Human Resource Management at UG

The University of Guyana, as part of its strategic goals for the 2006-2011 period, which addresses the need to strengthen management systems and governance, and restructure incentive systems, has embarked on a human resource management (HRM) initiative. The plan addresses a number of areas including human resource planning, recruitment, training and development, retention, performance management, reward and motivation, equal opportunities, employee relations procedures and creating a harmonious environment. The plan aims for UG to lead the way in employment best practice nationally and to increase employee performance through the establishment of goal focus awareness.

Two teams have been formed, the Human Resource Management (HRM) Team and the Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC). The HRM Team, which operates to give confirmation, validation and guidance to the HRM Action Plan implementation process, consist of Al Creighton, Vincent Alexander, Patsy Francis, Hector Edwards, Patricia Harnanan, Neil Browman and Stacy Peters. The Committee will report to the Vice-Chancellor on a quarterly basis. The EOC focuses on ensuring UG complies with equity laws and promotes a work environment that results in maximum efficiencies for both institutional and employee benefit. The members of the EOC were appointed by Academic Board on Tuesday, 23 May. Members comprise Daam Barker, Deryck Bernard, Aubrey Bishop, Evette Burke-Douglas, Tamsia Clement, Marcellin DAguiar, Treena Dundas, Geetangeli Geer, Patricia Harnanan, Bruce Haynes, Phillip Hernandez, Teni Housty, Jaigobin Jaisingh, Tota Mangar, Cecilia McAlmont, Rishee Thakur and Barbara Thomas-Holder.

The HRM Team has begun consultation sessions with staff across the Turkeyen campus and IDCE; sessions with staff at UGBC will round up the process. The sessions are being conducted to spread awareness of the HR initiative, hear staff concerns regarding current employment practices at UG and get staff input for the direction of the Plan. A workshop has been planned for 3, 4, 7 and 9 August to, among other things, sensitise staff about the HRM initiative and its relations to the strategic plan, including the determination of departmental goals and objectives, and to determine priorities and first steps.

Policy on Student Intake and Programme Offerings

Questions have been raised about the increases in studentship at Turkeyen with resulting over-population, a strain on limited space and resources, and an imbalance among the disciplines. While the University faces a dilemma because its main income comes from student fees, it is now moving to rationalize and suspend some programmes while focusing more on areas of strength.

UG/OAS Project Consultant’s Report
The Consultant’s Report for part of the University of Guyana/Organisation of American States Project: Building Capacity in the Education Sector for Sustainable Human Development, was submitted to the Vice-Chancellor recently. The consultant, Prof. Stafford Griffith of the Institute of Education, UWI Mona Campus, was employed to undertake tasks defined under Activity 2.2, Component 2 of the Project, which is being executed by the School of Education and Humanities, UG, in collaboration with the Organisation of American States (OAS). Activity 2.2 is concerned with the resuscitation of the Master’s Degree programme in Education, to be delivered from the academic year 2006/2007; the development of a new Master’s Degree in Multicultural Studies, to be delivered from the academic year 2007/2008; and the development of teaching manuals for these programmes. Based on a review of past Master of Education programmes of the University of Guyana, a number of recommendations were made, taking into account the need to assure comparability with similar programmes in the regional/international community and the benefit that may be derived from the ongoing collaboration between the University of the West Indies and the University of Guyana to strengthen and sustain the Master of Education programme at the University of Guyana.

Administration meets with UGBC Senior Staff
Members of the University Central Administration paid a follow-up visit to the Berbice Campus on 26 June to meet with the academic and Senior Administrative community there. The Vice-Chancellor James Rose, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Al Creighton, Registrar David Chanderbali, Acting Bursary Neil Browman, and Personnel Officer Pat Harnanan, met with the full Campus Board and then with the Campus Coordinating Committee (CCC) to hold further discussions and give advice on a wide range of issues including critical examination matters, University regulations and employment procedures. This was the second visit by this team for semester II, 2006.

Government Officials visit UGBC
The Berbice Campus was honoured by a visit by a Government contingent led by the Hon. Prime Minister Samuel Hinds, on 26 June. Mr Hinds was accompanied by the Hon. Minister of Tourism Manzoor Nadir and Member of Parliament Zulfikar Mustapha. The officials were on tour of the area and included the Campus as one of their stops. They met some staff members and had a brief look around.

