



Renaissance

Office of the Vice-Chancellor, The University of Guyana

Vol. 2 No. 3, March, 2017

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The VC Speaks

On Mays and Michelangelo

“The tragedy of life doesn’t lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach. It isn’t a calamity to die with dreams unfulfilled, but it is a calamity not to dream.” - Benjamin E Mays

The words above, by the late, distinguished African American educator Benjamin Elijah Mays are relevant existentially to both individuals and institutions. His underlying proposition, though, was not merely to dream for dream sake; he recognized—and advocated—the symbiotic relationship between dreaming and doing.

But, as we ponder dreaming and doing, it is useful to keep in mind the prescient observation of cultural exemplar Michelangelo, who offered both advice and admonition in saying, “The greatest danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it.” The nexus between the words of wisdom of Mays and those of Michelangelo and my point of emphasis here is this: we should not only dream, but do; we should not only dream big, but aim to do big.

This has been a key desideratum in my approach to things, at both the personal and professional levels. Thus, big dreaming and big doing continue. A few March month examples will suffice as evidence of this.

We had an amazing academic-community engagement trifecta during the second week of the month. On the 14th, I hosted a splendid celebration of one of our academic giants—distinguished scientist Dr. Ulric Neville Trotz—with the Inaugural Dr. Ulric Trotz Distinguished Lecture. The packed Pegasus ballroom audience received an intellectual and policy-relevant treat by another outstanding scientist, Professor Suresh Narine, with a treatise on “Science, Policy, and Culture: Essential Elements of Transformative Change in Guyana.” Big dreaming; big doing!

The following day, on the 15th, we assembled a powerful panel for Turkeyen and Tain Talks VI to discuss “Economic and Financial Policy and Praxis in Guyana.” The panelists included Distinguished Professor CY Thomas, Finance Minister Winston Jordan, Roraima Airways CEO Captain Gerry Gouveia, Geologist and entrepreneur Dr. Grantley Walrond, Guyana Revenue Authority Board Chair Rawle Lucas, and UG Economics Department Head Sydney Armstrong. Dreaming big; doing big!

And, there was more. On the 16th, I hosted the second Vice Chancellor’s Renaissance Lecture, with Founder and Chairman of Ian Randle Publishers (IRP) delivering a sobering address on “The Publishing Pillar of the Renaissance Bridge.” The occasion also witnessed the signing of an historic agreement between IRP and UG to establish The University of Guyana Press. The IRP Chairman also gifted UG over 200 books and journals, worth some US\$15,000. Dreaming big; doing big.

Yet, why stop there. On March 21, the National Procurement and Tender Administration Board (NPTAB) advanced the process to construct the following: a Teaching and Learning Complex for Science and Mathematics; a Students’ Social Complex; and a new Maintenance Building. They also approved rehabilitation of the UG property in Pere Street, Kitty, once the official residence of the Vice Chancellor, and rehabilitation of sections of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry. Big dreaming; big doing!

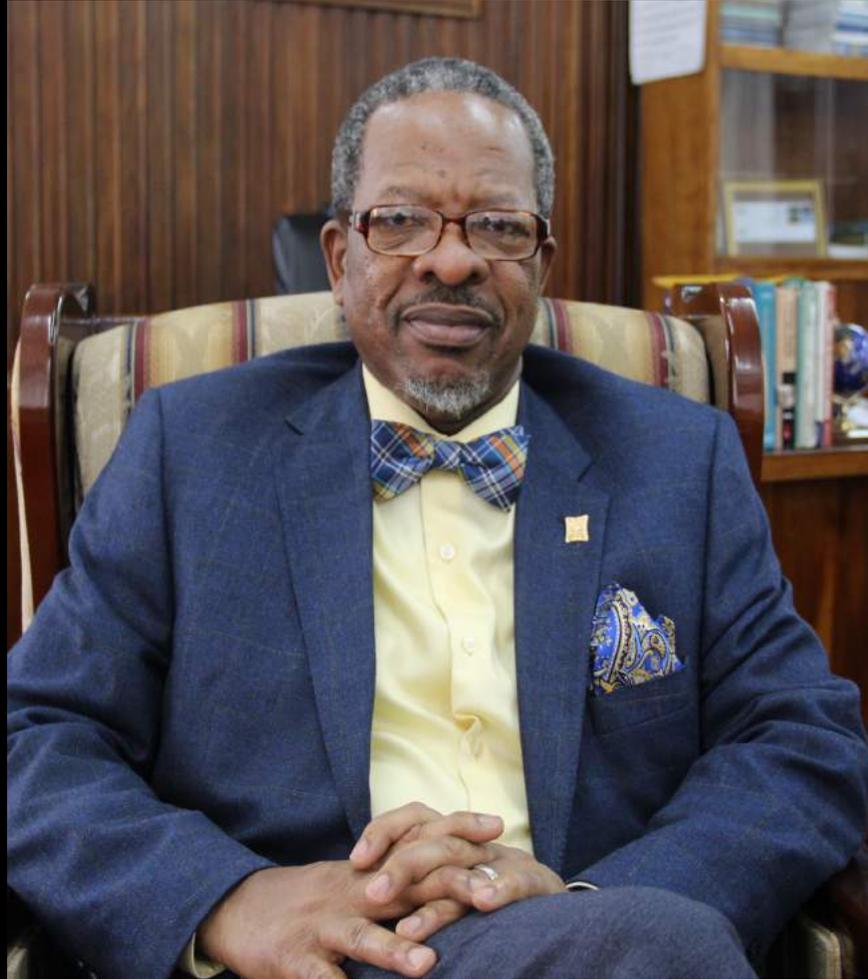
The month of March also witnessed extension of the Wifi access across the Turkeyen campus via E-Governance, the placement of a fiber optic link between the Turkeyen and Berbice campuses, and the launch of the UG/Giffland VIP Card, which provides students and staffers with special discounts on purchases, part of a broader partnership being developed with the Giffland Group. Big dreaming; big doing!

Clearly, then, mindful of propositions by Mays and Michelangelo, not only do we Dream, we also Do; not only do we Dream Big; we Do Big.

Keep on keeping on!



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



THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S MARCH QUOTE

“Every country it seems without exception they have memorials and statues to blow your mind

But the Caribbean man, I just don't understand, we don't have anything of that kind

We have a lot of history and plenty famous names, but like we don't want to talk about it

West Indians know about Daniel bone and Jessy James

It's time we start blowing we own trumpet.

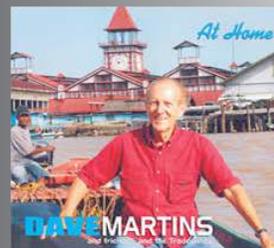
“So, I'm asking you where are your heroes, Caribbean,

Ah don't see many statues on your streets

And yuh have no replicas of famous figures

Men like Walcott and Kitchie

Where are your heroes Caribbean, show them to me.” – *Dave Martins*



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 Volume 2: No. 3 edition of *Renaissance*, a monthly newsletter. *Renaissance* is the Vice-Chancellor's medium of sharing with you our University's developments.

The month of March was filled with activities held in observance of International Women's Day. Ms Audrey Benn, Lecturer in the Women Studies Unit has written an important message on the importance of celebrating women and our own Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Engagement), Dr Michael Scott shared an impacting poem, both of which we hope you will reflect on.

In this edition you will also read about a number of lecture series hosted by UG: Turkeyen and Tain Talks VI and the VC's *Renaissance* Lecture Series II.

UG recently launched its very own press as a publishing arm in collaboration with Ian Randle of Jamaica's Ian Randle Publishers. This is truly an historic move by our University. The *Renaissance* team had an opportunity to profile the new Director of the Centre for Biodiversity, Dr Gyanpriya Maharaj.

Additionally, in March the winners of the Turkeyen campus' Open/Career Day were announced. We congratulate the Faculty of Earth and Environmental Sciences on winning the first place, Vice-Chancellor's Cup in this event.

Our alumni around the world have certainly made us proud. We feature in this edition of *Renaissance* the story of Ms Sonnel David-Longe's 2017 Ridding Reading Prize from the Girton College of the University of Cambridge in the UK.

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

UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA

Vice Chancellor's Fund for Strategic Initiatives

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HANDS OF VIOLENCE



By Dr Michael E Scott

**Hand; that once cuddle,
 Clench and fondle
 Hand; now defy attraction
 Deny the taste of love
 So brutal, selfish
 Slashing, lashing
 Hand; that once cuddle,
 Clench and fondle
 Hand; now defy attraction
 Deny the taste of love
 So brutal, selfish
 Slashing, lashing
 Punching, raping.
 Painful, repulsive hand;.**

**I see it coming,
 Contending, my desire for es-
 cape
 Elude; me;
 To feel evil hand;
 Grip and grab me
 Oh! my hair
 My throat
 My deepness;
 I scream for dignity
 Then my life goes gushing
 outof me.
 I dared to stand my ground,**

**Resist the vicious crunch
 Of deliberate ghoulis hand;
 Hand; of sons
 Hand; of uncles
 Hand; of brothers
 Hand; of others; too
 All born of woman.**

**And those word; of hate
 Which trigger those hand;,
 From tongues
 That hang me,
 Handle me,
 Humiliate me,
 Diminish and dwarf me
 Devalue me
 So worthless; so useless; I be.**

**Yes it; violence.
 Remonstrative,
 Confrontational,
 Reflecting frustration
 At seeing power ebb away
 A power which is not
 For hand; that defile
 Hand; against which
 All in unison must rile.**

**Hand; so unloving
 Fueled by tongue; of fire
 Fanned by a fury of silence
 Kill; me quickly
 Kill; me slowly
 I surely died
 Buried in no self esteem
 Lie entombed in a cold
 friendly grave.**

**I speak from
 Where no violence hold; me
 Oh my son
 My brothers
 My uncles
 And others; of my love.
 Bind those hand; of violence
 For survival of your sisters
 Your wives, your moms, your
 aunts
 I once knew
 And I never hope to know.
 Painful, repulsive hand;.**

WOMEN IN THE CHANGING WORLD OF WORK: PLANET 50/50 BY 2030

*Message By: Audrey Benn
Lecturer
University of Guyana*

It is the belief, at least for most, that women should be celebrated not only for being 'women' (their inherent identity), but also for what they contribute to the world of work (their function).

