The Excellent Decade

2005 – 2015

Errata

Page 203, line 2: “Trinidad & Tobago” should read “Guyana”

Anthony N. Sabga, ORTT,
Hon. LL.D (UWI)

The Excellent Decade

2005—2015

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Contents

Introduction

Sir Shridath Ramphal
Chairman
Eminent Persons Panel, 2015

It seems like yesterday that Dr. Anthony Sabga talked with me about honouring and furthering excellence in the Caribbean, but a decade has passed since the inauguration of the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence.

It is now the 10th anniversary of those awards, and the pages that follow tell the proud story of their evolution over that decade. It is a story that deserves to be told, one that is worth recording and re-living; for it is itself a story about excellence and about the Caribbean and about the home grown philanthropy that made possible their co-mingling.

Striving for excellence is not new to the Caribbean. It never was enough for its people simply to get by, for our deepest roots lay in conditions of deprivation from which we were compelled to escape. The urge to excel is the very essence of that compulsion for self-improvement. With betterment as the driving force of Caribbean civilisation, excellence had to be the ultimate goal of our most ardent endeavour.

In no society is it given to all to reach that goal; but our Caribbean culture of striving ever upward makes the attainment of excellence in any quarter an achievement in which all our community shares. It is a regional achievement in its truest sense. Within our small Community of the Caribbean, the attainment of excellence in manifold areas of activity has been phenomenal; but we have not always acknowledged it in public ways that would further such effort itself. We have long needed to do more through recognition and reward to enhance the culture of excellence itself.

It is in this respect that the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence have made a major difference in our region. The Awards have made an enlightened start in several respects. Just how enlightened you will find eloquently told in the speeches of my predecessors as Chairman of the Eminent Persons Panel (the EPP) which selects the winners—Sir Ellis Clarke and Mr. Michael Mansoor. They and their colleagues ensured a high level of integrity and independence of the selection process aided by the essential work of Country Nominating Committees.

Sir Shridath Rampphal

Starting with biennial Awards in three fields: Arts and Letters, Public and Civic Contributions and Science and Technology (and as of 2010 being annual) the Awards have been given to Caribbean men and women in recognition of quite extraordinary achievement. The attainment of

The 2015 Eminent Persons Panel. Left-right: Mr. Christopher Bovell, Justice Christopher Blackman, Sr. Paul D'Ornellas, Justice Rolston Nelson, Sir Shridath Ramphal (Chair), Maj.-Gen. Joseph Singh, Mrs. Judy Chang, Prof. Compton Bourne.

excellence in their separate fields by all the Laureates to date tells a story of Caribbean achievement that goes beyond personal successes to wide ranging national and regional service. This year, 2015, there has been added a fourth category of award—Entrepreneurship; a development which speaks loudly to the enlightenment and modernity of the ANSA McAL Foundation which administers and funds the Awards.

The Foundation's philanthropy is itself worthy of a Caribbean Award for Excellence; for it has raised the bar for selfless generosity from the private sector in the Caribbean. Dr. Anthony Sabga's leading role in the design and endowment of the Awards is a contribution of enormous proportions—a model of corporate civic responsibility discharged on a Caribbean basis.

Most significant of all is the story the unfolding pages tell of the excellence attained by the Awardees themselves in Arts & Letters, in Public & Civic contributions, in Science & Technology, and now in Entrepreneurship. Their achievements are uplifting for our entire Caribbean society—affirming Caribbean capacities and inspiring conviction in a worthy Caribbean future.

Remarks

Dr. Anthony N. Sabga, Chairman, ANSA McAL Foundation and Chairman Emeritus, ANSA McAL Group of Companies, 2008

The Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence is something of genuine value to our Caribbean region.

I am delighted to be here with you at this ceremony and to offer some advice to all those persons that aspire to achieve excellence in their chosen fields. I firmly maintain that the secret to achieving success is first believing in oneself and then acting with determination, perseverance and integrity to reach one's goals.

My father was my inspiration. He always instilled in me the idea that I could achieve anything I wanted, if I believed in myself and persisted in my vision of what was possible. That was the formula that was the foundation for my success. My family came to Trinidad 80 years ago, seeking freedom and a better quality of life. We had no money and very few practical skills.

But we had high ideals that are the true foundations for success.

Our family exhibited sound moral values in all our dealings.

We believed in honesty and integrity. This is the legacy my father handed down to me, and it is something I treasure dearly.

We recognise the sacred trust that is placed on us, that is responsible for the phenomenal growth of the ANSA group.

There are so many dear and wonderful people that have contributed to my life.

My personal dreams of achievement would not have been possible without the support of a whole host of people.

Unfortunately, they are just too numerous to mention here.

However, my key support over the years has been my wife, Minerva. We have been married sixty years. She has played a crucial role in all the times we have shared together and particularly in the formation of our large family which she created in our own image.

I am truly grateful to her. She is a very special lady. But I also believe there is another major aspect of life that is worth recognising. It is this:

The company you keep reflects you. The quality of the people with which you associate, mirrors your own quality. Aside from that, the knowledge and inspiration you absorb from your friends and colleagues help to mould your future.

My message tonight, for those that seek success, is to keep good company.

My seventy years in business have been most rewarding because of the people I have associated with. I have found pleasure and success in almost everything I have done.

But again, do not be discouraged by disappointment. I have not achieved all my dreams.

One of my dreams was to develop pigeon point resort in Tobago into a national park. I wanted to help to put Tobago on the Caribbean map. I was unable to do so because the

Tobago House of Assembly acquired the property. I wish the Tobago House of Assembly good luck in their efforts and hope they fulfil my ambition.

So perhaps you will understand why I am delighted now to be associated with these Caribbean awards for excellence.

Tonight we celebrate the achievements of the winners of our Caribbean prizes. We will hear shortly of the incredible work done by the men and women who have been selected.

While their work to date is worthy of praise and recognition, we gladly give our support to their future endeavours. By winning these awards they have become part of my special family: the ANSA McAL Foundation family. The family is here to give guidance and assistance.

Thus, the award is not solely about getting financial support to continue to work diligently and successfully, but to help you to continue to strive and achieve anything that your hearts desire. You are all part of a growing group of very special caribbean citizens. I personally congratulate you on your outstanding accomplishments.

This is our region of the world and I am honoured to try to help to bring it, with your continued support, to its full potential.

This awards function would not be possible without the enormous support of many, many persons. I want to pay special tribute to the nominating committees in the various islands and the eminent persons selection panel. They have worked hard and diligently to nominate and select our worthy recipients.

Dr. Sabga (right) with Sir Ellis Clarke (left)

Sir Ellis Clarke, Chairman of the Eminent Persons Selection Panel, has so very ably coordinated the whole enterprise.

We are very grateful to him. I need to make special mention of my friend, Mr. Michael Mansoor, who I feel is an adopted part of my family. He is also the nerve centre of this whole project.

We give special thanks and again our congratulations to the four awardees. Congratulations go also to all other nominees in the various islands. Their participation has added prestige to these awards. Finally, we are also thankful to you, tonight's wonderful audience, for honouring us with your presence.

Inaugural address

Sir Ellis Clarke
Chairman of the Eminent Persons Panel, 2006

The Awards are indeed novel and historic. They show the character of of the man who made them possible, ANS. They were long in the making—yes he had the idea. He discussed it with many people, including with me, quite rightly on a plane, and I thought he had dropped it for a while.

But I found that he resurrected it at the right moment. So in the first instance, I think, we should express our gratitude to Dr. Anthony N. Sabga for the inspiration that induced him to make these awards available. There was a great deal of work to be done to select the laureates. We didn't simply sit here quietly in Trinidad and assume we knew people in the rest of the Caribbean we had organising committees who worked very hard and supplied us with names of people they thought were eligible. We then from those names decided on the actual awardees.

There were very many names submitted, because we had committees in several territories and what that revealed was that in the Caribbean here we are blessed with a tremendous amount of talent. Most of us would not even know of the particular laureates who would be honoured tonight. Nor would we know of the many others we considered and had to pass over because there was one award in each category.

I think it's encouraging to know that in the Caribbean we have such an abundance of talent and that it spreads over a wide field. We have those who are scientifically excellent, we have those who so care for their fellow man and woman that they do what Fr Ramkissoon has done in and out of Jamaica, and there are those who have the talent to be innovative as our filmmaker has shown himself to be.

Therefore I think we should be happy that these awards have been given and they should act as an impetus for others to follow suit and to keep alive that spirit of innovation, that spirit of enterprise that we found.

Sir Ellis Clarke

Inaugural address

Michael K Mansoor, 2006

I'm delighted to be able to share with you some background on the objectives, policies and processes adopted by the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence in this inaugural year.

The world of philanthropy changed fundamentally when Warren Buffet agreed to contribute his billions to the Gates Foundation; no doubt Mr. Buffet made this decision as strategically and as carefully as he would make any investment decision. Key reasons given were that Buffet believed in the objectives and purposes of the Gates Foundation, and that the Gates Foundation had built on organisation of some 300 people who could actually do the administrative work.

What this short story shows is that charitable foundations need to make very careful and deliberate decisions about what needs to be done, and secondly, how to do it in a consistent and professional manner over time. Indeed being seized by the promptings and imperatives of a charitable heart is only the beginning of effective philanthropy. What is equally important, apart of course, from the deep pockets, is the strategic decision-making about what to do to be most effective, and then marshalling the organistion and the management to implement efficiently, consistently, and effectively.

The ANSA McAL Foundation in launching this awards programme has, it seems to me, made a profound and wise decision to focus on, to search for, to celebrate, and to foster Caribbean Excellence. This is noble and good. It is also practical and critical. Because nothing great will ever be achieved without great and outstanding men and women. And we will only sustain and amplify greatness if we recognise it, if we encourage it, if we nurture it, and if we cultivate it.

Why, one might ask, is it valuable and useful to recognise excellence? Is it not obvious that we will always have our heroes? Will there not always be bold and massively productive people who, regardless of recognition, will work in the vineyards day after day? I've very certain that our laureates here this evening would have continued their endeavours in the absence of this award. But we dare to hope that this award will inspire them to do and accomplish even more. And we dare to anticipate that the existence of this awards programme will serve as a beacon of inspiration, encouragement and hope for all of our people who have chosen to do mighty works, consistently and humbly in the challenging arena of research, societal reengineering, and the betterment of the human condition.

Simply put, the objective of this programme is to promote excellence so that it flourishes and multiplies a

thousand-fold. In the words of our charter document, our mission is to publicly recognise, reward, and thereby support and encourage excellence in human endeavours that benefit and uplift the Caribbean and human community.

It is probably useful to share with this audience that when we first met, we were not sure how this programme would eventuate. A small group of us received a broad mandate from the directors of the ANSA McAL Foundation. It gave us great latitude to achieve our mission, as I've just described, but it was very specific in three important respects. The first was that the selection committee would be totally independent of the Foundation, and that it would have final decision making power in selecting the laureates. The second was that we must establish and document for 2006 and for the future, a meticulous, robust, and rigorous process for awardee selection. The third imperative was that we appoint as selectors persons of sound judgment and integrity who are themselves exemplars and experts in their fields.

It seemed logical to us at the time that we should first attempt to define excellence. We wondered, in our circumstances, if excellence should be defined by geography, or by citizenship. Was it a lifetime award? Or should our awards go to individuals who were in their early to mid-careers? Was excellence the same as "moral rectitude"? And would we grant an award to an individual who was excellent in the area under consideration, but who was known to be a public sinner. Assuming of course that we could define who among us is not a public sinner.

We asked what substantively constituted excellence and in what areas of the human endeavour might we look for it. What were the best approaches to increasing public awareness of the programme in our far-flung island communities? You will see the results of our deliberations documented in our brochures and on our website. It's all a work in progress, I assure you. But if I may say so, it was valuable work that was well done.

These deliberations were useful and we quickly realised, under the able chairmanship of Sir Ellis, that it was more urgent to set about the business of finding excellent people rather than attempting to define excellence in a vacuum. We had a significant breakthrough when Francis Lewis came on board as our CEO. In the end, we adopted a rigorous two-stage nomination, evaluation, and selection process. We first enlarged our group to include representation from all parts of the region, from Jamaica to Guyana. Perhaps as a reflection of our modesty this group came to be called the EPP, or Eminent Persons Panel.

Maybe in our next outing we would opt for more realistic nomenclature and just simply call ourselves The Regional Panel. The second decision we made was to establish five country nominating committees, in Barbados, Jamaica, Guyana, The OECS, and Trinidad & Tobago. It was the responsibility of each country committee to identify, investigate and recommend three candidates, one for each award category. A review of our charter would show that we have identified five areas to make awards. But for any one year, we would select only three for the nomination process.

We established very demanding criteria in choosing our selectors. They were expected to bring to the process a broad Caribbean perspective and a deep-seated appreciation of the wider Caricom community. They would be known and respected in their country and field of expertise, and well-regarded for their judgment and discernment. They were not to be narrow or parochial. The country committees would be representative of their country and region, and multidisciplinary across the various award categories.

Our specially recruited research and administrative staff worked with each country committee to support and facilitate their selection process. When the finalists were identified, the researchers would validate each candidate's CV and perform detailed reference checks. To make this final selection, the EPP received very detailed documentation on the 15 finalists. And our five country chair persons made live presentations on the finalists they had selected.

As Sir Ellis said, we were all elated to know that despite the limitations of size and scale in our Caribbean community, there is so much Caribbean talent.

Mr. Michael K. Mansoor

People who work day-in day-out, without fanfare and without accolades and who contribute so greatly and hugely to the common good. The panel deliberated, and under Sir Ellis's chairmanship, we selected the 2006 laureates. And shortly thereafter, the panel's chairman announced the names to the media.

We believed we followed a good process. Some 50 persons contributed to our decision making in a disciplined and transparent manner. We believe that by bringing to the attention of our Caribbean community, brilliance in the arts, meaningful achievement in science, and significant work in the civic and societal sphere, we will increase a thousand-fold the impact of such work. We hope that many more will be encouraged and motivated to do more, to help more, to research more, to educate more.

We will shortly place before you the 2006 laureates and I hope that these awards will inspire them and others, to excel and achieve. Through the work done to create this programme, we hope to convince those who are often so skeptical, that we are blessed with Caribbean men and women who, on a daily basis, transform their environments and altruistically enhance the lives of many. Perhaps we can challenge the regional media to give prominence to tonight's laureates. Not because they need it or want public acclaim, but it could cause their lives, or their lives' works, and their individual stories to uplift and inspire many.

The man who has given his name to this Caribbean Awards for Excellence, Anthony N. Sabga, is Chairman of the ANSA McAL Foundation. Had he not been the patron, he might have very well been a candidate. The fact that Dr. Sabga has supported this, tells that that he knows from his own experiences how critical, how pivotal, individual excellence, uncompromising determination, and the willingness to sacrifice greatly are in every human endeavour. The fact that Dr. Sabga and his Foundation have made provisions that this award programme will continue, demonstrates a keen awareness of the need for imagination, persistence, and peak and transcending personal performance.

I should also mention the work done by former ambassador Wilfrid Naimool, the man who kept this particular item on the agenda of the Foundation for as many as 15 years.

We build for a future that we cannot see. It might be useful to place the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards in a regional context. If countries are like people, political independence does not automatically confer maturity. One aspect of maturity is discernment: the ability to know good from bad, and to know better from good. And also to be quietly and resolutely confident in our own judgments and in our own unique identity.

It was Saint Augustine who in talking about glory, described it as clear recognition with praise. This is what we are trying to do offer clear recognition, with praise and tangible support. We believe a hallmark of our maturity and independence is reflected in a resolute confidence to recognise and honour people of excellence and invest in their potential.

Programmes like this one take responsibility for our region, and we take responsibility for our future. This programme represents a coming-of-age, in which we, Caribbean people, recognise and embrace our own. It is today one of the more noteworthy philanthropic initiatives in the region, and we believe that in time it will become the region's leading private sector programme.

This programme represents a coming-of-age, in which we, Caribbean people, recognise and embrace our own.

2006 Laureates
Robert Yao Ramesar
The Very Reverend Monsignor Gregory Ramkissoon
Professor Terrence Forrester

2006

Top left: Former CARICOM Secretary General, Mr. Edwin Carrington, being greeted by Dr. Sabga.
Top right: The late Sir Branford Taitt, Chair of the Barbados Nominating Committee, and Sir Ellis Clarke.

Bottom: His Excellency Sir Kenneth O. Hall, Governor General of Jamaica 2006–2009, with Dr. Sabga.

Top: Lady Hall, Dr. Sabga, Mr. A. Norman Sabga, Chairman and Chief Executive, ANSA McAL, Mr. Gerry C. Brooks, COO, ANSA McAL, with Mr. Conrad Enill, former Government Minister. Seated: Mrs. Minerva Sabga and Msgr. Gregory Ramkissoon.

Bottom left: Mrs. Jocelyn Naimool, Mr. Adam Sabga and Mr. Wilfred Naimool.

Bottom right: Mrs. Judy Chang and Mr. Ravindranath Maharaj, ANSA McAL Foundation Directors, with Miss Patrice Khan, Programme Office Co-Ordinator.

Top left: Mrs. Linda Hadeed, ANSA McAL Foundation Director.

Top right: Mr. Michael Mansoor, Mrs. Minerva Sabga and Mrs. Maureen Mansoor.

Bottom: Dr. Anthony N. Sabga, Sir Ellis Clarke and Mr. Michael Mansoor

Mr. Wendell Constantine, MC

Guests at the Awards Function

Sen. the Hon. & Mrs. Larry Howai

Mr. & Mrs. Christopher Bovell (Jamaica)

Prof. & Mrs. Gerald Grell (Dominica)

St. Joseph's Convent Choir

Chantel Esdelle and the Ethic Jazz Club

Prof. Terrence Forrester

Prof. Terrence Forrester

Jamaica
Science & Technology, 2006

I was born 1950 in Jamaica to Oswald and Olive Forrester. My mother was a teacher, my father operated a haulage company. I had five siblings, and my mother was a powerful early influence on me. Because of her education background, she encouraged us to ask questions and be curious. So I wanted to be a researcher before I wanted to be a doctor.

That inquisitiveness carried me to biology. As a child, biology is the first thing you start asking questions about. My mother tells me a story that she was pregnant with one of my siblings, and I asked her a straight question: how is the baby going to come out? She fluffed around a bit, and then gave me a book, which had some diagrams, and she said I seemed to understand it, and she kept giving me biology books.

I think after that, when I was still in primary school, I developed an interest in natural history. I got a microscope for a birthday present and spent a great deal of time using it, looking at everything from water to insects. So by the time I hit high school, I was ready for and was channelled into the biology stream.

As I entered university, the link between biology and medicine seemed obvious, but the choice of medicine was influenced by the framework it provided for research and because members of my family were also in the profession.

I had a cousin who is a doctor and another a dentist. If another member of my family were a scientist, that's the route I might have taken, but there was no role model, so I chose medicine. I don't regret it, but that's the best field to be in for research, and by the time university research inclination was strongly developed.

As I have journeyed through life, I have realised the family is the basic context within which one is empowered to act. I start with my wife Barbara, without whom nothing would be possible. She is wife and my partner. She is a good sounding board, and we support each other. We have no children and I regard my fellows as my children. I invest emotionally in the people I train, and I regard them as more than trainees.

