

## **Annual Report School for Continuing Studies, The Bahamas, Academic year 2007/08**

### **Introduction**

The future role of the UWI in the Bahamas is dependent on an understanding of the concerns and perceptions shared by many people in the Bahamas and the development of structures and strategies to redefine the role and function of UWI to bring its operations in line with the other main campuses. Some of these concerns/perceptions include: The impact of competition from other tertiary institutions, the planned upgrade of the College of the Bahamas to University status in the next 2-3 years, the loss of visibility with the Bahamian public over the years, the perception that the UWI is not making an adequate contribution to students and the community in proportion to the financial contribution being made by the Bahamas Government to the University, and finally the UWI is not fulfilling its obligations towards the building of institutions in the Bahamas.

Over the last ten (10) years, many institutions have entered the Bahamas offering varying standards of tertiary studies. Several American universities now offer joint programmes with Bahamas institutions. It is not clear what quality assurance parameters are in place to monitor these programmes. The UWI has clearly lost its identity over the years and needs to re-establish itself as the premier institution of learning and research in the Caribbean.

Economies of scale and institution building are factors to be considered in the process of redefining the future role of UWI in the Bahamas. Other factors such as the rapid development of its financial and tourism institutions and a broadening of the skills base to facilitate the growth of other industries will require the development of relevant programmes and courses to satisfy the demands for highly trained and skilled personnel.

The UWI therefore needs to urgently redefine its role. This could be as outlined below:

- Provide new undergraduate and post graduate programmes relevant to the needs of the Bahamas
- Attract a greater number of tertiary students
- Assist the Government of the Bahamas with institution building
- Facilitate the development of a cadre of leaders to take the Bahamas forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Assist with the establishment of standards for tertiary education in the Bahamas

All of the above can be achieved by intentionally creating the appropriate infrastructure, improving customer services, working in cooperation with tertiary institutions and the Government of the Bahamas, offering excellent programmes of a very high standard and improving the image of the UWI in the Bahamas. (Extract from “University of the West Indies in The Bahamas.....the way forward to a United Campus” Proposal Professor Howard Spencer July 2005.)

## **Staff Matters**

Professor Howard Spencer UWI Coordinator assumed responsibility for the School with the departure of Mr Matthew William on Sabbatical leave for the academic year.

Professor Spencer was promoted from Director to Dean of the School of Clinical Medicine and Research, The Bahamas with its change of name and reporting relations to the Mona Campus.

Professor Spencer represented the School at the Sir Frank Walcott Symposium held in Barbados from September 16-19, 2007.

He attended the book launch of “Breaking down the Walls, an Evolution of the Extramural Department, The University of the West Indies 1947-2000” a publication which sets out the history of the SCS, TLIU, and UWIDEC. The authors Howard Fergus, Lennox Bernard and Judith Soares were present for signing copies of the book. A complimentary copy of the book has been presented to the Minister of Education Hon. Carl Bethel. A copy was also received by Mrs Barbara Burrows the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health and Social Development on behalf of the Minister of Health Hon. Dr Hubert Minnis.

Professor Spencer attended the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Labour “Trifor Conference” under the theme “The Importance of Social Dialogue in Achieving and Maintaining Industrial Harmony”.

Discussions were held with Dr Beverley Bryan of the School of Education, Mona Campus about the BEd. on line programmes and the potential for increased enrolment of students in The Bahamas. These discussions took place on visit to the Mona Campus in November 2007.

A workshop held on January 5, 2008 on the “Vision for the UWI in the Bahamas 2008 and beyond” was held at the British Colonial Hilton Hotel in Nassau. It was chaired by Dr Glen Beneby, Medical Advisor to the Public Hospitals Authority and addressed 9 areas.