This year, on March 08, 2017, the world observed International Women's Day by the United Nations (UN) calling on the world of humanity to educate and empower women and girls in order to achieve gender equality in the workplace. This year's fitting theme, "Women in the changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030," seems to suggest a call for equal numbers of women in the workforce by 2030. The theme is directly linked to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Number Five (gender equality). But what if by 2030 a situation is developed where women outnumber men in the work environment; but they still continue to be poor and earn less than men? This phenomenon has already presented itself and is manifested strongly, especially in the private security sector.

There is no doubt that women have been entering the labour market by great numbers ever since the end of World War Two and the establishment of the United Nations to replace the perceived ineffective League of Nations in 1945, in order to promote cooperation instead of war. As it is seen this elaborate intergovernmental organisation was established to provide human services to the world's people by presenting a general framework through which nations can achieve cooperation and development, especially after the devastation of the two wars. Yet, this organisation does not necessarily model in a practical sense that it is practicing what it preaches.

Sometime last year the United Na-

tions, with a view to promoting gender equality at a planned conference for youths from all over the world, showcased a team of presenters with only one woman present. According to one participant present at that event, the men dominated the presentations with the lone woman sporadically being given a chance to speak. This was highlighted to pinpoint that if the United Nations is the model through which nations of the world are to achieve gender equality; then the world of humanity is hopeless.

This is because gender equality is much more than talk. One can talk from now until 2030 or, at least as long as is wished, about educating and empowering women and girls towards gender equality. However, if the mechanisms are not developed to change the current social, political and economic structures to facilitate those changes, then it would be very difficult to achieve gender equality.

In order for the world to achieve gender equality, there must be deliberate and intentional efforts to ensure that gender equality is at the top of the agenda. This is important because in a world of ideological sexism, gender equality cannot be achieved by just the mere development of strong and passionate themes, as seen practiced by the UN. It is a matter of going beyond the historical, instrumental hypothesis and initiating a change cycle that will surely dismantle the oppression that sexism brings. Only then can there truly be a change in witnessing women experiencing what they were created to be in the first place. Has anyone ever wondered why women are almost never picked to become finance ministers although they are touted as better managers of family finances? Only the decision makers really can answer this question.

In winding down attention is drawn to the opening statement in order to reinforce all that is being said. As far

back as research would allow one to go, women have been struggling to find themselves as equal partners with men in the world of work. Initially this was and is true because of a lack of formal training; but with formal training the position has not changed much. Women's equality with men in the workforce can only be changed when the edifice of ideological sexism is dismantled.

Ideological sexism normalises women's marginalisation in the work environment and serves as a contributory factor to gender inequality. Studies have shown that when women operate in sexist environments they are treated as objects and not as human beings. As someone once said, turning a human being into a 'thing' is the first step in justifying wrongdoing against that person. Society often fails to acknowledge that gender inequality, or the disparity in status and power between men and women in the workforce today is just as strong as it has ever been. According to a United Nations Development Programme 2014 report, women remain significantly under-represented in higher-level executive professions in the workforce such as large corporations and government offices. Very often such disparities are attributed to individual-level factors, such as the difference between what a male and female employee is willing to contribute to the situation. However, recent work suggests that ecological factors, such as systemic oppression as a result of ideological sexism which advantages men and disadvantages women, may provide a more valuable understanding of the inequalities that exist today in the workforce.

With this I congratulate women for not becoming frustrated and giving up, but staying their ground and working towards change

Open/Career Day Campus Competition Award Presentation 2017

Joy, excitement, fulfillment and rewards were the sounds resounding from the Education Lecture Theatre, Turkeyen campus on March 3 as participants, volunteers and winners of the 2017 Open / Career Day Campus Competition were presented certificates and awards for a job well done.

According to Public Relations Officer Paulette Paul in her opening remarks, Open/Career day which was held on February 17th under the team 'Dare to Dream, Make it Happen' was a successful event. She expressed enormous thanks to student volunteers, ushers, the Bursary, Maintenance Division, Learning and Resource Center, Center for Communication Studies and Ms. Bess for their outstanding contribution in making open/career day a success. She also alluded to the fact that over eight schools were in attendance, including schools from region 7, 6, and 10 which speaks to the success of career day. Deputy Vice Chancellor Dr Michael Scott also shared similar sentiments as he addressed the gathering, thanking the university community for a job well done and expressing his satisfaction for the numerous schools that attended and the regions they came from.

Thirty-six certificates of participation were presented to the participants of talent splash. Talent splash consisted of thirty five students and one staff as well as three rock bands, skits and representation from Confucius Institute. Performances for the talent splash were selected using the audition criteria. Volunteers also received certificates of appreciation and special mentions were made of Ms Harry, Ms Richman and Mr Patterson Phillip Bowman among others.

The final results of the 2017 open / Career Day Campus Competition were presented by the chief judge, Ms Denise Adams, with Earth and Environmental Sciences taking the first place Vice Chancellor's Cup, second place - Agri-



From Left: Representatives from the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry (2nd place), Faculty of Earth and Environmental Sciences (1st place), Faculty of Natural Science (3rd place) and the Registry (Honourable mention) accepting the awards

culture and Forestry taking the Registrar's Cup, third place Natural Sciences taking the Bursar's Cup and honourable mentions made of the Registry. The chief judge explained that the faculties and departments that competed in the Career Day Competition were: Agriculture and Forestry, Health Sciences, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Earth And Environmental Sciences, Education and Human-

ities, the Library and the Registry. They were judged for the display of relevant materials, student and staff involvement, visitor friendly environment, knowledge of the staff and students about the programmes and services. Overall she added that the majority of programmes and services showcased by the university, for the 2017 Open Career Day Campus Competition were of a high standard.



Deputy Vice Chancellor of Academic Engagement Dr Micheal Scott handing over the trophy to representatives from the Faculty of Earth and Environmental Sciences (1st place winners of the Career Day Competition)

Eco-Tourism Development Seminar in Guyana



The Eco-Tourism Development seminar was a collaborative effort by the University of Guyana and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The image above shows participants from both universities.

The University of Guyana in collaboration with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, hosted a seminar on eco-tourism development in Guyana on Friday March 24th 2017, to showcase the research conducted in and about the community of Surama, Region 9, by students of both universities. The seminar which was held in the Education Lecture Theater on Turkeyen Campus, was attended by both students and professionals.

Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Guyana Professor Ivelaw Griffith in his opening remarks, expressed his desired to see more collaboration between the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Guyana. He explained that the University of Guyana plans to develop partnerships with entities relating to biodiversity and climate change. He added that establishing a School of Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation, is one of items to be considered at the University's upcoming governing council meeting which is intended to create synergies between entrepreneurship and tourism, and business and tourism.

The seminar was also graced with presentations by experts in the eco-tourism industry in Guyana from both public and private sector and academia, who addressed various

subject arrears. The presenters were: Andrea and Salvandor de Caries from Wilderness Explores, Dr Raquel Thomas Caesar from the Iwokrama International Center for Rainforest Conservation and Developments, and Ms Shenera Sam lecturer of the University of Guyana, presented on subject matters such as: Community Tourism in the North Rupununi Region, Eco Tourism the Iwokrama Experience, and Tourism Policy in Guyana, respectively. Other remarks were given by Major General Retired Joseph Singh, Professor John Kalu Osiri and Honourable Valerie Garrido-Lowe, Minister within the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs.

The research which was conducted in the community of Surama was presented by the students with emphasis on: Industry Analysis an overview of the tourism sector, customer research a field base market research, customer research awareness in the local market and a marketing plan positioning Surama for international tourists. However the research brought to being various observations and recommendations about Surama. The observations noted were, that the Surama eco-lodge has a unique rainforest that is non-existent elsewhere and with the existence of community base tourism, the experience of visitors is authentic. Moreover it was discovered that some Guyanese have only heard of the Surama eco-lodge but do not have a full

understanding of what this product has to offer. Recommendations made was mostly centered on using social media to better market the Surama eco-lodge to Guyanese and to the rest of the world, thus bringing awareness to what the Surama eco-lodge is all about, packaging this information and making it available on social media platforms such as facebook, twitter, snap chat and instagram but with consistency. Additionally a strategic marketing plan to attract US base visitors along with specialize advertising was recommended, in order to target perspective demographics such as individuals who are most interested in the cultural aspects of eco-tourism, wildlife or the natural beauty of the land.

