



SERVING OUR ISLANDWIDE, NEIGHBOURING,
AND REGIONAL COMMUNITIES

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At the beginning of the 2008–09 academic year the Mona Campus opened its satellite site, Western Jamaica Campus (WJC), to support the western region where economic growth is increasingly centred.

WJC began operations with 128 students enrolled in programmes, offered through the Faculties of Medical Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities and Education, that respond to the specific needs of the business community in the new and emerging growth sectors in the West. There are currently 477 students registered at the WJC.

We further signaled our commitment to serve that community by including its major stakeholders in the launch activities. Later in the year we hosted a conference in Montego Bay on Casino Gambling, titled “Examining the Impact of Gaming on Jamaica”, to engage policy makers and industry stakeholders in the discussion on Gaming’s potential impact on Jamaica.

A display of Agriculture and Agri-business research outputs mounted at the Denbigh Agriculture Show in Clarendon served as a way of involving the farming community in a conversation on new approaches and technologies in Agriculture. In addition, the conference that was held at the Pegasus Hotel served to fortify the message of “gown” engaging “town” on matters of national and regional strategic importance, in this instance, Agriculture and Food Security. As previously mentioned, the University continued its tradition of hosting a number of other conferences and symposia, aimed at communicating research findings to the public and influencing their uptake into national and regional policy.

At the Faculty level, Pure and Applied Sciences facilitated transfer of tissue culture technology to farmers in Manchester and Trelawny; continued to

be the leading provider of public and targeted education in occupational and environmental safety and health in Jamaica and the region; engaged local and hemispheric companies in search of opportunities for student training and consultancy services; provided consultative services and software to automate some labour intensive processes in firms; facilitated the search for petroleum on Jamaica’s terrestrial and marine locations; led the effort to replant mangroves along Jamaica’s coastline; provided research data for disaster mitigation and management; and maintains the only decompression chamber, used for the rehabilitation of deep sea divers, in Jamaica. The Faculty also made significant input in a newly proposed Cyber Crimes Act in Jamaica; facilitated development of data collection processes at the Ministry of Agriculture; provided actuarial financial services advice; and staged a mathematics Olympiad that attracted teachers and students from high schools seeking to enhance problem-solving skills and improve learning outcomes in mathematics education.

All Departments in the Faculty engage in outreach activities such as bringing to the Faculty school children for a structured exposure to science, helping candidates prepare for CAPE examinations, visiting schools in inner city areas to promote science and mathematics education, and providing external examiner services to other tertiary education institutions including CASE, UTECH and Community Colleges. Of special interest is the science camp organised for children between the ages of eight and twelve to expose them to the fundamentals of the earth and environmental sciences using field



trips, museum excursions, hands-on lab experiments, computer packages and exercises using the World Wide Web.

In enhancing our strategy to reach underserved communities, the Campus approved the establishment of a Centre for Disabilities Studies, primarily to conduct research, sensitise the public and assist in policy formation related to persons with disabilities. The Centre started operations in August 2009.

Members of faculty and senior administrative staff continue to serve the community in various other ways. They served on various boards and committees of professional organisations, educational institutions, policy making and inter-governmental organisations, state and private sector companies and international journals. Some of the institutions and organisations served included: Police Services Commission, International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), Decision Sciences Institute, CVSS/United Way, Idea Group Inc. (IGI), Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica, Small Business Association, School Boards, UNICEF, Optimist Club of Kingston, National Commission on Reparations, Institute of Jamaica, Friends of Liberty Hall, Jamaica Environment Trust, African Finance and Economics Association, Financial Services Commission, Forest Conservation Fund, Chartered Accountants of Jamaica, University College of the Caribbean, Jamaica Flour Mills, University of Technology's Mechanical Engineering Advisory and

Industrial Engineering Committees, Planning Institute of Jamaica, Bank of Jamaica, Statistical Institute of Jamaica, Commercial Banks, Credit Unions and the University Hospital Board of Management.

The Campus's long-standing support of the Caribbean Examinations Council's CSEC and CAPE continued, with faculty serving as Chief and Assistant Chief Examiners in various disciplines, and Departments mounting workshops for teachers and students in support of the respective syllabi. The Faculty of Humanities and Education hosted the CAPE History Lecture Series – a CAPE Lecture Series for History Unit One and Unit Two that offered additional academic support and facilitated further understanding of specific topics for secondary school students sitting CAPE Caribbean History.

Pure and Applied Sciences mounted a seven-day workshop on Teaching Mathematics at the Early Childhood and Primary levels. Guest presenter, Professor Dionne Cross from Indiana University, USA, offered professional development courses to teachers and allied professionals, in keeping with the School of Education's strategic decision to provide such services on an ongoing basis.

Public lectures, such as that on Culture, Psychology and 'Social Justice' delivered by Professor Kwok Leung, of City University of Hong Kong, a widely-recognised authority on cultural and psychological aspects of 'social justice' within societies and in the workplace, allowed policy makers and others the opportunity to share ideas and discuss policy



recommendations. A number of Mona's faculty remained active in the media by writing articles for newspapers, serving as special guest editors and participating in radio and television interviews.

The annual Research Day took place this year under the theme, Information Communication Technologies (ICT): Enabling Cutting Edge Research. This open day activity caters to the public, including hundreds of school children who come to view the research displays, interact with researchers and participate in the research conference.

Engaging the Non-campus Countries

We cemented our partnership with the UWI Open Campus (UWIOC) by facilitating its delivery of the online BEd degree that draws on various departments in the Faculty of Humanities and Education for content and/or professional courses, and the CARIMAC's courses in Online Journalism and Community Media. The Faculty of Medical Sciences completed the online conversion of the BScN (post RN) degree which has a wide student population around the Caribbean. UWISON conducted a Curriculum Development Workshop in Nevis to build capacity at the Health Science Division, Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College, to transition the Associate Nursing degree to a baccalaureate degree. The Social Sciences Faculty committed to working with the Open Campus to facilitate their offering of either a major or minor in Economics and subsequently other Social Sciences programmes.

Developing Neighbouring Communities

During the year, Mona launched its "Township Project" in the neighbouring community, August Town. This project seeks to use education and sports as tools for enabling development of Mona's neighbouring inner-city communities. The Campus works with school principals, school boards, community leaders and families to improve performance at all levels of the school system. Within this project, the Campus lends direction, provides teaching assistance and resources, as well as undertakes construction and upgrading of school and community learning (including sports) compounds. Plans were also put in place to award UWI scholarships to eligible members of the community in the current academic year.

Another component of the project is a job training programme which the Estate Management Department mounts. A Home Owners' Association was also formed with the aim of expanding houses in the community to accommodate University students. Fruitful discussions have taken place with the Jamaica National Building Society to provide mortgages.

The University Township Project, it is hoped, will evolve into a model of community development in which an educational institution, by integrating with its local community in the delivery of high quality education, helps the community to transform itself into a preferred and privileged place, rich in social capital.