

WESTERN JAMAICA CAMPUS

Montego Bay

Year ending July 31, 2017



PATRICK PRENDERGAST, MA (CSBC)
Campus Director (Actg.)

– Overview –

During the 2016–2017 academic year faculty and staff of the UWI Mona-Western Jamaica Campus were engaged in several initiatives aimed at strengthening both the quality assurance processes and the physical infrastructure capacity to deliver on the promise of providing the best experience for all stakeholders, especially our students. The theme for the year was Transforming for Growth which provided the frame for intended expansion in: programme offerings at the undergraduate and graduate levels; physical plant and information infrastructure; and new student intake. It also spoke to the matter of improving the human resource capacity which led to increased and sustained staff engagement with the Human Resource and Management Department over the past year.

While no new programmes were offered, the dialogue is far advanced and we look forward to the introduction of courses and programmes in education, entertainment management and cultural enterprise, information systems management, library management, and sociology as early as January 2018. The proposed expansion of our programmes and physical plant would further locate the campus at the centre of the commercial, health and technological transformation taking place in the city of Montego Bay and bring added value to the social and cultural economy of the city.

For the 2016–2017 academic year we surpassed the 800 student population combining both undergraduate and graduate students. This was due to an increase in new students of just under 20 percent as well as improvement in retention of returning students. At the end of the academic year we had 786 undergraduates and 66 graduates for total of 852 registered students. This is compared to the July 31, 2016 numbers at 715 undergraduate and 74 graduate students with an overall total of 789

which was itself an improvement over our highest registration mark of 778 at the end of 2014/2015. This growth can be sustained with deeper embrace of new and emerging communication activities by the University's administration (See appendix for student application and registration numbers.)

The outreach and community enterprise as well as student development programmes took advantage and saw all round success in widening the reach of the UWI Community Film Project (UWICFP); deepening the involvement of student groups such as the Future Psychologist Association and the Student Nurses Association (UWISON); engaging the Mona Social Services (MSS); and initiating campus-based and community centred events with Bank of Jamaica, Jamaica National, Planning Institute of Jamaica, and National Housing Trust.

The continued growth of the campus is critical and is dependent on the development of a professional workforce and the promotion of a collective culture grounded in institutional advancement and community transformation. We are excited by the drive of our young academics to engage in research and publication and the increased participation of our undergraduates and graduate students in research initiatives. The main publication of an edited volume, *The Economic Transformation of Jamaica*, in February 2017 features several chapters by WJC academics combined with that of other stakeholders from critical areas of national economic development and underscores the value of partnerships between academia and industry.

Overall, the campus continued to play a significant role in the development of the Western region and must seek to highlight that difference in the coming 2017–2018 academic year which will mark the tenth year of its presence in the city of Montego Bay, Jamaica.

PUBLICATIONS

- Anderson, R. and Longworth, L. (Editors) (2016) *Economic transformation of Jamaica – Policies, competitiveness and technology innovations*. Indiana, USA: Trafford Publishing.

- Campbell, Steffon (2017) “Out of many one Love? A Comparative study on the nature of sexual communication in polyamory and monogamy in the Caribbean” (115–141) in Karen Carpenter (Editor) *Interweaving Tapestries of Culture and Sexuality in the Caribbean*. Palgrave Macmillan.

PUBLIC LECTURES

- The campus hosted several public engagement activities chief among which are our now established February Lecture Series and the CARIMAC-WJC Distinguished Lecture in April. The February Lecture Series, now in its second year kicked off 2017 with the official launch of our publication, *Economic Transformation of Jamaica*. The keynote was delivered by Pro Vice-Chancellor for Global Affairs, Ambassador Dr. Richard Bernal. The other lectures in the series included: *The Economics of Crime in Jamaica* presented by Dr. Leroy Binns, (adjunct lecturer, Department of Government) and *Shifting the Philosophy and Geography of Entertainment Reason: A Jamaican Music Culture of Sound Regulation Versus Noise Abatement in a New Regulated Era* by Dr. Sonjah Stanley Niaah, Senior Lecturer, Institute of Caribbean Studies.
- The 7th annual CARIMAC-WJC Public Lecture was held on April 12 under the theme *Get it together – The role of media in Caribbean integration* delivered by noted Caribbean media giant, Mr. Ken Gordon on April 11, 2017.
- Earlier in the year, the Press Association of Jamaica (PAJ) supported by the Public Affairs Division of the US Embassy in Jamaica executed a public lecture and awards presentation during Journalism Week in November 2016. The lecture was delivered by Kevin Z. Smith, deputy director of the Kiplinger Programme in Public Affairs Journalism and examined the role Jamaican media played in the coverage of grief. A special presentation was made to Mr. Lloyd B. Smith, founder and Managing Editor of the *Western Mirror*, as well as the announcement of a special PAJ scholarship to a CARIMAC student valued at JA\$50,000.