The students who conducted this research from the University of Guyana and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln are: Devon Austin, Kareem Brown, Renuka Sankar from the University of Guyana and Michael Sierfet, Courtney Van Hoosen, Kathryn Shehan, Rick Palky, YahaoFu, Rucao Wang, Tracey Olmer, Kathleen O'Toole, Jackson Grasz from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

UG Establishes a University Press

The University of Guyana (UG) and Ian Randle Publishers (IRP) of Jamaica signed an agreement on March 16, 2017 to establish. The University of Guyana Press as the publishing arm of UG to create an outlet for the scholarly work of faculty and student researchers, as part of efforts to boost research and scholarship at the nation's sole national university. The agreement takes effect on April 1, 2017, and will be in effect for an initial period of three years.

According to Vice-Chancellor Professor Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, "the establishment of the Press is both history-making and an important part of enhancing the brand of the university. It is an integral part of my Renaissance vision for our university." The University of Guyana attaches great importance to this collaboration with IRP, which is the largest scholarly and commercial publisher in CARICOM.

The agreement was signed on behalf of the university by Vice-Chancellor and Principal Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, and IRP Board Chairman Ian Randle signed on behalf of IRP. The ceremony took place in Herdmanston Lodge, Georgetown, at the end of the presentation of the second Vice-Chancellor's Renaissance Lecture, which was delivered by Mr Randle on The Publishing Pillar of the Renaissance Bridge. Present for the historic occasion was Professor George (Ken) Danns of the University of North Georgia, who accepted the Vice-Chancellor's invitation to serve as the founding chair of the International Editorial Board of the Press.

Both UG and IRP noted their intention to actualise the agreement fully to ensure the publication of deserving works by university faculty and students as well as scholars in the Diaspora, especially on matters related to Guyana and the Caribbean. Both Vice-Chancellor Griffith and Chairman Randle are committed to having the first UG Press titles available before the end of 2017.

In his remarks at the event, Vice-Chancellor Griffith announced that the Press will publish both books and journals, including *Transition*, a journal that has had a troubled publication history, and at least two new



Ian Randle Publishers (IRP) Board Chairman Ian Randle and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Guyana Professor Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith sign the agreement

ones. He has in mind a Journal of Entrepreneurship, to link with the proposed School of Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation, and a Journal of Diaspora Engagement, as the scholarly arena of the proposed Regional Center for Diaspora Engagement.

Mr Randle also gifted the University Library with 200 books, worth US\$15,000. The Vice-Chancellor received the donation on behalf of the University. He thanked the IRP Chairman for his kind expression of personal friendship and institutional support. He noted that "not only is Ian a friend of long standing and the publisher of my seventh book, but he is committed to enlarging the educational boundaries of Caribbean people through the availability of educational and popular material."

The Vice-Chancellor seized the opportunity to present Mr Randle with the instrument of appointment as an Education Resource Ambassador of the university. Also inducted as an UG Ambassador was Ms Roxanne Reece, Director of Fly Jamaica, which was one of the co-sponsors of the Renaissance Lecture.



A participant at the event expressing her views

PERSONALITY PROFILE

Gyanpriya Maharaj, Director of Biodiversity Centre



Director of the Biodiversity Centre, University of Guyana, Dr Gyanpriya Maharaj

“Do what you love and do it well”. This is the advice of two loving parents to their only daughter, Gyanpriya Maharaj, who followed her dreams and accomplished a Doctor of Philosophy’s Degree in the field of Biology.

Gyanpriya is like a cup of coffee, warm, reviving and someone you look forward to seeing. Pretty and petite with short, dark hair, she’s as flamboyant as butterflies. Her position at the University of Guyana as Director for the Centre of Biodiversity is one of many successes she has earned thus far in her life. Her chosen career path also allows her to lecture on the subject of Biology, which she says is a pleasure since she finds educating the younger generation fulfilling. A major part of her action plan for the Biodiversity

Centre includes finding avenues to get primary and secondary school children educated about the biodiversity of Guyana and what the Biodiversity Centre does. This is important for her as Gyanpriya strongly believes that a change in society needs to be made to ensure that knowledge and care for the biodiversity of Guyana is of interest to the younger generation. Other plans include the continuation of housing collections at the Biodiversity Centre but in addition doing scientific research on them, creating brochures to highlight to the public what is at the Biodiversity Centre and what the students do there.

Maharaj’s journey to success has been a long one dating back to 2005 when she graduated from the University of Guyana with her first degree in the field of Biology. Her love for teaching then took her to the School of the Nations where she spent two years to gain a Diploma for teaching and trainers from Cambridge University.

Even this wasn’t enough for her, as she persevered and went on to complete her Master’s degree in Plant and Environmental Sciences during the year 2011 at the University of Warwick. Here her interest in insects was magnified and she found an exuberant and undying love for butterflies. These pretty little insects were her chosen research for her Master’s programme. She describes her adventure in learning about butterflies and how they contribute to a well balanced ecosystem as interesting and exciting. Her love for butterflies is evident in the sudden burst of energy she has when they are mentioned. This has caused her to be nick-named at Turkeyen as “the butterfly girl”. Finally, her long awaited goal of earning a Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PhD) became a reality in 2016. Faced with the dilemma of leaving her safe haven and moving to a country where she knew no one, Gyanpriya described her academic journey as bitter-sweet. “The hardest part of my journey

was leaving my parents and moving to unfamiliar grounds”, she said. Here she was faced with adjusting to a new country, new people and a different culture. She missed the close knitted society of Guyana and being around her family’. However, she soon made new friends who would become her new family to love, care and support each other when they were faced with things such as tedious days, issues back home or grants being rejected. “Doing a PhD is not for the fast, it’s for those who can endure, you have to be ready for long nights, every night for years upon years”, she advised. She loves her chosen professional life and she considers herself very fortunate to have continuous support from her family and friends through it all. As the Director for the Centre, she aims to be seen as approachable by the students so that she can advise and help them through struggles they might be facing and guide them in the right direction. “Being a leader is not about telling people what they have to do, but rather guiding people so they want to do what they have to do, but apart from that first of all they have to have an interest in doing it”, she stated. For her, this is not a job but a blessing to have the opportunity to do what she loves.

Apart from going out into the fields to study nature, this butterfly lover enjoys teaching, going out with friends, watching movies of all genres and indulging in different cuisines. She supports educating women to empower them and takes on a fraction of the responsibility in ensuring that females who are not supported by their families in her field of study have her attention and guidance to accomplish their goals at the University of Guyana. “Have confidence in yourself and be informed; read, ask questions and talk to people to educate yourself on what you want to do” is her advice to those who would have an interest in starting tertiary education.

Panel discussion on the replacement of death penalty in Guyana



Deputy Vice Chancellor of Academic Engagement Dr Micheal Scott

On Thursday March 9, 2016 a panel discussion was held at the Education Lecture Theatre discussing the replacement of the death penalty in Guyana.

This discussion saw three (3) reputable panelists putting forward arguments some for and some against the death penalty. These were namely, Mr Stephen Fraser, Attorney at Law and Ms Belinda Jankie, who both put forth

arguments against the death penalty in Guyana, and Mr Patrice Wishart, third (3) year law student at the University of Guyana, giving opposing arguments.

Attorney Stephen Fraser opened the discussion and gave a little context to his presentation by including a little history. He spoke about the Jones Town massacre and about two gentlemen: Mr Michael Archer and Mr Peter Adams, who were hanged in 1997, after being found guilty for a murder that took place in Berbice. He strongly disagrees with the death penalty and mentioned that "the criminal offences act was amended and the word 'mandatory' was removed from 'death penalty' and as such serious crimes such as murder of a law enforcement officer or agent will attract either the death penalty or life imprisonment". "Any other category of murder will attract a penalty of life imprisonment or any other sentence the court sees fit."

Ms Belinda Jankie was next to put forth her arguments against the death penalty in Guyana and stated that the death penalty was abolished in England since 1965, because they believed that the state should not be in the business of killing its own citizens. She further cemented her position by stating that "Guyana is the only country in South

America, that still has the death penalty." She looked at the death penalty from a religious point of view, implying that no matter who you are or what you believe in killing is wrong.

Mr Wishart chose to appeal to the emotions by asking thought provoking questions "How would you feel if someone that killed your loved one, is placed back in society?" "What reparations would be enough to make up for you loss?" He strongly believes that the death penalty will deter elements that are prone to killing. "The death penalty may not be so much of a bad idea, considering the alternative is life imprisonment, they will still die because the (prison) conditions are so deplorable." He further added that having prisoners on life sentences is extremely expensive to tax payers, since the state has to provide food, shelter and medical care.

There is currently an ongoing petition against the death penalty in Guyana and this panel discussion was an attempt to garner support. There have been no deaths by hanging in Guyana for twenty years. Children under the age of eighteen, pregnant women and the mentally ill are exempted from the death penalty.



Panelists: Attorney-at-Law Mr Stephen Fraser, Mr Patrice Wishart and Ms Belinda Jankie

World Harmony Week observed with discussion on religion



A section of the audience at the panel discussion.

The role of religion in creating harmonious societies was up for discussion when the University of Guyana, along with the Inter-Religious Organization of Guyana (IROG), held a panel discussion at the UG's Turkey-en Campus on February 6.

The event, which featured five panelists from different religions, brought to light the importance of religion, particularly in a culturally diverse nation such as Guyana.

The discussions were kicked off by Ms Jennifer Dewar of IROG who shared that the event was a part of World Harmony Week, which is observed annually from February 1 to February 7. Observation of World Harmony Week started in 2011 with the objective to promote harmony among all people.

During the event, the five panelists

were given the opportunity to share their views on religion. These panelists were from the Christian, Hindu, Rastafarian, Baha'i, and Islamic communities.

