

**THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
CAVE HILL CAMPUS**

Principal's Welcome Remarks

**2017 Dinner
In Celebration
of the
Honorary Graduands**

The Hon. Sir Marston Gibson, Chief Justice of Barbados; the Hon. Ronald Jones, Minister of Education, Science Technology and Innovation, the Honourable John Boyce and Mrs Boyce, Minister of Health, Senator, the Honourable Maxine McClean, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, Mr Robert Bermudez, and Ms Ushna Rani Maraj, Vice-Chancellor, Professor, Sir Hilary Beckles, Chair of the Cave Hill Campus Council, Sir Paul Altman, and Lady Altman, our distinguished honorary Graduands, Ms Kaye Foster, Dame Selma Udine Jackman, Professor Ihron Rensburg and his spouse, Dr Sizeka Rensburg, members of the Diplomatic corps, Mrs June Chandler, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Pro Vice Chancellor and Principal of

the Mona Campus, Professor Archie McDonald, Pro Vice

Chancellor and Principal of the Open Campus, Dr Luz

Longworth, University Registrar Mr. William Iton, Pro Vice

Chancellors and other senior University officials, Deputy Campus

Principal, Professor Clive Landis and other members of the senior

management team, members of the Campus Community;

distinguished ladies and gentlemen, members of the media, good

evening and a brilliant, golden, Cave Hill welcome to you.

Welcome to the UWI Cave Hill Campus's dinner in celebration of our Honorary Graduands.

Once again, we are gathered in this most elegant of settings for our annual celebration of excellence. We look back on the past year with gratitude and look forward with anticipation and excitement. We mourn the loss of lives, (especially photographer Rollin Williams tragically yesterday) and the devastation wrought by the recent hurricanes and we are thankful for the rallying of Caribbean governments and peoples to each other when we face

calamities. The UWI is part of that rallying and we are quietly looking after our Dominican students and those from other affected countries. We extend that support to a fund raising cricket match at the 3Ws Oval on November 11th. Do join us.

Tonight we are honoured to welcome our Chancellor, Mr Robert Bermudez and Ms Ushna Maraj to their first honorary dinner and graduation ceremonies at the Cave Hill Campus. The University of the West Indies epitomizes continuity and change, and all of us in the executive management of this academy, acknowledge the sacred responsibility we hold to nurture an institution that can, not only survive man-made and natural disasters, but can revitalize Caribbean development.

I extend a most gracious welcome to our corporate supporters, Dr Patricia Downes-Grant, CEO and President of SAGICOR Life Inc, Senator, Dr, Sir Trevor Carmichael, of Chancery Chambers, Mrs Jennifer Hinkson, President of the UWI Co-operative Credit Union and Mrs Carol Nicholls, Senior Partner, KPMG. We thank

these companies and their leaders for enabling The UWI Cave Hill Campus to honour these unique African and Caribbean citizens who personify our vision of being an international university rooted in the Caribbean. We are thrilled that as we celebrate tomorrow, the fiftieth graduation ceremonies of the Cave Hill Campus, we can rejoice in the singular achievements of these two outstanding Barbadian\Caribbean women and an exceptional African man.

Ms Kaye Foster: Corporate Leader

Philanthropist, advisor, transformational business leader, Ms Kaye Foster is a Barbadian born, American corporate executive who has managed complex mergers across a range of large pharmaceutical companies in the USA. She works with CEOs and leadership teams focusing on talent management strategy and human resource development. A bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Baruch College, City University of New York and an MBA from Columbia University provided her qualification

platform for an outstanding corporate career. Ms Foster sits on several boards including serving on the Board of Trustees of Spelman College, Atlanta. She is honoured to serve on the Board of **'Girls for Change'**, a national organization that empowers girls from low-income neighborhoods to develop and lead social change initiatives in their communities.