At UWI, there was one lecturer called Ovid Trouth, who recognised my inclination and offered the opportunity to learn more about physiology in his lab. So after part one of the MB degree, at which I did fairly well, I got the opportunity to go to the US, to do a full research degree in Wisconsin, instead of the UK intercalated degree which was more didactic.

I went to Wisconsin and worked on pulmonary physiology trying to learn about lung blood flow. I learned a lot about cardiovascular physiology during that period from Chris Dawson who was my supervisor. That refined the channeling toward the subspecialty in physiology I eventually chose.

accepted and we tested it out. That was my second publication.

This in itself was remarkable. In the English-speaking Caribbean when a junior comes to a senior saying: "I think I've found a way in which we can answer this question", the senior tends to pay it scant regard, but Sir George was supportive.

He looked at it with an open mind and said: "Yes, Terrence, let's try it". He found the money for the experiments, we did them, and we came up with the solution. He also participated in the study as a control! The experiments took about a year, I did it in my spare time on weekends.

In the English-speaking Caribbean when a junior comes to a senior saying: "I think I've found a way in which we can answer this question", the senior tends to pay it scant regard, but Sir George was supportive.

When I got back to Jamaica I wanted to continue from the masters to a PhD as a mixed programme, but it could not be done at UWI. So the opportunity for continuing study was broken. This is a seriously detrimental issue with regional institutions which inhibits development of academic clinicians.

The next person who played a core role in my journey was Sir George Alleyne. When I got to the hospital for the second part of my medical degree, he was the professor of medicine, and as a junior student I served on his firm.

When the time came to choose an elective, I chose to do it with him. I asked him whether there was anything I could do. There was this project that was floating out there; he had identified the problem of solute clearance from the kidney in sickle cell patients– I went to the books and did the research, and came up with a proposal, and came back with the proposal, which he

All this took place in 1974–75, when still a student. But it helped to solidify the decision to go into research. I finished medical school in 1976, and went to work as an assistant lecturer in the Department of Physiology and while there registered for a PhD in physiology, and again Sir George was my supervisor. My research was on high blood pressure and the role intracellular ions played in hypertension.

I finished the degree in three years and in the third year, I joined the residency programme. So while I was a first-year resident, I was writing up my PhD thesis.

After residency I went to NIH (National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland), to further study the genesis of hypertension and get some clinical experience in cardiology.

Hypertension is the commonest cardiovascular disease globally. This influenced my choice to research it. When I sat down with Sir George and said I was looking for a topic, he said hypertension was the common and he had a family history of hypertension. You find that people tend to gravitate to areas where there's a personal interest. My family also had a hypertension issue, but I didn't know it at the time.

In Maryland, the clinical training went fine, but what it brought home to me was a sense of dissatisfaction in answering only bits of questions. Medical research can be reductionist or it can be synthetic, bringing together large fields of knowledge. I spent much of my career doing reductionist, incremental research. This is what was done then, and the stage at which biological science had reached made it hubristic for an individual, or small group, to tackle a big question. However, in the last ten years or so, things have developed to such a degree that it is now possible to tackle big questions without flying too close to the sun.

This is particularly relevant to the Caribbean, since small groups and institutions tended to be short of resources. The problems faced by research in this environment tend to be twofold. One issue is technology and resources, but more crucial is the second, the effect of a having and being part of a global network.

Unless you live globally, being in the Caribbean becomes an impediment. But if you live and think globally, being here becomes a tremendous asset. If you can leverage global networks you can transform that into an asset. Working with people of like scientific mind and complementary skills, leverages something the Caribbean is good at, which is thought leadership.

When I started out, I was asking what role sodium and calcium play in the peripheral resistance in blood vessels. That was a very small question. Now, we are asking, for example: what are the underlying molecular causes of stunting in childhood, and why does stunting lead to hypertension in later life? This is a huge question, which we can now ask because of the state of the science and the global network.

When I finished my hypertension fellowship at NIH, I was recruited to join the Tropical Metabolism Research Unit at UWI Mona. And because it was a nutrition unit, focused on malnutrition, it was an opportunity to bring together the two strands of research. On the one hand, malnutrition, and the other, hypertension—so we were able to ask the question: are the two related in any way, is there any overlap?

Between 1984 and 1993, I figured out what the link might be and joined a small group of scientists globally who were focusing on the role that malnutrition, interacting with genetics, played in modifying how the body functions. This is an area within developmental biology. We determined that under-nutrition during pregnancy and/or early childhood years plays a large role in determining capacity in organ systems and thus risk of disease.

For example, if you are bred for famine, but you experience an environment of surfeit, let's say of food, then you are unable to maintain health within the realms of normal blood pressure, or blood sugar or normal body size. There is this mismatch between body capacity, and the environment.

Unless you live globally, being in the Caribbean becomes an impediment. But if you live and think globally, being here becomes a tremendous asset. If you can leverage global networks you can transform that into an asset.

This is of import globally, and it's a very active area of research. I worked on this till I became director of the TMRU in 1991. Eight years later I was asked by Sir Alister McIntyre, then UWI Chancellor, to gather the small institutes, centres of excellence like the TMRU, the Sickle Cell Unit, and the Chronic Disease Research Centre in Barbados, under one organisational framework. This led to the formation of the Tropical Medicine Research Institute, the TMRI.

The TMRI was created with the invaluable input of many colleagues. Once it was established, I planned my departure five years hence, so the next team could set a new agenda, and take it in a new direction. When I left, it was a good organisation. It was resilient, had good scientists, a worldwide reputation, subject to external peer review every five years. So a good leader could change course without high risk. I still work with colleagues at the TMRI, but stay away from management or governance.

What I am proudest of with the TMRI was being able to create it: making something out of nothing. Between 1999, when I started it, and 2010, when I left, it came from something which did not exist before, to being a highly prized asset of the University, with an international reputation. It produces a robust stream of science that is relevant to the region and internationally. But the biggest achievement was to have recruited, retained, and promoted a large team of academics.

Since leaving the TMRI, I have been trying to create another type of research institution for the UWI, and I must express gratitude to the University for providing an environment within which the independent academic can continue to thrive. We criticise the university for many things, and I am one of its critics, but one of the things it does very well is create a framework in which individual academics can thrive.

The new institute is called UWI Solutions for Developing countries (SODECO) and is different from the TMRI is various ways. First of all, I established a non-compete arrangement with TMRI. The new entity builds on the capacity for using science to answer big questions, and leveraging its global network.

When I set up TMRI I was happy to benchmark it internationally. But UWI SODECO acknowledges that it is already benchmarked internationally, and now acts globally—we have research projects in Ghana, New Zealand and the Caribbean. We use grant funds to set up research programmes wherever they need to be, rather than solely anchored in the region.

We seek to develop research questions very close to where they can affect human health, whose answers are positioned very close to translation into treatments. We design the experiments so that the findings will unearth a functional biological pathway with relevance to the problem at hand That is, the data will be user-ready for pharmaceutical companies to purchase to develop pharmaceutical approaches. We don't do clinical trials, but when we are finished by 2016 we will have the information that will directly inform interventions.

This has been my approach, and we have been successful, but there is a lot of opportunity for improvement in research capability and capacity regionally within UWI. I would guess that the genesis of this is a mixture of a lack of functional and helpful global networks, a lack of leveraging such networks where they exist, and perhaps the too slow development of critical masses that can draw in young people who need a structure to develop. It is unreasonable to expect that every young bright person can develop a research programme.

By leveraging what we have (thought leadership) and global network we have been able to function without much financial support from the university. And we can compete internationally.

By leveraging what we have (thought leadership) and global network we have been able to function without much financial support from the university. And we can compete internationally.

Robert Yao Ramesar

Trinidad & Tobago
Arts & Letters, 2006

As far back as I remember—I was about eight years old I think—I wanted to be a filmmaker. One of my schoolmates wrote down in her diary at the time that I had said that's what I wanted to do. There was only one other boy, a friend of mine too—Birdman—who ended doing what he wanted: he is a pilot.

Beginnings

Growing up in Trinidad there was a profusion of cinemas, many within walking distance of my home. Palladium, in Tunapuna, whose final curtain closed not long ago, was my first film school. There was also Monarch, Eros, Planet, Crest as well as Kay Donna and latterly one at Valpark Shopping Centre.

I used to break biche, my change of clothes in my school desk ever-ready for the cinematic escapade. The occasional awkward moment when I encountered the teacher also ducking into the mid afternoon darkness notwithstanding, those days proved seminal in my filmic education as there were only a handful of releases in theatres. So we watched, over and over, the same films, mulling over the elements, learning how stories were told.

When it was time to move on to formal education, there were no film schools in Trinidad, so I had to leave. I made a promise to myself that I would come back, to make films and to help teach filmmaking.

I worked and saved for two years to accumulate enough money to pay my first year of tuition at Howard Film School. My co-workers used to give me fatigue and nick-named me "old clothes" and "soup man" because I was scrimping and saving every penny. My first year at university, I earned a perfect GPA and got a scholarship to cover my tuition and would remain on various forms of scholarship for the rest of my university life. I was an academic all-American, on the national Dean's list.

The first film I made, Grey, a black-and-white short about the son of an American soldier at the American base in Chaguaramas (in Trinidad) and a Trinidadian woman, won an award. The prize was a Beaulieu camera, one of the most beautifully designed cameras ever. It had a blue chrome body and pristine lenses. Regrettably I loaned it to a fellow film student whose brother stole it and sold it (for a pittance) to buy drugs. Over the years my student films won awards and began screening throughout the world. My peers came from all over—Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Latin America—there was a lot of collaboration and cross-fertilisation.

Politics also became a natural adjunct to my activities as a filmmaker. I was the Graduate Film Students Association president in 1988 when I undertook a hunger strike to protest the threat of the film school's closure. The Film School is still open and I'm still here, so I guess it worked. And in 1998 I made good on my promise, as it was the year that I began teaching film at UWI, St. Augustine. I believe it was the first time

film was taught at the tertiary level here.

In the period that followed I went on to make over a hundred documentaries and experimental films in the Caribbean. It is these films that many people know me for (without always knowing who I am). One gentleman who had seen a couple of my works, (filmed in sepia and black and white, and framed to be timeless), on meeting me, was surprised to learn I was a relatively young man.

I was motivated by the belief that it wasn't just the work for its own sake, but the need for that post-independence generation to see itself and its own popular heroes onscreen, that is crucial to our psychic survival. But in the end it was a race against time, because most of our oral history went unrecorded and died with our elders. With no authoritative voice from the past to speak to us, amnesia has allowed the revisionism so prevalent in contemporary discourse.

It was an intense period in my life, moving throughout Trinidad and Tobago locating the subjects of these films. The naturalism of the shorts/documentaries made during this period—discovering the wealth of real locations and non-actors—carried over into my fiction films later on.

When I was in film school lecturers who were constantly producing work were highly prized because they would have been au courant with the state-of-the-art. I've tried to emulate that. The wealth of knowledge that I gained working in South Africa these last few years will pay dividends for

Mr. Robert Yao Ramesar

my Cinematography students in the new term. Making films in Africa also aids my lectures for Cinemas of Africa, another course I teach.

In terms of the practical knowledge acquired from this experience—selecting the equipment and determining the look for this film, for instance—required hundreds of hours of research. When the new (HD) camera was deployed in the field in South Africa, the resolution of detail was astonishing—in some cases, too stark. The soft (edge) of celluloid was a welcome veil in the past because film is about magic, and there are just some things you don't want to reveal.

Film /video has always been about how close we could come to what the human eye sees. Now that the technology has surpassed this, what are the implications for the art form? What do we do with cyber-thespians, now that we can digitally produce a cinematographic facsimile of a human being? How do audiences react? Or the actors' unions for that matter? These are contemporary issues that film students have to consider.

Major Work

In 2005 I launched the production of Sistagod, my first narrative feature. I liken the experience to that of a writer moving from poetry to novels. That film has gone on to be my most successful international offering to date. Sistagod won the Grand Prix at the ArtoDocs International Film Festival in August 2014, in St. Petersburg, Russia. I believe it is the first local narrative feature film to have screened in Russia where it took the prize for Best Feature Film. It is especially poignant for me because my work has been heavily influenced by the great Russian cinema masters—from Eisenstein to Dhovzhenko and Tarkovsky. I have both studied and taught their work.

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It is always heartening when a festival such as ArtoDocs continues the long Russian tradition of honouring cinema as art. Even the host city St. Petersburg, home of the Hermitage Museum, is one of the world's great cultural centres. One objective of the ArtoDocs festival is to offer a creative platform for cinematographers. There are four sections in the festival: artistic films—competitive screenings of short or feature films; documentary—competitive screenings of documentary films; animation—competitive screenings of animation; cinema museum—out-of-competition screenings of rare and forgotten films.

It was thrilling to be in such illustrious international company as the lineup of finalists in this edition of ArtoDocs International Film Festival included films from Germany, Spain, Argentina, Russia, Ukraine, Israel, Armenia, Luxemburg and Italy.

The line-up of films was compelling—I would like to think that my own film complemented the others rather than competed against them. At this level, to me, it's about artistic statement. Trinidad and Tobago film would have been virtually unknown to that festival audience and by far the smallest nation represented. So getting the Grand Prix is an emphatic introduction to what we can do. The fact that the film is subtitled in Russian is lagniappe as it is now accessible to an even wider audience.

Russia is one of the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa)—the emerging economic bloc, that comprises a market of billions. My work has now been screened in all of these territories save China, though I did direct a Mandarin /West Indian Creole language feature with Chinese lead actress, Jiang Jie.

Sistagod's world premiere was in 2006 at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), the major North American and hemispheric festival, where it remains the first Trinidad and Tobago feature in official selection at a major international festival. It

During the shoot of "Sistagod"

has continued to attract audiences throughout North, Central and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, picking up a number of awards.

My most recently completed feature, Haiti Bride was screened at the Trinidad and Tobago Film Festival (TTFF) in September. Haiti Bride, a Haiti/T&T production, is a narrative feature.

I believe I was the first filmmaker to begin direction of a narrative feature film in the aftermath of the Haitian earthquake, and this is the first feature from the Anglophone Caribbean made in Haiti. The movie was made by a two-person crew under harsh conditions, on a shoestring budget and featuring a cast of first-timers. It is the story of the flight of a Haitian family to New York after the removal of President Aristide in 2004.

The family's daughter falls in love with a young Haitian man who is visiting New York. She wants to marry him and re-settle in Haiti, though he wants to settle in the USA. A compromise is struck and the wedding is set for Haiti, with the couple promising to return to the US after their honeymoon. Unfortunately, the wedding date is set for the afternoon of January 12, 2010—the day of the earthquake.

On her wedding day, the bride is late for the ceremony and as she enters the church, it collapses on the wedding party inside. She vows to wear her bridal dress and veil every day until her groom is found—dead or alive. After weeks of scouring post-earthquake Haiti, she returns, devastated, to New York.

Her groom meanwhile has been pulled from the rubble, barely alive, and "disappeared" himself. While waiting at the altar for his bride's arrival, he had second thoughts about the marriage as he was actually engaged to Natasha, a girl from Jacmel, just prior to his leaving for New York. When the church collapses on him, he believes it is God's wrath visited upon him for his deception. When he recovers, he journeys to Jacmel to find his real Haiti bride, hoping that she has survived the earthquake.

New Projects

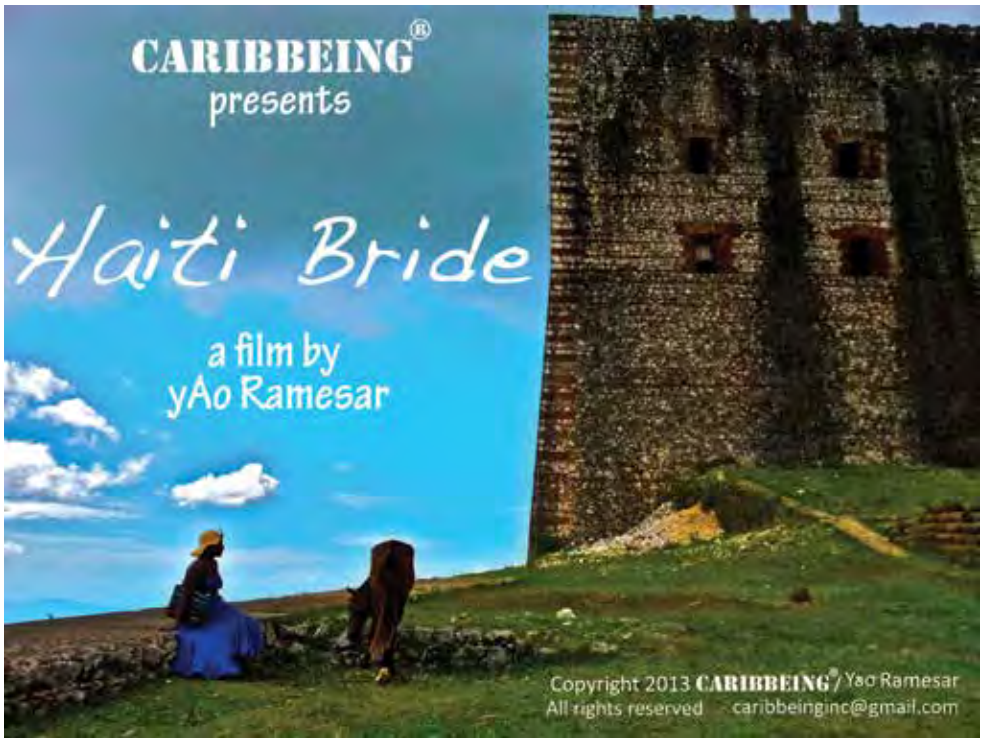
After filming Her Second Coming, the sequel to Sistagod, which features a woman with albinism, the film's lead actress Crystal Felix and I started building a world albino network, which I suggested we call Shade. This led to my introduction to Mathapelo Ditshego, a young woman with albinism in South Africa. We got to know each other as

Facebook friends. And then the idea came to me to make a movie with her, so I asked whether she would be interested in being the lead actress in my film, which would also be titled Shade.

A major consideration was whether we would do the film in her first language, Sutu, or in English. My two prior experiences directing features in foreign languages—Mandarin in Stranger In Paradise and Kweyol in Haiti Bride—made me comfortable with either option. We settled for English by default because there are no fewer than eleven languages commonly spoken in South Africa. Shade would also sing American R&B, so that pretty much closed the deal on that. Two years later in 2014, I showed up on her doorstep, camera in hand. And there it began. The difference was that the two-man crew of Haiti Bride was now cut in half. It was just me.

This ongoing miniaturisation of the process comes with the terrain in the ultra low-budget formula— I can't even afford to take on volunteers, as it costs money to provide food and transport. Working alone means I have to fulfil about a dozen technical roles which, fortunately, I can. The formula also means it is possible for me to make films all over the globe. The physical stress is another matter entirely.

Working in post-earthquake Haiti was incredibly tough, as was the one-man crew experiment in South Africa. Though the risk and fact day-to-day injury are real, it's not as noticeable when



you are consumed by the filmmaking. The morning after shooting wraps though, is like the day after a prizefight. It takes weeks and sometimes months to recover.