Of particular interest was the presentation by the representative of the Christian community, Pastor Wendell Jeffery. In his presentation, Pastor Jeffery noted that "most of the world is religious". He strongly believes that the world is a better place thanks to religion. However, he also noted that religion could also be detrimental. He pointed out historical occurrences of wrong deeds being used in the name of Christianity as well as ISIS.

Jeffery further posited that most of Guyana's problems are due to politicians being religious. He said too that some religious persons instigate hate and racism in Guyana.

The discussions eventually led to heated debates among the attendees. The atmosphere was tense as students began to critically challenge the arguments presented with intriguing questions. While each speaker attempted to answer the questions to the best of their abilities, the debates persisted nonetheless.

However, calm was restored when the audience was reminded that the event was created to allow persons to better understand each other and to co-exist, even with differing opinions.

As the event came to a close, it was clear that all religions had some common denominators. It was also noted that religion can both unite and divide a nation and that persons should treat other the way they themselves wanted to be treated.

-The Prosecution of Domestic Violence Cases against Women in Guyana Successes and Lessons Learned

Under the worldwide theme, “Be Bold for Change,” the University of Guyana observed International Women’s Day 2017 with a public lecture at Theatre Guild on March 16, 2017.

The event was chaired by Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Philanthropy, Alumni and Civic Engagement, Dr Paloma Mohamed, with a focus on “the Prosecution of Domestic Violence Cases against Women in Guyana, Successes and Lessons Learned.” Present at the event was Honourable Minister of Social Cohesion, Dr George Norton; Chief Justice, Roxanne George; the United Nations Fund Representatives; several senior members of the University of Guyana; other special invitees, past and present students; and the general public.

The welcoming address was delivered by Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Planning and International Engagement, Dr Barbara Reynolds. She concluded her welcoming address by informing invitees of the intensity of the subject to be discussed.

The main presentation was done by Ms Chandrawattie Persaud, a former nurse, union activist, former student of the University’s law program and, most recently, a graduate of the University’s Masters in Public Health Program. Ms Persaud presented portions of her thesis which largely addressed the prosecution of domestic violence cases against women in Guyana, with a focus on the successes and lessons learned.

Following her presentation, a panel discussion was launched in response. The panel included Ms Sara Bharrat; Chief Justice Roxanne George; Human Rights activists, Ms Vanda Ramsit and Ms Lisa Hussain; the lone gentleman, UG Lecturer, Mr Andrew Hicks.

The panelists discussed extensively the legal system in Guyana as it relates to domestic violence, the challenges, and how the system can be improved. The panelists all agreed that, as a society, there is a need for a paradigm shift in the way we address domestic violence, regardless of who the claim is being made by or against.

After the presentation and responses by the panel, there was a passionate interactive segment where members of the audience were able to ask questions and make suggestions. The audience’s convictions towards the topic being discussed were clearly evident and the

discussion segment was one of humour, enlightenment and self-searching.

Meanwhile, the invitees were treated to a greeting by UG’s Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ivelaw Griffith, who could not be present at the event but used a video to wish women well on the occasion of International Women’s Day. He further indicated that the world is standing with them. Professor Griffith encouraged women to be bold for change and highlighted the part the University is playing in supporting this theme. The Vice-Chancellor noted that in his seven months at the university he has promoted two women to positions of leadership; Dr Paloma Mohamed and Dr Barbara Reynolds. The Vice-Chancellor concluded his greeting with a salute to women and girls around the world, encouraging everyone to do what they can to be bold for change.

The event was concluded with a vote of thanks by psychologist and a current student of the Masters in Public Health program, Ms Mosa Hudson. Ms Hudson extended appreciation to everyone who participated and supported the event.



Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Philanthropy, Alumni and Civic Engagement, Dr Paloma Mohamed



Deputy Vice Chancellor of Planning and International Engagement, Dr Barbara Reynolds



The Panelists



The Audience



Minister of Social Cohesion, Dr George Norton

LOCAL EDUCATOR CALLS FOR FIRM STANCE AGAINST INCEST



Librarian of the University of Guyana Ms Gweneth George and Dr Joy Wilson

“I stand today as a victim, now victor over childhood incest.” These were the bold words spoken by Dr Joy Wilson as part of her closing statements at the recently held lecture series hosted by the University of Guyana’s Library in observance of International Women’s Day on March 8, 2017.

Dr Joy Wilson, who is also a marriage and family therapist, educator and transformational leader, said that “according to a study commissioned by the United Nation, the Caribbean has the earliest sexual debut in the world.” She mentioned also that “incest is a hidden cancer because children are sexually molested by people that they know, love and trust.” Out of a study that she conducted in the churches in Guyana with a participation pool of one hundred and twenty-five (125) Christian women, twenty-five (25) of them reported that they suffered childhood incest and in twelve cases (12) a male cousin was the perpetrator.

During the International women’s day lecture series Dr Wilson also launched and handed over a copy of

her new book to the University’s library. The book titled “Ministering to victims of Incest: A model for church responses” is dedicated to everyone who has suffered from childhood incest.

International Women’s Day 2017 was held under the theme “Be bold for change” and Dr Wilson rightly mentioned that “being bold for change places a demand on each person to do their part to protect our children and youth from incest and every form of domestic violence. She further encouraged persons to support people who have the courage to break the silence about their experiences with childhood incest and not shun them.

This was the fifth (5th) lecture series held by the University of Guyana’s library, with the first being held in October of 2015, in observance of Agriculture month, the second being a lecture on Black History month and the third and fourth lecture series was in observance of International Women’s Day 2016 and Arrival day respectively.



Dr Joy Wilson’s books on display



A section of the audience at the presentation



Distinguished Educators pay tribute to Professor C Y Thomas



From Left: Vice Chancellor of the University of Guyana and other distinguished educators at the journal launch.

The life and works of Distinguished Professor, Clive Yolande Thomas, were celebrated in a special issue of the CLR James Journal, launched on February 17, 2017 in the Education Lecture Theatre, at the University of Guyana Turkeyen campus.

The event was chaired by Deputy Vice Chancellor Michael Scott and saw many distinguished educators paying tribute to Professor Thomas, including

Vice-Chancellor of the University of Guyana, Professor Ivelaw Griffith, who said that enough was not being done to celebrate the exemplars of success in the academy and in the Caribbean. He went on to state that his intent was to have "the university play its role in lifting up the heroes and 'sheroes', so that the younger Guyanese can want to aspire to dream and to do."

Professor Griffith concluded his tribute with a timely quote from Chinese

philosopher Confucius: "If you are planning for a year, plant rice; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for 100 years, educate people."

This special event was the second one to honour Professor Thomas. Last semester a C Y Thomas Distinguished Lecture Series was inaugurated. C Y Thomas is a world-renowned economist, scholar, and political advocate and activist.

UG Alumna cops 2017 Ridding Reading Prize in UK

Reprinted from Chronicle Daily Newspapers

Sonnell David-Longe of Guyana copped the 2017 Ridding Reading Prize after being judged the overall winner of the competition which was held last Friday at Girton College of the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom (UK). The competition is a Girton tradition founded in honour of Caroline Mary Ridding, who won a scholarship to Girton to read Classics in 1883, and became a renowned Sanskrit and Pali scholar.

According to a statement from the college, 24-year old Sonnel, who is a former student of Queens College, consistently showed appreciation of and sensitivity to the language of the passages and poems, and riveted the audience with her readings. Prose and poetry readings were set for the contestants to prepare and read. They read a range of subjects in the Sciences and Arts. Sonnel, who holds a Bachelor's of Law Degree from the University of Guyana (UG) and a Legal Education Certificate from the Hugh Wooding Law School (HWLS), was the lone Guyanese contestant. She emerged victorious over five other competitors who all attend Girton College; four undergraduate students and two graduate students including Sonnel.

The other participants were: Jessica Ginn, David Lawrence, Sheanna Patelmaster, Ruari Paterson-Achenbach and Scott Remer. The statement highlighted that in the first round of the competition, the contestants read an extract from Shadderby Neil Gaiman, and a sonnet, 'Farewell!' by William Shakespeare. After this round, only three of the six contestants were selected to proceed to round two. In the second round, contestants read an extract from 'The Pursuit of Love' by Nancy Mitford and 'A poetry reading at West Point' by William Matthews. "The contestants approached the former passage with relish, and communicated its humour and changing voices very effectively to the audience" the statement read.

It was noted that all readers of the Matthews poem engaged with the sense of place and tension running through the piece. Additionally, it was pointed out that the contestants read an unseen poem, 'A Blessing' by James Wright, and the judges were impressed by the way that they conveyed the mingling of gentleness and wildness in the scene depicted. The competition was judged by a panel of Girton Fellows: Judith Drink-



Sonnell David-Longe receives her award

water, Dr Jill Jondorf, Dr Roland Randall and Dr Emma Weisblatt, and Yelena Popova, Girton's Artist in Residence for 2016-17, who was the external adjudicator. Following the distribution of prizes, the evening concluded with an excellent buffet meal kindly provided by the catering staff, while those assembled took the opportunity to discuss the readings and the different styles with which they had been presented.



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April 14th 2017

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.....

May 12th 2017

All acceptance letters
For proposals e-mailed.
.....

June 16th 2017

Deadline for the executive
summary of your paper(s)
Submitted.

