



# Open Letter

The e-newsletter of the Open Campus, UWI

## Open Campus Developments



### **The Inaugural Meeting of the UWI's Open Campus Council**

In the midst of its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, the University of the West Indies has created a new Open Campus to extend the range and reach of its programmes, courses, research and outreach functions between its three physical campuses and the wider world. Inheriting the resources of the School of Continuing Studies, the UWI Distance Education Centre, and the Tertiary Level Institutions Unit, the new University of the West Indies Open Campus will have a presence throughout the 15 countries that contribute to and own the University. It intends to bring a wide range of pre-University and professional enrichment courses and programmes to the whole region and to offer a selection of degree programmes, undergraduate and postgraduate, mainly through online delivery. These will be accessible to students anytime and anywhere in the region, and indeed the world.

On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, Sir Dwight Venner, Governor of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank and Chairman of the Open Campus Council, formally opened the first meeting of that Council at the University Centre in St Kitts. He stressed that the intended role of UWI Open was to bring about a quantum leap in the service provided by the University as a whole to the twelve countries that did not have a campus of their own. He noted that it would also bring University programmes and the characteristic contributions of a university to people in underserved areas of the traditional campus countries.

The Open Campus Council endorsed the restructured outreach sector as presented by the Principal, Professor Hazel Simmons-McDonald, and considered various policy positions that would support the Open Campus' desire to put students at the centre of its teaching operations and manifest its openness in various ways. The Council praised the dedication of the previous Head of these outreach sectors, Professor Lawrence Carrington, who had overseen the conceptualisation and planning that had resulted in the new Campus. Sir Dwight emphasised the need for the entire University to collaborate on the various initiatives that were envisaged, particularly because the Open Campus would not be duplicating intellectual resources but rather maximising their impact on the entire region. He asserted that the region as a whole could only make progress through the harnessing of knowledge so the University was a crucial component in any serious planning for the future.

In this context, the Council noted the need for a coherent regional response to the maintenance of academic standards, including the registration and accreditation of institutions and their programmes. In closing the first meeting of Council, the Chair observed that it would be appropriate for many of its future meetings to emulate the virtual form of the UWI Open Campus' programme delivery. Finally, he stressed once again the tremendous opportunity the Open Campus is poised to provide for the intellectual stimulation and growth in knowledge of a diverse and increasing group of persons in the entire region and beyond.

Current News  
March-April 2008

**The Inaugural Meeting  
of the UWI's Open  
Campus Council**

**CUPIDE –Building a  
Base for the Open  
Campus**

**Bids Invited to Run  
Open Campus Online  
Bookstore**

**Call for papers for the  
Montserrat Open  
Campus Country  
Conference**

**Meet Some of the  
People of the Open  
Campus**

**Open Campus Quick  
Facts**

**Your Feedback**



Members of the Open Campus Council at the inaugural meeting of the Open Campus of the University of the West Indies at their first meeting in Basseterre, St. Kitts & Nevis on March 3, 2008.

**Seated (from left to right):** Hon. Vince Henderson, Vice-Chancellor Professor E. Nigel Harris, Sir K. Dwight Venner (Chair), PVC and Principal Professor Hazel Simmons- McDonald, Dr Vivienne Roberts, Mrs Patricia Charles, Prof Sir Howard Ferguson.

**First Row (standing from left to right):** Mrs Gloria Barrett-Sobers, Professor Roy Augier, Mr Tommy Chen, Mrs Luz Longsworth, Mrs Gillian Beckles, Mrs Althea Collymore, Dr Christine Marrett.

**Second Row (standing from left to right):** Mr Osbert DeSuza, Dr Bevis Peters, Dr Gladstone Best, Dr Julie Meeks-Gardner, Dr Roosevelt Williams, Mr Winston Bayley, Mr Charles Maynard, Mr Mark Figueroa, Dr Hamid Ghany, Mr Ed Brandon, Dr Letnie Rock, Prof Bhoendradatt Tewarie, Dr James Pitt, Mrs Olivia Edgecombe-Howell.

