A Happy and Prosperous 2006 to our Alumni Family!!!

World Aids Day observed at Turkeyen

The students of the B.Sc. Nursing Programme of the Faculty of Health Sciences observed World Aids Day by organising a Lecture/Discussion on December 1 at the Faculty’s Resource Centre. The Guest Lecturer was Dr. Chuka Anude of the François-Xavier Bagnoud Centre, University of Medicine & Dentistry in New Jersey (UMDNJ), who gave an update on HIV/AIDS in Guyana and explained the reasons for the rapid spread of the disease. A very descriptive PowerPoint presentation accompanied the lecture, leaving observers with no doubt as to the devastating consequences of the disease. Prior to Dr. Anude’s lecture, opening remarks were made by the Head of the Nursing Programme, Mrs. Gwendolin Tross (Chairperson). Dr. Emanuel Cummings, Dean of the Faculty also addressed the problem of stigma and discrimination, and stressed the importance and role of nurses in today’s society. He also said that persons should realise that HIV/AIDS is everybody’s business, and that the problem affects everyone. Also present at the event were representatives of Guyana Youth Challenge who urged persons to get tested and know their status. Various brochures were distributed, giving vital information about the topic. At the conclusion of the very informative programme, the vote of thanks was given by a student from the B.Sc. Nursing Programme.

Convocation Exercises at Berbice Campus

The University’s Berbice Campus held its 4th Convocation Exercises on December 3, with a total of 169 students graduating from various programmes. Pro-Chancellor, Dr. Prem Misir who delivered the feature address urged the graduates to become torch bearers to ensure that the hard won credibility of the institution from its establishment to date is sustained – not only nationally but within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and internationally, particularly within the context of globalisation. He stressed that graduates have a responsibility to help establish a social order grounded in the values of freedom, social justice and equal opportunity. Dr. Parsram Thakur, Director of the Campus, whilst expressing astonishment at the large gender gap (130 females and 39 males), said that he was pleased at the rapid expansion of the Campus, and expressed satisfaction at the rapid increase in the number of graduating students. We are moving forward,” he said, “We need to move forward because a university is a forward moving place. We do not want to go back to the routine or to become outmoded or hidebound. We do not want to become fossilized. We want to be proactive and will be proactive.” The award for Best Graduating Student went to Ms. Pamela Vanessa Rose, Valedictorian, who obtained a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English with a GPA of 3.9. She also received the NBIC award for her achievement.

Moments of Reflection

On December 7, the University Community – past and present - and members of the public gathered to pay tribute to UG’s longest serving Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Dennis Irvine, under the theme: Moments of Reflection. At this simple ceremony, which was organised by the Public Relations Division, persons shared their memories of the late scholar and reflected on the positive impact Dr. Irvine had on their lives; there were even moments of humour as anecdotes were told. He was described as a simple person who always had the interest of the staff at heart. Present was Leader of the Opposition Party, Mr. Robert Corbin and British High Commissioner, Mr. Stephen Hiscock. Vice-Chancellor, Dr. James G. Rose CCH gave the commendation and formally opened the exhibition of the late Dr. Irvine’s works. A Book of Condolence was also opened and signed by everyone present and later, by other members of the university community and the public. Dr. Rose and Mr. Samuel Small, Director of the Institute of Distance & Continuing Education (IDCE) represented the University at Dr. Irvine’s funeral, held in Jamaica on December 9.
**Festival of 9 Lessons with Carols**

The Public Relations Division once again held the Festival of 9 Lessons with Carols on December 14 in the Education Lecture Theatre, Turkeyen. This is an annual event, which heralds the Christmas season on Campus. At this event, nine lessons pertaining to the birth of Christ are read from the bible by members of the university community, and carols are sung by the university choir accompanied by members of the audience. It is usually after this event that the first Christmas wishes are exchanged. This year’s event was chaired by Ms. Paulette Paul, Public Relations Officer and opening remarks were given by Mr. Al Creighton, Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

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**Exhibition of Projects**

On December 15, the Department of Architecture, Faculty of Technology held an exhibition of projects under the theme: *World of Ideas*. The event, which was held at the Faculty building was chaired by Mr. William Harris, lecturer, who was also the Exhibition Coordinator. Projects displayed included: *A New Line of Flexible Furniture for Tight Spaces; A New Line of Toilet Facilities and A Highly Flexible and Portable Gastronomic Centre for Mining Camps.*
Dr. Marlene Cox, Director of the Office of Resource Mobilisation & Planning attended SEC and Council Meetings at Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Headquarters in Jamaica and also participated in a meeting of the Caribbean Knowledge and Learning Network (CKLN) in St. Lucia. These meetings were held during the period December 1 – 6.

Ms Diana Alert-Wharton, lecturer in the Department of Curriculum & Instruction, School of Education & Humanities served as local moderator for the CSEC Examinations in Home Economics in Lethem and Mabaruma in the North-West District from December 1 – 3 and 9 – 11 respectively.

Professor Aubrey Bishop, Head of the Department of Law, Faculty of Social Sciences attended a Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) Meeting in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad from December 1 – 3. He also attended a special meeting of the CCJ on December 8 & 9, a statutory meeting on December 16 and another special meeting on December 20.

