



Renaissance

Office of the Vice-Chancellor, The University of Guyana

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UG Turkeyen Campus 50th Graduation pg 12

Turkeyen & Tain Talks 4:
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Celebrates 16 years pg 26

DID YOU KNOW?

CLASS OF 1968

The first Convocation was held on January 13, 1968, at Queen's College Auditorium. The valedictorian was Mr Mohamed Insanally from the Faculty of Social Sciences. The graduation address was delivered by Professor Sir Harry Annamunthodo.

At the first conferring of degrees by the University of Guyana, the music was provided the Guyana Police Force Band, under the direction of the Bandmaster, Superintendent P G Small.

The members of the first graduation class, 1968:

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Bebe Isha Beekie
George Nathaniel Cave
Inez Selina Clarke
Iris Eileen Gilbert
Ronald Benjamin Gunraj
Adam Hoosain
Elise Jonas
Arnold Moorlee Lochan
Pairadeau Adolphus Alva Mars
Chintaman Mayroo
Allan Lionel Roopan
Robert Lakhram Sarjoo

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Morris Orlando Paul
Halvidar Singh

BACHELOR OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

Asgar Ally
Martin Jagdeo Boodhoo
Sheik Ayube Hassan
Mohamed Insanally
Cecil Leonard Mohanlall Jawahir
Dudley Ganesh Persaud Kissoore
Zameer Majid
Rupert Anbrey McGregor
Sahadeo Patram
David Tanjuen Peters
Richard Moorat Prashad
William Rambihar
Alfred Dhabylal Ramrattan
Annette Ramrattan
Richamond Henry Reece
Winston Cleveland Smith
Edwin Yhap



The University of Guyana Convocation 1968

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The VC Speaks

*“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”
-Nelson Mandela*

Convocation and Change

There are certain moments in the lives of individuals and educational institutions when the wisdom of the proposition by the late exemplar of patience and principle named Nelson Mandela are highlighted. One of those moments is the symbolic and ceremonial end of the educational journeys of students, called Commencement in some places and Convocation in others.

We call it Convocation at The University of Guyana (UG), and we had two of them during the month of November—the milestone 50th at Turkeyen, and the Fifteenth at Tain. There was both individual and institutional pride as we graduated 1,628 actual and potential change agents with certificates, diplomas, undergraduate degrees and post-graduate degrees at Turkeyen, and 428 actual and potential agents of change with certificates, diplomas, and undergraduate degrees at Tain.

The ‘end of journey’ pride exuded by the graduates at the Turkeyen and Tain ceremonies was palpable and understandable. But there was more than individual pride; institutional pride also was evident, and understandably so, too, as our university lecturers and academic and non-academic staff had delivered on one of UG’s key promises to the students when they started their educational journeys: to facilitate the broadening of their perimeters of knowledge, enabling them to become agents of personal and professional change to benefit themselves, their families, and their societies.

There was additional reason for institutional pride in the case of Turkeyen graduation. In order to commemorate the 50th milestone, we held a competition to produce a Golden Jubilee Song, which was premiered at the event. It was sung by the newly formed UG Choir, to the accompaniment of the Guyana Police Force Band. Moreover, the 50th Convocation witnessed several firsts: six students were conferred with the Master’s degree in Internal Medicine/Infectious Diseases; six of them received the Master’s degree in Public Health; two students received the Bachelor of Science in Medical Rehabilitation; and nine of them received the Diploma in Industrial Engineering.

I extend my congratulations to all our Turkeyen and Tain graduates, to their families, friends and supporters. Let me also offer my deep appreciation to the hundreds of UG lecturers, technicians, librarians, secretaries, and other staff—in the various Faculties, in Maintenance, the Registry, Bursary, Safety and Security, and other units for helping to produce those agents of change.

Keep on keeping on!



Professor Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, B. Soc. Sci., MA, MPhil, Ph.D.
Tenth Principal and Vice Chancellor
The University of Guyana



Editor's Note



Denise Hopkinson-Braam
Editor

Dear Readers,

The collaboration between the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and the Centre for Communication Studies (CCS) of The University of Guyana brings to you this fourth edition of *Renaissance*, a monthly newsletter. *Renaissance* is the Vice-Chancellor's medium of sharing with you the developments and the areas of interest that need to be celebrated at our University.

As Guyana celebrates its Golden Jubilee Independence, it is quite fitting the country's most prestigious, tertiary institution celebrates its 50th Anniversary Convocation exercise. Dr Vincent Adams, Guyanese born, engineering giant working in the US Department of Energy, delivered the feature address at Turkeyen's Jubilee Graduation.

Our Berbice Campus also hosted its graduation exercise, with feature speaker Professor Jaipaul Singh.

We hope you enjoy reading both addresses to the UG 2016 Graduates.

Renaissance's entire publication team congratulates all our deserving 2016 graduates. Because of your personal commitment to success, you are a part of this celebratory Convocation 50th Anniversary Year. Endeavour to become far greater than any circumstance challenging your future success.

Graduates, we hope you become impassioned in your respective fields. Be motivated as you read of the UG Computer Science Graduates who won this year's, first ever, Hackathon.

Renaissance has expanded to include articles featuring our sister campus in Berbice. Feel proud with us as you read of the students' and lecturer's accomplishments.

Most of these stories are creations of our CCS student interns attached to the publication.

CCS is involved in training students in the art of print, radio, television and online journalism; public relations; communication research, and consultancy.

As you read, be inspired to join us as we celebrate with pride... UG's *Renaissance*!

UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA

Vice Chancellor's Fund for Strategic Initiatives

Giving to UG

Supporting UG can be achieved through monetary donations/material contributions in the form of gifts and/or sponsorship(s)

THE PROCESS

Send Cheques via Registered Post to
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Turkeyen Campus
Greater Georgetown
Guyana

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For further details and enquiries please email

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For alumni membership and matters please email

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The University of Guyana's Turkeyen and Tain Talks 4

"After Obama, More History: Implications of the US Elections for Guyana and the rest of the Western Hemisphere"



Panelists of the Turkeyen and Tain Talks 4: (from left to right) Kadasi Ceres, Head of Government and International Relations, UG; Queenela Cameron, Coordinator & Lecturer, Government and International Relations, UG; H.E. Pierre Giroux, Canadian High Commissioner to Guyana; Professor Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, Vice-Chancellor, UG; Jean Ricot Dormeus, Organization of American States Representative in Guyana; Hon. Sherod Duncan, Deputy Mayor and Moderator; (at the podium) DVC Barbara Reynolds, UG.

The fourth bi-monthly Turkeyen & Tain Talks, held on Tuesday, November 15, 2016, sparked the public's interest with over 100 persons in attendance.

One aim of the University is to serve as a public intellectual broker: thus, the panel consisted of five distinguished professionals: Professor Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, Vice-Chancellor, The University of Guyana; Mr Jean Ricot Dormeus, Organization of American States Representative in Guyana; MsQueenela Cameron, Coordinator & Lecturer, Department of the Government and International Relations, The University of Guyana; H.E. Pierre Giroux, Canadian High Commissioner to Guyana; and Mr Kadasi Ceres, Head of Department of Government and International Relations, The University of Guyana. The discussion was moderated by Deputy Mayor, Honorable Sherod Duncan.

It is believed that the United States of America's elections will have implications on the region, given that the president holds great power that shapes foreign policy. Indeed, "when America sneezes the world catches a cold."

There was a sense of anxiety in the room as the five panelists shed light on a potential way forward for Guyana and the rest of the Western Hemisphere.

In their discussion, they dealt with the United States' national interest, their relationship with Latin America and the Caribbean, and the effects of the transition from the Obama to the Trump administration.

Mr Dormeus believes Guyana's President, H.E. David Granger, hit the

"When America sneezes the world catches a cold."

nail on the head when he said that the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) will be engaging the Donald Trump administration, especially when President Granger assumes the chair on CARICOM for the next year. Commissioner Giroux reiterated those sentiments with his remark about the importance of Guyana establishing a friendship with the Trump administration.

Meanwhile, VC Griffith spoke on the "Implication for the United States electoral change on the hemisphere, focusing on the international, the state connecting with other states."

In his brief remarks, he noted the

change in the stance of President-Elect Trump from when he was campaigning. This observation was based on the merit from former US President George Washington, whom he quoted, "No nation is to be trusted further than it is bound by its interest and no prudent statesman or politician will venture to depart from it."

According to VC Griffith, the national interests are going to contort the Trump we saw during the elections.

Professor Griffith highlighted the US's five interests: the first, he said, was democracy, the way states govern themselves. He added that the interest was to ensure a democratic ideal.