Staff Attachment at Wayne State University
To commemorate the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the University of Guyana and Wayne State University, Ms Coreen Jacobs-Chester, Lecturer in the School of Education Humanities, was invited to visit Wayne State University for three weeks (1-23 June 2006). Ms Jacobs-Chester reported that her visit was very productive, as it afforded her the opportunity of observing how the English Language Institute at Wayne State University conducts English as a second language classes for non-speakers of the English language. In addition, she was able to observe classes in the Education Department which trains teachers to teach English as a second language. Ms Jacobs-Chester, who is also
on study leave, used the opportunity to garner data as well as to interview a few of the Professors at Wayne State for her research. She thanked the University of Guyana for the opportunity afforded to her and looks forward to applying what was learnt to UG.

School of Earth & Environmental Sciences Activities

World Environment Day Award Ceremony - The School of Earth and Environmental Sciences held an Award Ceremony for winners of the World Environment Day 2006 Essay and Poster Competition, on Thursday, 29 June at UG’s Learning Resource Centre. Student Prizes - An award ceremony was held on 25 May to honour three students from the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences (SEES) for their outstanding achievement for the academic year 2005/2006. First year student Joel Chase who has a GPA of 4.0 received a cheque and a plaque from Iwokrama and Omai Gold Mines Ltd; second year student Asma Sharief who has a GPA of 3.7 received her awards from Conservation International; and third year student Darlene Persaud who acquired a GPA of 3.0 received her awards from the Environmental Management Consultants and Omai Gold Mines Ltd. Final Year Student Projects - On 29 and 30 June, fourteen undergraduate students of the S.E.E.S. made oral presentations on their final year research projects. Assessors were drawn from S.E.E.S., the Faculties of Natural and Social Sciences, Technology, the Institute of Development Studies, as well as the Central Housing and Planning Authority, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

University Library Activities

‘Reading is Fun’ Programme - The Libraries at the Turkeyen and Tain Campuses commenced their annual ‘Reading is Fun’ programme in July. This is an annual summer event in which reading programmes are run on the Campuses for primary school children. Library Seminar - The Library conducted another seminar on 26 July in UG’s Learning Resource Centre. Those in attendance were treated to two interesting presentations:

2. Libraries and Archives are Threatened by Various Disasters: How can these Collections be Safeguarded? - Ms Hansrajie Ramcharan, Head (ag), Readers' Services Division

In-Service Training Programmes/Seminars

Records Management - Fifty-four staff members comprising Administrative Officers, Administrative Assistants, Personal Assistants, Secretaries and Clerk/Typists were selected to attend Records Management training programmes organised by the Personnel Division, and which specifically targeted persons working with records in the office. The aims and objectives of the programmes are to distinguish between records management and filing, to organise and maintain an efficient record system and to classify correspondence in the correct way. The facilitator of the programme is Ms Jean Carroll, Training Officer of the
Public Service Ministry. Working with and Removal/Disposal of Asbestos - Buildings at Turkeyen Campus, constructed in the 1960s, still contain walls/ceiling made from asbestos material, most of which remain undisturbed except when activities of renovations and/or electrical and plumbing installations become necessary. The Personnel Division, recognizing that staff changes requires continual sensitization and safety programmes on asbestos, organised two half-day seminars on 12 and 13 July 2006 for staff members mainly from the Facilities Maintenance Department. The objective of these seminars was to sensitize staff about the procedures for working with and the removal/disposal of asbestos materials as well as the precautions necessary in any instance of minor contact with such material. The facilitators for these seminars were My Lydia Greene and Ms Corlene Cadogan, Occupational Health and Safety Officers attached to the Occupational Safety and Health Department, Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security. HIV/AIDS Seminar - The Personnel Division in its continuing education programme on HIV/AIDS in the Workplace, organised a series of HIV/AIDS seminars for all categories of staff members during the period 28 June to 26 July. The objective of these seminars was to sensitize new staff as well as encourage all staff about safe and healthy lifestyles. The facilitator of these seminars was Ms Monica Miller of the National AIDS Programme Secretariat and Part-time Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences. NIS Seminar - In an ongoing effort to sensitize and to keep staff members informed about the National Insurance Scheme (NIS), specifically as it relates to benefits and claims, the Personnel Division conducted a NIS Seminar on “NIS Obligations to the Worker”, on 21 June. The seminar was conducted for all staff members, especially those who have been in the employ of the University since March 2004. Staff members were informed about: - Types of NIS Benefits - Contribution Rates (Employee/Employer) - Qualifying Requirements for NIS Benefits - Procedures for Completion of Sickness Benefits Claim Form - Breakdown/Calculation of Reimbursements - Responsibility of the Employee, the Doctor, the Employer and NIS The facilitator of the seminar was Ms Dianne Lewis-Baxter, Public Relations Officer (ag), National Insurance Scheme.

