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Sir Ronald Sanders Formally Installed as 11th Chancellor of the University of Guyana ...Says Will Work to Sustain the University's Integrity, Relevance and Confidence in a Time of Rapid National Change



Newly installed Chancellor of the University of Guyana, Sir Ronald Sanders, receives the Mace from Vice-Chancellor Professor Paloma Mohamed-Martin and Chief Marshall, after being administered the Oath of Office during the formal installation ceremony at the George Walcott Lecture Theatre, University of Guyana

Internationally-respected diplomat and Caribbean Statesman, Sir Ronald Sanders, KCMG, KCN, AM, MA, was on Friday, February 13, 2026, installed as the University of Guyana's 11th Chancellor, at a special ceremony held at the George Walcott Lecture Theatre (GWLTL), Turkeyen Campus.

Among those in attendance were His Excellency, the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali; Prime Minister Hon. Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Anthony Phillips; Minister of Education, Honourable Sonia Parag; Minister of Public Service, Government Efficiency and Implementation, Mr Zulfikar Ally; members of the diplomatic corps, senior public

and private sector officials, faculty, students and well-wishers from academic and other regional organizations across the Caribbean.

The ceremony was formally declared opened by Vice-Chancellor Professor Paloma Mohamed Martin. In a symbolic and historic moment, the VC invited Sir Ronald to take the Declaration of the Oath of Office.



President of Guyana, H.E. Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali delivered remarks during the formal installation ceremony of the 11th Chancellor of the University of Guyana, Sir Ronald Sanders, at the George Walcott Lecture Theatre, University of Guyana

Delivering remarks at the ceremony, President Ali framed the occasion as one of national significance, describing Sir Ronald as ***“a distinguished son of the soil”*** whose life’s work uniquely equips him for this moment in the University’s history.

“Sir Ronald Sanders is no stranger to this region’s development process. He is no stranger to academia, to research, and to the diligent work of transforming institutions. At this time in our history, when the world is undergoing rapid change, it is appropriate that we have a bridge—someone who can help us navigate the changing global environment in which education must be pursued and delivered,” President Ali Said.

President Ali underscored that while the Government’s policy of free education had expanded access, it must now be matched by quality, relevance and national purpose. ***“Free education creates possibilities, but it does not guarantee outcomes. Our education must be much more than access; it must be matched to national development needs. The University of Guyana must be strong in research, able to contribute to global literature, and capable of producing graduates who are globally marketable through integrated professional certifications,”*** he stated.

He further emphasised that the Office of Chancellor carries deep responsibility. *“The Office of Chancellor is not ornamental. It is about what the person brings to the institution and how that leadership aligns with national transformation. Sir Ronald’s strength in diplomacy, his international stature and tested leadership will be an immeasurable asset to the University and to Guyana,”* President Ali noted.

In his inaugural address, Sir Ronald pledged to work diligently to help sustain the University’s integrity, relevance and confidence in a time of rapid national change. *“Guyana today, stands at a hinge of history. Economic possibility has widened, national expectations have risen, and global competition has sharpened. In such moments, a country’s future is not secured by resources alone. It is secured by what its people know, how quickly they learn, and how effectively they apply knowledge,”* he said.

He challenged the University to act, not as a passive observer, but as a driver of national capability. *“Knowledge is not an ornament of development; it is its engine. The University must sit at the very centre of the national project, not at the margins, but as a force shaping confidence, competence and character,”* he noted,

The Chancellor also called for stronger links between research and practical applications, urging the University to convert scholarship into innovation and policy and production. He stressed that private sector investment in university infrastructure is not charity, but *“strategic self-interest”*, and emphasised that free education must translate into *“valuable education that facilitates both individual and national growth.”*

Sir Ronald, a Guyanese-born diplomat of global standing, brings to the office a lifetime of service across journalism, broadcasting, diplomacy and scholarship. As Chancellor, he is expected to serve as a vital bridge between the University, the Government and the international community, helping to position the University of Guyana as a world-class centre of higher learning at a time when the nation’s future is being reshaped by unprecedented opportunities.



Former Chancellor Professor John Edward Greene delivered remarks during the Installation Ceremony of the 11th Chancellor of the University of Guyana at the George Walcott Lecture Theatre, University of Guyana

Immediate past Chancellor, Professor Edward Greene, CCH, offered a heartfelt and reflective account of his six-year tenure, describing it as a period defined not by ease, but by resilience forged in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. ***“While the world paused, the University of Guyana moved forward, adapting, innovating, and proving that the spirit of this institution is unbreakable,”*** he said.

Prof. Greene highlighted major milestones achieved under his stewardship, including the University’s institutional accreditation in 2025, the award of more than 40 PhDs through the Staff Improvement Scheme led by the Vice-Chancellor Professor Paloma Mohamed Martin, the establishment of the Institute of Marine and Riverine Ecologies and Economies, the launch of Project Alpha as an immersive digital learning platform, and the completion of a modern medical complex at the Turkeyen Campus, among many others.