The second interest, he went on, was geo-narcotics. According to VC Griffith, the US is still the recipient of drugs from South America, Africa, and Asia through the Caribbean and other parts of the world. The other interests were geo-politics and counter-terrorism; immigration; and geo-economics and its implication for trade and investment.

In regards to the last interest, he said that there is a worry about retaining global competitiveness in trade and financing with Caribbean countries, Central American countries, and South American countries,

whether bilaterally or multilaterally. Free trade, and its importance to the US economy, was also discussed. The topics discussed piqued the interest of the attendees and questions were also posed in the areas of immigration, education, and security.

We can expect these talks to continue with the next Turkeyen and Tain Talksto beheld on January 24, 2017, which will focus on Public Health in Guyana.

Scenes from Turkeyen and Tain Talks 4



UG Computer Science Graduates Win Inaugural Hackathon

- Already making an impact in the corporate world, local communities and education



Members of Version75 take a moment for a UG Renaissance photograph at their WeOwn Space location at Aubrey Barker Road and David Rose Street, South Ruimveldt Gardens. From Left to Right: Shemar Lindie, Asa Brouet, Eldon Marks, Ashim Badrie and Christopher Clarke.

In early November, Team Version75 Solutions won the Ministry of Public Telecommunications **Hackathon 2016**; the first of its kind held in Guyana.

The team of four, led by Eldon Marks, lecturer in the Department of Computer Science, currently on sabbatical leave and 2004 UG graduate, included Asa Brouet and Ashim Badrie 2015 UG graduates, and Shemar Lindie, 2016 UG graduate.

Version75 Solutions is also a registered business in Guyana, which provides software solutions to numerous clients. It comprises a network of thirty freelance and independent software professionals, but the core members are

Marks, Brouet, Badrie, Lindie, as well as current final-year UG student Christopher Clarke.

The winning software application and platform, 'TELL-Effective Incident Reporting for Organisations' features the ability for members of the public to make reports of incidents and issues and have them forwarded to the relevant authorities to be addressed, while providing status updates where necessary. These incidents may be crimes, accidents, fires, damage to public infrastructure, blackouts, and an expanding list of issues that may affect citizens and communities.

One key feature of the application is its integration and use of location mapping, Marks explains. Already the E-Gover-

nance Project of the Government of Guyana has expressed an interest in the software. He believes his team's solution is yet another clear indication that custom-designed software solutions for local issues can be easily developed by local ICT professionals.

The formal education from the University of Guyana's Computer Science Department, he says, provided his team with the necessary background that proved to be advantageous in his team developing the prize-winning software solution at the Hackathon. The Hackathon saw participation by eight teams including one from neighbouring Suriname. Other teams also included UG graduates or students but Team Version75 was the one with mem-

UG Computer Science Graduates Win Inaugural Hackathon

- Already making an impact in the corporate world, local communities and education

bers who all passed through the UG Computer Science program.

In 2004, Marks' final-year Computer Science project was deemed, by his Lecturer Malcolm Williams, as having an innovative and unique way of solving a challenge. He was then asked to apply to join the Computer Science Department upon graduation. The mentorship of lecturers and the encouraging environment of the Department would in turn inspire Marks himself to provide mentorship to his own students.

Marks pursued a Master's Degree at Howard University, specializing in Artificial Intelligence. His passion for spreading his knowledge and expertise saw him encouraging students to form networks while finding the best ways in developing their own entrepreneurial pursuits. His focus is a passion for community and collaboration rather than competition.

What started in his home as a network of Computer Science 'techies' has now grown to a network with its own office space in a large complex at David Rose Street and Aubrey Barker Road in South Ruimveldt Gardens. There, beside the other arm of the venture, aptly titled, "WeOwn Space", the core team of five works on solutions to numerous issues, not only for their corporate clients but also for local communities and youth.

WeOwn Space is an environment for independent young entrepreneurs in the tech fields to use as a modern, comfort-

able workspace. It also functions as a centre of learning for youth where Clarke, while still a UG student, spearheaded the teaching of software and IT concepts to local youth. Leaders in entrepreneurship also visit to give inspirational talks to the youth in the area.

Version75 team members have also visited schools to push the enthusiasm of children in programming, software development, web development and information technology.

These enthusiasts are young UG graduates who are not only pursuing their personal entrepreneurial development but are keen on sharing their skills and knowledge with the wider community while collaborating with their peers. They all have plans for furthering their formal education in various fields in Computer Science, Information Systems or Information Technology.

The Department of Computer Science (UG) in congratulating the winning team on its facebook page was clear: "The formal training received while pursuing their studies at the University of Guyana was integral in making Version75 a highly effective software team. They understood the processes, the importance of specialization, software design and modeling before heading into code. Further, team leader Mr. Marks noted, "The quality of

lecturers in the Department throughout the years who inspired the best in us really made all of this come together, so we were able to function as a well-oiled machine with a great group dynamic."

The Version75 team is big on vision and sees tech solutions as key in the development of the nation. Marks added "On a grand scale, the more technical our thinking is as a third world country, the more accelerated our development will be. [We can] embrace the possibilities of modern technologies to solve our typical problems, find the appropriate technologies in this day and age which are all around us and just match them to the problems we face.

With groups like ours and the network we are surrounded with, the use of technology for its best potential, can slowly but surely become common knowledge."

To learn more of Version75 Solutions you can find them online at <http://www.version75.com> or find them on Facebook, along with their other tech community venture 'WeOwn Space'. You can also test the TELL application at: www.tellreporting.com

The University of Guyana's Turkeyen Campus 50th Graduation



The 50th Convocation Ceremony of The University of Guyana's, Turkeyen Campus was an occasion filled with excitement, nervously tapping shoes, anxious but proud relatives and marked yet another year with stellar performances by a large number of academics.

The ceremony, held on Saturday, November 11, 2016, saw hundreds of relatives converging at the campus to witness the graduation of their loved ones, creating long lines of traffic leading to UG.

After several minutes of final preparations, the Convocation got off to an exciting start as the graduates grew anxious as the names of the 1,628 who graduated were called.

Persons graduated with master's, bachelor's, and associate degrees, as well as diplomas and certificates. The class of 2016 graduated from academic programmes in the seven faculties at UG: Agri-

culture and Forestry, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Education and Humanities, Health Sciences, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and Technology. There were also students from the Institute of Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE) who graduated.

According to the university, a notable milestone of the 50th Convocation was the graduation of the first batch of students from four new programmes offered in the Faculties of Health Sciences and Technology.

Six students were conferred with the Master's Degree in Internal Medicine/ Infectious Diseases. Another six students received the Master's Degree in Public Health while the Bachelor of Science in Medical Rehabilitation was conferred on three students.

Nine students, including UG staffers from the Facilities Maintenance Division, were conferred with

Diplomas in Industrial Engineering.

The announcement of the names of those who performed exceptionally came closer to the feature of the proceedings – the speech by valedictorian Dr Kibwey Peterkin, who received loud rounds of applause when his name was called among the graduates and also during his speech.

Dr Peterkin received the President's Medal for the Best Graduating Bachelor's Degree Student, and he also won the Prime Minister's Award for the Best Graduating Student in the School of Medicine.

At the ceremony, special mention was made of the outstanding achievements of Ganesh Mithra Singh, a visually impaired student who graduated with distinction after reading for a Degree in Social Work.

The event was graced with the presence of President David Ganger and several other

government officials and well-wishers.

Meanwhile, Dr Vincent Adams, Deputy Field Manager in the US Department of Energy and a UG Alumnus who migrated decades ago, reminded the graduates that they should grasp every educational opportunity available because it is crucial to further success.

Dr Adams, during his feature address, stressed hard work as a key factor for upward mobility, noting that giving up is never an option, even after disappointments.

Over the years, hundreds of persons have graduated from the country's leading tertiary institution with various forms of certification. The university plans to expand its reach and the Faculty of Health Sciences will, in the new year, benefit significantly from the administration's plans, including the construction of a new faculty building.



