



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
MONA CAMPUS

NEWSLETTER

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS OFFICE



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The Newsletter is produced by the International Students Office.

Your queries or comments are indeed welcome.

Please send these to the editor at

isomona@uwimona.edu.jm

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& **Mr. Lorne Matthews**

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Editorial

Welcome to the November issue of our Newsletter. The University of the West Indies, Mona is pleased to have had many successes since the last quarter. We are excited to have our first students from Malaysia and Harvard on Study Abroad and to have our Medical Elective arrivals increase by a 58% margin.

Jamaica still remains a popular destination for International Students, if only for its beaches and agreeable weather. The Mona Campus is blessed with the picturesque Blue Mountain Range and the towering green of Long Mountain as its backdrop.

The Mona Campus has 419 new Graduate and Undergraduate non-Jamaican students from 26 countries around the world registered for the 2009/ 2010 academic year.


Also, in an effort to further integrate our campuses, the Vice Chancellor has reconceptualized the **Millenium Fund** initiative. The program is now the **Caribbean Integration Program** and, additionally, the allotment has been increased from US \$900 (plus airfare) to US\$5000 per person. Mona offers a wide range of Undergraduate, Masters and Doctoral Programs in the Humanities and Education, Pure and Applied Sciences, Agriculture, Engineering, Law, Social Sciences and Medical Sciences. (To find out more: refer to our website at www.mona.uwi.edu.) For the International student, it is the ideal choice for a relaxing environment and for the region's best educational facilities. Mona offers several courses, hardly found anywhere else abroad, and boasts several engaging discourses on Jamaican and Caribbean culture, such as *Dancehall Studies* and *Rastafari in the Global Context*.

In this issue, we aim to highlight University happenings over the last couple of months as well as to keep our readers

informed of future endeavours and opportunities. It remains the pleasure of the International Students Office and the University, to offer International Students a one-of-a-kind academic and cultural experience here at Mona. With a mélange of regional histories and traditions, the UWI remains the Caribbean's premiere institution and certainly *your place to shine*

Mrs Althea Gordon-Clennon

Senior Assistant Registrar



*"Citizens of
Non-Caribbean
Countries will need to obtain a
valid student visa before
coming to Jamaica."*

THE ISO

WHO WE ARE



The International Students Office was established in August 2008. Since then, the Office has served as the cultural hub for University students from across the globe and has forged significant partnerships with several Universities (including Grand Valley State University, Queens University and the University of Southern Denmark).

The ISO is the first point of contact for all non-Jamaican students and is fully dedicated to ensuring that student needs are met. The ISO is charged with the role of recruiting outside the Caribbean and facilitating the smooth cultural immersion and integration of non-Jamaican students into the UWI and Jamaican life.

"When making travel arrangements, you are advised to travel on a return and NOT a one-way ticket."

Christmas in Jamaica

*"Mek di Christmas ketch yuh feeling fine"
- from a popular Jamaican Christmas Carol*

Jamaicans are big on holidays and at no time is this more evident than at Christmas. Christmas is a time to spread good cheer: It is a time for giving, for love and for family. The holiday is celebrated in like manner around the world. But a Jamaican Christmas, is splendidly different and, carries its own cultural idiosyncrasies. A mixture of traditional and reggae-revised carols can signal the season from as early as September.

For Christmas, Jamaicans marinate preserved fruits in the local rum many months before; these are used to make 'Black cake' or Christmas Fruit cake.

Another popular feature of the Jamaican Christmas is the sorrel drink, which is drawn from the sepal of the sorrel plant. It can be anywhere from light to heavy with rum to suit the palette of the drinker.

At Christmas, Jamaicans break out their best china, curtains, table dressings and, of course, food. Usually rice and gungo peas or red peas is prepared, and with one of two or three meats – which typically include chicken, ham and/or oxtail.

At Christmas, there are treats for children, parties and balls as well as several Carol services held island wide, including our own annual and-not-to-be-missed Mona Chapel Carol service. What Jamaicans call 'pepper lights' (Christmas lights) go up in various colours, they decorate everything from trees to old car tires (which are used like pots to grow a variety of plants).



“At Christmas, Jamaicans break out their best chinaware, curtains, table dressings, and of course, food”

Imagine Santa riding a donkey! Or the local *Jonkunnu*, with horse-headed men dancing in the streets. Santa is featured from time to time in rural areas riding his donkey or donkey-drawn cart bearing gifts. Jonkonnu, mostly a part of rural festivities, is an African-inherited masked celebration where men don Horse-heads, much like the Chinese Lion Dance, and dance in the streets on Christmas Day.