**Back Row (standing from left to right)** Mr William Iton, Hon Bertrand Joseph, Dr Lennox Bernard, Mr Stewart Joseph, and Professor Ralph Carnegie.

## CUPIDE –Building a Base for the Open Campus

The implementation of the Open Campus at the University of the West Indies is based on the foundation built by existing outreach units which are being merged to form the Open Campus. Under the then UWI Distance Education Centre (UWIDEC), the Caribbean Universities Project for Integrated Distance Education (CUPIDE) helped to create a general climate supportive of the concept of a virtual, open campus that utilizes information communication technologies (ICTs) to network the geographically distributed constituent parts.

CUPIDE started in January 2003, bringing together five universities across the English, Dutch and French-speaking Caribbean and was aimed at improving access to their services through building human and other resource capacities in the provider institutions for the increased use of ICTs for teaching, administration and the delivery of course materials. The project was financed under the UNESCO/Japanese Funds-in-Trust for Capacity-building of Human Resources to the tune of US\$1.1 million.

Managed by UWI under the direction of a Project Advisory Committee chaired by CARICOM, the partner institutions were the University of Guyana (UG), Anton de Kom University of Suriname (AdeKUS), University of Technology, Jamaica (UTech), and University Quisqueya (UniQ), located in Haiti.

Project activities were completed in December 2007 and included the provision of: base-line data on telecommunications, distance education programme needs and staffing; strategic planning; computers, photocopiers and binding equipment; and telecommunications equipment to enhance the existing infrastructure.

A critical component was training related to the adaptation and use of open source learning management software, especially Moodle, which was provided to technical, academic and administrative staff of the institutions.

CUPIDE also enhanced collaboration between participating institutions and pioneered the establishment of the Caribbean Association for Distance and Open Learning. Additionally, the Caribbean Universities Portal for Integrated Distance Education ([www.cupide.org/moodle](http://www.cupide.org/moodle)) was developed and governance policies for the operation of the portal drafted. It is anticipated that the portal will be further developed under the Caribbean Knowledge and Learning Network (CKLN) initiative.

A four module pilot course, *Developing an on-line course using a team approach*, was developed by UWI and UTech. The four modules are: *Readiness Test, Blended Learning, E-tutoring, Selecting and incorporating resources for online learning* and are accessible on the CUPIDE Web Portal, [www.cupide.org/moodle](http://www.cupide.org/moodle). CUPIDE can also be credited with raising consciousness among the senior decision makers in UWI to pave the way for the acceptance of the Open Campus proposal. The broadband connectivity and equipment provided (e.g., printers, computers, VSat terminals) will be utilised for the Open Campus.

In summary, although there is no formal connection between CUPIDE and the Open Campus, UWI, CUPIDE helped to create a general climate supportive of the concept of a virtual Open Campus that utilises ICT to network all the geographically distributed constituent parts.



Members of the CUPIDE PAC meeting for the last time in November 2007 in St. Lucia. Seated top centre is CARICOM chairman, Dr. Morella Joseph. To her left are: Professor Stewart Marshall, CUPIDE Director, Dr. Jeanette Bartely, UTech representative, Dr. Evenson Calixte, UniQ representative, Mr. Tommy Chen, CUPIDE Telecommunications Manager (hidden from view), Mr. Rayman Khan, UG representative (hidden from view), Mr. Anil Chategoon, CUPIDE Finance Manager, Mr. Paolo Fontani, UNESCO representative, and Dr. Christine Marrett, CUPIDE Project Operations Manager. Not in picture is Mr. Jerry Teixeira, AdeKUS representative, who took the photograph, and Mr. Carlton Samuels, UWI representative who was not at the meeting.



Participants at the LMS workshop held at the UWI Mona campus, Feb 7-9, 2006.

## Bids Invited to Run Open Campus Online Bookstore

The Open Campus, UWI, has announced its intent of seeking a book vendor that would support the creation and operation of a virtual bookstore that would service the students and faculty of the Open Campus starting in September 2008. The virtual bookstore web site would be hosted as a part of the Open Campus web site and would appear as an integral part of the campus operation.