But making films like this contributes significantly to my functions as Coordinator of the UWI Film Programme. It forces me to be resourceful, innovative and disciplined. It's always about astute management and precise budgeting, which is indispensable to my work at UWI. As a point of trivia, in 2009 Edmund Attong and I equaled the world record for the smallest crew to complete a professional feature film on Her Second Coming. We repeated the formula on Haiti Bride and now on Shade it's down to just me.

Future Projects

The Last Dance of the Karaoke King, has been brewing in my unconscious for years. It is the story of the washed-up chutney Soca singer / songwriter Robin Singh who, fifteen years after riding the wave of a single hit song, now subsists on karaoke winnings while plotting a comeback. The film is an exploration of an Indo Caribbean culture, and centers around the indigenous musical art forms of chutney and chutney Soca.

The turning point in the narrative comes with the arrival of an American ethno-musicologist / documentary filmmaker who arrives on the island to complete her documentary on indo-Caribbean masculinity and the Chutney-Soca art form which

inadvertently plucks Robin from semi-obscurity. Her sojourn coincides with the return into the singer's life of his childhood sweetheart from London where she fled during the brief period of Robin's success. The lead is played by Chris Garcia, who I grew up next door to, and who is practically my brother. Chris got into music and I went into movies. I thought he would be perfectly fit.

The last three features I've made have been directed outside of Trinidad & Tobago. I returned from South Africa in July this year having directed the basic story for Shade. I'll return to Soshanguve Township, Pretoria, to complete filming, with my eye on a 2016 release. The projects have all been very demanding, but much less stressful than the films I've made in Trinidad, because I'm removed from other day-to-day dramas and commitments and making a film provides enough stress on it own.

But this is how my immediate future seems to be unfolding: 2015 will be very much about Haiti Bride, 2016, Shade, and 2017/18, The Last Dance of the Karaoke King. I've already done some preliminary filming on Karaoke King. Principal photography will be completed in the last quarter of 2015. My usual work schedule means I'm in production on two or three features simultaneously. The first one filmed does not necessarily translate into the first one released. It's ultimately about which one is ripe for market.

Making films for me is also all about continuous learning, so I become a better teacher. Film is one art form where your tools are constantly changing and you have to stay on top of the state-of-the-art technology. New technology influences technique and can expand aesthetic opportunities and possibilities. But it's the human element that makes the technology meaningful.

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The Very Reverend Monsignor Gregory Ramkissoon

Jamaica/Trinidad & Tobago
Public & Civic Contributions, 2006

I was raised in a traditional Indian Hindu family in San Fernando and Central Trinidad, the fifth of thirteen children. My father was very much the patriarch and set the tone in all activities and aspects of life. Our extended family of uncles and aunts played a big part as well.

We were a typical Indian family within an Indian community. Trinidad at that time consisted of islands of culture in this bigger island of multiculturalism. Hindus distinguished themselves from Muslims who distinguished themselves from Christians yet we all did very well together. We were united as a community but it wasn't that we were separating ourselves but that we knew who we were and were not threatened by other faces around us. Our family was so Indian that there were no English records only Hindi ones in our home until I was 15 years old. So we never had calypso in our house and although we loved calypso and went to carnival, at home all we had were Hindi records.

There were Hindu schools, Muslim schools and Christian schools in our district. My brothers and sisters went to Muslim schools. My father sent me to a Muslim school during the weekday, to Catholic instruction classes after school and Hindi lessons on Fridays. Besides desiring a good education for us, our parents wanted us exposed to all religions so that we would know enough about them to not feel any bitterness or prejudice. Because I knew who I was and where I came from I never felt pressured to become Muslim or Christian in those early years.

My father showed us this tolerance by example; I remember that once a year he would invite what we used to call in Trinidad a "Shouter" Baptist church to our home for an all night prayer service which involved lots of loud singing and shouting. Every few years my parents hosted a seven day Hindu prayer vigil in our home which went on day and night and to which various Hindu clerics would be invited. He gave money to Muslim schools and generously helped Catholic priests in the surrounding areas yet never felt threatened or obliged to convert. Our home had an area set aside for a Hindu altar and a Hindu cleric or pandit would be invited once a year to hold services in our house when our neighbours and friends would come for dinner.

My mother has always meditated and still faithfully does to this day though she is in her eighties. In our yard there was a jhandi or specially marked area which was set aside for prayers and she would go there every morning to perform her Hindu rituals. Her example has stayed with me all my life. My maternal grandfather who was from India married his Indian wife in Trinidad. He was of a business caste which had its own special religious practices for funerals and births which we had to follow.

The Very Reverend Monsignor Gregory Ramkissoon

Our family even had its own 'resident guru,' a mysterious elderly man who lived in a hut at the back of our house. This sadhu or holy man was consulted for his wisdom by my parents and others for his wisdom, his gifts in the healing arts, and for his supposedly prescient abilities. He advised my mother and father on how to bring up children in the Hindu way. It was rumoured that he was a former soldier in India, a member of the Kshatriya or warrior caste. He simply appeared one day and just as simply disappeared several years later. In Hinduism, sadhus are ascetic wanderers who renounce the world and its attachments to live apart from others in order to pursue their spiritual practices. Our sadhu's seemingly mystical presence was a part of the fabric of our everyday lives and added to the mystery and mysticism that was Hinduism to us. As children, though we thought he was a little 'weird,' we accepted him as a member of the household and he became our protector in a sense. We were also exposed to traditional Chinese families who practiced Confucianism and who seemed equally mysterious and mystical to us in some of their practices.

I was sent to Presentation College, a Catholic high school, where the Christian influence on my life became more pronounced. At this stage of my life I was able to understand Christianity in greater detail and depth than I could the complexities of Hinduism and this made an impact on me. I was baptised at 14 years old with the full consent of my parents. My Hindu background gave me an appreciation for the sacred and in fact, I recall that the Hindu boys in our school were the most devout at the Catholic pious practices. The strictness of my family environment was so very important in forming me that when I left Trinidad at 16 to join a religious order in Ireland I found the discipline of the novitiate not a problem at all.

That sense of the sacred I learned from my parents was twinned with a sense of giving to others, especially the poor. These two activities of prayer and generosity permeated life around us. Helping the needy is integral to Hindu belief and I recall the special feast days when we would go out to look for beggars to feed. Muslim families would send us food on their feast days and I remember our own Diwali feasts for the abundance of food that would be shared by all. There seemed to be a constant flow of people being helped by my father though we were not wealthy by any means. He especially liked to give to those who badly needed it. I also remember a rich neighbour who would give money and toys away at Christmas to strangers. That milieu of giving and praying at the same time impacted my life then and has carried me through. Though I left home for good at 16 I carried with me those ingrained practices of prayer and giving.

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The transition from Hinduism to Catholicism was not as difficult for me as one would imagine. I found the ritual of the Mass not dissimilar to certain Hindu practices and I was very attracted to Mary, our Blessed Mother, partly because of my familiarity with Hindu goddesses. In fact, I was a member of the Legion of Mary at my high school even before I was baptised. This Catholic lay organisation devoted to prayer and good works has a special place in my youthful memories. I recall going with three other boys to distribute rosaries to some remote Hindu villages and getting stranded for the night due to heavy rains. My father eventually called the police when we did not return home by nightfall. I was delighted though, as I felt like a true soldier of Christ. This was the kind of stuff that gave me a sense

In 1978 in Kingston, Jamaica, Mustard Seed Communities was formed to serve and uplift the most vulnerable in society, at the time, abandoned, disabled children.

of adventure in the Christian faith that was not there for me in Hinduism.

It seemed to me that Hinduism focused inward while Christianity was more concerned with looking out towards others, to encompass the community but with a touch more adventure. Despite this, the rituals, beliefs and experiences of my youth have helped to mould my own personal spirituality and are reflected in the philosophy of Mustard Seed Communities. My question was always how to bring in the Eastern practices into the Western faith. I felt that I could not exist in two worlds at the same time, learning certain things in one while living in another. It felt absurd, contradictory. That is the reason that today, praying the rosary for me has become like my mantra while meditation is still an essential part of my daily routine.

In 1978 in Kingston, Jamaica, Mustard Seed Communities was formed to serve and uplift the most vulnerable in society, at the time, abandoned, disabled children. From one home for disabled children we have expanded to twenty-two centres in the Caribbean, Central America and Africa with over six hundred children and young adults in our care. These now include children living with HIV/AIDS and pregnant teens.

Mustard Seed Communities is the largest NGO in the Caribbean and Central America caring for abandoned children with disabilities as well as the largest NGO in the Caribbean and Central America caring for orphaned children living with HIV/AIDS. We also operate ROOTS 96.1 FM, the largest community urban radio station in the region. At present, we are the largest entity in Jamaica for children with disabilities and HIV/AIDS and we have the only home specifically for long-term residential care for pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers. Plans are underway to return to Haiti where we once were to establish a home near the capital Port au Prince for the many disabled children in desperate need there.

The vision statement of Mustard Seed Communities which speaks to the healing and caring ministry of Jesus Christ as its source is the key to the organisation's growth and development. Firmly rooted in prayer, our actions are directed toward caring, sharing and training of those who, no matter their circumstances deserve a life of dignity.

Recognising that children with handicaps and other disabilities are among the most defenseless in our society, and that many of these are often abandoned due to poverty, Mustard Seed Communities has focused on this segment of the population. Our children have disabilities that include: cerebral palsy, Down's Syndrome, autism, epilepsy, blindness, mental retardation, scoliosis, microcephaly, progeria and others. As expected, the specific needs of these children are significantly greater than those of a normal population and include frequent medical care, specialised caregiving, special education and therapy. MSC aims to provide a safe, healthy and caring environment with the overall purpose of advancing the spiritual, moral, mental and physical well being of all its children.

Grounded in the unshakeable belief of the value of all life, we are committed to the protection, care and nurturing of abandoned children living with HIV/AIDS. In 2000 the first of our homes for abandoned or orphaned children with HIV/AIDS was opened in Jamaica. This was soon followed by two other homes on the island where today almost eighty children are being looked

after. Two years after the first home was established in Jamaica, we were invited to Zimbabwe due to the increasing needs surrounding such children in Sub-Saharan Africa. At present, we care for fifty children among three homes there.

Education, sustainability and self-sufficiency are included in this vision of communities of caring. We invite the communities around us to share and participate in the caring of our children while at the same time offering skills-training, distance learning and basic education for neighbourhood children. Income generating and sustainability efforts include fish ponds, egg production, vegetable and livestock farming, ceramics, and the production of greeting cards using renewable resources such as banana bark.

An early and very successful venture was ROOTS 96.1 FM, a community radio station launched in 1998. Its mission is to assist in inner-city development by focusing on the unique daily challenges faced by community residents in the impoverished neighbourhoods in which they live. All of its mainly interactive programming aim to empower, uplift and enrich the lives of its listeners by promoting dialogue and entertainment that speak to their common realities and aspirations. In addition, ROOTS FM sponsors as well as organises various community initiatives such as skills workshops, and opportunities for dialogue within strife-torn neighbourhoods.

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The Poor Man's Building Society is a programme offered within Mustard Seed Communities which offers financial training and loans to staff members seeking to improve their lives and the lives of their families. Another outreach initiative is a medical and dental clinic at Jerusalem, one of the larger homes in Jamaica. This clinic offers free weekly health visits for the poor and elderly in the surrounding communities. An annual and much-anticipated Mustard Seed Communities activity is the Christmas Treat, a project providing food and gifts to thousands of needy children in Kingston's inner-city communities. On Christmas Day 2010 five thousand children were fed by volunteers who included many staff and friends of MSC.

Located in both Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic are centres operated by an arm of Mustard Seed Communities known as Christ in the Garbage Ministries which assist children and families dependent on the municipal garbage dumps. Feeding programmes, basic schooling and skills-

training are some of the activities we are involved in there.

Mustard Seed Communities operates its own registered school system recognised by the Ministry of Education in Jamaica. The school, known as the Little Angels' Learning Centre, has four satellite locations in and around Kingston. It provides early childhood, special needs and remedial education to MSC residents and to children from the surrounding communities at very little cost to the parents. The students, whose families come from mostly deprived circumstances, also benefit from subsidised daily meals. It is our belief that by teaching the children we effectively teach the parents and eventually the wider community.

We have developed a volunteer programme where individuals both locally and from overseas assist us on various projects which have a direct impact on the children in our care. The majority consist of missionaries who participate in one week visits or mission trips but some come for longer periods lasting from a month to a year where they live, work, eat, take public transportation and become part not only of the MSC family but also of the wider community. In working alongside our staff in these often marginalised neighbourhoods they share their talents and skills, and by their willingness to work under conditions often strange and very challenging to them, they demonstrate a level of care and dedication which enriches everyone involved.

In Mustard Seed Communities we welcome those of all faiths as we pray and serve God together while creating communities of true healing and caring. That is what I call community, a community praying to the Lord, a community serving God together rather than just living in one spatial arrangement. It is essentially, a group of people attracted to a vision, a vision of what you want to get done. This vision is what we try to live too, not just theoretically but practically, and to teach our children to do the same.

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2008 Laureates
His Excellency, Prof. David Dabydeen
Annette Arjoon-Martins
Claudette Richardson-Pious
Dr. James Husbands

2008

Introduction

Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie
PVC UWI Institute for Critical Thinking

The Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence is something of genuine value to our Caribbean region.

The value is in its focus on excellence; in the unassailable credentials of its judges, in the fact that it is a private sector initiative, not likely to be influenced by narrow partisan nor crass political considerations; that it is a unique, sustainable, philanthropic gift to the region which will, over time, serve as a stimulus for talent, energy and good works by the ambitious, the creative and the genuinely caring among us.

A great deal of credit must go to the founding Chairman of the ANSA McAL Group, Dr. Anthony N. Sabga, Doctor of Laws (Honouris Causa) and Chairman Emeritus of the Group, who not only had the foresight to establish a Foundation to address the issue of giving back to the society several years ago, but who has succeeded in pointing the ANSA McAL Foundation to the creation of the Caribbean institution, devoted to recognising and supporting excellence and which is fittingly named The Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence, after a man who has pursued excellence in business and human relations all his life and who is today regarded as a pioneer, master entrepreneur, regional business and community leader, generous philanthropist and exemplary citizen.

The conception creation and execution of the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence is a timely initiative that is nothing short of a masterstroke. This pioneering Awards programme is destined to play a significant role both in facilitating the development of high standards in the region and in bringing Caribbean high achievers to the attention of the world.

The Awards programme is still in its infancy, but already its impact is formidable, perhaps because of the

Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie

sharpness of its focus, the clarity of its perspective and the meaningfulness of the programme's intention. While the awards are for people who have already demonstrated excellence awardees are also meant to have significant career potential with the prospect of even greater achievements in the future.

The year 2008 winners come from three categories—Arts & Letters, Public & Civic Contributions, and

Science & Technology. Significantly, none of the winners is from Trinidad & Tobago, the headquarters of ANSA McAL, the home of the ANSA McAL Foundation, and the place where the Awards for Excellence Programme was first launched. However their truly outstanding contributions leave no doubt whatsoever about why they are winners.

The Arts & Letters winner is Professor David Dabydeen, an academic and writer of poetry and fiction. A Guyanese by birth, Professor Dabydeen has won both the Guyanese and Commonwealth Awards in the past for his contribution to arts and letters. He has played a vital role in promoting the literature, life and culture of the Caribbean at Warwick University in the UK.

The two Public and Civic Contributions winners come from Guyana and Jamaica, respectively. Ms Annette Arjoon is a conservationist whose pet project is the 100-mile ecosystem in the northwest coastal region of Guyana where four species of turtle nest. She leads the Guyana Marine Turtle Conservation Society as well as her own tourism business.

Mrs. Claudette Richardson-Pious is an advocate for children in Jamaica. Based in Spanish Town, Children First, the NGO she founded, is dedicated to getting children off the street and also plays a key role in providign HIV AIDS testing and counseling to rural youth. Mrs. Richardson-Pious is an entrepreneurial leader in this kind of constructive endeavour in Jamaica.

The Science & Technology Winner is Mr. James Husbands, an entrepreneur who has played an instrumental role in making the Barbados-based Solar Dynamics the largest solar water heater in the region. Beyond entrepreneurship, Mr. Husbands is a pioneer in a field of great importance to the sun-blessed Caribbean where the search for alternative energy is of great value.

The Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence plans to expand both in terms of geographical reach as well as scope. New categories for Awards will be added over time and while Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and the OECS countries now constitute the main countries of focus, the ANSA McAL Foundation anticipates expanding the programme in future years to include the Bahamas, Belize, Suriname, Haiti as well as Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, Cayman Islands, and the Turks & Caicos Islands.

The Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards is a formidable regional institution in the making. Because it is funded from earnings which accrue from a growing endowment made possible by the ANSA McAL Group, the sustainable life of the Awards programme is assured.

The unequivocal commitment by all concerned to excellence will ensure that this Awards programme continues to grow, not only in geographical reach and scope, but also in stature. That will be a fitting tribute to a family business that grew to become one of the most diversified conglomerates in the region. It will also come to represent another lasting contribution by someone who had family responsibilities thrust upon him while still a little boy but who, shouldering those responsibilities, eventually emerged as the giant of a corporate leader known as Anthony N. Sabga.

Past award winners have used their prize money to advance their work and to explore their interests more deeply. This pattern will undoubtedly continue with the 2008 awardees. Let us take this opportunity to wish them even greater achievements and limitless horizons. Let us thank them also for providing light, hope and inspiration and for reinforcing in our minds that we in the Caribbean do have people worthy of emulation, who do things worthy of celebration.

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Top: Dr. Sabga, Mrs. Claudette Richardson-Pious, Sir Ellis Clarke, His Excellency Prof. George Maxwell Richards, President of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago, Mrs. Annette Arjoon-Martins, Prof. David Dabydeen and Dr. James Husbands.
Bottom left: Ushers Hazel Moonsammy, Charmaine de Silva, Sabrina Gosein and Shirley Miles, with Maria Superville-Neilson in the centre.

Bottom right: Sir Ellis Clarke, Dr. Sabga and Mr. Francis Lewis (then Programme Director)

Top left: Sir Ellis Clarke at the 2006 media announcement.
Bottom left: Mr. Michael K. Mansoor
Bottom right: The second Eminent Persons Selections Meeting.

His Excellency, Prof. David Dabydeen

Guyana
Arts & Letters, 2008

East Indian/West Indian—From Black to Brown to Green man

Indian in the Caribbean

I was born and grew up in Guyana in the 1960s.These times were fraught with racial conflict (in Guyana and Trinidad), and people of Indian origin had a strong sense of being "Indian", because of those conflicts. Being Indian meant being on the margins, and considered a threat to Caribbean society, politically, and this may have translated into my interest in "marginal" scholarly subjects.

Growing up in Guyana in the 1960s in the centre of these conflicts, you were induced to look for and create heroes. Rohan Kanhai the cricketer immediately became a hero for the whole Indian community because he symbolised the movement from the canefield to the world stage. His family were literally cane-cutters and he came from a sugar plantation, so his

progress was inspirational to the Indian community in Guyana and especially to a young boy. I must have been about nine or ten, and I would listen to the radio whenever he was playing in, say, Warwickshire or a place called Australia (we didn't really know where the places were). You listened to the radio and there was your great star playing in these strange places and making centuries. Consciously and unconsciously he was an inspiration to create and to achieve.