By Lorne Matthews

“Remember to take your Offer of Entry letters with you to registration.”



An Exchange Student sharing her experience about London Metropolitan University, England at the International Students Fair 2009.

The News in our Notebook

Annual Student Exchange/Study Abroad Fair



The International Students Office's annual Student Exchange/Study Abroad Fair was held on Thursday November 12th. The Fair featured several testimonials from students who had gone on either the Study Abroad or Exchange Programme. Featured in their presentations were their experiences while studying at Universities in Sweden, Canada, England amongst others.

Mona to forge Partnerships with Asian Universities

The University of the West Indies, Mona has entered into discussions with South Korean and Chinese Universities, with the hope of forging partnerships to facilitate both student and faculty exchanges. Currently, there are plans underway for additional Chinese and Japanese Language courses at the UWI. On February 12, 2009 an agreement was signed between the People's Republic of China and the Mona Campus to establish a Confucius Institute; the first of its kind in the English-Speaking Caribbean.

Orientation



This year, CARICOM students joined International students for a special orientation programme. This was held between the 20th & 21st of August and featured *First Phase Survival Tips, Life on Hall* and the importance of *Quality Learning*. The students were also treated to a *Taste of Jamaica* lunch and a presentation on *Jamaican Language* and a *History of Jamaica Music and Dance*.

Centre for Disability Studies

The newly established Centre for Disability Studies began operations on August 1. The Centre will encourage research and knowledge regarding disabilities as well as promote an awareness of the needs of the disabled. The Centre will also inform policy on disabilities and will function alongside the Office of Special Students Services.

New Programmes

The UWI has introduced 4 new Bachelors Programmes – BSc in Electronic Engineering, BA in History & Heritage Studies, BA in Digital Media Production and the BEd Literacy Studies Degree Programme.

Graduation Ceremonies



The Mona Campus held its Graduation Ceremonies on Nov. 6-7. Three thousand five hundred and fifty students were conferred with their degrees.

The honorary graduands for the 2008/09 academic year were the Honourable John Issa, Mr. John Maxwell, the Honourable Oliver F. Clarke, Dr. Anne Walmsley and Professor Colin Palmer.

Visit of the Tanzanian President



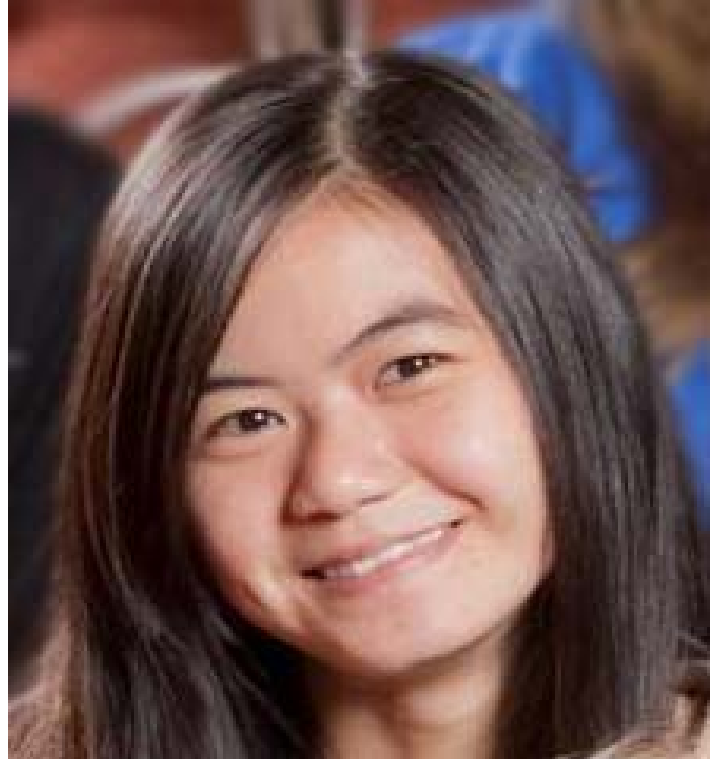
The UWI, Mona Campus hosted the President of Tanzania, His Excellency Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, on November 26, 2009. The President gave an insightful lecture on *Africa and the Caribbean in the Age of Globalization*.

"Housing is available on Campus or in the surrounding environs of the Mona Community."