Stress Management Sessions
The Brahma Kumaris Centre in Georgetown extended an invitation to staff members of the University to participate in Stress Management sessions on 27 June 2006. The two areas dealt with were the Peace Experience and Stress Free Living. Approval was given for one staff member from each Faculty/Department to attend the sessions.

Former Chancellor elected Fellow of the Royal Society
Prof. Calestous Juma, former Chancellor of the University of Guyana, was elected Fellow of the Royal Society on 19 May 2006. Forty-four scientists, including Prof. Juma, have been recognised for their exceptional contributions to science, engineering and medicine. Prof. Juma joins an outstanding group of over 1400 Fellows and Foreign Members of the Royal Society, including more than 60 Nobel Laureates.
Attendance at Development Seminar for Aspiring Leaders

Mr Jason Benjamin, President of the UGSS represented the University of Guyana at the UWI Mona Campus’ Annual Development Seminar for Aspiring Leaders in the Caribbean, during the period 11-16 June in Kingston, Jamaica. The theme of this year’s one-week residential seminar was “Aspiring Caribbean Leaders: Partnering for Caribbean Development”. Presentations were made by Prof. the Hon. Rex Nettleford, Mr Claremont Kirton, amongst others. At the end of the seminar Mr Benjamin was elected Valedictorian and was presented with a Certificate of Participation. On behalf of the University of Guyana, Mr Benjamin expressed enormous gratitude to Dr Thelora Reynolds for a dynamic, influential and inspiring seminar that effects illustrous change in the Caribbean through regional integration. In her closing remarks, Dr Reynolds, Director of Student Services, Mona Campus, requested to see at least three Guyanese university students participating in the 2007 seminar.

Scholarly and other Academic Activities

In keeping with its commitment to academic excellence and scholarship, faculty seized upon a number of opportunities to exchange ideas and test research findings.

**Mr Al Creighton**, Deputy Vice-Chancellor; **Dr Marlene Cox**, Director of ORM&P; and **Ms Paulette Paul**, Public Relations Officer; represented the University at the Inaugural ACU Public Relations Marketing and Communications Network Conference, from 17-19 July in Canada. Among other things, the Conference dealt with the marketing of the University. **Dr Victor Shchigolev**, Lecturer in the Faculty of Natural Sciences, presented a paper titled “Inhomogeneous Models of Cosmological Inflation with Yang-Mills Fields” at the XVI International School Workshop on Theoretical and Mathematics Physics “Volga-16, 2006”. The workshop was held during the period 20 June – 2 July in Kazan, Russia. **Mr Calvin Bernard**, Lecturer, Faculty of Natural Sciences, participated as the University of Guyana and National representative on the ACTO Youth Expedition, from 23 June – 28 July. **Mr Al Creighton**, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, participated in the Medellin Poetry Festival from 28 June – 4 July in Colombia, at the invitation of the Festival. **Prof. Winston McGowan**, **Walter Rodney Chair**; and **Ms Diana Alert-Wharton**, Lecturer, School of Education and Humanities, participated as Chief Examiners in the CXC Script Marking exercise from 2-22 July in Jamaica and Barbados. Prof. Joycelynne Loncke, School of Education and Humanities, participated in the CXC Script Marking exercise from 5-14 July in Barbados. **Ms Denise Maltay**, Lecturer, School of Education and Humanities, conducted research in Special Education at Medgar Evers College, New York, from 5-26 July. This research was part of the OAS Project, Building Capacity in the Education Sector for Sustainable Development.

**Prof. Aubrey Bishop**, Head of the Department of Law, attended the Caribbean Court of Justice Commission Meeting on Friday, 7 July in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad. **Mr Claude Blackmore**, Sports Organiser of UG and Vice-President of the Guyana Olympic Association, was selected as the Chef-de-Mission of the Guyana delegation which participated in the recently held Central American and
Caribbean (CAC) Games in Cartagena, Colombia. **Mr Donald Sinclair**, Lecturer in the School of Education and Humanities was nominated by UG to attend an Events Management Certificate Programme from 17-22 July in Christ Church, Barbados. The Programme was sponsored by George Washington University.

**Obituary**

Mr John Monize, Temporary Lecturer in the Faculty of Technology, died on Thursday, 22 June. Mr Monize served the University from 5 April 1983 and was laid to rest on Tuesday, 27 June 2006. The University administration extends sincere condolences to the bereaved family.