PROGRAMME & DATES

JULY 23rd 2017 – ARRIVAL & WELCOME RECEPTION

JULY 24th 2017 – OPENING PLENARY, PANELS & PAPERS

JULY 25th 2017 – PRESENTATIONS DAY

JULY 26th 2017 – 2nd ERA CONFERENCE

JULY 27th 2017 – KNOW YOUR COUNTRY DAY

JULY 28th 2017 – CLOSING PLENARY, CULTURAL NIGHT

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Vice-Chancellor Ivelaw Griffith in the Phagwah Parade in New York



Vice-Chancellor of the University of Guyana and his colleagues at the Phagwah Parade in New York

by Dr Dhanpaul Narine

What does one do on a day when the ground is covered with snow? One would be tempted to stay indoors and let the strong chilly winds ruffle flags and feathers. But if you are the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Guyana neither snow nor storm could prevent you from celebrating a grand Guyanese festival.

Professor Ivelaw Griffith travelled from Guyana and brought warmth and sunshine to Richmond Hill in New York. It was the occasion of the 29th Annual Phagwah Parade that has become an institution in New York.

According to the 'New York Times' the Phagwah Parade is the biggest street festival in Queens and the largest of its kind in North America. The Parade was founded by Guyanese immigrants in New York and the first attracted 40 persons; it numbers over 100,000 today.

Professor Griffith was warmly received by members of the Phagwah Parade Committee 2017 and by the crowds. He mixed with fellow Guya-

nese and other nationalities and took the long walk from 133rd Street into Smokey Oval Park.

This was familiar territory for Professor Griffith because as a senior officer at York College in CUNY he would meet and interact with students in the area. The VC, as the world knows, has given up lucrative positions in North America to return and serve Guyana.

Since he assumed the mantle as Vice-Chancellor the University of Guyana has seen a turnaround. There is transparency and accountability, and students, faculty and support staff can hold their heads high and be proud of the achievements of the University.

This formed the basis to introduce Professor Griffith to the large audience in Smokey Oval Park. Dr. Dhanpaul Narine said that Professor Griffith and his team are working hard to hold the University accountable to high standards. He added that under the VC's leadership the University has made significant progress and that this has oc-

curred in less than a year.

Professor Griffith was well received by the crowd. He thanked the organizing committee and the ERA's that included Herman Singh, Naro Balli, Roy Singh, Shanti Ammar and Vivian Williams. In his address Professor Griffith brought greetings from the students and staff of the University of Guyana.

The Vice-Chancellor said, 'we are rebuilding our dynamic university, thanks to the leadership and support of so many of you. We look forward to your continued support. You will be hearing more exciting news about UG later this year. We are creating a Business School, among other projects, and we are encouraging everyone to support our university.'

Professor Griffith brought the sunshine of Guyana to the Phagwah Parade in New York and his message was appreciated by all. He is without doubt the greatest ambassador of UG and the institution should consider itself lucky to have him.

The Inaugural Dr Neville Trotz, A A Distinguished Lecture

The Inaugural Dr Neville Trotz, A A Distinguished Lecture on Science, Policy and Culture: Essential Elements of Transformative change in Guyana was held on March 15 at Pegasus Hotel, Kingston.



History of the Walter Rodney Awards for Creative Writing

The Walter Rodney Awards for Creative writing is a pillar of the Walter Rodney Foundation. The Foundation was established by the Rodney Family in 2006 and is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. The foundation is a non-profit one, and is committed to sharing the life and work of Walter Rodney. The foundation focuses on improving lives through scholarship programs, the awards for creative writing, annual symposium and anything intellectual or historical.

It is on this backdrop that the Walter Rodney Awards for Creative Writing was launched in October of 2013. The founders felt that the University of Guyana needed a creative writing program, to help students from all faculties explore and enhance their talents in writing.

The Walter Rodney Awards for Creative Writing is fully sponsored by

the Walter Rodney Foundation, with support from donors and persons interested in the life and work of Walter Rodney. One such person is Dr Tumbridge who we spoke with to gather the information on the history of the Awards. Dr Tumbridge volunteers his services to the Foundation.

The Awards has one criteria for entering and it is one must be a current students and past students who graduated within a 3 years period. Students can be from any faculty of the University of Guyana.

When Dr Tumbridge was asked if the awards has lived up to its expectation, he informed us that the Awards started quietly with about 20 persons but has seen tremendous growth over the years. The awards contest is held annually.

It starts in November and concludes in February of the next year. Therefore the Award is growing and it is helping students, since one of the past Awardees went on to win the Guyana Prize. The 2017 awards are proof that there was growth, since there were about 100 persons present, including the Honourable Minister of Education Dr Rupert Roopnaraine and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Guyana Professor Griffith.

The founders of the Walter Rodney Awards for Creative Writing have not decided on a new aspect for the Awards for the future, but it is their hope that it will continue to grow and attract the attention of more students and continue to receive the support from the University and the Ministry of Education.

Winner of the Non-Fiction Category - Andrew Hutson

Guyana's Evolution



Andrew Hutson

Ebb and flow

Time: Definitions have for some time been overused; in the conventional essay. However, the paradigm that comes with explaining, or rather, predicting the future of Guyana is best related to time and its power.

A power I have come to find is typically disregarded.

Time as defined by the Oxford Advance Learning Dictionary "is the indefinite continued progress of existence and events in the past, present, and future, regarded as a whole".

The prediction is that as time passes things will unfold as such to make Guyana a more holistic and functioning system.

A prediction I intend to explain using the past, present and future...

The idea of social productivity and movement of people unidirectionally towards agreement of love and respect is one that has been more complex than expected. Guyana's history undeniably began with men who had the premise of bonding society; which for all intents and purposes was a good notion. Those men were Forbes Burnham and Cheddi Jagan. According to Hazel Woolford (author of an online publication entitled A History of Political Alliances in Guyana), Forbes Burnham and Cheddi Jagan were charismatic men who had spawned mighty

relationships with trade unions in Guyana. The idea at that time was to merge the many races of Guyana and lead progressive alliances towards social movement.

The idea did eventually become tainted with reality, at some point. The scourge and underbelly of power leapt into action. The Burnhamites felt that they were no longer being heard by the Jaganites. A divide was then forged and Guyana received a lethal blow; racial voting. This detriment to the social construct had pervaded Guyana at a pivotal time; its political infancy.

Two things then happened; Guyana gained its Independent status in 1966 and Walter Rodney entered the political arena.

At midnight on Thursday, 26th May, 1966, the Union Jack (a symbol of 163 years of colonial rule) was lowered and The Golden Arrowhead (the symbol of Guyana's thrust into destiny) was raised. But besides this another event bore witness to social launch and unity; Forbes Burnham

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Guyana's Evolution... Cont'd *from page 22...*

and Cheddi Jagan embraced each other. At that moment the shackle which bid race against race and brother against brother lost existence and Guyana was as harmonious as Reverend Archibald's song.

In 1974 an enigmatic political alliance stepped forth and was constituted. The Working People's Alliance was magnetic. The opposing parties had been rendered choice-less and were forced to take account of the W.P.A.'s leaders.

Labelling social class as the disaster plaguing Guyana's ebb and flow was a success for the W.P.A.. The novel idea of Nationalist Government took Guyanese by storm. Though Guyana had many inflictions due to the racial-vot-

Bauxite on the other hand was largely foreign owned too. Demba and Alcan among others accounted for most of Guyana's bauxite and calcined bauxite earnings. This had a dampening effect on Guyana's growth seeing as though at the time according to an article entitled Postindependence by countrystudies.us (anon.) Guyana was the 4th leading bauxite producer in the world and the leading world producer of calcined bauxite.

Economist Delisle Wallace said, "Foreign ownership was considered the root cause of local economic difficulties" (qtd. in Merrill). Guyana agreed. In the early 1970s following Independence and Republican status, Burnham nationalized most of the companies that were foreign owned

Recently, Guyana has allowed for offshore drilling which has proven successful. Exxon Mobil has found a pocket of oil. One single pocket which may contain over 700 million barrels of oil. That find alone will drastically increase Guyana's GDP.

ing setback, Walter's views provided escape. His gatherings increased in numbers and Guyanese began to think for themselves. Walter and his views served as an adsorptive process; somewhat of a catalyst to the development of social march.

Social growth seemed to bloom when leaders were able to foresee great things: like independence, unity, camaraderie but most of all – hope.

It is an honest thing to say that Guyana has had its economic misfortunes. In the early 1960s when Guyana was on its way to Independence many foreign companies controlled the revenue landscape. Though Independence was just a short slide away in 1966, economic liberty did not come until the 1970s. Companies like Booker-McConnell and Jessel Securities had control of Guyana's sugar industry. It was even said that 30-35 percent of Guyana's foreign exchange earnings belonged to these companies. Not surprisingly, they employed their own. That in itself could not be fought immediately because Guyana did not have an abundance of professionals.

in Guyana. A step that did see return. So much so that from the period of 1970 to 1975 Guyana experienced a period of GDP growth of four percent per annum.

In the 1980s Guyana's economy experienced demise. The migration of Guyanese intellectuals coupled with the plummet of demand for bauxite and sugar led to economic retrogression. Burnham's regime took heavy criticism for the fall of Guyana's economy. It was not until 1988 that another stalwart proposed an idea to lessen the aftermath. The Economic Reform Program introduced by President Hoyte was used until 1997/1998 when the Free Market Economy took its place. The two frameworks have seen a reduction in Guyana's multilateral debt. Guyana has since been relieved of all debt incurred by the government up until the year 2005 by the International Monetary Fund. This is accounted for by the successful macroeconomic, poverty reduction and improvements in public expenditure management the country has seen over the recent years. Besides this Guyana was able to secure its

economic growth at 4.5% for a nine year period. Though according to the PPP/Civic Guyana's estimated growth in 2015 was predicted to be 3.8% (a drop from expected), the construct continues to flourish (IMF External Relations Department 2005, Global Finance Magazine 2016, Stabroek News 2009, Indo-Caribbean World 2013, Webmasters 2015).