Professor Spencer addressed the “Proposed Structure of the UWI in The Bahamas” and “The Medical programme and the SCS” Mr. Berkley Williamson Director of CHTM spoke about “The Tourism Programme”. “Graduate Studies and Research” was addressed by Mrs. Beverley Dinham-Spencer Research Fellow in the SCMR. Dr Robin Roberts Consultant Urologist and Chairman of the SCMR Research Steering Committee spoke on “Medical Research”. “Tourism Research and Graduate Studies” was presented by Ms Angela Cleare Consultant and former Senior Director, Ministry of Tourism and Mr. Gary Young Senior Director of Research and Statistics, Ministry of Tourism. Mr. Reginald Saunders Administrator Scholarship and Loan Division, Ministry of Education and Social Development spoke on “Education Research and Graduate Studies” “Law Research and Graduate Studies” was delivered by Mr. Ian Winder Attorney at Law and the final presentations on “Alumni Affairs” were by Dr Homer Bloomfield, Chairman of the UWIMAA, Bahamas Chapter and Mrs. Missouri Sherman-Peter Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Security and President of UWIAA, Bahamas Chapter. It is planned to publish proceedings of this workshop.

January 7, 2008 was celebrated as UWI Day throughout the Caribbean and Professor Spencer was guest on the television programme “Bahamas at Sunrise” and talked about the UWI’s 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations and the launch of the day. A proclamation of January 7, 2008 as UWI Day by the Prime Minister the Rt. Hon. Hubert Ingraham was published in the local newspaper.

He attended the launch of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary Ceremony in Barbados representing the UWI Bahamas on January 12 & 13, 2008 and on January 16, 2008 met with the Postmaster General of The Bahamas to finalize arrangements for production of a commemorative stamp issue in the latter part of the year to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. He also attended the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Church Service and Mona Campus Research Days in late January.

February saw the successful HLSTUEI lecture delivered by Lynn Bolles Professor of Women Studies University of Maryland. The topic was “Forever Indebted to Women: They Carry the Burden of Globalization” This was arranged in association with the Institute as part of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations. Professor Spencer chaired the lecture session which was well attended. Mr Matthew William welcomed the guests and Mrs Marva Phillips Coordinator of the HLSTUEI introduced the guest lecturer Professor Bolles. Women in the trade union movement in the Bahamas were well represented. Mr Obie Ferguson President of the Trade Union Congress and Mr Timothy Moore, General Secretary.

Professor Spencer attended the World Congress of Cardiology meeting in Argentina from May 18-21, 2008 and presented a paper “Cardiology in low and middle income countries- models of service delivery” He attended the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the UWI in Jamaica and also the Open Campus Retreat.

He was a member of the organising committee of the Annual meeting of the Caribbean College of Surgeons held in the Bahamas June 13-15, 2008.

He was also member of the organising committee of the Annual Cardiology meeting of the Caribbean Cardiac Society and presented a paper “Catheterization of the Right Heart in the Evaluation of Acute Cor Pulmonale due to Pulmonary Embolism Trial- the CHEAPE PE Trial- a Pilot”. This meeting was held in The Bahamas July 23-26, 2008.

Mrs. Wanda James Senior Administrative Assistant and Mr. Marvin Hanna, IT Technician attended the workshop organized with the theme “Vision for The UWI in the Bahamas 2008 and beyond.” This workshop’s objectives were a) to provide a forum for all members of the UWI’s Academic, Senior Administrative Staff and Student Executives to meet and be informed of the UWI’s presence in The Bahamas, b) to update invitees on the academic programmes and plans for the Open Campus, c) discuss and recommend future directions of the UWI’s programmes in The Bahamas, d) update participants on the Alumni and the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the UWI.

Mrs James attended the Open Campus Retreat and 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in Jamaica in July 2008.

Mr. Andrew Campbell E-tutor in the BEd. Programme shared his concerns and suggestions for improving the output of the School.

Mr. Marvin Hanna participated in the Cisco Academy Training Launch, Networking Academy Update, and IT Essentials Training in Trinidad organized by the Faculty of Engineering St Augustine Campus. It is envisioned that Mr. Hanna with this training would assist with technical matters in the Northern Caribbean.

