and Available Information Resources. The toolkit was circulated to all key stakeholders across the Campus, and a Web-interactive toolkit is currently being developed to be launched in the current academic year 2016–17.

In continuing our efforts to improve the service delivery to our students and prospective students, the OGSR also designed the Graduate Students Special Envoy (GSSE) outreach programme. The aim of the programme is to create a rich and supportive community for current and prospective graduate students. Therefore, members of the GSSE will be expected to participate in, and give support to:

- Graduate Information Sessions, Open House and Campus Tours
- General Orientation for graduate students (mandatory)
- Networking receptions for new students
- Graduation ceremonies (hosts/ushers)
- Awards & recognition ceremonies (for example, Scholars' Breakfast)

The GSSE outreach programme was launched at the Evening of Excellence in Honour of UWI Scholars held on June 1 at the Mona Visitors' Lodge and Conference Centre, and has been widely supported. Special envoys will receive the prestigious GSSE pin to be worn alongside the UWI lapel pin.

OGSR also introduced a world class Graduate Information Guide. This is a very attractive, informative and user-friendly guide geared towards new and prospective students. It showcases (i) the full list of graduate programmes (including doctoral programme options A-Z); (ii) enrollment options (FT/PT/SVUS/Online); (iii) Tuition fee structure; (iv) General and entry requirements; (v) Application guidelines through a 5-Step guide; and (vi) A synopsis on each Faculty. Another exciting feature is information on Campus life, including clubs, societies and associations; housing accommodation; dining

WITH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE OFFICE, SOME GRADUATE STUDENTS ALSO ATTENDED OVERSEAS CONFERENCES WITH A VIEW TO PRESENTING PAPERS. FACULTIES ORGANISED WORKSHOPS TARGETED SPECIFICALLY AT ADDRESSING ISSUES RELATED TO POSTGRADUATE STUDENT LEARNING.

facilities; security and parking; and health and library services. There is also contact information on the International Students Office and the Lodgings Office.

The OGSR organised three student workshops for research students, and made efforts to institutionalise the activities. The workshops were geared towards each of three groups: research student starting, those upgrading, and those finalising. All Faculty deputy deans were involved, and each workshop was oversubscribed, with an average of seventy-five (75) students attending.

With financial assistance from the Office, some graduate students also attended overseas conferences with a view to presenting papers. Faculties organised workshops targeted specifically at addressing issues related to postgraduate student learning. These issues, among others, included time management skills, supervisor/supervisee relationship in research supervision, as well as the techniques of thesis writing.

Furthering its goal to improve throughput, OGSR held, in 2015–16, its second supervisors' training programme, with 25 participants. Supervisors, in addition to the set course lectures, identified a number of areas where they needed more training, including time management and recognising mental illness in students.

The Graduate Studies Thesis Tracker

The Graduate Studies Thesis Tracker (GSTT) is an application which was developed to provide an efficient way of tracking and monitoring the status of thesis examinations. OGSR spearheaded this

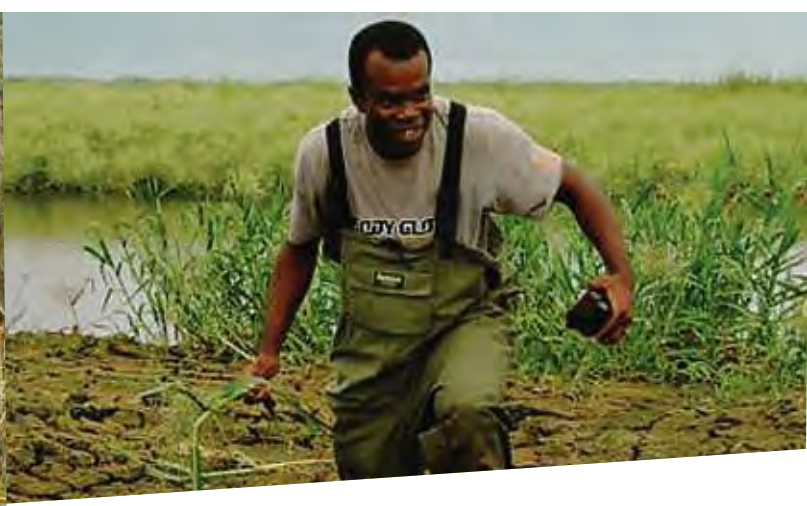
initiative which is to be used University-wide. Since the Application was migrated to the Production Database on June 9, 2016, three (3) students successfully submitted their application for examination using the system.

The GSTT was designed to:

- streamline the process flow
- improve communication with students
- enhance information flow
- provide ease of submission of examiner's report, and
- provide ease in tracking the status of the thesis examination.

The Tracker is a transparent system that allows students to follow three easy steps in applying for examination of their theses, submitting, and monitoring the progress of the examination. A User Guide has also been developed to assist students in using this system.

Over the past six years, graduate students have been able to participate in a range of activities hosted by the OGSR during the Research Days at Mona. The Graduate Students' Lounge revolutionised the way graduate students experienced Research Days. In 2016, the tagline was *Experience the Graduate Students' Lounge* and the signature activity was a demo/workshop on the Graduate Studies Thesis Tracker system to finalising research students. Over the two-day period, the lounge provided an opportunity for graduate students to engage in interactive group and one-on-one discussions with presenters in a relaxing and caring atmosphere, and avail themselves of important informational brochures.





RESEARCH STUDENT AWARDS



In AY 2015–16, five students received PhDs with high commendation: Dale Rankine (PhD Physics) who also received the Most Outstanding Thesis Award for the thesis titled, *Assessing Yield Response to Water in Root Crops in Present and Future Climates: An Application of the FAO Aquacrop Model for Jamaica Sweet Potato (*Ipomoea batatas*)*.

Sandra McCalla (PhD Philosophy) received the Most Outstanding Thesis Award for her thesis titled, *Performance Enhancement Drugs in Sports: An Inquiry into the Freedom and Responsibility of Athletes*. Keino Senior (PhD Gender and Development Studies) produced the second thesis, and first high commendation from the Institute for Gender and Development Studies titled, *Untold Stories of Abortion: Masculinities and Fatherhood*. Norda Stephenson (PhD Chemistry), received high commendation for her thesis titled, *Developing Critical Thinkers in Introductory Chemistry: The Science Writing and Workshop Technique (SWWT) Experience*. Orville Beckford (PhD Cultural Studies) received high commendation for his thesis titled, *The Missing Dialectics: An Examination of the Management Studies Programme at the University of the West Indies for Cultural Content and Relevance*.

Plaques were presented to the departments of Chemistry, Institute for Caribbean Studies and Institute for Gender and Development Studies, for their outstanding supervision of research students.



Research student awardees pose with Minister Horace Chang (front row, second right), Coordinator, Graduate Studies and Research and research supervisors at the “Evening of Excellence Awards” function, July 1, 2016.