Recently, Guyana has allowed for offshore drilling which has proven successful. Exxon Mobil has found a pocket of oil. One single pocket which may contain over 700 million barrels of oil. That find alone will drastically increase Guyana's GDP.

It is fair to brand such a find a Guyanese victory...

Note, the ebb and flow sustained over time. Increase, decrease, defeat, retaliation and growth.

Earlier this year I heard Guyana being called the garden city...

I'll tell you more...

For quite a while we have been burdened with the issue of flooding. In 2005 Guyana experienced a flood which spanned the entire coastal plain. It is unfair to say that this problem was government caused, people caused or garbage caused. Rather, it was a culmination of every one. The government did not put much work into drainage and irrigation for reasons I am sure that can be explained. Guyanese have grown accustomed to throwing plastics into the gutters and trenches, and at that said time the kokers could not be opened; it was high tide; what a coincidence. Guyana had to shunt millions into local aid and within that brief timeline, leptospirosis became a problem; taking fifteen lives with it before slumbering again.

In 2015 Guyana witnessed the birth of a coalition that spoke of things like national governance. This coalition won the 2015 general elections. This is not by a long haul something to be called original or paperback. But both PNC and PPP regimes have opted to have national governance. Sadly, this was only given voice when both parties had their backs against the wall.

This election displayed the rhythm of a new song...

Chords which had old merit made a new melody. Something enchanting, something that gave air to freedom and new meaning. Younger peo-

Continued on page 23...

Guyana's Evolution...Cont'd *from page 22...*

ple cared this time. They were tired of hearing the beat of the past. They wanted more, and the older folk wanted more too. I suppose the word change fits the occasion.

More...

We decided to have more...

This election bred the era of choice; where it was as simple as saying this is what I want and if it does not suit me any longer I will say no.

To quote George Tan Ming an exemplary mechanic and my grandfather, "When ah d small small ah coulda swin in these trench. Till de bottom ah used to go an come up back. They used to call it the Garden city!" He said it with a smile that folded and bent up on itself. A smile I envied; because he seemed to enjoy that memory so much.

Our government has undertaken the task of beautifying the city and making it more homely. I have seen a small amount of their work. Bus stops with lights and soon enough wi-fi internet access, playgrounds on the mall and they have even remembered to place receptacles at every street corner. It has been efficient. Allowing Guyanese who ...work around the market areas to aid in the clean-up activities have added to the respect we have for our city. I have witnessed vendors chastising others over throwing garbage in their areas of work.

My opinion; respect breathes love and a sense of authority in what is just.

The many ethnic groups that have come to be a part of Guyana have long been a strength among us and for us. East Indians, Chinese, Africans, Amerindians, Portuguese and Europeans are all very rooted in their culture. All of these ethnic groups have had their moral fibre tested, torn away and rebuilt; an ebb and flow as is convention by now.

An article entitled "Culture and Development (Guyana)" published in the Kaieteur News on 25th January, 2013, quoted Peter Bauer (a recognized economist) as saying, "Economic achievement depends upon a people's attributes, attitudes, morals and political arrangements." (Culture and Development (Guyana), 2016). Thus far the greatest impediment to cultural fluidity has been the occurrence of slavery and to a smaller extent indentureship.

The African population in Guyana has had the harshest castigation at the hands of the titan called slavery. Most of the

slaves were forced to drop their African names for Christian ones. The use of drums were prohibited after uprisings, and traditions were only kept alive through words said under the dark of night.

East Indians, Chinese and Europeans were allowed their culture. As is evident in the fact that their names are of ancestral origin. Amerindians during the period of slavery chose death or hid so deeply in the Amazon forest that they were untouched by the changes in the world, as a result their culture is still widely practised.

Guyana has an abundance of holidays and seasons which respect and reflect on our cultural heritage. However, cultural experts have come to label diffi-

Time, as I have alluded to, takes into account gems of the past, images of the present and the light of the future. Guyana's political future, Guyana's economic future; its cultural, social and environmental well-being will be preserved.

culties in other ways. Al Creighton in a piece entitled "African Heritage in Guyana" said Afro-Guyanese have become "inflicted with self-contempt". Self-contempt caused by confusion of human rights during the period of slavery.

Racial voting inspired during our early political development has imposed itself on this self-contempt which has been bred among Afro-Guyanese. Fear and blind governance led to a flow of this caloric foe to events such as the Wismar massacre and more recently the Lusignan massacre in 2008.

However, not long ago, in early February of 2016 (this year), an inter-school dance competition for the annual Mashramani celebrations provided

the stage for cultural entanglement and amalgamation. East Indian, Amerindian and Afro Guyanese dancing have been practised by members of every single ethnic group. No one dance was performed by its ethnic group.

In further defense of this growing meshwork of unity I say this: there is no Guyanese that does not enjoy pepperpot on Christmas morning or a curry and roti on a Wednesday afternoon after work - a trend I predict will not change in 50,100 or a billion years.

A tide of retaliation against past constraints and a platform towards social-political- economic harmony; it seems...

Attitude- respect- love- peace- fellowship. Ebb----- flow.

Flight

Time, as I have alluded to, takes into account gems of the past, images of the present and the light of the future. Guyana's political future, Guyana's economic future; its cultural, social and environmental well-being will be preserved.

When I am asked where I see everything heading in fifty years I feel a sense of enthusiasm at the thought.

Time will permit mistakes to be made, it will also ensure that they are fixed and that they are learned from.

But... My prediction...

My prediction as radical and faithful as it is...

Is this...

Guyana is at the pinnacle of intellectualism; its people have learned of their voices; those voices are ready to be heard.

Those voices will persist like Rodney's; like Jagan's; like Martin Carter's... And the song of time will make them immortal...

Time will show its power; its ability to promote evolution.

And, perhaps, my prediction will be right; perhaps time will permit the evolution of Guyana and its people.

It will facilitate more efficiency, more revenue, more strength, more accord; more unity; more...

Guyana will be more...

Ebb, flow----- EVOLUTION...

Winner of the Poem Category-Gabrielle Mohamed

Hell That Springs From the Memory of the Dead



Gabrielle Mohamed

Guyana in the next 50 years is simply impossible.

Why?

Because I'm already dead.

I've been murdered and fucked by you.

5 You killed me, Guyana.

I was, and is, the girl with no reflection.

So no one saw, no one cared about the coolie, bush-head gurl.

So no one mourned the death or existence of a girl who was unseen but felt everything.

No, you thought nothing of my absence.

10 But then again why should you; I've never existed in your eyes.

So I've become a memory that has been resuscitated from the graveyard of imperialism,

A single memory transformed by the blood of martyrs, and unnamed heroes.

And so it has come to pass

You identified my flaws like good ole

massa Charles

15 From Plantation Albion. Remember 'im?

And like 'im you underscored my tragedies and predicted the demise

Of 'the Coolie gurl, gud fa noten but lay down pun she back'.

And you, my African Buddy and Didi in arms,

We fought together, against and as a coalition.

20 I didn't come Guyana fa steal anything from ayo,

Meh come fa work de land like propieta tell me se.

Fa years me and you, we ah revolt. And fa wa, nah freedom?

Is nah freedom we de had pun we mind wen,

Good ole massa Charles dey grunting into we cunt,

25 Or wen he de busin we man skin wid licks fa stealing food fa da baby?

Ah wa happen to da freedom, eh?

Is wa Guyana sons and daughters doing, eh?

Tell me why I'm here drowning in the blood of your sins, Guyana.

Why you now think you Guyana is de new massa Charles,

30 And me, the coolie, bush-head gurl, your property.

No name, no country, no identity. No space to claim, just a property

To be own by de next massa, and de wan afta da.

So, I couldn't conform to your strict colonial mould.

Is eitha coolie, fair skin or black; straight long hair, short curly-kinky hair.

35 Da is wa it come to now, a either-or situation

Two big binary oppositions in a game of chess.

Which one am I: pawn, king, queen, bishop, knight?

Do I forsake my family and conform to your strict code and risk being burnt off the tree?

Or ignore the fact that I must be your faithful monkey, and still geh bun off de tree?

40 Onward, upward may we ever go, day by day in strength and beauty grow,

You taught me this pathetic song Guyana. Ya mean a line of it?

How in God's name we going onwards and upwards if

My skin and hair texture is da only deciding factor in getting a job?

I educate maself. It wasn't easy but I mek it.

45 Teacha only seem to focus on certain students, but I mek it,

Besides the strikes, besides teacha eyes of condescending failure, jus like massa Charles:

'Is only housewife ya gan be, mek nuff baby and tek licks from man'.

Winner of the Fiction Category-Nicholas Peters



Nicholas Peters

The air was sweltering and the city was nearing a festive climax. Tomorrow would begin the country's centennial celebrations. Everywhere you turned green, white, yellow, gold, black and red decorated the buildings so vibrantly that today's heat paled in comparison. Everywhere was ready for the flame of jubilation to be lit.

To raise the curtain for the nation's biggest party tonight will be the drawing of the biggest lottery in the nation's history. The combination of annoying heat and national anxiety was enough to get anyone out their home and onto the street, just to see and feel what was going on. So I did.

I called Richy to meet me near the waterfront for the walk. I liked it there but he complained that the heat was too much. In the end I convinced him that this walk was a century in the making and none like it would come in our lifetime.