PUBLIC SERVICE

- **Ms. Inderia Adjudah**, WJC Administrative Officer, served as Chairman of the Administrative Professionals Week Committee 2016/2017 for the St. James Chapter of The Jamaica Association of Administrative Professionals. She is also a member of the MoBay City Run Committee in charge of Volunteers/ Marshalls and Water Stations.
- **Mr. Patrick Prendergast** served a second year as Director of the Montego Bay Chamber of Commerce and Industry up to April 2017. He also continues as the leader of the Association of Western Jamaica Tertiary Institutions.
- **Ms. Nicole Plummer** and **Mr. Steffon Campbell** continue to play critical research and communication roles as part of the Rastafari Coral Gardens Committee/UWI-Mona, WJC Working Group.

INCOME GENERATION

With a significant increase in new student intake for the 2016–2017 academic year there was even greater demand on the limited space available for teaching, co-curricular and other critical community enterprise activities. However, we continued to promote external use of our facilities as part of the income generation strategy. A strategic balance between the internal obligations and outside requests allowed the campus to increase its earnings from basic rental of space to just over JA\$2.490 million.

The WJC Branch Library continues to generate some income from its reprographic and allied services to the tune of JA\$1.093 million, while Office of the Director executed a US\$25,000.00 IDB funded bi-lingual project (Basic Spanish) for the BPO sector. This was done in collaboration with the Business Process Industry Association of Jamaica (BPIAJ) in Montego Bay.

INTERNAL OPERATIONS

The focus over the period under review was on developing effective transition between Admissions, Registration and Examinations while

building on the systems that would improve the quality of delivery and number of services provided at WJC. Mechanisms were introduced to shorten the waiting period for services that would normally be provided directly at Mona. For example, the newly engaged Administrative Assistant with specific responsibility for Examinations led a process of proactive application of the UWI Examinations Regulations, orientation for staff and students, re-training of all invigilators, and more direct communication with the Mona Examinations Section. There is more work to be done but the various teams are committed to improving student relations with the systems and procedures from admission to graduation.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENTERPRISE

The UWI Community Film Project (UWICFP) has become a significant part of the community outreach agenda expanding to seven communities over the last two years. The communities involved in 2016–2017 were Canterbury, Catadupa, Flanker, Granville, Norwood, Pitfour, and Salt Spring with 14 participants completing the training. One of the feature films in GATTFEST 2017 examined the state of coral reefs along the Western Jamaica shoreline was produced by a couple WJC participants and drawing on the expertise of the Discovery Bay Marine Lab.

Two new initiatives emerged from the expanded presence of the UWICFP. The first involved a JAMPRO/UWI Mona-WJC Creative Industries Open House under the theme “Unlocking the Opportunities in the Film Industry – Western Jamaica” at the Montego Bay Convention Centre in February 2017 with just fewer than 50 persons from across the creative industries participating. The second initiative was the WJC Ambassadorial Corps endorsed Jamaican Film Festival held April 4–6 featuring *Rise Up*, *Songs of Freedom* and *The Harder They Come*. All the films had both star and production roots in Montego Bay, St James. Both initiatives are set to become annual affairs as the campus deepens its relationship with the various communities of interest and geography across the region.

The RuJohn Foundation held its annual summer Celebrity and Sports Camp; and this year the campus was specially recognized for its support

and sponsorship of the Foundation's philanthropic work at its highly anticipated awards ceremony at IberoStar Resorts in June 2017. The scholarships granted by the RuJohn to UWI students for the current academic year stands at approximately US\$12,000.