In congratulating his successor, Professor Greene remarked, ***“Chancellor, you inherit an institution on the trajectory of becoming a global brand. You bring the rare combination of intellect and diplomacy, and I ask the University community to accord you the same cooperation and sense of purpose that sustained me.”***



Pro-Chancellor Professor Randolph B. Persaud, delivering remarks during the Installation Ceremony of the 11th Chancellor of the University of Guyana at the George Walcott Lecture Theatre, University of Guyana

Pro-Chancellor Professor Randolph B. Persaud who spoke on behalf of the Council of the University, echoed similar sentiments, describing Sir Ronald as a leader with a wealth of experience drawn from international diplomacy, the private sector and higher education. He assured the new Chancellor of his full support and commitment to advancing the University’s mission, noting that in his ***“42 years in higher education, I have never felt more energised to begin a new journey with a Chancellor.”***



Chair of the Committee of Deans, Professor Leyland Lucas , delivering remarks during the Installation Ceremony of the 11th Chancellor of the University of Guyana at the George Walcott Lecture Theatre, University of Guyana

Chair of the Committee of Deans, Professor Leyland Lucas, welcomed Sir Ronald as a steward uniquely equipped for the times. *“You bring to this institution a wealth of diplomatic, academic and practical experience. We commit ourselves to working with you to establish new programmes and strengthen existing ones that are critical to national development,”* he stated.

Dr Davon Van-Veen who spoke on behalf of the workers union described the office of Chancellor as one rooted in moral authority and continuity. *“The Chancellor stands as guardian of the University’s intellectual heritage and future promise. Universities endure not because they are free from difficulty, but because they remain committed to truth, integrity and collegial governance,”* he said.



President of the University of Guyana Students Society, Ms Tirishatta Semple, delivers remarks during the Installation Ceremony of the 11th Chancellor of the University of Guyana at the George Walcott Lecture Theatre, University of Guyana

The voices of students and alumni added a deeply human dimension to the ceremony. President of the University of Guyana Student Society (UGSS), Ms Tirishatha Semple, welcomed the new Chancellor with warmth and optimism. ***“This University shapes not only our education, but our confidence, our purpose and our future. Chancellor, we assure you of our full support. This University is your home—so welcome home,”*** she said to resounding applause.

On behalf of the Guild of Graduates, Ms Somattie Sayrange affirmed the alumni’s enduring connection to the institution. ***“We recognise the Chancellor’s role in safeguarding the values of the University and inspiring excellence, integrity and service. We stand ready to support initiatives that strengthen academic excellence, institutional development and national advancement,”*** she said.

Senior representatives from sister academic institutions across the Caribbean offered warm congratulations to Sir Ronald and expressed hope for deeper collaboration with the University of Guyana. Those offering remarks at the event included; the University of the West Indies, the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), the T.A. Marryshow Community College, St George’s University, the University of Trinidad and Tobago, and the University of Southern Caribbean.



A section of the audience at the Installation Ceremony of the 11th Chancellor of the University of Guyana at the George Walcott Lecture Theatre, University of Guyana

The University of Guyana extends its heartfelt congratulations to Sir Ronald Sanders on his installation as the 11th Chancellor, and looks forward with confidence to his visionary leadership in advancing the institution’s mission of excellence, service and national development.

Please see the video of the event here: <https://youtu.be/hj6pmcrcUvM>

UG in Brief

The University of Guyana, the accredited national University of Guyana, now in its 62nd year, was founded in October 1963, three years before Guyana became independent. “UG”, as it is fondly referred to, offers over 180 distinct programmes in over 80 disciplines from Certificates, Diplomas, associate degrees, Bachelor’s Degrees, Master’s Degrees to Ph.D.’s. These programmes are offered in online, face-to-face or blended formats. UG delivers through a system of eight campuses. This includes its 37-year-old community-based Institute for Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE) and the second major campus at Tain in Berbice celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2025, as well as the path-breaking Maoka Taawa (Forest Campus, South Rupununi). The University of Guyana’s student population is over 11,500.

Through its 9 faculties and 10 Research Institutes and Centers, including an accredited College of Medical Sciences, School of Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation and the Faculty of Earth and Environmental Sciences which has been ranked # 5 globally, “UG” has provided education, training and research for over 71,000 alumni over its 62-year history with significant national and

global impact. Key faculties include the Faculty of Engineering and Technology, the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry, the Faculty of Natural Sciences, the College of Behavioural Sciences and Research, the Faculty of Education and Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences. The University's 10 Research Institutes include the recently launched Institute for Marine and Riverine Ecologies and Economies (IMAREE), the internationally important Centre for Biodiversity, the Institute for Food and Nutrition Security, the Institute for Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, the Institute for Energy Diplomacy, the Green Institute, the Institute of Gender Studies, the Institute for Human Resiliency, Strategic Security and the Future, and the International Centre for Excellence in Early Childhood Education.

The mission of the University of Guyana is to discover, generate, disseminate and apply knowledge of the highest standard for the advancement of communities, the nation, and mankind within an atmosphere of academic freedom, transparent accountability, pragmatic innovation and universal respect.

UG's forward-thinking Blueprint 2040 is currently setting the course for the University's future design and institutional response to the changing needs of Guyana, the region and the world. It is entering the 2nd of its four phases. UG is currently celebrating its 62nd anniversary with a continued focus on becoming the leading teaching and research University in Guyana.

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