At the same time as I was listening to Kanhai, I read my first West Indian novel. This must have been sometime in 1967 which was when V.S. Naipaul's *Miguel Street* arrived in my hand in Guyana, ten years after publication. It was almost mind-blowing because the characters were people you could actually recognise, if you just looked out of the bedroom window or balcony you could see Hat and all the other characters, they were us lot, right?

Up to that point, we were immersed in the great classics of English children's literature, wondrous stuff by Enid Blyton and others which told of an unfamiliar (and therefore, magical and beguiling) land called England.

I think it was the first time we had a chance—by "we" I mean me, but also young people—to encounter West Indian literature. It was new. Up to that point, we were immersed in the great classics of English children's literature, wondrous stuff by Enid Blyton and others which told of an unfamiliar (and therefore, magical and beguiling) land called England, where children had bicycles, and regular meals, with mouth-watering and magically-sounding treats like scones and marmalade.

Such writing not only excited our imagination, but no doubt made us want to emigrate, especially now that Kanhai was living in England. Naipaul's novel was something completely refreshing, the familiarity of it, the way you could identify with it. Of course it is a novel that, on the whole, sympathises with the underdog even though it is scathing in many ways. For example, something I could recognise immediately was the Indian woman beaten by her husband who oils the cricket bat. One of the more painful features of being a child in Guyana was witnessing incidents of violence towards women, since male violence to women was normal. When you then read it in a novel, in a peculiar way it became even more real than the violence you actually witnessed. So Naipaul grounded me in the sense of an environment and the humility of ordinary West Indians and the male propensity to violence towards women, undoubtedly.

And then the third moment was awareness of our great political leader, the founder and father of our independence movement, who was Cheddi Jagan, Premier of British Guiana, of Indian origin, and again because he was powerful, because he would travel to meet Nehru, he would travel to Britain, he would go to see Kennedy and Castro and you would be reading about this as a child. He was somebody who obviously occupied the world stage, again from a cane-cutting

family. Therefore these three figures cohered in my imagination as a boy, in terms of being iconic figures and figures you would want to emulate.

I should add, of course, the role of religion in creating a sense of Indianness. My folk were a mixture of Christians and Hindus: there was no contradiction in going to church (and even many denominations: my mother went to Lutheran and Catholic churches on different Sundays) and attending the Hindu temple. I myself was baptised in the local Scottish Presbyterian church. We held regular pujas in our house, and put out the Hindu prayer flags.

As children, we thought the pandit a comical figure: he'd ride his bicycle with his dhoti on, a tricky thing to do. And after the puja, we'd climb up and steal the coins [offerings to the gods] attached to the prayer flags. So Hinduism for me, as a child, was not a particularly serious matter. The only time I rallied to the cause was when a drunken British soldier—in the early 1960s (the British army had arrived to maintain order during the period of inter-ethnic strife)—rattled the gate and demanded to know why we were flying Communist flags. We explained they were red Hindu prayer flags, and I took up position behind the kitchen door to pelt him with a stone (the one my mother used to grind massala for our daily curry) in case he didn't budge. Fortunately, he hiccupped away; Hinduism and the massala stone won the day.

Black in England

I left Guyana in 1969 for England. It was soon apparent to me, within a month of being in England, that I was not a real Indian. My school friends were from India and Pakistan; they had their mother-tongues. Their homes smelt of incense. I felt much closer to a West Indian identity than an Indian one. At university in the 1970s I was really more interested in the black diasporic experience because it just struck me as something that demanded original scholarship, and you could spend years getting engrossed in these subjects—you know, blacks in literature, blacks in art—partly because they were overlooked, more or less, by mainstream scholarship.

It was a challenge of coming from the margins and moving the subject into the centre: all these things we take for granted now in postcolonial studies. I didn't think of it consciously at the time; all I thought was this is a risk I would take with my academic career and this was an exciting thing to do: to take the risk and not to do a "normal" set of studies. And then I thought that if I wanted to develop my interest in literature there was no point in doing it at a university that didn't have prestige in Britain, so I took a serious risk and applied to Cambridge.

In those days, you could apply to five universities but I just applied to Cambridge. When I was interviewed, the Cambridge dons asked: "If you don't get in what will you do?" and I said: "Well, I will reapply." So obviously Cambridge must have felt sorry for this skinny West Indian of slender means (I was in the "care" of the local authorities at the time, completely dependent on welfare) and took me in. So it was always about risk-taking, taking on a risky subject, not something that is considered to be central to literary studies or history or art studies. I eventually gravitated into what is now called "Black Studies". I did a special study of the black presence in English literature as well as black figures in British art (*Hogarth's Blacks*).

It was a challenge of coming from the margins and moving the subject into the centre: all these things we take for granted now in postcolonial studies.

After I left university I went to work as a community education officer, again taking the risk in Wolverhampton, because this is Enoch Powell territory, he was the MP there for many years. Therefore I just found it fascinating to be able to go to Wolverhampton as a Race Relations community education officer, but quickly realised, after a year, that that was not where the power was (in local politics and associations). The power was in universities because they were centres of tremendous influence. So I came back into academic life in 1983; I was offered a place at Oxford University, funded by me signing on for the dole [welfare] since it was a non-stipendiary Junior Research Fellowship.

And from this vantage, I was pushed back into Indianness! I did a talk at

ever. The previous book, *Slave Song*, was a mixture of Indian and black, more about plantation experience, but this was an exclusively and explicitly Indian poem.

My initial ethnic anger at the Rastafarian woman gave way to the sheer pleasure of composing in words, struggling for the image, the alliteration, the cadence. There was no space for spite or ethnic triumphalism. The poem and its sequence ("Coolie Son") are about East Indian poverty, humiliation, ambition. And, later, when I looked into it, it became apparent that the study of Indians in the Caribbean was at an embryonic stage, very much so, and therefore if you wanted to be a West Indian intellectual you must also try to fill those gaps in scholarship. Hence I organised at Warwick University, in 1988, a conference on Indo-Caribbean History and Culture (Cheddi Jagan attended, Clem Seecharan, Brinsley Samaroo, Frank Birbalsingh, Sam Selvon and others), edited a couple of books on Indians in the Caribbean and wrote a novel on the Indian middle passage, as it were (*The Counting House*).

A Rastafarian woman literally braced me up against the wall and said: "Why are you doing our thing? Why don't you do your own thing? Why don't you do Indian? You are Indian. Why are you doing black things?"

London University in 1984-85 on the iconography of black people in British art and during the coffee break a Rastafarian woman literally braced me up against the wall and said: "Why are you doing our thing? Why don't you do your own thing? Why don't you do Indian? You are Indian. Why are you doing black things?" And I remember being shocked by it! Because at the time I was working in Goldsmiths College London, in a black area. I was at home there; I was living in a black home. Sybil Phoenix rented me a room and she is the grandmother of Lewisham, she is a black Guyanese and I was at home there, until this Rastafarian pushed me against the wall and confronted me with my ethnicity.

And I remember being so hurt by that: that very evening, and I don't want to be melodramatic about it, but that very evening in Sybil Phoenix's house, I wrote, within one hour, "Coolie Mother" which is my first Indian poem

One of the products of this conference was a collection I co-edited with Brinsley Samaroo, *India in the Caribbean*, which was one of the early attempts to look at the issue academically. From that I was catapulted into an arena of great privilege, because the BBC asked me to anchor one of their programmes, some ten years later. It was a programme on the "coolies" and it was shown on BBC2. A few million people watched it and a day or so later I received an e-mail from a woman called Brigid Wells who said: "I saw your programme. My great-grandfather's brother wrote a diary on board the Hesperus', which was one of the first two ships to arrive in the New World. The first load of coolies actually to be landed in Demerara was from the *Hesperus*. She said: 'He was the ship's doctor. Would you like to see the diary?"

Can you imagine, it was almost like finding the beginning of your beginnings! So eventually I met her and we published that diary in 2007, a great moment. And then quite wonderfully I received a letter from Sir John Gladstone inviting me to tea in Hawarden Castle in Wales. In his letter he more or less apologised for the Indian trade. He believed his great-grandfather (also Sir John Gladstone) had started Indentureship, as the first Guianese Indians were called the "Gladstone coolies". The contemporary Sir John thought perhaps his ancestor had not treated the Indians as well as he should have, and invited me to tea.

Beautiful, lovely handwriting and obviously a very interesting man, and he actually drew me a detailed map in the letter as to how to get to Hawarden Castle, which again is marvelous, because it is like the map from India to Guyana, take a left when you get to

Cape Coast, take a right past Mauritius, eventually get to Trinidad and keep going straight ahead to Guiana, right? I have not yet had a chance to meet Gladstone because I have been busy in India, having spent several months there recently, partly doing research on the departure of Indians in 1838.

One of the things I have (with many collaborators) managed to do was set up a website and an Indo-Caribbean Studies Association, with Derek Walcott as a patron. We are hoping to set up a Journal of Indo-Caribbean Studies, and I am hoping that towards the latter part of my academic career, if I can get Indo-Caribbean Studies embedded in the academy, then at least I will have done something worthwhile. Not quite equal to VS Naipaul, Rohan Kanhai, and Cheddi Jagan, but in scholarship, yes, hopefully something substantial will remain.

A Green Man in the 21st Century Guyana

Having said all that, deep down, as a person, intuitively and emotionally and creatively, I am not really interested in scholarship, or even Indo-Caribbean scholarship. I would much rather sit and write my novels which may or may not be about Indians or Africans. I do believe that the moment when you really eclipse the predicament of your ethnicity is when you can write beautifully. I think, and I have argued elsewhere, that the enslaved Olaudah Equiano finally emancipated himself not when he bought his own freedom—he became then a free social person—but when he wrote his book, his autobiography, with novelistic features, with a prose that was lush and lucid and moving, that had rhythm and thought and humour and pathos; when he wrote with that beauty, in other words when he became a writer, he was no longer Black.

I have decided now to spend as long as I can moving from brown and black to green. I want to be a green man now. I want to look at eco-critical aspects of literature, eco-critical responses to writing, I want to look at medieval literature, and I want to look at the green man as a universal symbol. I want to write the rainforest of Guyana and I would like to be a green writer because the future is not black or brown, the future is green. In my last two novels I have been desperately trying to capture something of the nature of the rainforest, echoing Wilson Harris, and writers who went before me.

Obviously, I take a boat into the interior but I don't spend the night. Because you don't want to spend the night in the rainforest. You want to go with all your intuitive faculties raw and then you want to encounter the rainforest and then after a few hours you want to return to the nearest rumshop, get back to Georgetown and urban safety (bandits are more tolerable than jungle snakes) and then you begin to write. Because you can't research your subject too much, you have to imagine it as well, which is my excuse to return to the safety of Georgetown.

So my last novel (*Johnson's Dictionary*, 2013) although it is revisiting slavery—because you have to keep going back to things—I was trying to make it green. I was greening the novel as I went along.

One of the things I also hope to do is actually make some money off my writing. When Bharrat Jagdeo was President of Guyana, he asked me how my books were doing. I said they were doing poorly, that a writer had to be banned or jailed to gain prominence and sales. Right away he said: "I'll ban you, David. You deserve it because of all the cuss words and vulgarity in your writing. Although you dedicated Counting House to Janet Jagan, she told me she didn't like your book because of all the swearing. And I'll jail you too, but I'll give you a key to get out secretly every night so you can go sporting, but you must promise to come back to your cell before dawn. I'll give you paper and fan and cockroach repellent and good curry to help you to write."

It was an extraordinary and most generous offer of patronage by Jagdeo, and I was on the brink of negotiating female company for my cell. I eventually turned it down because later that year everybody was breaking out of Georgetown prison, five one day, ten the next day, and so on, so the offer of being let out every night was no longer special or alluring. And I got married, so the female cell-mate bit was out. Still, as long as my sales remain poor, I live in hope of notoriety.

Claudette Richardson-Pious

Jamaica
Public & Civic Contributions (Joint)
2008

I was born in Kingston, Jamaica. My mother was a government pharmacist, who was transferred to rural Jamaica soon after I was born, and I grew up in Manchester, a country community, where I went to high school.

I think the rural environment cultivated a quietness and shyness in me, and it was only when my mother was transferred to Kingston, and I experienced urban life, that I really found myself. When I went to the Excelsior High School in Kingston, there was a drama department, which was key to my self-discovery.

I excelled in drama in Excelsior. The idea of dramatising what was inside and outside was a powerful transformation tool, and I decided I wanted to use drama to change lives and make social statements.

At that time, in my early teens, I had another transformative change. My mother migrated to Canada and left me to my aunt. My aunt had other children, but it was not a pleasant experience for me. Unfortunately, like many other children left in similar situations, I was taken advantage of. My mother sent money and clothes for me but I only got them after my cousins went through them. My aunt mismanaged and misplaced the money sent for me. In addition, I was made to do all the housework. I had to clean and cook, and do the washing, and what not. There was also psychological abuse as my aunt drummed into me that I would never succeed.

It was a difficult time for me. At that age, to have your life transformed like that can be traumatic, but I managed. Ms. Etta Whiteman, the guidance counselor at Excelsior was my saviour. She encouraged me, she did all the "hand-holding" when things went wrong.

Things did not improve when I went to live with my sister, when I was about 14. My father, who died when I was at Excelsior, had left a house and I was given a room there. Although he had not been there for "hands-on fathering", he had done his best to provide for me financially despite having many children. This new situation was better than where I had been before, but I was left to fend for myself. That is not a good experience for any child that age. Such experiences have devastated many people, but it was the opposite for me. It was the start of my desire to make sure this did not happen to anyone else. And from an early age, I was also driven to prove to my aunt that I could do well despite her predictions."

After Excelsior, I was very concerned about what I would do next. I entered Tastee Patties' annual Talent Competition, and I won a scholarship to what is now the Edna Manley School for the Visual and Performing Arts. I studied drama in education and

Mrs. Claudette Richardson-Pious

directing, and I was caught up in drama in education and community drama. Here, I found my niche.

I did my teaching practice at Kingston College and I was given a job there, teaching Religious Education and English Literature. I was a form teacher so in addition to teaching, I had to become a little more involved with the boys. I found that many of them had family issues. There were the problems with absent fathers, and neglectful mothers, compounded by the issues of poverty, lack of resources, like food, supplies, and a safe environment.

My friend Audrey Brown was the school's guidance counselor, and I found myself in her office a lot. After a time, I remember some boys running away, and not showing up for school at all. It was definitely not in a teacher's or guidance counselor's job description to go and look for them, but I got up one morning, and found out from the other boys that they went to a river, called Hope River, where they would spend the day, and then go back home.

I found Hope River, spent the day with them, and found out all their problems. I discussed this with Audrey and we started trying to provide whatever help we could in terms of meals, homework help and so on. However we realised that the extent of the problem was so great, a much larger intervention was needed. As a result, I found myself changing my focus from teaching to social work.

Once on my own, and realising that funds for this, like many other needed programmes, were scarce, I decided to focus on projects that would make people self-sufficient—teaching them how to fish, instead of providing fish.

I continued doing what I could at the school, and a little while after, there was an opening for a project officer at a remedial education and family welfare programme operated by Save the Children UK. This was in Spanish Town, former capital city of Jamaica. After the first interview in November, I went to Spanish Town to do some preliminary research. I held a Christmas party and found out about the boys: who they were, what they needed, and how best to help them. So by the second interview with Save the Children, I knew the area and I knew everything about the position, and it was difficult for them not to employ me.

I stayed with Save the Children till they left Jamaica in 1997, when their planners told them their resources were more acutely needed in Haiti. By that time I was a senior project officer. I could not close down my project; the residents, especially the hundreds of children, needed me in the community. So I asked Save the Children to provide funding support for a year after they departed, which they kindly agreed to. We then established Children First as a registered entity, but after the year, we had to find our own funding.

Once on my own, and realising that funds for this, like many other needed programmes, were scarce, I decided to focus on projects that would make people self-sufficient—teaching them how to fish, instead of providing fish. Another non government organisation (NGO), the World Food Programme, was leaving Jamaica, and I asked them if they could give me a grant to do training with the boys' parents. I also approached the Netherlands Embassy in Jamaica. With what we got, we were able to provide parents with skill training, and things like a sewing machine, a goat, some chickens—so the parents had some basic equipment to look after themselves. We also instituted a revolving micro-loan programme. One person got a loan, then another person, and the one who was next in line for it managed the loan.

As a result of our efforts, we began to see changes in the community. I remember one child was able to come to school more regularly since her mother had fewer "male partners" because she was more self-sufficient. Thereafter a lot of the children were attending school

regularly, and changes were positive. In the next phase, we started surveying the community to find what were the needed marketable skills. We discovered they were cosmetology, barbering and drapery making, and hence that informed our training programmes.

"One of the early things I felt was very important was to give young people ownership of the project. Children were elected to the board of directors, along with the parents, and I think in a way that was our saving grace. It got us noticed by UNICEF, with whom we forged a relationship which exists to this day. We were involved in child rights training and giving the young people a voice, and we were using community drama for change. We had groups who would go into a community and see what the problems were and we would develop drama presentations to promote positive solutions. Even our organisation's title, Children First, was determined by the youngsters—the result of a naming competition.

This Bashy Bus programme is youth driven, non-judgmental, and the young people feel comfortable. We go into communities, have discussions, and provide education on HIV/AIDS and reproductive health issues.

I went to the UWI where I studied Mass Communication, because I felt I needed to understand more about how

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to reach people via media as well as through institutional channels. I also completed Social Work at Cambridge University and have been working towards my doctorate at that same institution. By the time I entered UWI, I had started my family. I had two biological children and three adopted ones. Two of my children now work with me at Children First.

The next evolution in the organisation was in reaction to an external problem. In the 1990s, HIV/AIDS became a big issue, and there was a great deal of fear and a lack of knowledge. We decided it was crucial to start integrating the relevant, life saving information into our work. Simultaneously, we were able to take on the issue of youth sexuality. At the time in Kingston, there were many reports of young people engaging in sexual activities on the public transportation buses.

We initiated a focus group with young people and discussions about having a positive bus commenced, but the bus was a key icon in this programme. We felt that to create a bus that would go into communities and disseminate a positive message would be effective. We didn't know how we would do it, we didn't know where the money would come from, but we knew we wanted to make a difference. Infinity Tours donated an "engine-less" bus, and over time we were able to put a functioning bus together. This was called the "Bashy Bus".

At this time UNICEF became interested in supporting the project, but they wanted to do their own research, which had to be evidence based. Out of their commissioned baseline research the bus operated in three parishes, along the major transport route: at Spanish Town in St. Catherine, in Ocho Rios in St. Ann, and in Montego Bay and other districts in St. James. UNICEF's research confirmed our initial anecdotal findings, and based on the positive impact of the Bashy Bus initiative coupled with the 2010 findings from the midpoint assessment, they agreed on a second Bashy Bus for Children First and even supported the Bashy Bus' expansion to the North Eastern Region.