There was also a one-day only Open/Information Day in January 2017 which was highly successful and commended. This year, the event was deliberately placed during the regular teaching period. Approximately 600 students and teachers converged on the campus – the same number that participated during the previous year's two-day events – and for the most part expressed great satisfaction with and appreciation for being able to see the campus in action.

The WJC Week 2016 held October 9–16 was expanded to include students and staff attending a special church service, a media appreciation breakfast with 12 of the Western Jamaica-based reporters and journalists from all the major local media houses, a research symposium on tourism linkages, a forum on youth issues, and the annual Mental Health symposium organized by the Western Regional Medical Association and supported by the WJC Psychology Unit.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Two of the five valedictorians for the 2016 graduation ceremonies had direct connection with the UWI Mona – WJC. This achievement obviously brought tremendous joy, pride and motivation to the campus and the students. Ms. Chelsea Ricketts, who is currently pursuing graduate studies in Clinical Psychology at Mona and Mr. Marlon Reid who completed the first two years of his MBBS programme at WJC, were the standard bearers for the Faculties of Social Sciences and Medicine, respectively.

Also, the debating society has become a major force with which to reckon, participating and showing dominance in both local and international competitions including the UWI Leads "Great Debate" and the World Debating Championships held in Mexico. Of special note, Miss Monique

Barrett from the psychology section was accepted on full scholarship to do an MSc in Social Work at Barry University in Florida, USA.

As part of recognizing student success, The WJC Honor Society was introduced in November 2016 to honour academic achievements across all the faculties at the campus. Twelve students with the highest GPA were formally welcomed into the Society and each presented with a certificate of recognition and a five thousand dollars gift voucher, underwritten by Mr. Patrick Prendergast and redeemable at the UWI Bookshop. The top performing student for Year 2 was also given the Luz Longworth Award – a tuition scholarship of Fifty Thousand dollars (JA\$50, 000); while the top performing student for Year 1 received the Campus Director’s Award – also a tuition grant valued at Seventy Thousand Dollars (JA\$70, 000). The former was sponsored by a member of the business community while the latter was underwritten from a special student fund set up by the Campus Director from project administrative fees.

The UWI School of Nursing continued its hold on the annual LASCO/NAJ Nursing Student and School of the Year Competition. For the second consecutive year a UWISON-WJC student was triumphant with Miss Joy Odusanya being declared Student Nurse of the Year 2017–2018. The UWISON-WJC was also once again voted Nursing School of Year 2017–2018 for the third consecutive year. The Student Nurse of the Year 2016–2017, Miss Nadja Brown was also successful in implementing her special project, a community health fair for basic school students in a St. Elizabeth community.

CONCLUSION – CHANGING LIVES...TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

The 2017–2018 academic year will mark the tenth year of the WJC’s establishment in the city of Montego Bay. This should therefore be a significant time for us as a campus to underscore the role we have played in the development of the city. The theme for the year is Changing Lives... Transforming Communities and will be the frame within which we acknowledge, recognize, and celebrate our contribution in research,

public service and academic programming over the last ten years. The 2016–2017 year was therefore a sort of a foundational year for not only positioning the WJC as the best little piece of UWI out west but also making the UWI Mona the campus of choice among all stakeholder and interest groups. We have seen significant growth in the new student intake, sustained the quality assurance of our academic programmes and student development services, graduated over 800 students, consolidated our partnerships within and across the entire community, and accepted our leadership role as a higher education institution.

In the tenth year we must therefore look to not only marking the ten years of our existence but ensuring a positive reflection on the legacy of brand excellence which is the UWI. We must be an active part of the UWI@70 experience, proactive in the design and implementation of new initiatives to realize the new Triple A strategic plan of the UWI, and be brilliant in our positioning of the UWI Mona-Western Jamaica campus as a significant player in the lives, well-being and sustainable development of the city in which our great UWI Mona is located.

This should include improving our student engagement opportunities, engaging the academy with industry in research and personal and corporate development initiatives, and expanding our unique programme offerings. Importantly, we must be proactive in the promotion of a culture of student success as part of changing lives and transforming communities.