Commencement Address on the Occasion of UG's 50th Convocation on November 12, 2016

Delivered by Dr Vincent Adams

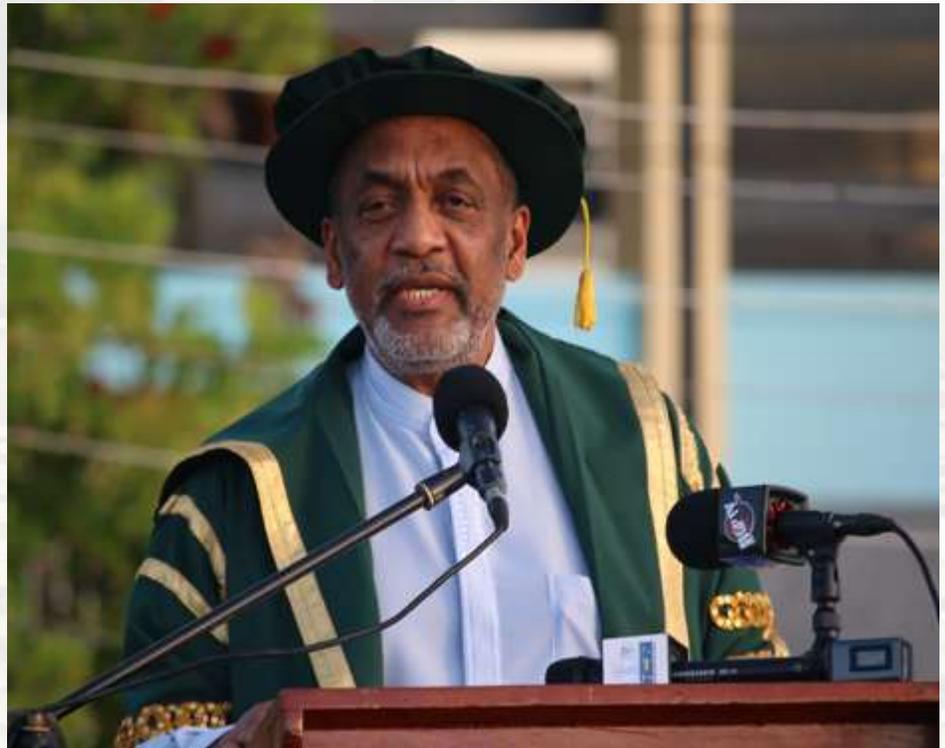
I want to take this opportunity to congratulate my very dear friend and fellow UG alumnus, Vice-Chancellor Griffith, for first surviving his first four and one-half months in office, but on a more serious note, thank him for putting his money where his mouth is, by returning home to serve in this most critical position of Vice-Chancellor, leading the renaissance of this great institution in its underpinning of this nation's enormous future.

UG is in great hands with him at its helm. Not only is this a distinct honour to be asked to speak before this special 50th anniversary class, but it also no doubt takes me down memory lane; I remember sitting right there in those seats 43 years ago, while being in the first degreed engineering class, a class of just 11.

This experience is very sentimental to me, for the education I received at UG is the only reason for me being who I am, and why I am here today. It's really important also for me to say that I would not have done it had my UG education not been free. I am a posterchild as to why no child or student should be denied an education because of lack of means.

Affordable education is a basic human right. It is the great equalizer and, as Dr Martin Luther King called it, "the passport to happiness". From an investment standpoint, education is the number one test, even over infrastructure, when it comes to attracting foreign investments – a key component of any country's economic competitiveness in this global economy.

Education is personal to me. You see, my mother could not read or write, because she was never given the opportunity to go to school. Further, I happened to have grown up in a little village called Christianburg in Linden. Christianburg was branded as being on the wrong side of the river and where most feared to tread. So, as you can tell, there were lots of opportunities for me to take the wrong road, but that village would not let me. That village raised and protected me. As dirt poor as I was, I never knew it because of the rich love, protection, and guidance I enjoyed. That's the reason why it doesn't matter how far I travel; Christianburg and UG will forever be home.



Dr Vincent Adams

Deputy Field Manager, US Department of Energy

In those days, I never thought of going to University. My only dream was to play cricket for Guyana and the West Indies. I made it halfway there when I made the Guyana team and was on top of the world. I felt invincible until, at the tender age of 19, my dreams evaporated with a terrible auto accident. I was lost and didn't know what to do.

But again, I was lucky to have someone like the great Basil Butcher not only as my mentor, but like a second father. He in no uncertain way forced me to go to UG. To paraphrase, he said, "son, as hard as it might be to give up the short-term fame of cricket, you must focus and do the things you could control. You can control how much education you get and that will stay with you forever, but you can't really control your cricket future, and even if you can, such a career would only last until you are maybe 30 to 35 years old." He was so right!

Of course, I couldn't get into UG without the generous free extra lessons and the dedicated time and attentiveness afforded me by the many teachers in Christianburg. I didn't know why at the time they singled me out in so many ways, good and bad. It was

that young teacher by the name of Cyril Campbell who taught me how to play cricket, table tennis and football - sports which I enjoyed more than anything in life and excelled at – but he would not let me play unless I stayed up with him late at nights studying. It was the late Head Teacher Hector Parris, who benched me for bringing third place in class. I didn't know it at the time, but they saw something in me and were preparing me for another life starting at UG.

This degree you receive today is just your learner's permit for the rest of your drive through life. Fortunately, I still have my learner's permit, except it is 43 years older than yours. So let me share with you five attributes that I have learned to be absolutely necessary for success:

- 1. The first lesson, per the famous quote is: "As you go on to eat the fruits, don't forget who planted the trees." Like me, I am sure you also had that proverbial village that has brought you this far. Like me, you may have been the first in your entire family, the first in your street, or in your alley, or the first even in**

your village to attend University. You are now viewed far differently than you were yesterday; you are now a role model. You now have influence and power. What you do or say means something. However, please use your newly acquired power, influence, and stature to be that proverbial village to raise the next generation; it's your turn. And when it's all over, it's best to not be judged by your personal riches, but rather by how many lives you have enriched.

2. I know you must be reading these inspirational books and listening to inspirational speeches that tell you to shoot for the stars, but I didn't plan my life the way it turned out. So, I advise a more passionate dedication to the pursuit of short term goals. Be micro-ambitious. Again, as I heeded, do what you can control, and the one thing you can control is hard work. Believe me, you don't have to be smarter than the next person, all you have to do is

try, or how well you perform, you will still end up failing. It's just the realities of life sometimes. It's not fair at times but step up when the times are toughest and, as Shaggy says, "Never, ever give up." Setbacks can lead to the greatest success which is humility and learning. What's important is that when you fail; don't fail to learn the lesson. As one writer sagely puts it, "the thing you must remember and realize is that nobody else is paying as much attention to your failure as you. You are the only one who is obsessed with the importance of your own life, so just move on!"

4. You have to be prepared for the one thing in life that is as certain as death – that is, change! So you must be agile, flexible, and versatile to adapt to changes. I never planned my circuitous path through life starting from being just this little shirttail boy in Christianburg, to becoming a national cricketer, to a groundwater hydrologist, to a petroleum engineer, to an environmen-

took advantage of every opportunity for training to broaden my horizon. My colleagues would oftentimes refer to me in jest as the professional student. The new paradigm in a highly competitive global economy is that for the dedicated, high achieving individual; school will never be out. Learning is an attitude, not a destination. The people being hired these days are not those with certain degrees, but those with a desire to succeed, a desire to achieve. As Shakespeare says, you have to be ready to "take the current when it serves or lose your ventures."

5. And here is my last, but what I deem to be the most vital of all attributes that you must have to be successful in life - both professional and personal. This attribute, you guessed it, is called ATTITUDE! I realize that as UG grads you have high IQs and good grades, but please let it be known that attitude is a far better predictor of your success than your IQs and grades. You could be taught math, you could be taught science, or you could be taught literature, but you cannot be taught ATTITUDE. Let me let you in on a little secret: there is a reason why employers conduct interviews. It should be obvious that it can't be to see who is the smartest among the lot, because, guess what; all of that smart information is already in your resume which they have studied. Interviews, my friends, are mostly to discern your ATTITUDE! That cannot be detected from your Resume, your IQ, or your grades.

As the great poet Charles Swin-doll said: "We cannot change our past... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play the one string we have, and that is our attitude...life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it. We are in charge of our attitudes".

"No matter what happens in life, always ask yourself what am I grateful for? No matter what is happening, there are still things in your life that are going well. It is important to stay grateful for what you have and look at life from an attitude of "abundance".

Also, no matter what is happening, ask yourself: "What can I learn from this?" Any tough situation is a chance for you to grow and learn. Or, as my better half tells me whenever things go badly, "Honey, everything happens for a reason and for the best and only God knows best." Lo and behold, she is proven to be right every time.

Finally, at the risk of sounding somewhat hypocritical, I would urge that

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Guyana now has the potential to become one of, if not the richest country on the planet – but you are the ones with the tools to lead the way in making this a reality. The discovery of oil is a game changer in a big way towards this reality, but it's just the start in making this country a power player in the world economy. Dr Vincent Adams

be willing to work harder, and your rise and accomplishments will take care of themselves. You will always get out what you put in.