Dame Selma Udine Jackman: Surgeon

The jury is still out on whether Dame Selma Udine Jackman chose medicine or medicine chose her, but the verdict is in, Barbados and the region has benefitted. Dame Selma is among the first Barbadian\ Caribbean born female surgeons to have qualified and worked in the region. After being awarded a Barbados Government Exhibition, Dame Selma earned her MBBS at the UWI, Mona Campus. During her studies she attracted several honours, Best Clinical Student, the Leonard de Cordova Medal for Experimental Physiology and the Preclinical Medal in Biochemistry. After surgical training at the QEH, Barbados, she

was admitted to the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, Dame Selma then trained in paediatric surgery at the University Hospital, Mona, Jamaica. Dame Selma spent a British Commonwealth Fellowship year at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children and the Bristol Children's Hospital, both in England before returning to Barbados to provide general and paediatric surgery to Barbadian and Caribbean patients. Dame Selma is known for her holistic approach to patient care and a focus that ensures all her patients receive the necessary and best care the health system could afford. In Barbados' fiftieth anniversary celebrations Dame Selma's lifetime of selfless service was rewarded with becoming a Dame of St. Andrew.

Professor Ihron Rensburg: Academic Change Agent

Professor Ihron Rensburg, Outgoing Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg, is widely acknowledged for his policy, strategy, leadership, and managerial skills, all ably demonstrated during his stewardship of South Africa's post-apartheid education policy, legislation and

programmes, as well as during the complex yet novel merger that he led to create the University of Johannesburg.

An anti-apartheid activist and leader, he spearheaded local and regional teachers' and students' movements and was elected leader in various civic organisations.

Professor Rensburg served as a Commissioner of South Africa's first National Planning Commission—which developed the country's 2030 National Development Plan—where he chaired the Working Group on Human Capabilities, advising the government on, education and training, science and technology, health and social development and security. Professor Rensburg held many public portfolios including, President of the South Africa and Southern Africa Broadcasting Associations, and Founding Board Member of the African Broadcasting Union.

Professor Rensburg holds a Bachelor of Pharmacy from Rhodes University, a Masters of Arts, Sociology, and a PhD in International Development Education, both from Stanford University.

This academic year The UWI celebrates seventy years as the premier educational institution in the Commonwealth Caribbean,

and the Cave Hill Campus is an active participant in preparing for these celebrations.

The Campus continues to face many financial challenges, but these challenges are bringing out the best in the campus and its wider community. I am blessed to work with an excellent management team and we have refused to be defined by the current adversities. Instead, we are focused on building a world class university grounded in Caribbean realities, yet dedicated to adding value to Caribbean societies. We have rolled out the Smart Campus Initiative articulated within the 2017-2022, Triple A Strategic Plan. Through harnessing information technology, the Smart Campus Initiative reconceptualises the model for the delivery of higher education goods and services by seeking to transform facilities, programmes, content, administrative services and generate revenues for the Campus.

Over the past year, the campus has been vibrant and energized.

Our students, faculty and staff continue to excel, while our

strategic partnerships are growing and providing critical support for the campus. We thank them all for their commitment.

Whether developing new academic programming, assuring quality assurance measures, introducing new initiatives, celebrating the achievements of our students, or expanding our community outreach, the Cave Hill Campus has had a good year of seeking to; expand access, achieve alignment and promote agility. In providing highlights, I assure you that Cave Hill continues to at the forefront in The UWI's tradition of excellence.

Student Achievements

Tomorrow 1538 of our students graduate in our two ceremonies and yesterday we celebrated the scholarly excellence of 193 students who earned either first class honours, distinctions at the masters level and high commendation for PhDs. One of the students who graduated with first class honours from the Faculty of Law is Ms Janeil Odle, a student who in spite of being visually impaired, that is legally blind, graduated at the top of her class

with a GPA of 3.93. We congratulate Ms Simone Delzin, the Commonwealth Caribbean 2017 Rhodes Scholar from the Faculty of Science and Technology. The UWI Cave Hill Sports Club received the Sports Club of the year award in 2016 from the National Sports Council ensuring our academic achievements are matched by athletic performance. Even as we celebrate their academic and athletic achievements we provide for their leisure and wellbeing. We are pleased to report we have opened a state of the art gym that accommodates differently abled students. We are also pleased the students have introduced the UWI Cave Hill Association for Persons with Disabilities, UWICAPD. It functions as an advocacy group for students with disabilities and it is the first of its kind at UWI.

