



4

Harnessing Communities' Human Capital for Social & Economic Development

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TO DATE, SOME 224 PARTICIPANTS, RECRUITED FROM THE COMMUNITIES OF GREATER AUGUST TOWN, MONA COMMON, TRENCH TOWN, JONES TOWN, NANNYVILLE/MOUNTAIN VIEW, WHITEHALL, MAXFIELD PARK, DENHAM TOWN, HANNAH TOWN, TIVOLI, VINEYARD TOWN, GRANVILLE, PITFOUR, ANCHOVY, CANTERBURY, NORWOOD, SALT SPRING, FLANKERS, CATADUPA AND PORTLAND COTTAGE, HAVE GRADUATED FROM THE FILM PROJECT

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The University's dynamic engagement in community outreach and development is evidenced in the numerous symposia it mounts to engage its various constituencies and, indeed, the region in the dialogue resulting from its research activity around social and economic issues. On another level, the Campus contributes directly to human development and social harmony and stability by virtue of its significant involvement in community development.

UWI film project

Formerly, the Greater August Town Film Festival (GATT), the UWI Community Film Project, an initiative of the Centre for Tourism and Policy Research under the direction of Professor Ian Boxill, has been encouraging young people from underserved communities to get directly involved with innovation, storytelling and filmmaking around important community and national issues. Since its inception, the project has been providing new opportunities and experiences for these youths, while simultaneously contributing to the education, social development and economic empowerment of the community members through filmmaking. The primary objective is to showcase the talent and culture of the community, changing the negative perceptions of the community and, through tourism, attract people to the community to experience this transformation for themselves.



Officially launched in October 2012, the film project has been recognised as an inspiring model of excellence. Its impact has motivated numerous groups and leaders to request implementation of the project in communities across Jamaica. It is currently the biggest community film festival in the Caribbean, involving not only local communities, but also other Caribbean creative minds, as well as international filmmakers who participate to tell their stories and be recognised for their talent and creativity.

In the reporting academic year, the UWI Film Project graduated 44 participants. To date, some 224 participants,



recruited from the communities of Greater August Town, Mona Common, Trench Town, Jones Town, Nannyville/Mountain View, Whitehall, Maxfield Park, Denham Town, Hannah Town, Tivoli, Vineyard Town, Granville, Pitfour, Anchovy, Canterbury, Norwood, Salt Spring, Flankers, Catadupa and Portland Cottage, have graduated from the project.

Community Development

The UWI One Life Programme, administered through the Office of Student Services and Development (OSSD) is a community engagement programme that seeks to enhance the lives of our student membership and that of individuals in the surrounding communities. The programme aims to foster a forum for positive interaction between the communities and students, and to encourage community empowerment. It is the mission of the programme to serve as a conduit for facilitating students’ involvement in

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public service and outreach activities. The participants in the programme play their part in increasing access to educational opportunities and to bring awareness to cultural and social inequalities, and also to inspire transformational change that will empower individuals at all levels.

The programme targets vulnerable groups in Jamaica and the region, including, but not limited to children, the elderly, orphans, and the homeless. The theme of the outreach group is “Helping one life . . . starts with you”. Through partnerships with organisations in the private sector, government, NGOs, development agencies and civil society, the group strives to implement social enterprises that will increase support for the future and present generations in the Jamaican society, thereby improving the standard of living of our citizens. Acts of philanthropy are used to promote values, goals and ideals of The University and the wider society.



Outreach to Haiti

On October 4, 2016, Hurricane Matthew did devastating damage to Haiti. Over 800 lives were lost. UWI One Life launched a project, titled “Haiti Relief Effort”, similar to the “Dominica Relief Effort” that was held in the previous year. Non-perishable food items, water, medical supplies and any other items that could prove useful to the Haitians in their time of need were collected. The project was very successful as the programme was able to donate approximately \$1,600,000.00 in kind.



The work of Mona Social Services

In academic year 2016/17, the Mona Social Services (MSS), a non-governmental organisation, continued its programme of community transformation through its socio-educational and other initiatives. Relying on voluntary services and private- and public-sector partnerships, it works in six communities within the Mona Valley – African Gardens, August Town, Bedward Gardens, Hermitage, Goldsmith Villa and Mona Common. The MSS collaborated with the Child Development Agency, Lions Club of Mona, UWISERT, Guild of Students, Greater August Town community-based organisations, Mona Common Steering Community, the Citizen Security and Justice Programme, as well as other private partners and the general UWI community departments and units to facilitate community engagement activities and to assist with various social intervention programmes. The MSS's portfolio of activities include literacy training, community beautification, summer youth programmes, recycling projects, healthcare, youth motivation and empowerment projects.