Calendar

o f e v e n t s

Student Testimonials



- Nov. 6th & 7th - Mona Graduation Ceremonies
- Nov 23rd - UWI Application Begins
- Dec. 05th - Western Jamaica Campus (WJC) Carol Service
- Dec. 13 - Mona Campus Carol Service
- Jan. 24th - New Semester
- Jan. 28th - 29 - Research Day
- Feb. 14-20th - Commemoration Week & Homecing
- Feb. 18th - Mona Flag Raising Ceremony
- March 11- 14 - Carnival at Mona

Ms. Tsiu Tjen Lim
Malaysia

Traveling and studying overseas have always appealed to me even though I never expected that I would get to exchange to as far as Jamaica. The opportunity to study at UWI was a dream come true! At UWI, there is a balance between education and extra-curricular activities: I was always occupied by school work, sporting events and Hall activities. Life at UWI was never boring! It was easy to blend in with the local and international students here. I made some friends during the Orientation Week and the list just kept on growing; persons at UWI are friendly and welcoming.

Student Testimonials

Living on **Mary Seacole Hall** was one of the best decisions I have ever made. The Hall is like a family with friendly and helpful *sistas*. I will never forget the generous hospitality offered to me.

The reception that I received was truly overwhelming and this gave me a sense of belonging. Being a part of the orientation, and the **First Year Experience (FYE)** program, also gave me a great opportunity to understand the Jamaican and Caribbean cultures. Besides, the International Students Office was always there to lend a helping hand whenever I needed assistance.

There were too many highlights during my five-month stay in Jamaica to mention them all. But one of the most overwhelming experiences was my encounter with the World's Fastest Man and 100m and 200m World Record Holder, **Usain Bolt**, and, (former 200m and 400m World Record Holder) **Michael Johnson**, at the UWI bowl- and I managed to snap a picture with them!

Jamaica is blessed with many beautiful attractions: I'm glad I had the chance to visit places like **Dolphin Cove**, **Mystic Mountains**, **Dunn's River Falls** and the **Blue Mountains**. My semester at UWI was an enriching and life-changing adventure. Even though my stay was only a brief one, I was able to make some really good friends.



Diana Ramos - Farina
Germany

The International Students Office (ISO) was always an available, helpful partner whether it was before I came to UWI or during my time here at the Mona Campus. Whenever there was a question or help needed, the ISO was more than willing to help. The Orientation Days for the International Students provided me with a lot of useful information about the organization and registration on campus and about life in Jamaica itself.

The wide range of offered courses made it hard to choose only four of them. The lectures were very interesting, and the relationship between students

and lecturers - excellent and fostered with a personal note! Most lecturers were absolutely supportive where necessary. Given my choice to take one Linguistics, one Literature and two Cultural Studies courses, I was able to learn a lot about the Caribbean Culture and life from different perspectives. This due mainly to the authentic, lively and very informative lectures provided for students. The **Culture of Rastafari** was my favorite course, and the field Trip to the Nyabinghi Camp in Montego Bay was definitely a once-in-a-lifetime experience! I was also, always looking forward to my **Introduction to West Indian Novel** lectures, which has an interesting tutorial - and **Caribbean Dialectology**, with a very engaging lecturer.

The in-course assignments were a load of work though, and were hard to manage sometimes especially when the computer lab was, once again, occupied by a CLASS IN SESSION and the few other opportunities to do research online or print a document asked for a lot of patience; since, too many students have to share the same number of facilities.

After all, I am convinced that spending a semester at The University of the West Indies (UWI) was the best choice I could have made, and time passed way too fast. I have learned a lot! I have gained knowledge that is of high value for my future studies. I wish I could have stayed longer and finish my studies here. Unfortunately, that is not possible, but I will definitely come back for a visit.

*"Temperatures in
Kingston and Montego Bay
range from 22°C to 32°C."*

Featured Partner

Malmo University



Malmo University was founded in 1998. It is Sweden's eighth largest University having just over 200 research students and approximately 50 full time professors. Malmo boasts four different faculties which are all multi-disciplinary. The University offers a choice of more than 90 study programmes and roughly 500 discipline-related courses - inclusive of a broad selection of courses taught in English. In 2006, there were 200 international students from 30 different countries covering four continents who studied at Malmo.

For further information, visit:

www.mah.se/ or email studentinfo@mah.se



The University of the West Indies, Mona Campus
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS OFFICE

UWISTIC

at Mona

JUNE 2010

Summer School Courses now offered in :-

- Popular Jamaican Music
- Culture, Gender & Sexuality in Jamaican Popular Music
- Traditional Folk Music of Jamaica



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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