The Cave Hill Campus prioritizes making the Campus more attractive to international students and this strategy underwrites many of our activities. We mounted two successful visits to the University of Miami, where we signed an MOU and held

productive discussions on research and student exchanges for electives in the medical sciences programme. On the mission to Ghana, we held meetings with the Minister of Health, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana, and faculty of the School of medicine and Nursing, all of whom have given their blessings to collaborative research and to the UWI Cave Hill campus offering pre-clinical medical training to Ghanaian students in the context of an articulated agreement for which both universities have already established working groups.

In **academic programming**, Cave Hill welcomed two cohorts of students into the Bsc in Software engineering. The students will complete two years at Cave Hill and two years in Suzhou, China at the Global institute of Software Technology. This programme, offered at Cave Hill and Mona in the first instance, will equip students with highly specialized skills for the changing labour market. The Institute for Gender and Development Studies: Nita Barrow Unit admitted its first cohort of students for the Diploma

and Masters in Gender and Development Studies, while the Faculty of Humanities and Education introduced the Bachelor of Arts in Applied Linguistics with Communication Studies and the Bachelor of Arts in Language and Society. The Faculty of Social Sciences introduced an advanced Summer Institute, of short but equally intense and heavily subscribed, income generating courses.

Cave Hill is committed to quality, and the midterm institutional accreditation review reinforced that. The report commended the campus for its positive, cultural change in terms of quality assurance, teaching and learning, communications and its strong commitment to student centredness. The Faculty of Medical Sciences now enjoys double accreditation status having received recognition from the US, Department of Education, through its National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation, NCFMEA. This recognition not only means US students can access federal funds to study medicine here, but

the degree is attractive to other international students knowing it will be recognized by the US.

There was a rich and varied display of research output. The George Alleyne Chronic Disease Research Centre continues to provide critical information to underpin health planning. The Canadian funded, (\$19.2 Million) Caribbean Justice Improvement Project continues to deliver a range of projects related to improving justice in the region, while the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute for Social and Economic Studies, SALISES completed a National Values Assessment of Barbados in collaboration with the Independence Secretariat.

Finally, the Campus completed two infrastructural projects, the opening of the building housing the Confucius Institute and other administrative offices, and the opening of the Nelson Mandela Freedom Park. We were delighted to have Professor and Dr Rensburg declare the park open along with Ms Ndelika Mandela, granddaughter of Nelson Mandela.

Ladies and gentlemen, I assure you the Cave Hill Campus has completed many more activities, pursued many strategic partnerships, but I believe I have said enough to indicate continues to make valuable contributions to the social and economic development of Barbados and the region.

I Thank you for gracing us with your presence, thank you for agreeing to celebrate with us, the brilliance and shining examples of the extraordinary achievements of our 2017 honorary Graduands.



Ladies and Gentlemen, if you have ever entertained any doubt, about the wealth of talent, creativity, discipline and accomplishment that resides with Africa and its diasporas, the sheer depth and breadth of the triumphs of the human spirit represented by this year's honorary graduands, should effectively dispel these. Please join me in raising a toast to Ms Kaye Foster, a leader dedicated to being an exemplary role model on how to succeed in the corporate world, Dame Selma Jackman Barbados gift of

healing, surgical hands to children and adults of the region, and Professor Ihron Rensburg, an African academic, activist and visionary; to our distinguished honorary graduands! Thank you.

Professor V. Eudine Barriteau

October 20, 2017