By the time we met it was close to evening. The workday had ended earlier than even the earliest of days for most, so the city was bustling like it was Christmas Eve in May. Screens were laden everywhere and I asked Richy what he thought about the centennial promotions as we walked the city's edge.

"It's a distraction," he responded as he read a news article on his cell. I asked him why he thought so and he reminded me of the news stories that littered conversations lately.

There was the story of the im-

The Centuries Old Flame

prisoned pandit who was now entering his thirty-seventh day on hunger strike. And just two days ago the body of an imam was found floating in a canal. Vigils were still being held for the comatose pastor whose home was ablaze last month. Then there was the charismatic Toshao who went missing last week. All the stories seemed separate but people like Richy saw the oneness in them.

"That pandit, you know he got his doctorate in Biogenetics. The pastor is another smart one. She did her PhD in Macro-Economics. I even read that the Toshao was a historian who went all over the world before settling down to help her village," Richy explained. "And if it wasn't for the imam nuff poor people wouldn't be living this new green life that good for the land. He planned out the whole set up so we don't depend on black water too much."

The "black water" he talked about was the source of our country's wealth in the last fifty years. Richy describes it as the water that turned the fish cold and kept speedboats hot. His grandfather was a fisherman and knew the dead imam. He would tell his grandson of the changes that came after black water washed up on Guyanese shores.

The capital changed from the hub of the country's farmers market to an active participant of the international market place. Fuel became cheaper than fish and more people bought more boats than they knew what to do with.

But throughout the touted prosperity a divide grew. It was a divide drawn from the ugly parts of our country. And I heard this from my parents, friends and people on the street. But Richy's frankness on the topic was clearest to me.

"These days people like me barely stand a chance," he would say. "Granfadda used to say how this country used to be the black man and coolie man fighting. How the chinee, putagee and buck man used to

get in the fight too. But not anymore since nuff of them mix up together. Now is mix thing against the people they come from," he chucked my shoulder. "That's what they want us to think."

Plastered everywhere was the promoted motto "One People, One Nation, One Big Big Party!" It used to be funny months ago. By this time it was over used and stale. People mocked it now. Instead, there was a graffiti motto which read "One People, One Nation, One Big Big Lotto". That's what the people really cared about.

"You really think those four people can change things?" I asked earnestly. "We've dealt with so much of the same thing for so long. I don't really know how it can change. It just takes a different form to me."

"People like you can afford to think so," Richy said. "You got your mix saving you. And your family name don't hurt either." His talks started to infuriate me. I began to protest but he interrupted me.

"But we gotta continue fighting. I can see that. You can see that. Others see that. Its people like them four that seeing it and doing something. This inequality and exploitation got to stop man!"

Richy graduated from university and was jobless for a year now. It wasn't for a lack of trying. He's brilliant and fearless but he didn't have the face or the family name or the connections to land the work he was qualified for.

"You can't trust what you see now. It's all just smoke. So much smoke you can't even see the fire," I said. We were closer to the city centre.

"You could never believe somebody like you would talk like that. It still got hope!" he responded wryly.

"This place got nuff dirty truths," I said more seriously.

I felt a vibration in my pocket. It was a message informing me of the celebration schedule. There was also news on stories that were upsetting lies.

"We forgot to tell our own stories," I told Richy. "I was reading some old stories about how we fought the Crown, then the

Government and even sometimes ourselves. I mean they weren't pretty, but at least it was we type of ugly. But we don't even tell the stories anymore. People here just feel jaded to keep the machine going and the black water running for outside people benefit."

"That's why those four people and anybody in line with them getting such a hard time. They telling their own stories. Stories the big bosses don't like," Richy said.

At this point we were at the city centre where the bustle was at its heaviest. As the sun set, the screens surrounding the commercial area got brighter. I had to admit that they showed off the country at its best. One screen showed the country's major rivers leading to major towns along the coast, riverain, mountain and savannah regions. Each town exhibited its unique features in nature,

One hundred years after the first fireworks of Independence ignited the Guyana sky a bottle could be heard popping open. Two hundred years after logie diyas were lit to overcome darkness the shingling of sticks in a box made a sudden burst.

trade and cosmopolitanism. It all culminated into the iconic Kaieteur Falls, this time glowing in the colours of the flag with a countdown to celebration hanging over it.

It was undeniable that the capital city had its best show face on as if the peoples undying loyalty to dress codes was manifested in the cityscape. But as Richy and I neared the centre monument we noticed a raucous mob that deviated from the festive order.

In the centre of a crowd was a woman. She had a tired look that made her older than her real age. The woman was shouting at the top of her lungs with a frustration I sometimes saw on Richy.

"Is too much I put up with!" she yelled. "Ah done with this place! And is people like you," she pointed at two officers, "that supposed to be helping we but slowly killing we!"

One of the onlookers related to Richy that the woman was a street vendor. Earlier in the day city officials had seized her goods saying that she was illegally selling on the pavement. Many believed that it was a direct order to remove her and people like her from the

cityscape because they upset the image of a modern and prospering country. Whatever it was, she had had enough of it.

"Imagine in me own country, where me husband and daughter dead and bury, I got fuh continue suffering! In de place I born and grow and put all me soul into, I gotta be pon the street barely surviving! And at de same time it got people from all overseas coming here fuh take all the wealth that by right is we own!" Her statement started to resonate with others.

"You know is wuh fuh put you only child pon funeral pyre? Me girl de smart bad bad bad and even graduate from University on top! You know is wuh fuh see somebody so bright and fuh work so hard to keep she shining to have she taken away from you? All cause this place givin' wuk and money

to all them outside people and barely givin it to we own people!"

More people started to gather around the woman. The story of her daughter had made the news cycle some time back. The tragedy of a young intelligent woman cutting short her life had people talking and theorising as to why it happened.

Meanwhile others were occupied with the surrounding screens which were about to broadcast the long awaited lottery draw.

"And look how it got we now nuh! All a dem watching screen for something nobody goh win. We goh fight fuh that money like rass. We goh fight and thief from one another till all uh we poor poor and ain got nothing. And daz all they want we do! Thief, rape and kill one on another so we could bribe them fuh lil safety as they thief duh lil resources we got! One people? Is a lie! They don't want we as one! They want we scavenge for a lil living like how I deh!"

Her truth was the truth of many of us and it consumed me. I turned to Richy and he had this sternness his face that

was a mix of validation and resolution. Around us people shouted their support, others earnestly watched on while the rest eagerly watched as each winning number came up on the large screens.

"I cuda barely feed she but I still manage fuh carry she through school! She still outshine everybody when all a them tell she she was nothing! De gurl still come out pon top! And she de still humble bout it. She de know what de going on in this place! She help them same people who say she was nothing! All type of people she help man, woman, mix, stushy and all. And fuh wuh? They ain help she. Till she get fed up! Fed up of people, of dis country, of dis world! I ain fail she? All uh we ain fail she? All uh we ain failing dem young people we calling we future when we ain fixing de life we deh in now? I de feeding she for a better tomorrow but she ain see it! So wuh tomorrow I seeing fuh meself if the future didn't see it fuh sheself?"

After that the woman made her way to a bottle that wasn't far from the screen projecting the falls and its centennial countdown. Both our eyes followed her figure. Suddenly Richy grabbed my shoulder as if to warn me. But I was too enthralled to notice the alarm and shock she was starting underneath that projector.

One hundred years after the first fireworks of Independence ignited the Guyana sky a bottle could be heard popping open. Two hundred years after logie diyas were lit to overcome darkness the shingling of sticks in a box made a sudden burst. Three hundred years after the torches of rebellion laid the first hopeful steps to freedom a scream was heard exclaiming "No!" Four hundred years after bonfire gatherings warned whole nations of encroaching men with thunder sticks, the guttural shrieks of a departing spirit began.

She was on fire. Flesh would become ash that would be carried by the wind. The rain would absorb the ashes and patter onto the earth. She was to become part of the land for another hundred years and more, unconditionally feeding her children until she couldn't anymore.

VC and Team Engaging with Various Leaders to Strengthen The Renaissance Bridge



Minister of Public Telecommunications Catherine Hughes and senior E- Gov officials



Berbice Campus: Inaugural Open/Career Day 2017

For the first time in 16 years, the Berbice Campus hosted its Open/Career Day on 10th March, 2017 on the Campus' tarmac.

The theme for this year's activity was "Dare to Dream, Make it Happen". A number of exhibitors showcased various pieces of information, events while faculties did pieces on programmes and services offered. Secondary schools from Regions 5 and 6, parents, UG students, special invitees, the public and private sector representatives were there to witness this inaugural event.

The day commenced with an opening ceremony. Among the speakers were Dr Michael Scott, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Engagement; Ms Paulette Henry, Assistant Director, Tain Campus; and Mr Mohamed Raffik, President, Central Corentyne Chamber of Commerce.

Some of the organisations in attendance were Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry, New Amsterdam Technical Institute, Suri Enterprise, and Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission.

Later in the day there was a Cultural Presentation which brought the curtains down on this event.



Preparing for Guyana's future in oil and gas



Dr Grantley Waldron

Economic and Financial Policy and Praxis in Guyana was the topic for Turkeyen and Tain Talks 6, which took place on Tuesday, 14th March 2017 in the El Dorado Room of the Pegasus Hotel. The distinguished panel of presenters included Professor Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, Vice Chancellor and Principal of the University of Guyana; Honourable Winston Jordan, Minister of Finance; Dr Clive Thomas, Distinguished Professor of Economics; Mr Rawle Lucas, Special Finance Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Guyana; Captain Gerry Gouveia, Chief Executive Officer, Roraima Airways Group; Dr Grantley Waldron, Chairman and Managing Director of RMC Silica Company Ltd. and Mr Sidney Armstrong, Head of the Economics Department.