Mrs. Donna Smith-Wallace represented the School by providing information on admission to UWI programmes to students at Doris Johnson Senior High School. Mrs Wallace also represented the School by providing poster display and information desk at the 2<sup>nd</sup> UWI Research Day held April 11, 2008 at the COB Nursing Auditorium, Shirley Street, Nassau. Mrs Smith-Wallace attended the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Caribbean Tertiary Level Personnel Association held in the Bahamas from June 16-19, 2008. She also continues to provide valuable assistance with site coordination.

### **Student Matters**

The School continued the collection and certification of applications and materials required for processing of potential students for several UWI programmes apart from those of the school. The BEd. Online programmes seem to be attracting more applicants. It is clear that a proper analysis of the programmes to be offered by this centre needs to be undertaken as soon as possible. There is no scope for the Associate degree and many of the certificate programmes at present being offered by the Open Campus. The suggested development goals for the Bahamas were contained in the 5 year projections for the UWI Open Campus Bahamas submitted some months ago. There is a need to communicate early, the information to applicants to UWI programmes, who are not qualified for entry. It is suggested that this is done by the end of May of the year of application. The School continues to support the visit of the Admissions Sections of the Main Campuses for the Annual College Fairs.

### **Programmes**

The present programmes are BEd. Admin and BEd Online with a total of 10 students. These have the potential of attracting a significant number of teachers in the Ministry of Education. The fact that they are distance programmes make them attractive for the Family Islands. The school principals could also benefit from a specific programme to improve their management skills since it would seem the majority moved into the positions by seniority rather than ability to manage. The Ministry of Education is enthusiastic about these programmes to upgrade the teachers.

The Dip. Gender Studies has not attracted any students. There are 3 students in the Certificate in Substance Abuse and 6 students in the MSc Counseling. The LLM, the only postgraduate programme has 4 students. 7 CHTM students doing the foundation and management courses together with the LLM students utilize the distance facility and

require the presence of the technician, resulting in a work schedule which was challenging to arrange. I have arranged a schedule of work involving the SCMR which allows Mr. Hanna to provide service for both the SCMR and the SCS and he is compensated for overtime work required by the schedule. An analysis of courses, work schedule and compensation to SCS is attached.

### **Infrastructural Issues**

There is no doubt that the UWI needs to become more visible in The Bahamas. This is not only related to the programmes offered but also to a place that can be seen by the public as the UWI's home. Several proposals have been put forward for acquiring such a place. The most recent proposal has been forwarded several months ago to the Ministry of Education. The promise of \$1M by the Government of The Bahamas to secure a UWI Centre demonstrates their continuing commitment to the UWI.

It was proposed to provide proper offices for the staff at the present location but this has been put on hold while the proposals for a centre are being discussed. Permission has been given for change of carpet and some minor refurbishing.

### **Outreach and Research Activities**

The School is very much involved in bringing to the attention of the Bahamas public the development and introduction of the Open Campus and the UWI's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations. The newsletters on the Open Campus have been widely distributed. UWI Student Ambassadors Mr Dominic Davis and Mr Andre Gordon visited the Bahamas from November 12-16, 2008. They had a busy schedule which consisted of a visit to the Minister of National Security Hon. Tommy Turnquest and Permanent Secretary and President of the UWIAA, Bahamas Chapter, Mrs Missouri A. Sherman-Peter. They also met with high school students, UWI students in the tourism and medical programmes in The Bahamas. They were guests on radio interviews.

### **Financial Matters**

Professor Spencer was interviewed by Consultant Dr Judith Robinson on the telephone on February 27, 2008 on the financial affairs of the School. The report has been made available for examination and input. Successful representations were made to the UWI Bursar for an increase in subvention to the School. The significant difference between the annual expenditure and income for the school requires concerted effort to improve the earnings from new programmes and increased student intake. The earnings from online programmes are very limited and the School will need to introduce seminars and workshops to increase the funds earned. This will be the challenge for the new academic year.

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October 31. 2008.