3. Your lives, like mine, will be littered with disappointments, failures, setbacks, sorrows, you name it. But, what you become afterwards will depend on how you react to these adversities. As the Japanese proverb goes, "fall down seven times, get up eight". Sometimes though, no matter how well you prepare, how hard you

tal engineer, and now, to reaching the unthinkable heights of being a member of the Senior Executive Service Corps running the day to day operations of the most powerful country on the planet. You must expect several career changes, more so in today's world of a global economy, and you must learn and think more like a generalist and acquire all the skills that entails. You must continue to educate yourselves. Even when I was doing well and being well-positioned in my jobs, I still

The University of Guyana's Turkeyen Campus 50th Graduation Valedictorian

This piece was originally published as a feature in the "Municipal Matters" and was reproduced with the kind permission of Georgetown's Deputy Mayor, Honourable Sherod Duncan



*Dr Kibwey Peterkin
UG Turkeyen Campus Valedictorian*

University of Guyana's Valedictorian for Convocation 2016 is Faculty of Health Sciences' student Kibwey Roderick Andwele Peterkin. It is the first time that the Faculty has produced a valedictorian in the fifty-year history of the University.

Peterkin, 23, born 7 October 1993, pursued Medicine and graduates with a Bachelor of Medicine /Bachelor of Surgery Degree (MBBS) and the coveted President's Medal for the Best Graduating Student as well as the Prime Minister's Medal for the Best Graduating Student in the School of Medicine.

The young doctor is now in a special class of students who have, over the years, been conferred with the high honor of valedictorian. This notable group includes James G. Rose (1977, Faculty of Arts); Freddie Kissoon (1978, Faculty of Arts); President David Granger (1990, Faculty of Arts); and Lorie-Mae Heywood (2009, Faculty of Social Sciences).

In Peterkin's five-year so-

journal at UG, he completed thirty-seven courses to attain his MBBS, thirty-six of which are 'A's, one 'B', a near perfect Grade Point Average. The medical doctor credits his success to his single parent mother, Holly Pinky Stewart, and his trust in a "something higher than me".

He remembers vividly the many years when his mother worked for just thirty-thousand dollars and wonders now how she made it with three children and bills to pay. His brother, Kadeem and sister, Kenesha are also University students reading for Business Management degrees.

"Even when I thought I didn't have the potential to do something, my mother always advised me not to worry and encouraged me to just do my best and trust in God and he would guide me through."

Peterkin's was an idyllic upbringing in the rural area, Bachelor's Adventure on the nation's eastern coast, attending the community's Seventh

Day Adventist Church. The young doctor, on the role his faith plays in his life, paraphrased last year's valedictorian Sachin Ramsurran (Faculty of Technology), 'if you believe continue to believe, if you don't believe you should start'.

"My faith in God has been nurtured since I was a young man." He said, "God has always been in the midst of it, even when I thought that he wasn't, he was."

Peterkin who attended one of Guyana's top schools stated that he doesn't know how a "country boy from Paradise Primary, who loved to play cricket ended up at Queen's College. It's still a mystery to me," and continued, "it must have been my hard work and trust in God".

He said that the key to success is to "repeat your hard work, repeat your dedication, imagine a better you and trust in God. If you want to achieve something in life set that goal and keep working at it, regardless of the setbacks and eventually you will end up there."

Hair dyed indigo blue, Peterkin breaks the stereotype of what one expects the disposition of a valedictorian to be: nerdy and introverted. He is chatty, engaging and laughs at himself and where his journey in life has brought him.

He was definitive, "Don't let anyone judge you by your looks, but by what's in your head and your performance." Peterkin spends his spare time in the gym body building, and on volunteer efforts and was very open, saying that up to third form he was not so engrossed in school work, but had in the front of his mind to

be a cricketer, describing himself in the sport as average. He contemplated being a mathematician as well, since it was a subject he was good at.

He noted that his interest in Medicine developed after reading Dr. Ben Carson's book, "Gifted Hands", which was a given to him by friend, Megan Wilson. He said that even though he couldn't comprehend all the concepts the book put forward when he read it as a second former, this was the period when his interest peaked "in the then unknown world of medicine".

On introspection on his achievement, Peterkin says he has learnt, "you are your own limit". He said being chosen as valedictorian came as a shock to him since medicine is arguably one of the toughest programmes on campus, but "hard work does count for something and each day has the potential for a new reality."

He said that, "the University's medical programme is one of the most challenging because of the volume of work and the standard you have to meet. It can take a bit out of you, but if you want to pursue your dreams in the area of medicine then UG's medical programme is an excellent one. It has produced some of the best clinicians in the Caribbean and the world at large".

Peterkin stated that there is no real secret formula to his success, but that he found to be true what Aristotle posited, "We are what we repeatedly do." His advice to young people eyeing medicine as a career choice is to, "Make sure it's not something your parents want you to do, but that it is some-

thing you want to do every day when you wake up.”

His valedictory speech focused on how persons should go about improving themselves and by extension, Guyana.

And as regards what comes next for the scholar, he intends to do a one-year internship. He is currently awaiting

a response from Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation, where he was born, and institutions in Jamaica and Trinidad. He has an abiding interest in clinical medicine as well as aspects of medical administration; “planning” in particular. His ideal job later in life is to work for PAHO or WHO, after giving back service to Guy-

ana as “Guyana holds a special place in my heart”, he said.

In addition to the history made by Peterkin, the University of Guyana’s School of Medicine continues to make historic strides, this year graduating specialists in Obstetrics and Gynecology, Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases. The School will add this

year also to the nation’s specialists in Pediatrics, General Surgery, Orthopedics, Anesthesia and Intensive Care.

The Faculty of Health Sciences was established in 1981. Prior to its establishment, its programmes were offered within the Faculty of Natural Sciences.

The University of Guyana’s

Berbice Campus Graduation Valedictorian Speech

Delivered by Lorelli Farley

Graduates, at this 15th convocation ceremony of the University of Guyana’s Tain Campus, I am honored to represent our graduating class of 2016. Now, we can say this moment marks the beginning of our new journey.

Graduates, we can use this moment to give thanks and celebrate our achievements, and we can also use it to confront the opportunities and challenges which we will encounter as we move forward.

To all those present here, we salute you, and we extend to you, sincere gratitude for sharing this special time with us. Your presence and your many kind expressions of love and support are deeply appreciated. It is with heartfelt gratitude that we look back over the years and see the marvelous ways in which God has led us to this significant milestone.

Graduates, our success must be attributed firstly to God Almighty for His grace and gift of faith. I know that God did not choose me to showcase my strengths, but to reveal His. I believe that my God can do anything – far more than I could ever imagine, guess, or request in my wildest dreams.

My fellow graduates, it took many persons



*Lorelli Farley
UGBC Valedictorian*

to help us achieve academic success.

No words can adequately express our gratitude to those persons. To our families who were there for us throughout our time in academia and gave of their best, we thank you. Your material possessions, love, care, encouragement, and support have helped to shape the individuals we are today. You have helped us to rise above the pressures and push relentlessly towards this day.

Ladies and gentlemen, as I look back, and then look at all that we have accomplished, we are grateful to our lecturers for their hard work and dedication in facilitating our academic success. Although we have not always given them an easy road to walk, we could not have been

placed into better hands during our time at Tain Campus.

Lecturers, you gave us much more than classroom experiences. You taught us valuable lessons which will always remain with us. Mrs Maureen Bynoe, you epitomize the qualities of the educator that I hope to become. Mr Rajkumar Sookraj, Mr Mark Lyte, Ms Marcia Conway, Ms Pamela Rose, Ms Camanie Khedaroo, Mr Ganga Persaud, Ms Erika Hope, Mr Imran Ali, and Mr Ray Jonas, we assure you that the knowledge which we have gained will be used to transform lives. Time does not permit me to mention every lecturer, but that does not lessen the gratitude we feel in our hearts for their contributions towards our success. Class of 2016, this is our Zen, trumped, and bigly moment. Let us bask in it.

Hard work, commitment, and dedication have given us our victory. We have realized one of our goals, and today we hope to set many more goals as we position ourselves for a better future.

To my colleagues from the School of Education and Humanities, I see great days ahead in the teaching profession if we apply the knowledge we have absorbed. Our knowledge has no val-

ue unless we use and share it.

According to Robert Meehan, we are not just teachers, we are managers of the world’s greatest resources – children. I have been a teacher for twenty-one years and education is what I love. It has given me lots of joy, pleasure, and some pains as well, but I am not leaving it for anything else. I read on social media recently that not all handsome and beautiful people are in movies. Some are in teaching.