Of the valuable contributions that were made by the presenters, Professor Clive Thomas in his presentation highlighted the fact that self-employed persons, professionals, farmers, non-bank cambios, retail outlets and other commercial entities generate less than 3% of Guyana's total revenue. This according to Professor Thomas shows how inequitable the tax system currently is. However, he emphasised that the coming of the oil and gas extract and export would play a pivotal role in Guyana's future.

The Government of Guyana announced in January, 2017 its intention to build a \$500 million petroleum process-



Professor Clive Thomas

ing and service center on Crab Island, following what is described by experts as one of the richest oil and natural gas discoveries in Guyana's coastal waters. This decision came as preliminary estimates regarding how much recoverable oil Guyana has, ranges to more than 1.4 billion barrels, which at today's prices would be worth more than 200 billion.

Mr Rawle Lucas addressed public finance and fiscal policy in his presentation. He outlined the definition by Holtz-Eakin and Rosen on public policy which is the "taxing and spending activities of Government". Mr Lucas opined that economic development is directly impacted by fiscal policy, of which, the national budget is a central attribute. According to Mr Lucas, Guyana recorded a progressive increase in surplus between 2013 and 2016, from a record

of 36 Billion to 107 Billion, respectively. He went on to explain that a surplus represents an increase in the country's national savings and consequently, increased opportunities for investment. However, Mr Lucas stressed that the level of investment, given these figures, is at a very low rate. As to why investments are dwindling, he stated that "perhaps we are seeing our balances on paper and are reluctant in the way in which we spend our money".

Captain Gerry Gouveia described himself as a job creator and an active member in the business of marketing Guyana. A highly recognised figure in the private sector, Captain Gouveia shared his perspective on the noted decrease in private investments. According to him, there is need for Government to create investor confidence which would provide an enabling environment for private sector development. Through this mechanism, the private sector would be assured of security and return of investments. The private sector is an important factor in economic growth since it assists Government with job creation and is therefore a vital source for generating revenues through taxation.

Captain Gouveia also stressed that in measuring success, Government should focus more on the Gross Happiness Index (GHI) and not just on the Gross



The Panelists at Turkeyen and Tain Talks 6

Domestic Product (GDP). This he emphasised could be achieved by focussing on all the pillars of national development, such as economic, human and social development (nation building).

In his remarks the Minister of Finance, Guyana, the Hon. Winston Jordan related that following his appearance on a local radio programme, he was happy to receive positive feedback from the public which suggests that pertinent information was not made available to them before. This according to the Minister, signals Governments' need to strengthen its public relations systems. Minister Jordan also expressed that Government is willing to work with the private sector.

However, it is equally important that the private sector approach be one of partnership with the Govern-

ment. He stressed that there is need for evidence-based dialogues with the private sector when it comes to the creation of polices. The Minister advised of his intention to meet with the private sector at an equally convenient time to discuss the range of issues in hopes of finding a common ground.

Turkeyen and Tain Talks are intended to be bi-monthly thought fora with the aim of facilitating informed and respectful discourse on matters of public interest that have significant national, regional or international implications thereby creating a space for all ideas and views to be expressed.

The next segment of Turkeyen and Tain Talks will focus on Oil and Gas and is scheduled for May 2017. Turkeyen and Tain Talks is streamed live on facebook and all segments are available on Youtube.



Scenes from Turkeyen and Tain Talks 6

Berbice Community Outreach

The University of Guyana Berbice Campus (UGBC) continues with its outreach of giving to the lesser fortunate in communities. This activity is coordinated by the Berbice Campus Library where both staff and sometimes students collaborate and give generously to these ventures. We are hoping that in the future this venture would be a bigger and better one. To date the following schools and organisation (on the right) have benefitted from this venture:

Year	Area
2007	1st Caanan's Children's Home: an orphanage Port Mourant, Corentyne
2008	2nd Corriverton Primary School Skeldon
2009	3rd Belvedere Primary School Corentyne Berbice
2010	4th Rose Hall Town Nursery School Corentyne Berbice
2011	5th Special Needs School New Amsterdam
2012	6th Mc Gowan Primary School Manchester Village, Corentyne
2013	7th Rose Hall Primary School Canje
2014	8th Fyrish Primary School Fyrish Village
2015	9th Schepmoed Primary School Mara Village Berbice River
2016	10th Dharm-Shala New Amsterdam, Berbice



Outreach to Secondary schools

The Berbice Campus commenced its outreach to Secondary schools on 27th February, 2017. Schools targeted were in Regions 5 and 6. This Outreach proposes to sell what the university has to offer as an institution. Both Lecturers and Library staff teamed up and were assigned to schools within their preferred zones. Visiting the schools entailed a brief discussion on programmes and services offered by the Campus which was then followed by the issuing of brochures. The general brochure represented programmes offered and entry requirements.

The number of schools reached during this period were approximately twenty-six (26).

SAVE THE DATES

April 12, 13 2017
Undergraduate Research Conferences, Turkey-
en & Tain Campus

April 28, 2017
RACE for PACE, 2017
Inaugural UG students against Faculty
Fund Raising Go Kart Tournament
GMRSC Ground, Thomas Lands

May 10, 2017
Turkeyen and Tain Talks 7
Oil and Guyana and its Implications
for Guyana, Tain Campus

July 23-28, 2017
The First Diaspora Engagement Conference
under the theme, 'Dreaming Diaspora Engage-
ment, Doing Diaspora Engagement'.
Ramada Princess Hotel and Turkeyen Campus

Vice-Chancellor's Etiquette Training



Meetings with Students and Student Leaders



Keith Waithe now Visiting Distinguished Artist-in-Residence



Keith Waithe

Keith Waithe, as the Visiting Distinguished Artist-in-Residence in the Vice-Chancellery for the period February 20 to April 8, 2017, is expected to undertake both instructional and performance engagements.

Mr Waithe, a flutist, is an expert in traditional Guyanese folk music and jazz. He will be conducting master classes at both the Turkeyen and Tain campuses in a range of musical styles using the flute and drumming as the key instruments. He has also been named a member of the planning committee for the forthcoming Diaspora Engagement Conference. His focus there will be to help organise the cultural aspect for the week-long event and to help mobilise Guyanese in the United Kingdom to attend the historic conference.

According to the Vice-Chancellor, "Keith is an outstanding music and culture ambassador of our nation,

whose prowess as both a performer and a teacher I am happy to leverage for the benefit of our students and staff." Moreover, said Professor Griffith, "he is one of a few musical leaders who commands respect across our racial and cultural landscapes and can assemble reputable musicians in the Diaspora and in Guyana along those lines."

Mr Waithe currently resides in the United Kingdom where he has been performing and working as a visiting lecturer with the School of African and Oriental Studies at the University of London, the Royal Holloway University of London, and other institutions.

About Keith Waithe

Keith Waithe, LRSM, PGCEA, is an award-winning flautist, composer, teacher, expert proponent of vocal gymnastics and leader of The Macusi Players - a world music Jazz band-blending rhythms from the Caribbe-

an, South America, Asia and Africa. He mixes many sounds from his collection of over 200 flutes fusing enigmatic musical forms and world music resonances.

In addition, he has worked with radio, theatre and television. His eight album, "Gathering Echoes," has had rave reviews. Amongst many other individuals, Keith has worked with Nitiin Sawhney, Courtney Pine, and percussionist Bosco de Oliverira. He reaches out to his audiences from early years through to the older generations and is renowned for maximising audience participation. Keith is a trained teacher and holds an enhanced DBS certificate.

The Keith Waithe and the Macusi Players appeared on the main stage of the "Night of Legends" as part of the Guyana Jubilee Festival 50th celebrations last year at the Guyana National Stadium.



Distinguished Visiting Artist-in-Residence Keith Waithe and other artists in concert held on March 31 at the Theatre Guild



Library's Session Formats with you in mind at UG Berbice Campus Library (BCL)

The Library continues to conduct its Information Literacy (IL) sessions throughout the academic year, all in an effort to assist the students with their journey through University and IDCE, New Amsterdam branch.

IL plays an important role in academic achievement and lifelong learning. Duncan and Varcoe (2012), research noted that several student learning outcomes, such as student success and graduate employability, were linked to Library and information Literacy activities.

At UGBCL, we help make students' research fun and exciting. One way we do this is by having several different session formats to shake things up a bit. We also custom make packages to suit the students' needs.

1) Lecturers can indicate topics of interest for their students.

2) Students can request a session with topics of interest to them

Lively sessions are usually conducted:

- in the classroom setting before/ after/even during a class lecture

- at venue that is convenient to the students.

- in the Library's Foyer Area

Join us for lively discussions and Q&A.



SOME IL PACKAGES OFFERED BY UGBCL:

- Features and demonstrations of the Library's Online Catalogue

- Differentiating among journals, books, magazines, etc.

- Recognizing Reliable/Credible Sources

- Online Databases e.g. EBSCO, JSTOR, HINARI, AGORA, etc.

- Referencing Styles Format e.g. APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.

- Differentiating between References and Bibliography

- Referencing Materials e.g. books, chapters within a book, scholarly journal articles, lecture, unpublished dissertation, conference presentations, online materials, etc.

- Formats for Citation

- Plagiarism

Renaissance

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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. 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:

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