This Bashy Bus programme is youth driven, non-judgmental, and the young people feel comfortable. We go into communities, have discussions, and provide education on HIV/AIDS and reproductive health issues. After our initial success, we were able to partner with the Ministry of Health through USAID & Global Fund for funding support as well as Johnson and Johnson through the Resource Foundation. This has been one of our most successful programmes, and it was instrumental in my being awarded the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence - 2008 Joint Laureate for Public and Civic Contributions.

"Before the Caribbean Award for Excellence, Children First did not have a home, and I used the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Award money to make the deposit on a permanent space for our activities. I had a hard time securing a mortgage from the banks, but National Commercial Bank of Jamaica eventually gave one to us in 2012. Though it has been very challenging to meet the monthly payments we have begun exploring income generating activities and though not self sufficient in the interim, we continue in earnest. We live from one project to the next.

From our head-quarters at Monk Street in Spanish Town, we have continued to expand. The "Bashy Bus" currently operates in several troubled communities in Kingston, and Children First has two other outreach centres in Spanish Town. We have increased our extensive skills training programmes and we have been accredited by HEART/NTA, Jamaica's national training agency. Education, including urgently needed remedial education, continues to be a priority across the Agency's various programmes.

We are very gratified that Children First has been honoured at home and abroad, including the 2013 Michael Manley Award for Community Resilience, the Prime Minister Youth Award in 2011, the 1998 Press Association of Jamaica award for Excellence in Community Development, and in 2006, the Young Investigator Award—Women, Girls and HIV. The latter was received when the "Bashy Bus" Baseline Research was presented at the XVIII International HIV/AIDS Conference that year in Canada.

However, despite the accolades, and wide interest in replicating both the Children First model and the "Bashy Bus" model, resources continue to be a major challenge, as global funding sources are drying up and we have to generate funds locally. The support of funding agencies, corporate Jamaica, well-wishers and volunteers, has been a significant force in helping to keep our doors open. We have embarked on a number of income generating projects on our own. We have opened a docu-centre, and a fishing project. And I am pleased to say that we have been doing a lot of model-sharing of the project. We are talking to groups from other countries who wish to replicate our models. For example, we have spoken to groups in Belize, and Brazil has replicated the Bashy Bus programme model.

For me, this journey has been very challenging but quite rewarding. Empowering my fellow citizens, especially the children and young people to make meaningful contributions to their families and communities, has brought immense personal satisfaction".

In the 1990s, HIV/AIDS became a big issue, and there was a great deal of fear and a lack of knowledge. We decided it was crucial to start integrating the relevant, life saving information into our work.

Annette Arjoon-Martins

Guyana
Public & Civic Contributions (Joint)
2008

Growing up in the rural Pomeroon area was very instrumental in instilling a love for nature in me. I lived with my maternal grandmother, who was Arawak in a very simple, stilted wooden house. I always anticipated accompanying her to pick coffee.

She would spread a table cloth under a tree and leave me there with the dog, Lion, with the falling blossoms and the smell of the coffee all around. We would have family excursions to catch crabs. There were no roads. You had to paddle for half mile to get to school. These weren't boats. They were dugout canoes. And we didn't have life preservers but there was always a stalk of bamboo onboard because bamboo floats. If you had to visit a friend you swam across the river. That fearlessness of water has been very useful to me.

When I was a little older I moved to Georgetown to be educated, so to speak. Then I went to Codrington, a boarding school in Barbados. I earned my private pilot license at the Briko Flight School in Trinidad immediately afterwards and started flying the length and breadth of Guyana. That's when I discovered the north west—the most beautiful part of the country, in my opinion. I fell in love with the indigenous people and landscape. I started flying Dr. Crichlow, an English scientist, to Shell Beach and wound up wondering what he was doing there. I went with him on one trip and discovered the green sea turtle. They are big. Some of them are the size of a Volkswagen, and as a species, they evolved at the same time as the dinosaurs. I was in awe.

Dr. Crichlow would employ some of the former turtle hunters as turtle wardens but only a few people benefited from that. The people needed the sea turtle meat and eggs as a source of protein, and turtle-hunting was a subsistence activity. It didn't take me very long to realise that you can't address the needs of the turtles and ignore the community. There are Warahoons, Caribs and Arawaks there. I am half Amerindian. If I had a child that needed that turtle egg to survive I would dig it up myself.

I co-founded (with Dr. Peter Pritchard) the Guyana Marine Turtle Conservation Society in 2000. The first priority was to provide the community with alternatives. I looked for the natural resources they have there and found commercial markets for them. I spoke to Robert Badal of Guyana Stock Feeds and he agreed to buy every single pound of coconut copra (the dried kernel of coconuts, mainly used as feed for livestock) the women produced. So for the first time the people of Shell Beach had a market and they had cash to buy chicken eggs and meat. We got them ice boxes to store their fish for longer periods in exchange for not setting nets where turtles were nesting. Private sector collaboration made all the difference.

This was a good start, but I knew there was more to be done. We created a brand called North West Organics to act as a lever for developing business. The brand is represented by a shell-shaped label, specifically intended for products produced by North West communities within and adjacent to the Shell Beach protected area. It grew steadily, from four women producers in four communities in 2004 to 48 women from eight communities in 2008.

The NWO product line has expanded from salted moracut, cassava bread, and cassareep to cocoa sticks, crabwood oil, and soaps. Generous funding from the U.S. Agency of International Development (USAID), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the German-government-owned development bank, KFW, has enabled building to meet capacity demands, established and emphasized stringent quality controls, provided for the mechanisation of once laborious manual production, and has led to developing packaging, labeling and marketing appropriate for local, regional and international markets.

Reinvestment also was essential. For example, the 2008 award for Public & Civic Contributions in the amount of US$48,000 from the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence (ANSCAFE), was reinvested in the women's group to ensure continued capacity through a VSO placement and expansion of the Blue Flame Women's Group manufacturing building at Hosorroro.

Annette Arjoon-Martins with her children at the Awards Ceremony

Now the women's cassava bread is being exported to Trinidad and St. Lucia. They also sell cassava cassareep (a thick black liquid made from cassava root that is used to flavor and preserve sauces, especially Guyanese pepperpot) and organic cocoa sticks. There's a stall in the Georgetown Market where all the products are available. We handed the business over to the community so that they could run it in 2009, and they have done brilliantly. It goes to show that if you find the right people to work with they will sustain the effort. You can talk about conservation until the cows go home but if people aren't an integral part it isn't going to work.

NWO products are now known for their purely natural and organic characteristics, free of chemicals and preservatives, and which contributed significantly to the sustainable livelihood of the local Amerindian communities whilst protecting the area's natural resources. In order to achieve the distinctive label designation, communities were required initially to meet strict quality control standards and to provide evidence of direct conservation efforts. The efforts also were guided by fair trade principles to ensure equitable distribution of benefits to the indigenous producer communities.

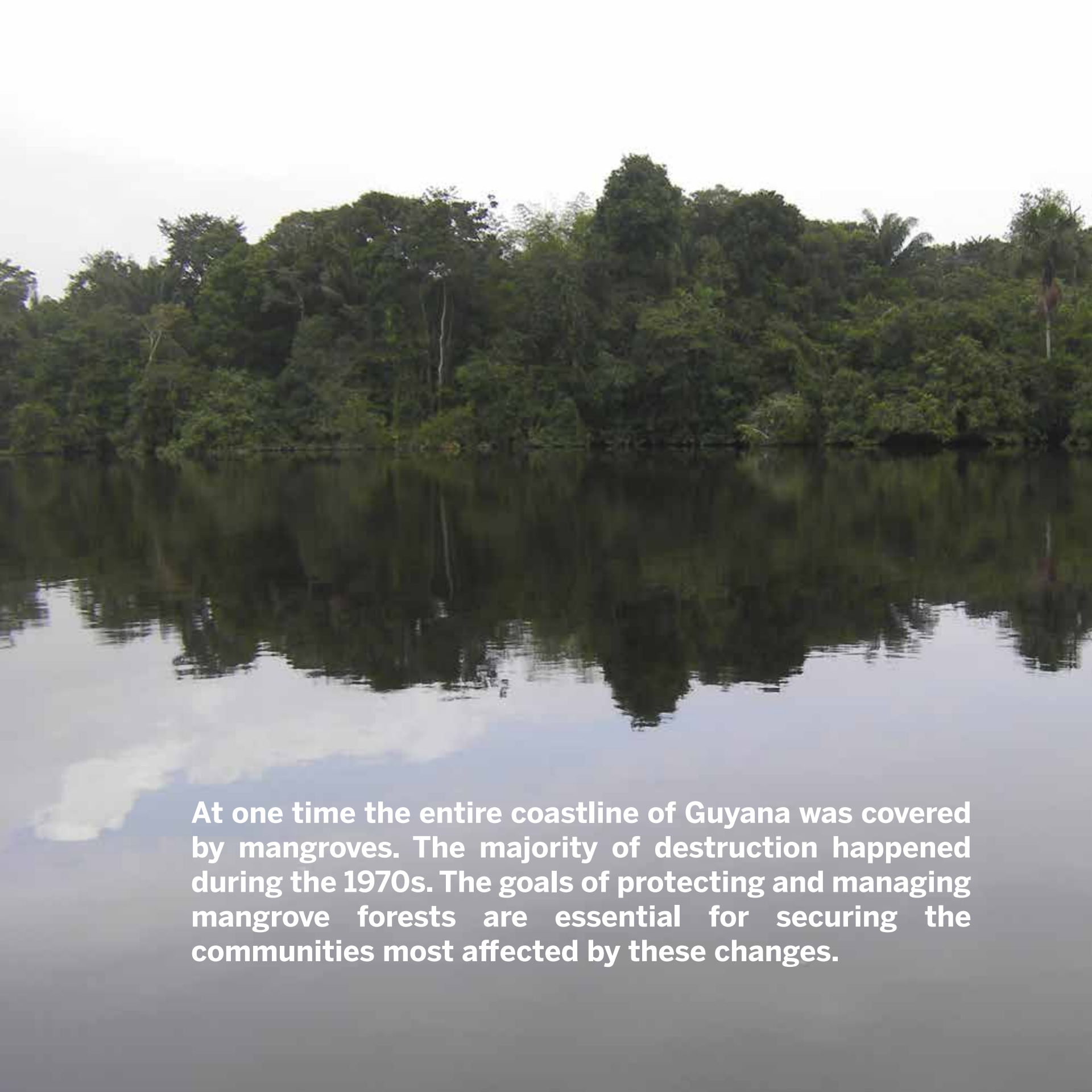
My opportunities for conserving and protecting the areas and communities to which I feel so connected were extended in 2010, when I was asked to chair the Guyana Mangrove Restoration Project (GMRP), sponsored by Guyana's government and the European Union.

Partnerships with retail outlets such as Bounty, Nigel and Bonnys's Supermarket Complex in Georgetown have made the 'Green Goodies' organic product line readily available.

Building trust-based partnerships with the Amerindian women producers occurred gradually and with much hands-on effort, underscoring the need to be patient for the long haul, as women not exposed to business world realities cannot survive by being thrust into them and then left on their own. When, in 2008, I handed over ownership of NWO completely to the community, the business was earning revenue of $3 million GY annually. Within three years after the transfer, the enterprise—managed by a Waini community resident—annual sales, which now include overseas markets, exceeded $8 million GY.

My opportunities for conserving and protecting the areas and communities to which I feel so connected were extended in 2010, when I was asked to chair the Guyana Mangrove Restoration Project (GMRP), sponsored by Guyana's government and the European Union. Traditionally, coastal mangrove forests are a critical part of sea defense, as they help to prevent erosion of the country's vulnerable coast which is seven feet below sea level and is being threatened by recent sea-level rise and increased wave force.

At one time the entire coastline of Guyana was covered by mangroves. The majority of destruction happened during the 1970s. The goals of



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protecting and managing mangrove forests are essential for securing the communities most affected by these changes and for identifying alternative sources of livelihood for residents in these communities. The project afforded opportunities to replicate the NOW concept with Amerindian women residing in coastal communities near mangrove forests, spanning Regions 4, 5, and 6.

A lot of people would cut mangroves down for fire wood because of all the restrictions. That was a time when people had to line up to get cooking gas. Now Guyana is experiencing the effects of climate change and people are seeing that where there are no (mangrove) forests water comes over and floods their communities. We would have to spend US$5million to build one mile of concrete sea wall. Restoring and protecting mangroves frees us up to spend that money in the social sector. In the last few years, we have planted more than 65,000 seedlings over a 3.8 km stretch. I was at the climate change conference in Belize in April and I presented on the project. They didn't believe all of this was happening in Guyana.

Shell Beach has been identified as a protected area and the 100 mile coastline is now a priority site. We have (EUR) $4.1 million for four years. What I am doing with the Mangrove Project is basically linking with and supporting coastal communities. Without the community buy-in and support everything else will fail. If you don't get the community involved from day one when the project funding comes to an end they will cut down the mangrove again.

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We're also working to educate and provide communities with funding to do their own conservation activities. For example there's a group of women beekeepers who have their hives in a three mile stretch of mangrove forest. They said that if we assist in the packaging and distribution of their honey they will take responsibility for protecting the forests and sensitising their neighbours.

At one of the sites that is just 25 minutes from Georgetown we're training the community to do tour-guiding so there's a tourism spin off. The Buxton Steel Band plays the mangrove jingle and they spread the message. We sponsored another community's cricket team. If you try to reach certain target groups fliers will not do. The community initiatives are out of the box and pragmatic. We've also had huge support from the private sector. There are billboards all along the coastline and we didn't have to pay for a single one.

A line of products capitalising upon a mangrove reserve brand was launched at a farmers' market in 2011, which was sponsored by Digicel. The company also expedited the brand awareness process by ordering 350 gift baskets for corporate customers during the Christmas season. More than 50 producers, mainly women, offer products including golden mangrove honey, handmade beeswax candles, cassava bread, tamarind balls, coconut oil, mango anchar and pepper sauce. The group became an NGO in late 2012 and received shortly thereafter support of GY$4 million from the Canadian Fund for Livelihood Initiative which enabled branding, packaging, labelling and a processing facility at Victoria Village.

The products also have been sold at the Mangrove Visitor Center, which was established in the 160-year-old former sugar estate house at Cove and John. Producer members now serve as tour guides to heighten awareness of conservation efforts and the activities of East Coast villages for thousands of students and tourists.

The Golden Grove/Belfield Mangrove Reserve, just 20 minutes from Georgetown, has become a

popular destination, along with the sprawling three-storey plantation house at the Village of Cove and John with its greenheart beams, pine floors and antique cast iron pillars. Columns made from bricks brought to Guyana as ballast for sailing ships in colonial days support the building's front gallery. Richly colored banners chronicle the mangrove story in detail, and an intricate hand-painted mural of the coastline depicting coastal forests and diverse birdlife are part of the permanent display.

Coastal villagers have found new enriching occupations, working as tour guides, horse-cart drivers, cane juice vendors, musicians, beekeepers, and agri-products producers. The impact took root quickly, as the group recently earned the Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana's Environmental Award and Caribbean Tourism Organisation's Biodiversity Conservation Award.

These experiences have demonstrated the value of just how effective these locally based ventures become, especially with the encouragement of mentors who understand that the transition to a modern business world cannot be rushed or expedited at the loss of the area's most important resources. The lesson's significance was magnified each time I visited these communities, which were at least one day's travel from Georgetown.

The Guyanese Government has been instrumental in fostering environmental sustainability. In the early 1990s President Desmond Hoyte gifted the world with one million hectares of rainforest. Then President Bharrat Jagdeo decided to put this country on a low carbon drive pathway. We know we have 85 percent of our rainforests still intact but you can't just tell people not to do timbering and gold mining anymore.

In terms of putting our country in the stewardship role, economists saw the value. We should be paid to keep our rainforest intact for the rest of the world. The Government of Norway already advanced Euro70 million towards preservation of the forests. Guyana is looking at alternative energy in terms of hydroelectricity and we're working with Suriname on that. Who would have ever thought Guyana would be working with Suriname? Obviously we're doing something that should be emulated regionally.

The thing that has surprised me the most is that the communities themselves have all the answers. We don't need highfalutin scientists to tell us what to do. These grassroots people are sincere and pragmatic. They are the real heroes, especially the women. In my own journey, learning to juggle time as a mother with two children in their formative years, I gained great respect for how these women were motivated to embrace a newfound sense of preserving the most natural assets in their communities while forging innovative paths as beneficiaries of fair trade principles and a thriving economy.

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Dr. James Husbands

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Barbados
Science & Technology, 2008

I was born in 1949, in St. Martins, Barbados, a country parish. My mother worked in the family farm, and my father was a carpenter. They both emigrated to the US by the time I was five.

My mother later worked as a domestic, and later immigrated to New York, where she would spend 24 years before retiring and returning to live in Barbados.

Eunice Husbands my grandmother, was responsible for most of my upbringing, and perhaps had the greatest influence on my early life. I traveled with her during my holidays on our donkey cart to dig and sell sweet potatoes. On Saturdays, she made and sold pudding and souse, and I would assist her and go to surrounding districts like Harlington, Penny Hole (now Gemswick) and Rock Hall to sell the Bajan delicacy.

My grandfather, Cyril Husbands, worked at the nearby estates, Oldbury, and Foursquare Sugar Factory. I recall the many pleasant times I would visit him at his "quarters" at Oldbury and Foursquare. Growing up in a typical country environment, my family planted and sold ground provisions, such as cassava, sweet potatoes, and peanuts. We also grew some sugar cane. The breadfruit tree in "the Alley" still bears to this day.

My grandmother grew, ripened and sold bananas to the neighbours, and her sister, Aunt Maude, made and sold sugar cakes. I remember the excitement when the workers on the Light and Power trucks started to drop these long poles in the district, and we were told that we were going to get electricity. Before that, only the Church and the Vicarage had electricity from a diesel dynamo. I went to St. Martin's Boy's School, and later to Princess Margaret Secondary and passed a few subjects in the School Leaving Certificate. Afterwards, I attended the Christ Church High School, where I did the GCE.

I was successful only in history. I was regarded as "a slow learner". My track and field did not start well at Princess Margaret, coming last in the 100-yards in First Form, and beaten by my good friend Victor Bonnet. I came first in the high jump, beating the supreme athlete Anthony Lovell, who later took me to the Headmaster for "kicking" the basketball later the same week.

I placed third and second in the 100- and 220-yard races. During the Christmas vacations, I worked at Cave Shepherd, Barbados' largest department store. There I would earn my school fees for Christ Church High. A customer, Mrs. Anthony Tempro, arranged an interview for my first job after leaving school, at her husband's company, A & R Tempro Ltd. I had assisted her in selecting toys for her family for two years.

I joined A & R Tempro and sold Proctor and Gamble and other products, including Clorox and Tide. The first product the sales manager,

Victor Miller, gave me to sell was Durex condoms. In those days you had to be very circumspect when approaching the sales clerks at supermarkets and drug stores about the product, to discuss their stock level, and to take the order. You had to wait until the counter was clear of customers. I became one of the leading sales representatives at A & R Tempro Ltd.