Let me remind you just how amazing you are for choosing teaching as a profession. The future of the world is in your classroom. Regardless of the lack of adequate salaries, support, and encouragement from parents and stakeholders, we owe it to our nation’s children to help them succeed beyond tests. We may not have all the tools, resources, facilities, and support to fulfill our mandate, but let’s strive to be the kind of teachers we would like for our own children.

To my fellow graduates from the Divisions of Agriculture, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences, you are the new exemplar of this nation and exactly what Guyana needs. Let’s embrace our country with love and a commit-

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The University of Guyana's

Berbice Campus Graduation Valedictorian Speech

Delivered by Lorelli Farley

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ment to making lives better for ourselves and others. What is expected, more than anything else, is for us to act as a catalyst for the growth and development of our country. We all have an important role to play in Guyana's development.

Let us turn up the volume of our contributions to Guyana's development. It is our obligation. UG TAIN CAMPUS has prepared us for this time and season in Guyana. After this excellent endeavor, we owe it to ourselves and our nation to work with all the skills and pas-

sions we have so that Guyana can shine again in the world.

Graduates, we know that our journey through academia was not easy – mental blocks, long stretches of thinking without writing, occasional wanders down blind alleys, not to mention the expense of travel. These are not aberrations but fundamental parts of the process of building academic character. It is not that some of us were smart.

We worked really hard, never gave up even when times were difficult, had a positive attitude, worked well

with our colleagues, always prepared for class, and studied assiduously. We are now finished here at Tain Campus, some of us with working relationships, marriage, health, and sanity still in good shape.

Class of 2016, I believe we were fortunate to obtain our Diplomas and Undergraduate Degrees right here at Tain Campus. We know that the doors of the University of Guyana are open to higher learning, but it is our hope that many of us graduating this evening would have the opportunity to pursue such

higher learning right here at Tain Campus. Some of us, just like our counterparts at Turkeyen, prefer to stay close to family and familiar settings.

In closing, to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to preserve you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to God, our Saviour, we give the glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore.

Thank you.

Commencement Address on the Occasion of UG's 50th Convocation on November 12, 2016

Delivered by Dr Vincent Adams

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you stay home in Guyana to take advantage of the opportunities that I foresee on the horizon. Notwithstanding the great opportunities I see ahead for your future in Guyana, the times have changed gravely since my generation left these shores for greener pastures. And if you have been following the elections in the US and Europe for example, you should understand what I mean – we are not welcomed like we used to be.

Guyana now has the potential to become one of, if not the richest country, on the planet – but you are the ones with the tools to lead the way in making this a reality. The discovery of oil is a game changer in a big way towards this reality, but it's just the start in making this country a power player in the world economy.

But it is not about

oil alone. Oil only opens the door for the abundance of long-term sustainable business opportunities. Oil will most definitely bring rapid attention to this almost unheard of country, but when people learn of our beauty and great potential, they will come in droves.

My absolute favourite, even more than oil, is food production; since the demand for food does not fluctuate like oil. It will continue to move in one direction – UP and UP! There is, predicted by the UN, to be a very horrendous food crisis whereby global food output would have to almost double by 2050, only 30 or so years from now, or face a global society collapse as food output falls permanently short of consumption for the nine billion population.

The good news is that Latin America is pegged as the

region that will have to serve as the critical source of food for the rest of the world, and Guyana is in as good a position as any to be a global food power. Even now, in all of the big supermarkets in the US, I see all kinds of products from Jamaica, for example frozen cassava, patties, sliced yellow plantains, plantain chips and, I say with puzzlement, why can't we do the same with 20 times more land space, abundance of water, etc.?

So, Class of 2016, our brightest minds, I ask, who else is more equipped than you to remain here, create the ideas and spark the vision to take advantage of the unlimited opportunities through your innovation and entrepreneurship in building those capabilities? Class of 2016, you are today beginning your journey through life. It will not be easy. But, after all, you are

the class of 2016, so anything is possible. Your being here wasn't just to get grades; it was to get an education, to be innovative, and to be independent thinkers. As the saying goes, "You may have earned a grade for taking a math test, but you have gotten an education for understanding that mathematical models can help us fly."

I promise that if you do these things I ask of you today, what started here will indeed have changed not only your lives, but those of your family, your friends, your community, your country, and the world, for the better. If this little boy from Christianburg can do it, so can you.

Yes you can!

Thank you, and again,

Congratulations Class of 2016!

Women and Gender Equality Commission Unveiled Suggestion Box at UGBC

Chairperson of the Women and Gender Equality Commission, Ms Indra Chandrapal, and a team of Commissioners, launched the Commission's Suggestion Box at the UG Berbice Campus

on Monday, November 21, 2016, under the theme: "If you can't say it, write it!"

This activity was done at the entrance of the Tain Campus which offers students, staff and members

of the community an opportunity to address their complaints on all forms of gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the workplace. The Director, Deputy Director, staff, and

students were witness to this initiative. The team followed the opening with a tour of the library.

Images showing the Women and Gender Equality Commission Chairperson, Ms Indra Chandrapal, assisted by UGBC Director, Professor Gomalthinayagam Subramanian and unveiling the Suggestion Box as members of the team watch on.



The University of Guyana's Berbice Campus Convocation Highlights 2016



UG Berbice Campus Director's Reception



UG Berbice Campus Chancellor's Reception



UG Berbice Campus Convocation Address Delivered by Professor Jaipaul Singh

This speech has been edited to fit the publication.



Professor Jaipaul Singh

Firstly, I would like to thank the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ivelaw Griffith for this invitation to deliver the lecture today. The Title is “Education is a powerful tool and it is the best gift parents can give to their Children”

The Acting President and Prime Minister, the Honourable Mr Moses Nagamootoo; Mrs Nagamootoo; Pro Chancellor, Ms Bibi Shaddick; The Registrar, Dr Nigel Gravesande; Representatives from Regions 5 and 6; the Vice Chancellor; Dignitaries; Ladies and Gentlemen; Friends; colleagues and most importantly, our 2016 graduating students and their hard working parents and family members: Welcome to the 11th graduation ceremony of the University of Guyana at the Tain Campus here in Berbice. It is both a pleasure and an honour for me, a Guyanese just like you, to give the lecture on this auspicious occasion to celebrate the 2016 convocation ceremony of The University of Guyana at Tain.

This is a momentous event, because it marks the end of the whole era of your initial University lives. Years at University are special because they have helped you to become the individuals you are today. Personally, I am sure that without that precious and crowning University experience, your life would be something completely different (still at home doing nothing or working in the field or possibly gone abroad). I am sure that you are

now more intelligent, more proactive in life, industrious, capable, and you have more determination, enthusiasm, motivation, self-confidence and energy, as well as more purposefulness and commitment to life. The University of Guyana has helped you to become the graduates who you are now, wiser persons compared to several years ago. You are more rational, you think more clearly and you have seen and developed new paths in life in order to build your future career. It is your future career that matters now, and I will try to advise you later on in my speech on your career building prospect.

Special thanks must also go to your teaching and learning team members (including academic, administrative and support staff) who have helped you tirelessly, and who have also given you a lot of guidance, and academic and personal support for the past few years irrespective of personal sacrifice. Like your parents, please do not forget your teachers. They have helped to make and to mould you into what you are today. You must keep in contact with them since you will need their help for academic references. But, make sure you always ask them for a reference before putting down their names on your application form. This is an element of good mannerism and practice. Even now, I always notify my referees when I use their names.

When I look back, you have reminded me that I am like you or you are like me in 1971 and 1972 when I graduated with my BSc in Biology and Chemistry and the Postgraduate Diploma in Education, respectively at the Turkeyen campus in Georgetown.

Like you, I am a product of the University of Guyana and I am very proud to be a graduate of UG. Our University has helped to make me what I am today and what you are today and probably a better person/citizen of Guyana for now and for the future.

To go back to history, I started UG in 1966 at Queen’s College in Georgetown studying for 6 years from 5

pm to 10 pm on a part time basis, almost every night religiously on all 5 days per week and even some Saturdays. During the day, I was School Teacher on the West Coast of Demerara teaching children from 9 am to 3 pm. After 3:30 pm, we had to travel from the West Coast of Demerara to UG in Georgetown. It was a great sacrifice almost just like yours.

We must credit two superb statesmen (Dr Cheddi Jagan and Mr Forbes Sampson Burnham) for conceptualizing and developing the University of Guyana, our beloved alma mater.

I now want to turn my attention to the University of Guyana which is 25 years behind time in terms of ‘the higher education revolution’. I do hope that our new VC will bring us back rapidly into the 21st Century.