During the year, the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica granted \$5m to MSS for an environmental project aimed at installing a water management system in three basic schools in African Gardens, August Town and Hermitage to increase resilience to climate change and contribute to food security.



UWI Township Scholarship

MSS hosted its eighth annual UWI Township Scholarship Welcome Ceremony at the beginning of the reporting academic year, where nine first-year students matriculating to the university received scholarships valued at approximately \$2m. The scholarships are given to students residing in Greater August and Mona Common who are committed to developing their communities and Jamaica. Twenty scholars, including the nine awardees, were enrolled in the programme for the 2016/17 academic year, at a total cost of \$5,288,254 for the year. The annual UWI Township Scholarship awards, is a reflection of the UWI-Mona's commitment and dedication to the transformation of the underserved communities through education. Fifty-seven (57) recipients from the six communities surrounding the university have benefitted from the UWI Township Scholarships.



The awardees pose with their certificates along with Dr Olivene Burke (left), Executive Director, MSS and Professor Archibald McDonald, Principal & Pro Vice-Chancellor. The recipients are enrolled in the Faculties of Social and Medical Sciences, Humanities & Education and Science and Technology.

Internship Programme

In the reporting year, the MSS's Internship Programme provided meaningful work experience for final year students who satisfy the requirement to complete the practicum component of their undergraduate degree programmes. The students were placed in the neighbouring communities through partnerships with the departments of Sociology, Psychology and Social Work and Community Health and Psychiatry. The MSS also continued to provide six-months' internship opportunities for UWI graduates through the National Youth Services (NYS) Graduate Work Experience Programme.

Beautification projects

The MSS is used as a conduit through which the Office of Student Services and Development (OSSD) engages students in giving back to communities through volunteerism. In 2016/17, various halls engaged in outreach projects in the community. Mary Seacole Hall and the MSS carried out a beautification project at the African Gardens Sports Complex in Greater August Town, and visiting students from the Florida State University partnered with the MSS and the Mona Lions Club to establish a kitchen garden at the August Town Seventh Day Adventist Basic School to provide vegetables for its school-feeding programme.



Through widespread social intervention initiatives, MSS continues to engage peace builders and at-risk youth within The UWI Township and the wider community to promote peace across borders. The unit's research work on transference and football as an intervention tool in community development aims at assisting related national policy formulation.

Of special note is MSS's steady progress on the Mona Common Redevelopment Project. An architectural team was engaged to provide technical reports on the settlement of some 10 acres of UWI lands captured by squatters decades ago. They set up houses, businesses and created an informal community that threatened the teaching status of

Above: MSS in August Town on Labour Day
Below: Principal with PM at the MSS August Town Peace Initiative



the UHWI. The project will allow the 1000 squatters to remain on the lands which will be redeveloped. Roads, sewerage and electricity, a new basic school and a community centre are aspects of the planned infrastructure development. The redevelopment work was informed by research done in the Faculty of Social Sciences (Department of Sociology, Psychology and Social Work) and the Campus.

Outreach efforts of other Campus units

Various other units and departments of the Campus also advanced their community outreach and development activities during the 2016/17 academic year, participating in social interventions in inner-city communities, treating patients with free dental care, assisting students in acquiring problem-solving skills, and the like. The Department of Child and Adolescent Health provided medical evaluation of all children and adolescents with cerebral palsy resident in the homes of Missionaries of the Poor.

The departments of Physics, Mathematics, Literatures in English, History and Archaeology, and the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication, conducted workshops to assist high school students in acquiring subject-specific skills for the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE). “Modern Languages and Literatures Day,” an initiative designed to promote the study of modern languages among secondary school students, was organised by the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures.

In addition to these activities, individual lecturers advised a number of public institutions, among them: Caribbean Examination Council; Jamaica National Commission for UNESCO; Entertainment Advisory Board, Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport; and the National Council on Education in Jamaica.

Through these various mediums, The UWI Mona Campus continues to deliver on its mandate to harness the society’s human capital, including that of our underserved communities, towards participation in nation building and economic activity.

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