The St. Martin's Anglican Church became a central part of my life; joining the choir at an early age, and singing a solo at the harvest festival entitled "Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling". A family friend, Ms Kate, gave me a pair of chickens as a reward. I later became a member of the Anglican Young People's Association. I was taught to serve at the altar by Allamby Marshall. I later became Chief Server, and later a Lay Reader.

My neighbour, Erskine Prescod taught me to play the chiming bells at St. Martin's. I served during the tenures of Rev Alfred Hatch and Rev Leslie Lett, with the oversight of G Gardner Weekes, the Sexton and chief church organiser. I spent a lot of my spare time around the church and the vicarage; I assisted Mrs. Pearl Hatch with her gardening, and had a section of my own where I planted eschalot, which was sold to the Barbados Marketing Corporation.

But the real genesis of the company was the energy crisis of the 1970s. Rev Hatch had built one for his own house, and he felt it was an appropriate technology, and it had commercial potential.

I moved to Black Rock, St. Michael, and joined St. Stephen's Anglican Church. At St. Stephen's I served as Lay Reader, Server, and sang in the choir. I later served as President of the AYPA, and as President of St. Stephen's Men's Fellowship. At St. Stephen's I served during the tenures of Canon Basil Ullyett, and Fr Frank Marshall. I was a member of the Church Council, and a Diocesan Representative.

When the Up-with-People Movement group from Jamaica toured Barbados under the auspices of the Lion's Club, and formed Sing Out Barbados, I was one of the founder members and later became Co-Coordinator of the group. I was invited to become a founder member of the Kiwanis Club of Bridgetown when it was formed. I later served as the Kiwanis President for two consecutive years. I was selected as a Distinguished Past President.

The Kiwanis was formed by a group of businessmen in Bridgetown, and I was the youngest member when it was formed. Kiwanians K Howard Spencer, Senator Marcus Jordan (later Sir Marcus), K Chesterfield Thompson and Charter President K Lionel Richards, were the leading lights who provided the vital guidance to the young club.

I started my own business at 22 years old, called Husbands Marketing Agency. During my tenure at A&R Tempro Ltd, a family friend called me and introduced me to a job opportunity at Oran Ltd. That company was a manufacturer of windows, doors and a range of aluminum furniture to become their salesman. It was a new area for me, but I did fairly well in it, but at one point, like most employees, felt my efforts weren't sufficiently recognised.

Oran Ltd had facilitated a sales training course for me. I had the desire to be better trained, and wanted to do the Dale Carnegie course. When my boss would not facilitate it, I did it on my own. I developed a desire to work on a commission basis, having calculated that it would be more remunerative, and that my salary would reflect my performance more accurately.

My dissatisfaction peaked when I came in late one morning, and my boss expressed his unhappiness. He was not aware that I had worked late the night before developing sales with building contractors. I started to think about a different model for my employment. I worked out that I could offer a wider range of building materials to the same Building Contractors which I could source from various companies, and be paid on a commission basis.

Husbands Marketing became a reality in 1972, and later became Buildec. We started by selling windows and doors for H Jason Jones, plywood for E Johnson & Co, which later became Blades and Williams Ltd and floor tiles for Harriett Enterprises. Other items were later added. We soon obtained the agency for Dunlop floor tiles out of the UK, and the business grew from there. We installed floor tiles for some major projects of that day such as The Barbados Workers Union Labour College at Mangrove, St. Philip, The Advocate, and Goddard's Supermarket on Fontabelle.

This is the business I was in, when Rev Andrew Hatch asked me to source some materials which he wanted, for the purpose of building a solar water-heater. Rev Hatch was using the design of Prof. Tom Lawand of McGill University. Prof. Lawand's "low cost solar heater" had been developed in the 1960's, on one of his visits to Barbados. This was the first time that I had heard about a solar water heater.

Later that year, Bishop Drexel Gomez, a member of the Christian Action for the Development of the Eastern Caribbean, CADEC's Board of Directors invited me to join a small group who were interested in the idea of making the project a business. My role was to sell the product. The idea to form a company to make the solar water heaters was the brainchild of Rev. Andrew Hatch, who by then was happy with the unit which he had made. This was at the time of the first energy crisis, and Andrew felt that this was the appropriate technology for water heating. A shed was donated, and was located at the St. Mary's Old People's Home. Lindsay Greaves, a server of St. Mary's Church where Andrew had previously served as Rector, would assume responsibility for the water heating systems.

The group included some young persons seeking their first job. The infant industry had much to achieve by way of making the product aesthetically acceptable, and its performance competitive. Many changes were required to make the system more functional and aesthetically pleasing, while seeking to build and knit a production and installation team. My role was intended to be that of sales generation, while Lindsay's role was to build and install the systems.

We have managed to convince the government of Barbados of the wisdom of our product, and philosophy. Our first commercial job was for the government (of Barbados) in 1976.

We had a demonstration unit installed at my office at Buildec, located in the DV Scott Building, at White Park Road, where we sold floor coverings and some other items. We moved there thanks to Mr. Ishi Kessaram, who encouraged me to rent a portion of the building, and who made the transition from my garage at home in Brighton, an attractive one, with low initial rent. Later, thanks to Mr. John Patterson of Plantations Ltd, we were able to acquire the Ash and Watson Building next door at White Park Road. The demonstration unit's installation provided much information and confirmation of client's expressed concern about noise, worker attitude, and workmanship which needed to be addressed.

It became clear that the work the Buildec team of trained and experienced workers did would be impacted negatively if we failed to bring the solar team up to the professional level required. The challenges were many: redesigning the product; reengineering the concept from a low-cost solar water heater to a solar water heater of great performance; redirecting and training the workforce to meet higher standards.

The Board of Directors of CADEC, a division of the Caribbean Conference of Churches, had approved a loan for Solar Dynamics for Bds$8,400, to make, sell, and install solar water heaters. One

of the Board's directors, John Stanley Goddard, (later Sir John) offered to have Geoff Nanton of the Goddard Group of Companies to provide a market survey for the young company.

The purchase of the second hand vehicle to transport the workers, tools and equipment to the job sites took the first $5,000 of the $8,400. The shareholders had put in some $3,000. It would be quite an understatement to say that Solar Dynamics started out undercapitalised. I recently met a gentleman who introduced himself as being one of the CADEC staffers who prepared the paper for the infant company. I couldn't resist asking him just how they arrived at $8,400. "That's what we thought the board would approve," he said.

Solar Dynamics has survived many challenges and threats to its existence. Soon after the company started, Solahart, a well-established Australian solar water heater was imported. The importer invited me to his office, and offered me a job to sell his product, "as we should stop trying to make them". I turned down his offer, and he wrote me the following day, saying I was "a belligerent young man". I made a secret vow that our product would be as good or better than Solahart. Based on FSEC tests, we have achieved it.

I was "a belligerent young man". I made a secret vow that our product would be as good or better than Solahart. Based on FSEC tests, we have achieved it.

Andrew reported that one of our benefactors had offered to have his conglomerate buy shares in the company, and he was asked to enquire about our interest in selling the group some shares. I responded in the negative. The message which came back was that "should we not sell them shares, they would start their own solar company and run us out of business."

Emile, our reliable plumber came in on two occasions stating that he was stopped while on duty by a competitor and offered a job. Soon after, concerns were raised when all of the jobs Emile did ended up leaking. Thinking that he might have been tired, we asked him to take his holiday, and to get some rest. The first job on his return also leaked.

Grantley, our installation supervisor, reported receiving a visit at his home from the same person who allegedly stopped Emile, when we won a major contract on the west coast. He was being offered a job at a critical time. I have been very fortunate to have had some outstanding co-workers over the years. Chief among them has been Ivan Franklyn. Ivan joined me a year after we started, on a part-time basis. He later chose to join us full time. Ivan represents what every person would want in a co-worker. He is reliable, dedicated, honest, resilient, technically gifted, and enjoys a challenge. I owe a debt of gratitude to Ivan, and his wife, Uriel.

The commitment of Andrew and Sheila Hatch has gone further than simply being the "father and mother" of the project. Mrs. Sheila Hatch contributed from her financial resources on many occasions when the company did not have funds. The benefits which have been derived have been well and truly earned. I have been overwhelmed at the public recognition of our work. The Government of Barbados honoured me in 1994 with the Gold Crown of Merit for our work in saving energy.

This national Independence Award has meant quite a lot to me. Becoming the first Barbadian to win the prestigious regional Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Award for Excellence in Science & Technology in 2008, was a signal achievement for me and Barbados. Being judged by a panel of eminent regional scholars, and coming out the winner is an achievement of mammoth proportion.

This is a regional competition that deserves to be highly recognised across the region. Its benefits include the awareness of critical work being done by a wide cross section of persons in the region, whose immense

contribution might have otherwise gone unrecognised. There are many winners in the competition, which is based on fellow citizens observation of these works, and not by application of the participants.

The Caribbean Awards has set a new regional recognition agenda, the likes of which have never been seen in the region. Its financial assistance to the winners is a new benchmark. The World Renewable Energy Network Pioneer Award, presented to me in Scotland, means much to me as well. It means that Solar Dynamics, Barbados and the Caribbean are recognised as leaders in renewable energy technology in the wider world. The value we have brought to the table as a region is worthwhile to the wider world. We have a story to tell. A story which is welcomed in the local, regional and international community; among scientists and researchers, and with a product which is enjoyed by the public we have the honour to serve.

So if we’ve done well, it’s only because we kept learning, constantly looking for ways to improve the quality and performance of the product. Dr. Ronald Wilson, one of our early clients was unhappy with the performance of the product—he felt that the temperature should have been hotter than what we had delivered. After much discussion and customer unhappiness, I thought that we should have a stated temperature against which the product could be measured. I therefore created the world’s first known “Temperature Guarantee” on a solar water heater.

Solar water heaters are the lowest cost item that allows a family to get into the green economy.

A unit, which costs about US $2,500 would last 15–20 years, and saves that family 4,000 kWh or about US $1,600 in energy cost per year in the Caribbean, except for Trinidad. The US Agency for International Development (USAID) found that the Barbados solar water heating industry had been the most successful of all renewable Energy Technologies in the Caribbean.

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The temperature guarantee has been cited by Oak Ridge National Lab, as a significant measure in the achievement of success in the industry.

A late friend, Aldo Coen, who was my supplemental banker, had a poster in his study I would read every time I visited him. It read: "There is a way to do it better; find it!—Albert Einstein." I have been influenced profoundly by those words, and have sought to live by them. My own philosophy of perpetual improvement does not always sit well with some of my work colleagues. A lot of people hold to the old maxim: "if it ain't broke, don't fix it". I like to think: "Let's break it and make it better".

Our continuous improvements have been appreciated by our customers, and they like to boast about how hot the water is, and how long the system has lasted. That is good for consumer confidence, especially in a home-grown product. Consumers like our solar water heaters because they save them enormous amounts of money.

The penetration of solar water heaters in the Barbados market is the highest per 1,000 households in the Western Hemisphere, and the fifth highest in the world. Austria, Israel, Cyprus and Greece are the other nations ahead of us in market penetration. In the Caribbean, Grenada, and St. Lucia are the two markets which are growing well, followed by Guyana.

One of the great benefits of using renewable energy, and solar energy in particular, is that the energy which you use today, in no way affects the energy which is available to you tomorrow. Using gas or electricity to heat water is a waste of a precious resource and it's an avoidable expense. The solar water heater of 80-gallon capacity saves the equivalent of 4,000 kWh of energy per year, 3.7 barrels of oil, and .424 tons of carbon emission.

For Trinidad & Tobago, whose industrial base is high, the need to reduce the carbon emission is vital. The late Prof. Oliver Headley and Dr. Indra Haraksingh of the University of the West Indies (St. Augustine) brought together a number of Caribbean persons interested in sustainable energy some 20 years ago in Antigua. The Caribbean Solar Energy Society since then has been at the forefront of galvanising interest in renewable energy, and has been working with the World Renewable Energy Network to enhance the public interest and technical knowledge in the various renewable energy industries.

Every two years the World Renewable Energy Network draws together professors in the various disciplines and university students involved in research, to present their papers and to discuss current developments and technical breakthroughs in scientific and practical research. Four of us from the Caribbean have been recognised for our contributions, including the late Prof. Headley, the late Dr. Raymond Wright of Jamaica, Dr. Indra Haraksingh of UWI St. Augustine, and myself.

My interest allows me to combine the manufacturing capability of our product with scientific data. The mentorship of students at these sessions is very important. I recall that at our meeting in Scotland in 2008, an engineering student was doing a presentation on temperature stratification, in which I did an intervention.

He did further research, and sent me an email of thanks, as it assisted him in his final project. For the past five years we

have provided students placements for summer. The attachment is for13 weeks. We have had Barbadian, Trinidadian and French students in this program. We usually get at least six applications from French Students for attachment to Solar Dynamics.

The Government of Barbados is committed to the full development of renewable energy. Successive Governments have utilised solar hot water systems in its various projects, especially housing projects. The first solar water heating job was at Oxnards Estate, St. James and took place with the assistance of Abdul Pandor and Louis Redman in 1976. Most of those units are still functioning today.

In 1980, the late Prime Minister Tom Adams introduced the first tax benefit for home owners who installed solar water heaters. This was after he had installed a Solar Dynamics hot water system at his home in St. George, and found that his 100-lb cylinder of bottled gas lasted 13 weeks rather than the three weeks it traditionally lasted when his family used gas for heating water and cooking.

The combination of business success and environmental awareness also attracted the attention of the UWI's Cave Hill business faculty. The management department at the UWI invited me to be its "Entrepreneur in Residence" for a year. This could be a useful programme to students and for consultation on projects.

Since the Obama administration took office in the USA, there has been heightened interest in renewable energy. Some European states have major goal-setting for carbon-emission reduction. In Scotland, you can't sell your home unless it is approved as having the appropriate carbon footprint for its size. These developments lead me inexorably to think that at some time in the future, the Caribbean is likely to be hit with carbon footprint issues, especially when it comes to the tourism industry.

People who are conscious of their carbon footprint in their homeland are unlikely to want to come to holiday in a place where it doesn't matter how much energy is used. So at a national and regional level this is something you need to start looking at, and addressing.

Since the Obama administration took office in the USA, there has been heightened interest in renewable energy. Some European states have major goal-setting for carbon-emission reduction.

It can become a non-tariff barrier for the hospitality industry. We don't want to wake up and be caught in that trap. My interest in manufacturing and energy include the use of clay as a resource.

Energy efficiency is very important to us in the region. Keeping our homes naturally cool as well as reducing the air conditioning load in the building will save us energy, and money, while making our homes more comfortable.

The use of our abundant clay resources in the region for roofing will reduce the heat in our buildings, as well as give us much longer lifespan of our roofs. This would lead to less foreign exchange being wasted for the replacement of roofing with a short lifespan. Clay roofing is the economically sensible option for housing in the region, when one looks at the resource availability, and the fact that it is the recurring cost which eats up the foreign exchange. The challenge lies in increasing output to drive unit cost down. This would lead to affordability of the products.

Barbados has beautiful clay and some of the most extensive reserves in the region. In 1989, an opportunity arose to become involved in the clay industry, because of difficulties Building Supplies Ltd faced.

We established a company called Claytone, to acquire the assets of Building Supplies Ltd, which had twice gone into receivership. The plant makes tiles, floor and roof, and bricks. It started back in the 1960s by a Frenchman, Mr. Fred La Foret. He brought with him two Italians, the Piccoli brothers. We became involved in the clay industry in 1989, at the invitation of Dr. Glenville

Phillips, the receiver on behalf of the Caribbean Development Bank.

It's a deep industry, requiring a deep pocket. A lot of capital is needed to keep the plant running continuously. As a small enterprise we face the multiple challenges of many small enterprises: attracting the level of capital and technical resources required; Accessing the international technical assistance available; Training and retaining intelligent, resilient and resourceful work force and retaining the reporting guidelines, and controls which are vital.

Claytone has tremendous potential to make a significant contribution to our national and regional well-being. The plant has tremendous potential, in converting the raw clay into a long-lasting product. Some clay roofs from the 1960s still look like new today. So from a foreign exchange and thermal perspective, clay is the best choice for a roof, across the Caribbean. This means saving foreign exchange for the repeat cycle, which is about 15-20 years for most roofs.

This is a very interesting and challenging time for the region. Energy is the lifeblood of all development. We need to develop more renewable energy and to distribute that energy where it is needed economically. The region is blessed with hydro energy, geo thermal, waves, wind and of course solar energy everywhere. We have to continue to develop our region, but on a more sustainable path. At the same time we must eliminate the pockets of poverty in the region through gainful employment or self-employment activities.

The next large investment in the expansion of renewable energy in the region will be solar electricity. Householders and businesses will have the opportunity to have sunlight provide most or all of their electricity needs. Solar Dynamics will be working to build on the footprint which it has had a good hand in shaping.

I wish to thank God Almighty for the blessings which he has given me. The challenges through which He has grown me: the patient endurance taught. I know that the work on me is not yet complete, and I pray that I will have the knowledge and fortitude to continue in this work. I thank my wife Cynthia for taking great care of me. To my son, Warren, and my daughter, Joy, I wish God's abundant blessings. To the ANSA Foundation, much thanks for your good work. May God richly bless you.

This is a very interesting and challenging time for the region. Energy is the lifeblood of all development. We need to develop more renewable energy and to distribute that energy where it is needed economically.

2010 Laureates
Dr. Adrian Augier
Prof. Kathleen Coard, CBE
Sydney Allicock

2010

Introduction

Professor E Nigel Harris
Vice Chancellor, University of the West Indies

I am honoured to have been invited to prepare a few words to preface the introduction of the winners of the 2010 Anthony N. Sagba Caribbean Awards for Excellence. As part of my preparation, the Foundation shared with me a collection of essays on Excellence prepared for the 2006 inception Awards.

I was struck by some of the values inherent in that collection of essays prepared by some of the most prominent academics, protectors of heritage and culture, and public servants across the region. Excellence and the ever moving target of attaining perfection or near-perfection were omnipresent of course, so was the need to constantly challenge oneself mentally and physically, as well as the status quo.

There was also the creative tension between personal and national or regional interests and the preservation and upholding of integrity in all that we do. Important to note were also the importance of service to humanity without servitude and the need to be mature enough to recognise the necessity of upholding and improving the livelihoods of others around us as the means by which humanity could and would survive and thrive into the foreseeable future. Another defining characteristic of maturity is the capacity to recognise and reward the achievements of those around you.

The emergence of indigenous Caribbean recognition and award schemes is indicative of a region coming into its own and confident of its identity and achievements. The Anthony N. Sagba Caribbean Awards for Excellence is a superb example of such a programme that embodies all the qualities and values mentioned above, and owes its conception to the Hon. Dr. Anthony N. Sagba, Founding Chairman of the ANSA McAL Group, himself a visionary who has demonstrated

Professor E Nigel Harris

his commitment to the people and countries of this region through the establishment of regional industries that have contributed to improving the livelihoods of Caribbean people.

Established in 2005, the programme recognises stellar Caribbean achievements and contributions in the categories of Arts and Letters, Science and Technology, and Public and Civic Contributions. It also takes

into consideration the potential for even greater achievements by each of the recipients and importantly too, their potential for leadership in their respective fields.