For almost 53 years, the University has survived in good and bad days/times under 10 faithful Vice Chancellors (Commanders), including Professor Griffith. I attended UG in 1966 and 1969 at Queen’s College in Georgetown, where UG was initially housed. In September 1969 we moved from Queen’s College to the Turkeyen Campus in Georgetown. I was one of the first UG students to come to a brand new campus with modern buildings and state-of-the-art labs and equipment and teaching facilities supported by well-qualified and dedicated academic staff who were all mainly from abroad.

The University of Guyana has come a very long way since 1963 and we still have a far way to go yet. I would very much like UG to commence fully with postgraduate research training courses leading to the awards of MSc by Research, MPhil, PhD, MD as, well as a DSc and DLit, two honorary degrees.

There are numerous areas for research in Guyana. They include biodiversity, sea defence, health issues (cancer, obesity, diabetes, heart diseases), tropical medicine and infectious diseases, and social issues (suicide and child bearing out of marriage- in Black Bush Polder), climate change, agriculture, soil and fishery

UG Berbice Campus Convocation Address Delivered by Professor Jaipaul Singh

biology, mining, forestry, fashion, forensic sciences, computing, media and design, sports, wellbeing and leisure, Gas and Oil, Fire, engineering, waste management and environment issues and many others in arts, businesses, education politics and other areas

Note that Guyana is a natural laboratory for many PhD theses.

UG now has a very good national and international leader (the VC) who is very much supportive of innovations, accreditation, research and collaborations, development and expansion, quality assurance, in-house postgraduate training, all of which will benefit Guyana and its people. I do hope that staff, students and Government give their full support to the present Vice Chancellor. He is very good, kind, highly qualified and a sincere person who is well-known internationally. He is the right person to internationalise UG and I fully support his appointment. He should have joined UG long ago.

When I was 11 years old, my mother used to tell us that the best gift they could give us as parents was good education since no one would take your education away from you. For all parents, education is the best investment in the lives of their children. Obviously, you also have to feed them first to keep them healthy. For all the parents who are here today, I must say that you have made a great sacrifice by investing wisely in your son's or daughter's education and I admire your sacrifice and thank you for this. For all our graduates, you must continue with this legacy when you have your children and grandchildren.

If society wants to beat poverty, then education is the best way forward. The Government of Guyana must provide state-of-the-art education to all Guyanese. Education is as good as health and security of a nation.

Most importantly, poverty must never prevent a bright young boy or girl from getting a good education. The Government must pay for this or

provide loans to help poor children get a good education. That same very poor boy or girl can become the President or Prime Minister of Guyana one day.

I am not saying that all education should be free. There is no harm in paying for education if you can afford it. In many parts of the world, students have to pay for their education and they value it more.

I left Guyana in 1974, but I visited Guyana annually from 1996 to collaborate with UG and Georgetown Hospital via staff training. From since that time, I noticed that UG did not have a very good track-record in their teaching programme quality assurance system supported by external assessors and examiners. I am confident that our new VC, Professor Griffith will address this important matter. We need to revise our courses constantly to maintain quality and to meet the needs of the country/nation. We need to run courses in which our graduates are not only looking

for jobs, but they can also use their training and knowledge to create new jobs.

You can go to Google and ask how you can create new jobs in your area of expertise. I am sure that Google will give many good ideas.

Government must also put aside a sum of money to help graduates and others who want to set up their own businesses. This can be given as a grant or as a loan. UG can do the same, investing in potential job creating schemes and financial areas. In this way if the business thrives, then UG will get part of the income. Establish a Science and Technology Park near the

University campus. Note that plastic and waste recycling is big business,

We can set up new medical, dental, pharmacy, nursing schools supported by a biomedical training centre here at Tain recruiting mainly foreign students who will subsidise local Guyanese students. We have New Amsterdam Hospital as a potential teaching hospital. Within 5 years you will generate almost \$7 million USAD annually. You also run other job creating courses here.

I will be happy to return to Guyana to work with our VC to build this Tain Campus creating almost 1000 new jobs. Even the local residents will benefit from this scheme via shops, accommodation etc.



Tain Campus Graduation 2016

What Advice Can I give You as New Graduates?

Let me now come back to this special day. You are graduating with the feeling of deep satisfaction since you have gained new skills and knowledge and invaluable experience over the past 4-5 years at UG, all of which have helped you to get where you are today. I want to share with you some tenets for success in life as you move forward:

1. Whatever you want to do in life then do it now. Remember that hard work and person-

UG Berbice Campus Convocation Address Delivered by Professor Jaipaul Singh

al sacrifice will improve the quality of your life and also make you rich.

2. You must never say never. You must ask or you must take some risks. Go out there and look for help. When you ask, they will either say yes or no or tomorrow. Do not sit idle doing nothing.

3. Your time is limited, so do not waste it by living someone else's life. Live your own life.

4. Never say tomorrow

5. Remember that less means more. You can talk your way out of a job. Just answer the question when you have an interview.

6. You must prepare to move to another place in Guyana or even to another country to find a job. Both of my children moved to London to work, 250 miles from my place.

7. Remember that it only takes one moment of negligence and naivety to destroy your career and your life.

8. Be careful with strangers who make some ridiculous offers. Check them out first. It could be a hoax or a deception to destroy your career or it could be real.

9. In life, be observant, careful and alert at all times.

10. When some speaks to you and look into your eyes then he or she can be trusted. Your enemy looks away when speaking to you.

11. Remember that time goes very fast when you need it and very slowly when do not need it.

12. Remember that you cannot force people to change, but you can show them what change can actually do to improve our lives. When they see that the change is beneficial then they will do the same. No matter what you do, you cannot please people and do not try to please people.

13. Never insult your elders, peers or your managers especially when you have to leave a job. Better to go quietly and you do not have to say pardon. Remember that stay quiet is better than beg pardon.

14. If you can afford it, I suggest that you do a postgraduate (taught MSc) degree either at UG or abroad. Your UG degree is recognized all over

the world. Take myself, the VC and other UG Graduates as examples.

15. Apply to the USA, or European Countries like Germany and Sweden where they give funding for PhD studies.

16. Look for jobs nationally and internationally, but make sure you prepare yourself for interviews, read about the company where you have applied for a job, fill out your application form correctly, write a good CV. Visit the company and speak with the people who are involved with the jobs. Get someone to do a mock interview with you. Companies like enthusiastic employers. If you do not get a job the first time, try again until you succeed.

If you have any bright and innovative idea (like setting up your own business), discuss these with any prospective companies for advice. They may use your idea to create jobs.

This is your day, possibly one

life's decision. You must have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. Take advice from others, but you alone must make that final decision. If anything goes wrong, then you do not have to blame others. Sometimes you win and some time you lose, but in life you have to take a risk or a chance. Eshumanuserr. It is human to make mistake.

Remember that 'Life is like a story and it is not how long the story is, but how good it is and this is what really matters' (J.K Rowling).

You must be proud of your University, your education and your qualifications. Never forget your University when you make good in life. Please give back some thing. Be part of the Alumni. Keep in touch. UG has made many of us (approximately 25,000 graduates since 1968) of what we are today, but many of us have neglected our beloved University. Re-



Tain Campus Graduation 2016

of the best days in your life. Live your life with integrity and do not give in to pressure. Be good to yourself, love yourself, be honest and trustworthy and enjoy life as well. This is why you have a life to live and you only live one life.

Be proactive and alert and always look on the bright sides of things in life. Try to do one thing at a time. Give each experience all your attention. Always use your commonsense, initiative, and instinct when you have to make a

member the famous words of one of USA great Presidents 'Do not ask what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country'.

The same goes for UG. Always ask yourselves what you can do for your University and do it.

Thank you very much and once again, sincere congratulations and best wishes.

VC visits Hindu Temple in New York

by Dr Dhanpaul Narine



The Vice-Chancellor's family extended a joyous welcome to a little bundle on Sunday, November 27, 2016. The arrival of Harper Julienne Mercado brought happiness to many and made VC Griffith and his wife Francille, grandparents for the first time.

Harper's mother, Shakina Griffith-Mercado and her father, Roberto Mercado have done well and we congratulate them. They have given us UG's newest Ambassador who will one day lift the welfare and values of her community to higher levels.

Professor Griffith took time off from a busy schedule to attend the birthday celebrations of Ambassador Naro Balli's mother, Mrs Sona Balli, in New York. The family is grateful.

His visit to the Arya Spiritual Centre, a Hindu temple in Briarwood, Queens, shows that the Vice-Chancellor is prepared to walk a thousand miles to promote the mission of The University of Guyana. In his address to the congregation, Professor Griffith pointed out some of the challenges, as well as the accomplishments of the university.