The successful bidder will operate a virtual bookstore that supports on average 15,000 students who are ordering in excess of 40,000 books each year, and guarantee delivery of any book anywhere within the Caribbean within ten calendar days of an order being placed. The bookstore will have to source textbooks at the lowest possible price from different publishers of higher education materials, as well as make recommendations about alternative textbooks when the suggested book is no longer available.

Print-on-demand services for products like student guides or reading packages will also be provided by the successful bidder, who also has to be prepared to distribute these documents (for a fee) to the students. In addition, the bidder will have to create and maintain a searchable textbook and materials database that reflects the current course offerings.

Some other key requirements of the successful bidder are the opportunity for Open Campus students to purchase other educationally discounted items such as laptop computers, printers and school supplies, as well as the opportunity for the Open Campus to market and sell memorabilia.

It is expected that the virtual bookstore will be self-funding and that no university or Open Campus monies will be needed to support its operations. For the exclusive right of provision of this service to our Open Campus students, the successful bidder is expected to pay a negotiated percentage of the net profits as reflected in year-end quarterly report produced by the Virtual Bookstore's successful bidder.

## Call for papers for Montserrat Open Campus Country Conference

The Open Campus centre in Montserrat Centre is planning their second country conference under the theme, "**Towards Sustainable Development in Montserrat: A Multi-Disciplinary Conference**". It will be held from November 13-14, 2008 as a cornerstone event of the Centre's activities for the UWI's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

Submissions for papers are being invited from persons who have given consideration to the sustainable development of Montserrat and how this can best be achieved. Various perspectives are anticipated since development requires the involvement of all sectors. Papers covering the role and contribution of the University in the island's development are particularly welcome. However, as Montserrat continues its search for a path towards sustainable development, contributions on the following issues could provide new insights on sustainable development.

- \* Sustainable use of the natural environment
- \* The impact of the arts and the humanities on development
- \* Tourism
- \* Education
- \* Conservation and preservation issues
- \* Transportation and communication systems
- \* Food security
- \* Economic niches
- \* Sectoral reform for sustainable development

- \* Community involvement in development
- \* Gender Issues
- \* Health and Wellness
- \* Disaster Risk Management
- \* Poverty and Equity
- \* Children and Youth
- \* Science and Technology

Submissions should include:

1. A cover sheet containing the title of the paper, author's address and contact information, (email/tel./fax number), institution and author's bio-data of approximately 50 words for inclusion in the conference programme.
2. One page with a 250-word abstract of the paper.

Please send these to: [gracelyn.cassell@candw.ms](mailto:gracelyn.cassell@candw.ms)

## Meet Some of the People of the Open Campus

### Pro Vice-Chancellor & Principal of the Open Campus



A St. Lucian by birth, **Professor Hazel Simmons-McDonald** is a Professor of Applied Linguistics and is the first Pro Vice-Chancellor, as well as the first Principal of the Open Campus of the University of the West Indies. Professor Simmons-McDonald was a Faculty member at Cave Hill since 1991. She has provided leadership as Deputy Dean (Outreach -1993-1995); as Head of Department (1995-1999); as Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Education A(2003-2007) at the Cave Hill Campus.

She has considerable experience in and understanding of the educational needs of the Eastern Caribbean countries as her professional experience began in 1970 in the UWI School of Continuing Studies in St. Lucia as a part-time Instructor of English Language and Literature. She was Acting Resident Tutor from 1973-1974 and served at the Mona Campus as Temporary Lecturer from 1977-1979.

Her academic works include *Exploring the Boundaries of Caribbean Creole Languages* (2005), co-edited with Ian Robertson, *Writing in English* (1996) and the popular Heinemann Ginn *Let's Work with English Series*, Books 1-3 and a fourth book for CXC, which adopts an exciting, integrated, task-based approach to teaching English in Caribbean secondary schools.

Professor Simmons-McDonald's main research interests include: Applied Linguistics: Language Acquisition/Learning; Teaching of English in Creole Contexts; Literacy in French Creole.