The Award serves as an incentive to the recipients to continue to excel and as an inspiration to others. Although the Foundation which manages this award is based in Trinidad and Tobago, the Award is regional in nature and the recipients to date have been truly representative of the region's diversity and talent. They are all (relatively) young, have broken new ground in their respective fields, continue to give of their talent and skills to this region we love so much, for which they continue to be recognised and elevated in various ways. This year's honourees are no different.

From Jamaica in the North through Saint Lucia to Guyana on the South American mainland, their achievements speak to an unswerving commitment to improving the lot of their fellow human beings through their disciplines, service to their communities, countries, region and the rest of the world. Their work collectively spans healing, cultural development and community-based activism.

In the category of Science and Technology, the 2010 recipient is Professor Kathleen Coard, a Grenadian by birth who makes Jamaica her home. Professor Coard has the distinction of being the first female graduate of the UWI to be appointed Professor of Pathology at the UWI and she is currently engaged in teaching and research in the field of medical pathology. Her achievements have been recognised by regional and international organisations and she serves on several commissions and committees in keeping with her professional interests. Her scholarship and other contributions have also been recognised by the University of the West Indies and national and international organisations.

The 2010 recipient of the Award in the Arts and Letters category is Mr. Adrian Augier of Saint Lucia. A cultural entrepreneur and advocate for the creative arts, Mr. Augier is also an acclaimed poet. An economist by training with accumulated years of service with the Government of Saint Lucia, the World Bank, the European Union, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), USAID and the OECS, he also serves as a development consultant.

However, his definitive contributions have been in the cultural sphere. He is Co-Chair of the CARICOM Task Force on the Development of Cultural Industries and has served on the Festival Directorate for CARIFESTA, last held in Guyana in 2008. His contributions to the development of culture in the region have been recognised nationally and regionally.

Mr. Sydney Allicock, a Toshao (or Chief) of an indigenous Amerindian village in the South of Guyana is the 2010 recipient in the category of Public and Civic Contributions. Mr. Allicock is passionate about promoting sustainable eco-tourism in the hinterlands of Guyana and is also an advocate for the preservation of the indigenous culture of Guyana. He has received many national awards for the work he has done in improving the livelihoods of the hinterland Amerindian communities and he continues to serve as a trainer with Iwokrama, a rainforest conservation and development project aimed at showing how tropical forests can be conserved and sustainably used to provide ecological, social and economic benefits to local, national and international communities.

Together, these 2010 laureates represent an important triad: the environment, the people who must protect that environment and the cultural elements that provide the essential psyche for our continuing evolution as a Caribbean civilisation. My warmest congratulations are extended to each of them and to the previous laureates. They are shining examples of all that we can be and do, and an inspiration for future generations of Caribbean people.

Dr. Adrian Augier

St. Lucia
Arts & Letters, 2010

These ANSA people in Trinidad say they want another article again. To put in an other pretty magazine. Again. And I wondering if any body really will read this thing they asking me to write. About myself. That is not an easy thing, you know. To write about yourself. And any way, who want to read that? Least of all, you.

But maybe that don't really matter. Because once you write it, it is born. And it becomes a thing that can make you smile and cry, that you can put down and come back to, anytime you feel to see how you was feeling then, and what you had say. So if people read it, well off course, you glad. But if they don't, well, it is still there. And you can love it. Like a child you yourself make.

But these ANSA people not easy. One of them, a fella call Raymond, only writing me every week for six weeks now, to ask me how it coming. And I want to tell him it coming, and it going. Because that that is the truth. But you know I cannot say that. Because my mother raise me to have manners. And to besides, that would be unkind. It is not everything you think, that you must say. Even if is true.

For instance, I would never say how these people give me one award since how many years now… maybe two, maybe three. I want to it count on my fingers. Because at this hour of morning words does come more easily than numbers. But even if I can't too well remember, I know is not so long. Best to look at the certificate and see.

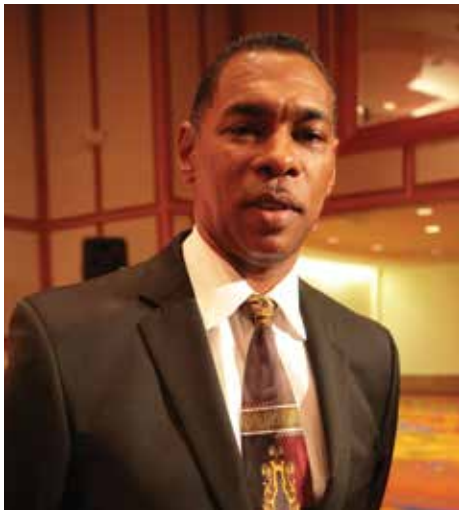
Any way, as I get up early, I will try and write this thing they asking me. Lord, look daybreak coming and brown doves already start to croon at morning light. And raindrops making little secrets in the guttering around the roof, and gurgling down the drain pipe beside the kitchen window where the sun does come in as it please, as soon as it rise up over the hills to the east.

And all of a sudden, I say, but wait. There don't have no rooster around here to wake up people in the morning? You know, it is 15 years we living in this house and I never think bout that before. So now, I listening careful careful. And yes, not too close, but down in the valley, I hearing one or two crowings, mix up with other early morning sounds. Like the car engine of that sagaboy fella, Cornelius, who must be only now rushing home. And I say, yes off course, this is the Caribbean. Blackpeople always have a fowlcock raising somewhere.

And as I say that, I think it is a Trini writer, Somebody Lovelace, that join up black and people into one word. And so I love to see it write down. It feel like a newborn nation. All shades of colours. All over the world. One word yes. Blackpeople.

So any way, it is early morning. I feel I say that already. But that is when I does

Dr. Adrian Augier



So as I was saying, my Linda still sleeping. She need more rest than me. Because she does work so hard for that big super market. The one the Trinis buy out. People say Massive Massy taking over. But I don't fret too much. After all, it is so all about in these islands. And elsewhere too. You must be prepared to sell out what you have, so that the place could grow and grow and grow.

I don't too well understand it. Because what sense you get a big job and work hard all your life, and nothing don't belong to you in your own country.

My own children gone America. It is only two of us remaining in this big house now. Me and my Linda. And two dogs and one cat. Today, it is only me that wake up already. And the cat.

write, mostly. Not about myself, mine you. But other things. The country. The sjupidness the guverment does be doing. Young people today, and this life that changing so fast no one can't hardly keep up.

My own children gone America. It is only two of us remaining in this big house now. Me and my Linda. And two dogs and one cat. Today, it is only me that wake up already. And the cat. And as I sit down in the kitchen, I hearing the galvanise roof rousing itself. And I thinking to make some coffee. I thinking about the smell. The taste. The whole ceremony of the dark dry coffee receiving its hot water. How the steam will ascend like incense. How the warm blue cup does fit in the curve of my palm. Yes, I like coffee. But it don't like me. Plenty gas.

But it is so things running. And they say all countries want what it is…? Foreign Investment. And foreign is good. Not so…?

Any way, I as usual sit down at the kitchen table in that quiet first light and I consider, I best write down this damn thing now. Because I done promise the people they will get it by weekend. Latest. One Miss Neilsons call me only yesterday. And I feel bad. Because she say is me one that they still waiting on. But then again I consider, my story must be important. Because if it was me had to print a magazine, and one man don't send his article, I done call that george, gone to press, and crapaud smoke his pipe.

Any way, that is the price I suppose, when people help you. And they really help me yes. It is because of them that I still able to be doing my little writings, and making big Mas' with real meaning, and offering workshops for young people who feel they writing poetry. And it is because of them I can be producing plays with Mr. Derek Walcott.

Now that ole shabin could write. It is he, not me who call himself so. But you never listen to mate's words in a play like Pantomime. We produce that last November. A story about two fellas. One white. One black. In a rundown Tobago hotel. A guest house really. The white fella from England. He come with all kind of pretentious airs and graces, like he still in the days of Empire. But is the black fella who really in charge.

And a year or so before that, we produce O Starry Starry Night. The actors come from Trinidad, England, Paris. That sell out !!! That one is a story about two painter fellas in Europe. One name Gauguin and the other name Vango. A young girl here name Natalie, she play the jakabat. Mr. Walcott always have some very articulate jakabat starring in dem plays. He like dat.

But any way as I was saying, when people help you, you suppose to write and tell them something nice. I wonder if that is how people feel when they go far away from these islands. To England or Panama or America. When they make that one trip of they whole life, hoping to maybe come back home, with something more than when they leave.

I wonder if, in all that waking up in cold and damp and darkness, to

go do somebody else work that not really changing nobody life, but it is work and the pay is better than back home, I wonder if that is how they feel, that when people help you reach somewhere, you must write and say something. Something about how good you doing now, in that big place where you reach.

That remind me. My father, Lennard Michael Templeton Augier… That is name papa. Templeton. It seem to me blackpeople don't have them kind of names again. It is only Shawana and Dervone and Shanikwa and Dawanda. Where they get that from…?

Any way, before I was digressing my father went to England. I feel it was in 57, because my older brother born at home that same year. And I sure his father was still in Saint Lucia, at the time. But maybe not. And now I cannot ask my Moms because she die last month. Well, was January actually. And in truth that is month before last. Because already we in March and I en write the people article yet.

This year flying, boy. And that feel so strange. Because to me, death is a thing that make time stop. Even reverse. When you looking for family overseas, and other people you must tell. And searching for pictures from longtime to put in the funeral booklet. Time does stop. Like it is not really you that happen to. Your mother die..? How comes..?

And she was looking so well, you see. The day before, we was out liming. Well, she was 84, so liming is not exactly the word I looking for. But still, it was an

easy liming kind of mood. And I was glad for that. Because we was quite happy doing little ordinary things. So I carry her to cut her hair and make some groceries in that same supermarket where my Linda working. They don't change the name to Massy as yet. But I know all that coming. Sooner than you think.

Any way, we do the groceries. Fruits and things to bring by my brother's wife—well, my sister really, cause we close close, and I glad for that too. Her name is Ann-Marie and she married to my same brother that born in 57. It is only two of us boys my mother make. Same father.

Any way, we went to see her because she was not well. Something in the stomach making her to throw up and can't eat. And it was as if my Mother know she did not have much time. She insist and climb up all them steps to that upstairs house. Must be more than 40 steps straight up, and she is… she was 84.

Next day. Sunday morning. Just so. She get in a coma. And exactly 5 days later, almost to the hour, the Friday morning around six o'clock, she dead.

That is a blow papa. When my father die in 89, it was not so. Back then I did still feel half of the family remain. But now is different. You know, death is not so much a sorrow. That does pass. Death is a absence. And that don't never change.

Any way as I was saying… I have to think back. Because like my mind wonder off the page. Ah yes, Templeton my father, went to England around 57 and my mother follow some time soon after. Must be in 58. He went to study. But like she went to study too. Because in 59, I reach.

In those days people went to England mostly. America too. Although things there was already locking down. Except for Brooklyn, which somehow always open for Blackpeople. Is like when a small shop close at sixoclock, but you

I really glad I come back home. We raise all our children here. This July will make 30 years since we married. And that is one thing my Linda and I agree on up to now.

could still get a bread and cheese if you pass round by the side door. You don't knock too hard or shout out no body name. Just say, Goodevening Ms Morella, in your sundaybest voice, and ask her to help you please.

Any way as I remember, it was from Brooklyn self, they send back Uncle Somebody who had overstay. US immigration find him working and ship his ass back home. Was not two years after, he get an next visa. He fly to Florida this time. And take a greyhound bus quite to New York where they would not look for him. Yes, Brooklyn. Is there self he die.

I myself went to school in Canada. Boy, that is whitepeople country. And cold. Don't mind how they say Canada does warmly welcome immigrants. It is true, they welcome you, but as an immigrant. After four years studying economic and political affairs, I had enough. I come back home yes. That is cold papa. All inside your knees and behind your eardrums, cold hurting you like toothache.

Any way, I really glad I come back home. We raise all our children here. This July will make 30 years since we married. And that is one thing my Linda and I agree on up to now. These three children, Marie-Eve, Jean-Luc and Jordan, they all raise up right here in the Caribbean, with aunties and uncles and cousins and grandparents. So even if they in America for now, and this house feel quiet and lil'bit empty, they know exactly who they are and where they come from. And Praise God, they know they could always come home.

By the way, I went and check the certificate. It was in 2010 these ANSA people give me the Laureate award. So that is two articles I write for them in these five years that pass already. And I consider, that is not so unreasonable after all.

Sidney Allicock

Guyana
Public & Civic Contributions, 2010

As a boy going to school, I loved the savannah, the forest, the outdoors. One of the things that caused me great concern was school. I was there for the academic, thinking, there was also this worry of the teachers whipping you for speaking your own language, and that was, for me, cause for concern.

I saw the language as our own means of communication. Makushi, my language, was the only thing we knew before anyone else came here. So as I grew up, I had this passion for a kind of integrated thinking, not only for the Makushi way of life, but for what I felt was coming. I felt a lot of changes were coming, and we couldn't easily move away from that, and we had to bob and weave with it.

Land for us, the natural environment, was the way we lived, and it was cause for concern what sort of development would come, and how could we all benefit. I wrote two poems that recorded these sentiments, in the 1970s and 1980s. The title is "In Search of a Home":

Over the years and long ago
Our history some may not know
Like a shadow in the dark we've been
Never heard of, nor seen
After years of careful searching
Triumphantly the indigenous group came marching
Into the territory of the great Roraima
Land of the Great Spirit, Makonima
Richness of every kind could be seen
Mountains, rivers, fishes, birds, savannah, gold, diamonds and forest green.
Hungry, greedy eyes are feasting our beloved land
My people, allow it not to slip from our hand.
Listen to my plea
It is good for you and me:
My land my life,
My life my land.

Years ago, the savannahs were cattle, non-stop, with over 60,000 head of cattle, this was until 1969, 1970, when there was a foot and mouth scare, which killed the industry. I used to ride four days to take cattle. Later, I went up there alone, and realised something was missing. So I wrote this poem: "Missing"

The evening was late and lonely
But the sun was in all her glory
As I sat spellbound on those hills of Reporti
Admiring the natural Rupunini beauty.
Round me, the rolling green and yellow savannah land
To the east of me, the majestic Makarapan
Away into the distance, the mighty blue Canacu
And beautified by the sunset the well-known Pakarimas too.
As I sat there soliloquising,
It dawned on me something was missing.
As I gazed away into the Rupununi evening
I fixed my mind onto some good reasoning
Visible for miles was the dusty old trail, and criss crossing of tracks

The few ranch houses, empty corrals, barns, seemed to be just shacks
No vaqueros on the great plains doing their normal chores
Of riding, lassoing, and singing out their regular Yehoos.
All that were moving, were donkeys fighting
So sickening, something was missing, physically missing
While I stared over this vaquero range
The idea of missing cattle seemed so strange
Could you imagine that cattle were missing?
The famous Rupununi cattle herds were slowly diminishing
I remember the good old days from Dadenawa to Takama
Chasing thousands of cattle over this famous savannah.
Now, there are only occasional carcasses, bleached by the weather.
Here and there on the great plain might be a lonely tired rider.
O Rupununians, gone are the cattle days
No more bellowing, horse-riding, nor happy old ways.
The twilight, missing cattle and hideous braying
Saddened the evening
The distant hooting of owls and moaning wind against hills, left me grieving
I wonder could it be politics and development
Or was it rustling and poor management?
The cattle were gone, over the border
And here is where I could search and no further.
Over hills throughout valleys or on the plains.
Throughout night, sunshine, or the rains
Here I'll remain,
Determined to rear cattle once again.

Growing up on the North Rupunini was not like today. We have come a real distance over the last 15 to 20 years. I am the eldest child of my family, we were 12 in number. Seven boys and five girls. As the eldest, I had to take on responsibility very early, because of the type of life we had to live. My father used to be out a lot, doing different types of jobs and doing wildlife trapping, so he used to be out for weeks or months on end. So I had to help my mother, and try to correct my siblings without favouring any one of their points of view.

That gave me a lot of time and material to think about how to make things better between people. After I started school, I was able to complete primary school. The school was Annai Anglican School. My first job was with my father in the balata trapping industry. Myself and my brother. I was 14 and he was 12, and it was the first time I was able to handle money for myself. My father was able to say: "Well, this is what you've worked for." And it was $120 Guyana dollars.

So from there, I worked with the military, ranching, driving cattle to Letter. During those times, you had to be on time. If you missed your day at the pens, you'd have to stay another week. I worked with a lot of seasoned men, and eventually became foreman on these drives. And here is where I saw how men think, how they work, and what they could do. And that gave me the opportunity to mature quickly.

I was married at an early age. At 18—19, I already had my first child. And my wife and I are still together. We have seven children. They're all grown now.

This, my family, helped me. My father was the key for what I am today. He, and his brothers, they had this vision of allowing what I would call "self-suffiency". You had to look around and see what you could make to survive. And that was a big turning point for me. And here is where all these things about development played on the mind. Politics came into being, and here is where I started to realise that the North Rupunini was in a bowl of stagnation. We were asking how do we get to do this and that. We were waiting for the government to do everything.

I realised we had to do something. I never wanted to be a burden to the government. No matter how poor, I knew we had something to offer. I prefer to be a partner in any enterprise. While I was quite young, I started to get involved in village politics, then national politics, moreso for what we could do.

I realised we had to do something. I never wanted to be a burden to the government. No matter how poor, I knew we had something to offer. I prefer to be a partner in any enterprise. While I was quite young, I started to get involved in village politics, then national politics, moreso for what we could do. And we started to focus on agriculture. We had a lot of peanuts, tobacco, and beef. All those things eventually went. And then we had the road coming in.

Mr. Sidney Allicock

I became Toshao (chief) in 1989, and I was responsible for five communities in the Annai district, about 2,000 people. And when it happened, I said we have over 500 strong young men and women, I'm going to do miracles. I quickly learned that it was just about 60 per cent of the population that was with me, and the rest, they were just out there. They were very strong, critical, and with a lot of knowledge and ideas of how things should go. So my thinking was how could I get them on the side that they could do better, to support the cause of making an honest living for everyone.

As Toshao, there was the villages looking up, expecting you to create this miracle. We had to do something. Two things happened: Iwokrama International Conservation Centre, and

the Road (Parnaponima Road) started. We were trying to understand how it would benefit us, and how we could all work together to improve the lives of the people, and the natural environment. We heard about these NGOs that gave funding. I was there with a long list, like a shopping list, to the NGOs, thinking you just went and say you need money for your village and they gave you money.

When I went there, I started to learn about project proposals, estimates, these were new words to me. In these times, our main mode of transport was by horse. Bicycles were a luxury. And we were told the road is coming. I was told it would be destruction, but I campaigned for the road. I felt cut off from the coast. We don't want to be too Brazilian, but we want to be more connected with Guyana. But some people felt bad about it, and were complaining and so on.

I was telling the people we needed the road, to get our produce out and so on, but we should not allow the road to use us: let us use the road. And it was good for government. The fear was the taking over of our land was the next thing. And we said, well, we need to negotiate. We need to find a medium where we could talk about these issues. How we could help to make a better plan.