He said that he is prepared to work with all regardless of religious or political persuasions to rebuild the university. Because he needs the help of the wider community, he appealed for all to get on board. Professor Griffith's call found widespread support.

Pandit Bharat Singh of the Arya Spiritual Centre said that Professor Griffith was on a noble mission to bring education to all Guyanese. Pandit Bharat urged the membership to support the Vice-Chancellor's mission and vision. This request was met with approval by the congregation, some of whom were graduates of UG, or had friends or relatives who have attended the institution.

Professor Griffith is taking UG to a place where all can feel that they have a say in the business of the institution. On a day when we celebrated the birth of little Harper, and a grandmother Mrs Sona Balli, Vice-Chancellor Ivelaw Griffith and the University of Guyana remain close to our hearts.

It was a blessed day all round.

Top left and right: Professor Griffith addresses the congregation in Briarwood, Queens, New York.

Middle: UG Education Resource Ambassador Naro balli with his mother Mrs Sona Balli and Professor Griffith.

Bottom: UG Education Resource Ambassador Dr Dhanpaul Narine, Professor Griffith and Pandit Singh.

UG Berbice Campus celebrates its 16-year Anniversary

- Honours long-serving staff

by Ms Paulette Henry

On November 6, 2016, the University of Guyana, Tain Campus celebrated 16 years as a Campus, under three different directors.

The Campus gave recognition to three members of staff. Dr Rishee Thakur, a faculty member since the establishment of the Campus, was award-

ed for his long service to the UGBC. Dr Thakur comes from the Division of Social Sciences and teaches within the Department of Governance. He is a Berbician and is passionate about thinking of innovative ways in which the Campus can grow. He has served as Assistant Director.

Ms Avis Wong has worked

in almost every department until being placed within the Registry in 2011.

Meanwhile, Ms Melisande Fraser joined in late October of 2000. Both Ms Wong and Ms Fraser have served the Berbice Campus for 16 years.



The University of Guyana applaud these stalwarts!

VC meets the Oldest and Youngest Graduates and Valedictorian at UGBC!

by Ms Paulette Henry

Vice-Chancellor Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith took the time to meet and chat with UG's Berbice Campus Valedictorian, Mrs Lorelli Farley along with Ms Joylin Conway – the campus' youngest graduate – and Ms Zita Adrain, the campus' oldest graduate.

He sought to learn from these esteemed women what their experiences were. Whilst they commended their support, they put their successes down to hard work and making sacrifices.

Joylin celebrated her 18th birthday on the day she graduated and was awarded a Distinction in the Associate Degree in Chemistry. Ms Zita Adrain, teacher for more than 20 years, also shared her journey with the VC. They were all proud to be graduating from UG in their different disciplines.

Well done ladies!



From left to right: Ms Zita Adrain (oldest graduate), Vice-Chancellor Griffith, Mrs Lorelli Farley (UGBC Valedictorian), Ms Joylin Conway (youngest graduate)

UG's Public Relations Division hosts The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

- Launches Santa's Helpers 2016

Gracing the festive season with goodwill, hearty laughter and joyous spirits, The University of Guyana's Public Relations Division hosted the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in the University's Education Lecture Theatre (ELT), on Wednesday, November 23, 2016.

The event facilitated the launching of a charitable community programme called Santa's Helpers 2016 that is intended to gift children with Christmas presents from two Turkeyen area nursery schools.

According to Ms Paulette Paul, UG Public Relations Officer, the Santa's Helpers initiative program has its genesis in 1993. The programme entails persons, who are actually Santa's Helpers, choosing one or more nametags from the Christmas tree to purchase an age-appropriate gift for the child as indicated on the nametag and then present this gift at the Christmas party, which will be held on December 21, 2016.

The occasion was complemented with appropriate Christmas decor. An enormous admirably decorated tree, was covered with bells, flowers, red ribbon bows, packaged gifts and illustrations of candy canes and snowmen.

In addition, the attendees included both staff and students from across the University's campus. Professor Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, Vice-Chancellor; Dr Nigel Gravesande, Registrar; and Professor Subramaniam Go-

mathinayagam, Director, Tain Campus graced the occasion with their presence.

The event's proceedings was chaired by a humorous Mr William Harris, Lecturer,

Renee Hamilton with his guitar.

The fitting jovial aura each Christmas period brings was highlighted and it undeniably shed warm blissfulness and

historical literature regarding the cheerful festival by pointing out that the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols originated in year 1918. He said, "It had been planned by Eric Milner-White who at the time had recently been appointed Dean of King's and was first held in 1918 on Christmas Eve."

Registrar added, "The order of service had music being interspersed with lessons which spoke to the advent season and alluded to Christ's coming to the earth and from that day the order of service always begun with the hymn *Once in Royal David City*."

Dr Gravesande further noted, "The hymns are always being changed and new ones are being introduced by successive organists and the original order of service was adapted from an Order drawn up by a man named E. W. Benson, who later became the Archbishop of Canterbury, produced in a wooden shed outside of a historic Cathedral. It was done either at 10:30 am or 10:30 pm of the night. Father Rodriguez who later appeared suggested 10:30 am, which the University of Guyana has adopted for its own festival."

In his closing, he chose to quote Mr Benson's recollection statement reading, "My father arranged from ancient sources a little service for Christmas Eve, nine carols and nine tiny lessons, which were read by various officers of the community, beginning with music and ending with music and a blessing by the



Faculty of Technology, and filled with thoughtful religious seasonal scriptures.

Immediately after the readings, the audience sang soul pleasing carols and hymns accompanied by musician

peacefulness into every lively soul in the room, marking splendor at such a beautiful time of the year.

Moreover, in delivering the event's opening remarks, Dr Nigel Gravesande shared

Bishop.”

Succeeding Dr Gravesande’s remarks, Vice-Chancellor Professor Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, in his address, spoke on the importance of people remembering the reason behind this season. He noted that, “There should be a balance between spending and observance. People should not spend so much they lose the true meaning behind Christmas.”

Clearly, the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, including the launch of Santa’s Helpers 2016, is geared toward spreading merry cheers and happiness this season because Christmas is synonymous with happiness and people deserve to have smiles on their face.

As carols and hymns like *Away in a Manger*, *The First Noel*, *Joy to the World* and *Angels We Have Heard on High* reverberated through the minds of the attendees, treats of mouthwatering, delicious fruit cake and orange juice were shared.

Scenes from the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols



Vice-Chancellor's Town Hall Meeting at The University of Guyana, Berbice Campus

by Ms Paulette Henry

Vice-Chancellor Griffith spent three days at The University of Guyana Berbice Campus (UGBC), participating in a series of meetings in Berbice, which culminated in a Town Hall meeting on Friday, November 18, 2016.

He was accompanied by senior management personnel Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Engagement (DVC-AE), Dr Michael Scott, and Registrar, Dr Nigel Grave-sande,

At this meeting, teaching and non-teaching staff participated in a discourse with the VC and team and shared their areas of concerns and visions for the University. Amongst issues raised were scholarship and staff capacity building; how to use student facility fees to improve teaching and learning; PhD programmes and challenges with quality assurance; Occupational Health and Safety practices, so that



Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ivelaw Griffith addresses teaching and non-teaching staff at UGBC Town Hall Meeting

staff are properly informed and equipped for work; perceptions of differential treatment across the Campuses; and strategies to both address legitimate concerns and dispel rumors were explored.

Two areas were fully ven-

tilated: the role of the staff in ensuring that the disparities are addressed where they do exist and working through their departments to ensure standardization of the work with their counterparts at Turkeyen. A proactive ap-

proach was taken to address registry and staffing matters. One key issue raised was pertinent to staff pensions. Strong concerns were expressed over the staff pensions and gratuity. VC explained the short and long term approaches which will be used to address these issues.

Emerging out of the Town Hall meeting and the meeting of the Campus Coordinating Committee (CCC), the Director and Deputy Director under the leadership of the DVC-AE, were tasked with developing a plan of action for UGBC.

VC Griffith and team's meeting with the CCC allowed for the UGBC administrative team to interact with senior administrators of UG. This opportunity provided good dialogue on the necessary actions and approaches for improved academic coordination and management of academic and support services.



Members of the Campus Coordinating Committee meeting with VC Griffith

Berbice Campus Outreach The Renaissance Bridge Unfolding

by Ms Paulette Henry



Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ivelaw Griffith (front centre), UGBC Director, Professor Gomalthinayagam Subramanianand (left of VC Griffith) with a team of UG's senior staff and members from Berbice's business community, government and civil society.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, Director of UGBC Professor Subramaniam Gomalthinayagam, and a team of senior staff of The University of Guyana, held a Dinner Conversation with a cross section of stakeholders from the Business Community.