### Director Designate of Academic Programming



**Professor Stewart Marshall** is currently the Director Designate of Academic Programming of the Open Campus of the UWI, which provides access to UWI programmes, using ICT enhanced distance education modalities, throughout the English speaking islands in the Caribbean. He also holds the UNESCO Chair in Educational Technologies.

Professor Marshall moved to the Caribbean in March 2004 from Central Queensland University in Australia, where he was the foundation Dean and a Professor of the Faculty of Informatics and Communication. Although originally an electrical engineer with the Central Electricity Generating Board in the UK, he has worked in higher education since 1973 in England, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Southern Africa and the Caribbean. He was the foundation Professor of Communication at the Papua New Guinea University of Technology, foundation Professor of Communication Studies in the Faculty of Arts at Monash University, and foundation Coordinator of Academic Studies and Professor of Distance Education at the Institute of Distance Education at the University of Swaziland in Southern Africa.

Professor Marshall has many academic interests, the main one being in the role of communication and information technologies in distance education, especially in developing countries. He has published several books and over 90 other publications, including book chapters, refereed articles and conference papers. He is also the Chief Editor of the International Journal of Education and Development using Information and Communication Technology (IJEDICT) – <http://ijedict.dec.uwi.edu/> - an online journal with free and open access. He has a blog, which can be located at: <http://cedict.blogspot.com/>

### Director Designate, Open Campus Country Sites



**Mrs. Luz Longworth** has a long history of service with the University of the West Indies (UWI) before her 2004 appointment as Resident Tutor for Belize. She worked in the Office of the Principal as the Executive Assistant to the then Principal of the Mona Campus, Professor Gerald Lalor from 1992 to 1996. This was preceded by four years of service in the Faculty of Arts and General Studies as an Assistant Lecturer in Spanish from 1982-1986 and later as Assistant Registrar assigned to the Secretariat for another three years.

After leaving Jamaica, Mrs. Longworth worked in the Offshore Financial Sector in the British Virgin Islands and later taught at the University of Belize for several years before rejoining the University of the West Indies. Since 2007, she also performed the duties of Deputy, Acting Director and Director of the School of Continuing Studies (SCS) before it formed part of the new Open Campus.

An alumna of the Holy Childhood High School in Jamaica, Mrs. Longworth is also a graduate of UWI where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts and a Masters in Business Administration. She also holds a Master of Arts from Queen's University and is continuing her doctoral studies in Business Administration (Higher Education Management).

## Open Campus Quick Facts

The University of the West Indies (UWI) is established to provide tertiary level education to the fifteen English speaking countries scattered throughout the Caribbean and Central America. The countries supported by UWI include:

1. Anguilla
2. Antigua and Barbuda
3. The Bahamas
4. Barbados
5. Belize
6. British Virgin Islands
7. Cayman Islands
8. Dominica
9. Grenada
10. Jamaica
11. Montserrat
12. St. Kitts and Nevis
13. St Lucia
14. St Vincent and the Grenadines
15. Trinidad and Tobago
16. Turks & Caicos (non-supporting country)

The University has an undergraduate and graduate population of 39,000 students scattered throughout the Caribbean, although the majority of the students are located on one of the three main campuses located in Mona in Jamaica, Cave Hill in Barbados, and St. Augustine in Trinidad & Tobago.

In addition, the UWI currently has 31 Distance Education Centres, 23 School of Continuing Studies Centres, five (5) specialised units and at least eight (8) satellite sites scattered throughout the fifteen (15) participating countries. These regional centres support a current student population of about 6,800 undergraduate and graduate students and approximately 13,000 continuing studies students each year.

## About the Open Letter

This e-newsletter of the Open Campus of the University of the West Indies is intended to provide our colleagues and clients with an up-to-date source of news and information about the developments of the Open Campus. The page, which is maintained by the Office of the Deputy Principal of the Open Campus, will be updated regularly, as new developments occur.

## Your Feedback is Welcome

We welcome your comments on the Open Campus, UWI, and encourage you to send your thoughts to the Open Letter to us via e-mail at our email address@ [marketing@open.uwi.edu](mailto:marketing@open.uwi.edu)