Mr. Al Creighton, Deputy Vice-Chancellor attended a CXC Council Meeting in Kingston, Jamaica on December 2.

Dr. Patsy Francis, Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture & Forestry participated in a Train the Trainers workshop hosted by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) under the theme “Organic Production for Entrepreneurs” in Santiago, Dominican Republic from December 4 - 10.

Ms. Debra Lowe-Thorne of the University Library, Turkeyen attended a Pre-Training Workshop hosted by the UWI St. Augustine Campus Libraries from December 6 – 9, in preparation for a six-day Programme for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC) in Name Authority Control (NACO) and Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) to be held in January 2006.

Ms. Coreen Jacobs and Ms. Gentian Miller, lecturers in the School of Education & Humanities and Mr. Arnold De Mendonca, Head of the Department of Agriculture, Faculty of Agriculture & Forestry participated in the Caribbean Knowledge and Learning Network (CKLN) Online Training Workshop held in Barbados from December 7 – 9.

Mr. Donald Sinclair, Assistant Dean, School of Education & Humanities participated in a Curriculum Evaluation Programme of the Caribbean Tourism Learning System in Barbados from December 7 – 9.

Dr. David Chanderbali, Registrar presented a Paper entitled “The Demise of Sugar and the Rise of Rubber in British Malaya 1895 – 1910 at a Conference organised by the Centre for South Asian Studies, Miami International University and held at the University of Austin in Texas from December 8 – 14.

Mr. Derek Archer, Head of the Department of Language & Cultural Studies, School of Education & Humanities represented the university at a Conference hosted by the University of the French West Indies, in Cayenne, French Guiana from December 9 – 15.

Dr. Michael Scott, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, was in Barbados from December 11 – 16 where he was involved in CAPE and CXC exercises.

Distinguished Professor Clive Thomas, Director of the Institute of Development Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences delivered an Independence lecture at the University of Suriname on December 13.

Mr. John Caesar, lecturer in the Department of Biology, Faculty of Natural Sciences attended a Caribbean Regional Meeting on Implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks (NBF) and Regional Cooperation, including the proposed establishment of a Caribbean Regional Node of the Biosafety Clearing House (BCH) which was held at the United Nations House in Bridgetown, Barbados from December 12 – 16. This meeting was a part of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) - Global Environment Policy (GEP) Project on Development of National Biosafety Networks.

Ms. Gwyneth George, University Librarian (ag) and Ms. Carol Parris of the Learning Resource Centre, University Library attended a workshop hosted by the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) in collaboration with BIREME (PAHO specialist center on Information Management) and the Information Knowledge Management (IKM) Unit on December 15. This was an effort to further advance the development of the Virtual Health Library (VHL) in Guyana. Ms. Donette Washington also of the University Library, performed rapporteurial duties at this workshop. The University Library was designated the National Focal Point (NFP).

Ms. Jennifer Wishart, lecturer in the School of Education & Humanities was in Castries, St. Lucia from December 19 – January 7 to finalise arrangements for a visit by students later this year.
Featured Alumni

Mr. Troy Thomas

Mr. Troy Thomas graduated in 2005 from the University of Guyana with a Bachelor of Sciences Degree (distinction) in Mathematics. He was also awarded the Irving Adler Prize for the Best Graduating Student in Mathematics. From the very inception, he proved to be a student who strove for excellence; he received an award for the Best First Year Mathematics Student in 2002. Before enrolling at UG, Mr. Thomas attended the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) where he obtained a Trained Teacher’s Certificate (Mathematics Major) in 2001 and was awarded the Best All-round Graduating Student in academics and sports, and the Best Graduating Student in Education. He also served as president of the Student’s Council for the academic year 2000-2001. Whilst studying at the University, Mr. Thomas lectured (part-time) in Maths, Integrated Science and Teaching Methods at the CPCE, where he guided trainee teachers in developing and fine-tuning their skills in classroom presentation. He also designed coursework assignments and tests for secondary schools and guided CPCE final-year students in the conduct and documentation of their research projects. Mr. Thomas also worked (from 2003 – 2004) as a Laboratory Demonstrator at UG, where he conducted tutorial sessions. One of his greatest achievements was being selected to participate in the Student Exchange Programme between UG and the York University in Canada for his final year of study. Here Mr. Thomas did the university proud. According to his tutor, Professor Paul Szeptycki, he possesses a level of emotional maturity, sharp intellect and enthusiasm, which will carry him far in whatever endeavour he pursues. He has been described as a gifted teacher with a level of confidence and maturity rarely seen in undergraduate students. Needless to say, his standard of work was deemed excellent. At present, Mr. Thomas is employed as an Assistant Lecturer at his alma mater, and continues to share his knowledge and expertise with those entrusted to him. Well Done, Mr. Thomas!!!

This newsletter is a monthly publication created to keep our alumni updated with news at the University of Guyana. Each month an alumnus will be featured. If you are an alumnus please advise us of recent developments. If you would like to be featured, please send us your CV, a recent photograph and a letter telling us about yourself. These can be emailed here. Feel free to send your questions and/or suggestions here. We look forward to hearing from you!