The feedback was inspiring as members from business, government, and civil society expressed their disappointments and hopes for the University of Guyana, Berbice Campus.

VC Griffith shared his vision for the rebranding, rebuilding, restructuring and fundraising of the University across campuses. The reception of his ideas was extremely amenable. It was a first-time initiative and the participants, many of whom were Alumni, were pleased to be recognized and to know that their input was valued.

Those in participation from government committed their support to budget for UG and to lobby in parliament. In addition, business owners said they

will expand their business's corporate social responsibility to the University.

UG's programmatic expansion, according to the Berbice stakeholders, should include additional agri-business courses, technology, policing as well as specialized courses to meet the needs of the managers of business. The time factor must be tailored into specialized courses.

Those participating in the outreach included the Mayor of New Amsterdam, Mr Kurt Wynter; Regional Chairman,

Mr David Armogan; Member of Parliament, Mr Charandass Persaud; Director of Regional Health Services, Mr Jevaughn Stephen; General Manager Nand Persaud Group of Companies, Mr Mohindra Persaud; President of the Berbice Chamber of Commerce, Mr Ramroop Rajnauth; amongst others.

VC Griffith encouraged the stakeholders to build a Renaissance Bridge of support and collaboration as we strengthen our University.



Members from Berbice's business community, government and civil society meet with a team of UG's senior staff from both Turkeyen and Berbice campus.

Four Years Strong! *- UGBC unites for International Day to End Violence*

by Ms Paulette Henry

On November 25, 2016 and for the fourth year The University of Guyana Berbice Campus, led by the Social Work students, joined the world in the observance of International Day for the Elimination of violence against women and girls.

The day, popularly known as 'Orange Day', campaigned under the theme "Stop the Violence! Break the Silence!" The day's activity started with a road march, followed by the ceremonious releasing of the balloons, then the cultural programme and symposium. Key Speakers at the opening ceremony included the Director of UGBC; DVC-PACE, Dr Paloma Mohamed; Director of Regional Health Services, Mr Jevaughn Stephen; Chairperson of the Rights of the Child Commission, Ms Aleema Nasir; with Signature remarks coming from Mrs Sita Nagamootoo.

This event saw rep-

resentation from a wide stakeholder community along with the police, members of civil society organizations, and secondary school students. The parade was led by the COFONA Band of New Amsterdam. The symposium generated rich discussion from the participants. Panelists included the following persons: Manager, IPED, Mr Shawn David; Regional Women Representative, Ms Eileen James; Kean Chase of ChildLink; Mr Vidyaratha Kissoon, civil society activist; and Medical Mental Health Practitioner, Dr Vinashri Khirodar.

#OrangeTheWorld!

Give hope to women and girls!

**"Stop the Violence!
Break the Silence!"**

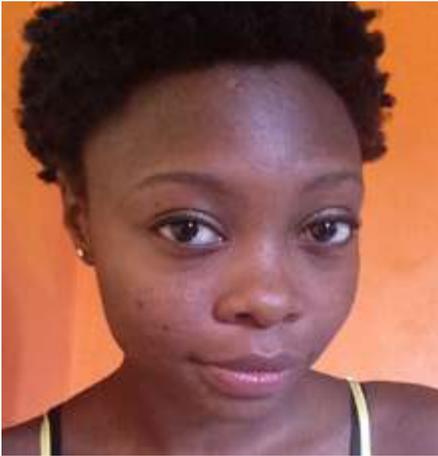


From left to right: Chairperson of RCC Ms Aleema Nasir, Director of UGBC Professor Subramanian Gomalthinayagam and Mrs Sita Nagamootoo.

Scenes from International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls



Four Years Strong! - UGBC unites for International Day to End Violence



Renata Burnette's piece submitted in observance of International Day to End Violence

The moment he decided where I went what I wore who I spoke to what I was doing when I wasn't in his presence and who I befriended I knew right then and there that our marriage had ended... but it is never over until the fat lady sings or in this case until he broke a few things a few things included me... my body soul and mine would cease to exist all in due time.

Chokeholds where the new I love you and I hate you because I care was the new catch phrase and sorry was a sorry word look at all I have done

for you... he said moments before his vice grips left me voiceless I could barely breathe as he squeezed the life out of my body as though I was nothing but air I stared into his eyes moments before mine closed... I didn't recognize him I didn't recognize his soul.

Hell that was on a good day for he was sober but he was merely upset that I didn't answer his questions like where were you and who are you texting... silly me I didn't realize that things were about to get interesting.

He muted me like a TV screen so no one heard me scream... and it hurt for this was the same man that stood before God and give him his word... I will happily ever after quickly became a catastrophic disaster he was my new master and I couldn't speak unless I was spoken to so when my family asked "how are u" as though I was on cue responded as always "I'm fine" and I don't know which one hurt the most the pain of that lie or having to swallow my pride as those nasty words erupted from my throat the same thrill that he left his handprints on... I'm fine I'm fine... and they believed me they believed he would have never laid a hand on the woman he defined as

his lifeline beep beep beep...

Sleep became my enemy blood-stained memories of all those fights every night rushed through my head as I lied on that cold bed numb... expecting the unexpected from a man who was supposed to be protective of his most prized possession makeup lessons to conceal his rage my friends didn't even notice that I was screaming through my smiles... wishing they would realize that I'm not okay that all up for better or worse got worse a long time ago... how could they not know

But everything in the dark eventually comes to light... all they wanted to know was why? Why stay? Why not say something?... I did I screamed but maybe I was not loud enough or maybe you weren't paying attention... I wanted to leave but my pride wouldn't let me I just felt empty... how could he... he almost broke me but I guess I Didn't Know My Own Strength so I stopped worrying about what people would think of me if I left I started to think of what was best for me... give myself time to heal... I refuse to be a victim of domestic violence... I refuse to silently scream.



UG's School of Medicine Undergoes Re-Accreditation

Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Dr Emanuel Cummings is optimistic that the University of Guyana's School of Medicine (UGSM) will be re-accredited.

This was noted in a recent interview as the university prepared to host a team from the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and other Health Professions (CAAMHP) which was expected in Guy-

ana carry out a re-accreditation assessment of the medical school.

Dean Cummings also expressed the view that the university's status can be raised significantly with perceived wider accreditation of other health programmes offered by the institution of higher education, as expansion plans — which include addition of a spanking new World Bank-funded modern faculty building costing

US\$6.9 — are being considered.

The building, which will accommodate approximately 350 students, is undergoing an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) by sister faculty, the Faculty of Earth and Environmental Science, which was contracted by the World Bank to undertake an assessment of the initiative. In March 2017 a final decision will be made on the project an optimistic Dr. Cummings noted.



The team from the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and other Health Professions (CAAMHP) were hosted at the Vice Chancellor's Renaissance Home during their time in Guyana.



SAVE THE DATE!
JULY 23RD TO 28TH 2017
GEORGETOWN, GUYANA



THE ONGOING UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA (UG) RENAISSANCE

Dreaming Diaspora Engagement, Doing Diaspora Engagement

ESTABLISHING A CARIBBEAN DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT CENTRE
 AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA AND HOSTING
 A FOUNDING CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE SESSIONS WOULD BE
 AROUND THE MAIN TOPICS OF:

**HEALTHCARE, EDUCATION/UG,
 SPORTS, TOURISM, ARTS AND CULTURE,
 ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

PARTNERS TO INCLUDE: GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA,
 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION.

**THERE WILL BE A CALL FOR PAPERS ON THE DIASPORA AND
 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.**

LOOK OUT FOR CONFERENCE REGISTRATION INFORMATION
 AT THE UNIVERSITY'S WEBSITE: WWW.UOG.EDU.GY
 E-MAIL: UGDIASPORA@GMAIL.COM | TELEPHONE: +592 218 1211

Save the Date: January 24, 2017

Turkeyen and Tain Talks 5

Topic:

Public Health Matters



UNIVERSITY of GUYANA

For our next edition we invite you to submit news items, short articles, poems and high resolution pictures of activities related to the national agenda and consistent with the development trajectory of UG. Share with us how UG has contributed to building industry and livelihoods for citizens both at home and abroad. Our email address is vicechancellor@uog.edu.gy. Do share Renaissance with at least ten of your friends and send us their email contacts to facilitate direct mailing of future editions. We thank you for being part of this transformative initiative.

For more information or to make contributions:

Call: 592-222-5402

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Visit: <https://www.facebook.com/ugturkeyencampus/>

Renaissance

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