In these times, our main mode of transport was by horse. Bicycles were a luxury. And we were told the road is coming. I was told it would be destruction, but I campaigned for the road. I felt cut off from the coast. We don't want to be too Brazilian, but we want to be more connected with Guyana.

Then Iwokrama was there, and I saw there were opportunities. But initially, they were only going to support two communities: Fairview and Surama, being the Toshao, I had to reason for everyone. I said it was unfair to those who also use the forest, so eventually, we were able to get them on board, and that was when there was a big swing in thinking. Rockview came into being, Colin Edwards.

We started talking, about tourism. Just before that, in 1988, there was a group called Operation Raleigh, a group of young people coming through here, telling us about ecotourism. We didn't know what this was. They said "You could sell a plate of food. You could sell a place to sleep." But we never saw that possible. We never thought about selling food. If you could eat what we eat, you share it. If you could sleep in a hammock, you share it. If you could follow us in the forest, you're welcome. If you're enjoying it, no worries.

But we were looking now for economic strength, but you know this might be the breaking point here. So I continued to engage Colin. As the Toshao, I had a little leeway, and could experiment. So I decided to try it with Surama, to start small. It took us about 5 years to decide to go with it, and give it a chance. And since then we haven't looked back. In Surama, almost everybody benefits, some way or the other. We now have an area called the Surama Reserve, an area of about 20 acres, which is set aside for tourist activities and research. We have stopped fishing and hunting in that area for about 8 years, and we are seeing the return of animals we had stopped seeing.

We do a rotational system. If you feel you could come in this month, you just say to Admin you're ready, and that is how it's done. In addition, Colin Edwards continued to encourage people, and we have several communities involved.

My greatest hope for the communities is that we come together. In 1993, there was this one day for indigenous peoples across the world, and I saw this as an opportunity. I asked the council what they thought. I said we had some money—we had been saving, and collecting taxes and what not, and had a little put aside for communal activities. And the council agreed, so we had that first day, 1993, where we invited 17

We understand that development is a double-edged sword. We know we are poor, but we also know that togetherness in our communities still exists, where we are part of something larger and meaningful.

villages coming to visit us. We wanted it to be three days, it ended up being four days.

We were able to have the Minister of Amerindian Affairs. He was able to organise the presence of the British and Canadian high commissioners, and today, it's a national event. We celebrate every September as Indigenous Month in Guyana. Then, we take our produce, our culture, our activities, and we get together. We formed the North Rupunini District Development Board to represent 16 communities, of which I am now chairman. We could then go to the government as a body, not as individual groups.

And as a group we were able to make stronger statements. For example we supported the President's Low Carbon Development strategy. When we heard of it, it was a welcoming sound. We survive because of the forest. And we see the forest valuable when standing, not when it is dead. We saw the forest and savannah land, as part of our cycle of life.

We understood that we were getting things we were not paying for. We have felt the impacts of global warming. It used to be you heard certain birds, saw certain flowers, you knew it would rain. Now, there is no way to tell: even the animals are confused as to the cycle.

The NRDDB's symbol is the three-legged stool. It is a strategy for development which we think of like a stool: one leg representing the communities, one, the government, and one business and other involved parties. If all the legs are not equally strong, the stool cannot stand. It provides a medium where we could discuss issues, to the benefit of everyone.

We understand that development is a double-edged sword. We know we are poor, but we also know that togetherness in our communities still exists, where we are part of something larger and meaningful. A part of our development strategy is support to children, we send them to university, to Cuba, to study forestry and medicine. We provide internet access for our communities. We give support to the sick. We also maintain our indigenous culture.

Our groups have performed in Georgetown at Carifesta. They have been invited to Brazil, and elsewhere. All this is part of our understanding of benefits, and exploiting the natural resources for our survival.

Prof. Kathleen CM Coard, CBE

Grenada
Science & Technology, 2010

A popular perception amongst lay people is that the pathologist's major, and often only responsibility, is that of performing autopsies. There is no doubt that the autopsy plays many important roles. However, although very important, the autopsy is only a small part of the typical hospital pathologist's practice.

Pathology: the Mystery Revealed

CSI and the Pathologist

Most anatomical pathologists are familiar with the popular misconceptions that surround our specialty. In fact, many of us hospital-based pathologists spend a considerable amount of social and professional time trying to convince others, that the majority of our work is dedicated more to the benefit of living patients, than to the identification of causes of death, whether natural or unnatural.

There is an easy explanation for this misconception. It is that forensic pathology, one of the sub-disciplines of anatomical pathology, is undoubtedly the most high profile branch of pathology, having received considerable media attention through its role in crime detection. This sub-discipline of anatomical pathology was increasingly highlighted to the public, beginning in the 1980s, with the television drama series Quincy and in a plethora of other forensic dramas since. These include the very popular recent Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) franchise. Significant credit in this regard, however, could also be given to the OJ Simpson Trial which some might classify, particularly in this era of Reality TV, as the preeminent forensic television drama series of all time.

Some time ago, an interesting article entitled "Public Perception of Histopathology", was published in the Journal of Clinical Pathology. This study analyzed information garnered from the circulation of a questionnaire to patients who were registered in a general practitioner's office in Sheffield, England. The questionnaire required participants to select responses, from provided answers, to a number of specific questions including the question of "What is a Pathologist?"

Analysis of these results demonstrated that, while most respondents knew that pathologists are medical doctors, they were unaware of the role of pathology in the treatment of the living. Instead, the majority of respondents selected answers that would have been appropriate for the discipline of forensic pathology. For example, in response to the specific question: "Which of the following do you think are part of pathologists' work?", 83% of the participants responded affirmatively to the option "Giving evidence in court". In contrast, the choices of "Helping

doctors give correct treatment" and "Diagnosing cancer" were answered affirmatively by only 31per cent and 29 per cent of respondents respectively confirming the long-held impression that the pathologist's role in diagnostic work was poorly understood by the public.

The results of this study are not surprising. Most anatomical pathologists have no direct contact with patients and therefore work in relative obscurity. Their contributions to patient care, while almost always of critical importance, are hardly ever appreciated by the public. Likewise, the non-autopsy functions of the anatomical pathologist are often not appreciated by hospital administrators, and even some clinical colleagues. More surprisingly, even those colleagues in surgical specialties, who benefit most from our expertise, are themselves not always aware of the nuances of our work and of the many changes that have taken place in the field recently.

Pathology and its Sub-disciplines

The American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) provides this definition: "A pathologist is a medical doctor who examines tissues and is responsible for the accuracy of laboratory tests. Pathologists interpret the results of these examinations and tests—information that is important for the patient's diagnosis and recovery."

While for most persons, medical and non-medical alike, the title pathologist,

used without qualification almost invariably refers to an anatomical pathologist, it is important to state that there are other branches of pathology collectively referred to as clinical pathology. They include chemical pathology (sometimes called clinical chemistry), the specialty that determines the concentration of organic or inorganic substances in body fluids, and haematology, which is primarily concerned with blood and its diseases. Another sub-specialty, immunology, straddles two disciplines - pathology and microbiology, the latter being another laboratory specialty to which we are closely related. Anatomical pathology further comprises three distinct areas: Surgical pathology (referred to as histopathology in Britain), cytology and autopsy pathology. The first two areas are concerned with the detection of diseases in living patients, which assists with subsequent treatment decisions, as opposed to autopsy pathology where the emphasis is on identifying diseases in patients who have died.

The larger but more unfamiliar role of a hospital-based anatomical pathologist is in the arena of surgical pathology (and cytopathology) as opposed to autopsy pathology. These roles of the hospital-based anatomical pathologist (hereafter referred to only as pathologist) are considered below.

The pathologist's involvement in patient care

The pathologist, whom most patients never meet, plays a vital role as a member of the health care team. He/she is the individual who is responsible for examining all tissue or cells removed from a patient and for interpreting the changes that occur in these tissues or cells. In so doing, the pathologist is usually able to determine the exact disease that caused the tissue to be removed. To facilitate this important function, technologists perform a sophisticated process by which the tissue is reduced to micro-thin material on a glass slide. This slide is then examined under a microscope by a pathologist who, after interpretation of the changes seen, issues a report which includes a diagnosis, to the referring physician.

A pathologist, by going through one of the most rigorous post-graduate programs in the field of medicine, is trained to visually identify and diagnose thousands of diseases, including all forms of cancer. Moreover, the art of diagnosis is not a case of one pattern equals one disease. There are dozens of different microscopic appearances of many cancers such as breast and prostate cancer, using just two common examples. Recognition of each of these is important not only as regards making the correct diagnosis, but in many cases these different histological appearances confer a different prognosis for the patient.

The ability to make a diagnosis from interpretation of the appearance of cells in tissue is an extremely specialised skill and carries a tremendous responsibility. There are few areas in medicine where there is as much pressure to get it right, all of the time. The implications of an incorrect diagnosis are self-evident, both for cases over-diagnosed as cancer or, just as importantly, cases of cancer that are under-diagnosed. And while a diagnosis of cancer is perhaps the one most often feared by any patient, there are thousands of other diseases in which the pathologist's diagnosis is necessary to facilitate further management of the patient.

The pathologist's role as a teacher

There is a widespread belief amongst doctors, and I concur with that opinion, that no other medical specialty offers as many different opportunities in education. Many further consider this to be one of the alluring factors why, those of us with an intrinsic love for teaching, choose a career in pathology. Pathologists carry a significant amount of the teaching load in medical schools. They teach medical students, post-graduate students (residents) in pathology and students in related medical disciplines including nursing, physiotherapy and radiotherapy. The medical students' lectures in particular, are usually placed early in their courses where they are first introduced to human disease, providing a firm understanding of the basic biologic principles underlying medical practice. Additionally, students in the medical laboratory professions such as medical technologists and medical laboratory technicians, while not requiring courses as detailed as those in the allied medical

professions listed above, also have need of some basic knowledge of pathology as this improves their ability to provide us with the high quality material we need for our diagnostic functions.

Teaching duties are carried out in a variety of settings, formal and informal. These include didactic lectures in the lecture theatre, smaller tutorials in the classroom setting, and a variety of more informal teaching sessions in the laboratory and over the microscope while we carry out our daily diagnostic tasks. Because continuing medical education is almost a universal requirement for many doctors worldwide, the teaching functions of pathologists are once more heavily relied on. Accordingly, pathologists participate in a variety of workshops and seminars on a regular basis with one of the more well recognised being the familiar "Clinicopathological conferences".

The pathologist as a consultant to other doctors

Many pathologists, including myself, proudly quote the well-known affirmation that a pathologist is the "doctor's doctor". This statement recognises the fact that pathologists of all sub-disciplines are the main persons consulted for interpretation of the results of laboratory tests and, in the case of anatomical pathologists, for interpretation of diagnostic findings and monitoring the correctness of surgical decisions. Many surgical pathologists when questioned about reasons for having chosen this area of medicine as a specialty often respond that it is because of its indisputable intellectual nature and its broad range of operations including interaction with most other specialties.

Advances in medical science and the development of new technologies have had major impacts on research methods. Today, in many parts of the world, pathologists involved in research utilise highly sophisticated technological innovations including molecular biological techniques, to unravel the mysteries of diseases.

With modern-day radiological methods of investigation and high-tech biopsy instruments, there are really no limits on the anatomical sources in the body from which specimens may be obtained. Resulting from the ever-increasing volume of knowledge acquired in part, because of the availability of these biopsies, coupled with the ever-increasing information required by the clinicians we serve, pathologists are now having to sub specialise as has been the case in the clinical specialties for a long time. In this sense, the pathologist perhaps can no longer be accurately considered one of the last true "generalists" in medicine. Regardless, surgical pathologists find themselves engaged, on a daily basis, in reviewing pathological findings with many physicians, presenting these at inter-departmental hospital conferences, including the recently popular tumour-board conferences and interacting closely with clinicians to assist them in selecting the best options for patient management. There is probably no other location of the hospital where students, residents and colleagues can obtain as much information, or correlate it as well with other patient-related studies, as they can in the pathology department. Wise clinicians are highly cognizant of this fact and often seek such consultations.

The pathologist as a researcher

Because of the unique role that the specialty of pathology plays in identification and treatment of diseases via its close association to clinical medicine, it should not be surprising that pathologists often play a significant role in research. This role is not exclusive to anatomical pathologists but to those in the other sub-disciplines as well. Thus pathologists are ideally positioned to be collaborators in a variety of research projects.

Historically, the research efforts of anatomical pathologists, by their ability to recognise new diseases, including a variety of occupational diseases and iatrogenic ones such as those produced by drugs used to treat various illnesses, have made a significant contribution

Top: Couresty call on His Excellency, President George Maxwell Richards. Left–right: Mr. Michael Mansoor, Dr. Adrian Augier, Dr. Sabga, His Excellency the President, Mr. Sidney Allicock, Prof. Kathleen Coard and Maria Superville-Neilson.

Bottom left: Jamaica Nominating Committee
Bottom right: OECS Nominating Committee

Top: 2011 Chairs: Dr. Barbara Glondon (Jamaica), Dr. David Singh (Guyana), Dr. Basil Springer (Barbados), Mr. Brian Lewis (Trinidad & Tobago) and His Excellency Ambassador Charles Maynard.

Bottom: Members of the Eminent Persons Panel with Dr. Sabga and the 2010 Laureates.

to medical science. Anatomical pathologists have and continue to play an important role also in the identification of complications caused by medical interventions including the use of prosthetic materials and their observations have continued to drive changes in the design of such prostheses.

Of course, advances in medical science and the development of new technologies have had major impacts on research methods. Today, in many parts of the world, pathologists involved in research utilise highly sophisticated technological innovations including molecular biological techniques, to unravel the mysteries of diseases. Even here in the Caribbean, some of these new technologies are increasingly becoming available and collaboration with other researchers from more affluent societies often provides an opportunity to participate in cases where such state-of-the-art technology is not yet available.

My Career as a Pathologist

An appointment as a lecturer in Pathology at the University of the West Indies is invariably accompanied by an appointment to the University Hospital of the West Indies as a consultant pathologist. The distinction between the roles in these two posts is not often appreciated by persons outside of a university setting. In the latter post of consultant to the hospital, one operates largely in a diagnostic capacity and as a specialist advising other physicians. In fulfilling both these functions, often referred to as "service work", patient care is the overriding concern. The performance of this service work is the most visible and by far, the most time-consuming activity of most hospital pathologists.

A day in my life as a pathologist could therefore find me spending hours behind the microscope, examining dozens of slides comprised of tissue or cells (cytological material) removed from patients, and culminating with the provision of reports on these, usually including a diagnosis.

A day in my life as a pathologist could therefore find me spending hours behind the microscope, examining dozens of slides comprised of tissue or cells (cytological material) removed from patients, and culminating with the provision of reports on these, usually including a diagnosis. This type of diagnostic work is intellectually satisfying but challenging and sometimes stressful. The implications of a wrong diagnosis are always foremost in one's mind each time one is faced with a difficult breast biopsy or prostate biopsy among others.

Another important aspect of my work is teaching. Formal lectures are the main modality used for teaching new students and, for these lectures, we liberally use photographic material accumulated over many years, while performing our service work. I might add that our photographic collection of pathological diseases is not only considerable, but rivals photographic representations seen in any standard pathology text book.

As the student level becomes more advanced, use of the pathological material obtained during the performance of diagnostic work increases and a more hands-on approach is used. This latter modality is utilised particularly for our graduate student (resident) training which is often considered an apprenticeship. It is during this phase that the pathologists-in-training are taught the important skills of interpreting gross and microscopic findings of the specimens received daily in our laboratory, in order to make diagnoses and provide other useful information, including prognostic parameters, to the clinicians.

It is easy to see how the discipline of pathology provides an ideal opportunity for research activity. Undoubtedly, the most significant research project in which

I participated was as a co-investigator and one of three study pathologists in the seminal "Jamaican Perinatal Mortality and Morbidity Study" from 1986-1987. This collaborative study was carried out in association with the Ministry of Health, Jamaica, under the auspices of experts from the University of Bristol in the UK. The findings of this study made a significant contribution to policy changes as they related to maternal and child care in the island, and allowed the Ministry of Health in Jamaica to concentrate its resources in a more meaningful way, to lead to the reduction of morbidity and mortality in mothers and infants. This study was considered so valuable that the findings were published in a special supplemental issue of the prestigious Journal of Paediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology. Other papers have also been published in British Journal of Urology International, American Journal of Clinical Pathology and Nutrition and Cancer.

But these types of multidisciplinary, sophisticated projects do not present themselves every day to those of us not working in a dedicated research unit, with appropriate support services and large resources. For us, therefore, research can be more mundane but equally important. Included among this is the documentation of the Caribbean experience regarding a variety of diseases from the repository of data available in the department of pathology.

In this regard, I have provided pathological data on a variety of tumours including bone, thyroid gland, and an assortment of soft tissue tumours. This information remains the only available data on these lesions from patients in the English-speaking Caribbean. Likewise, in my original area of sub-specialisation - Cardiovascular Pathology - I have provided the only significant Caribbean data on a variety of diseases of the cardiovascular system, as identified at autopsy.

Over the last 10 years, my research interest shifted to prostate cancer following involvement in a collaborative project with associates from the University of Chicago, that culminated in a number of presentations at international conferences. Since then, I provided up-to-date information on the clinico-pathological characteristics of this disease in a Jamaican population, information that is useful given the relatively high incidence of prostate cancer in blacks. Subsequent involvement in another collaborative project investigating, among other factors, the effect of diet on prostate cancer has revealed interesting findings. The analysis of these data continues.

Anatomical Pathology in the Caribbean

It is indisputable that there is a dearth of qualified anatomical pathologists in the Caribbean. The reason for this is unclear, but it is likely due to a number of factors. What is certain is that, despite the integral role that the discipline of pathology plays in medicine, it is one of the low-profile areas in medicine. This fact has important implications as, perhaps because of this low profile, the essential nature of the discipline of pathology to patient services is not easily appreciated by those who allocate the resources. Thus, compared to other medical specialties, departments of pathology are notoriously under-funded by Governments and other providers and this often translates into limited resources. To add to the problem, operations of a histopathological laboratory, especially if it includes some of the newer diagnostic methods, can be very costly.

While I cannot speak with authority on the availability of resources throughout the Caribbean, it is my belief that in the region, the basic tools for accurate histological diagnosis are generally only available in the major cities, and mostly in the public hospital setting. In Jamaica, for example, despite the existence of some laboratory facilities in many of the public hospitals island-wide and a number of private medical laboratories, these generally, with rare exceptions, perform an array of chemical pathology and haematology tests. Laboratory facilities for histopathological examination, on the other hand, are only available in Kingston and Montego Bay and, apart from the University Hospital, are mostly at or associated with government hospitals. This necessitates that tissue specimens garnered from other hospitals and medical centers island-wide be transported to these isolated facilities for analysis. The

In its practice, interpretation of the microscopic details can and often is the subject of discussion and "second opinions." A pathologist working alone is at a distinct disadvantage.

inadequate number of anatomical pathologists at these government institutions and the large work-load at these centers, resulting from the island-wide accessioning, translate into an unacceptable "turnaround time" for specimen analysis and reporting, with obvious implications for patient care.

There are other important considerations. The many advances in medical science and the development of a variety of new technologies over the past fifty years have had major effects on the practice of the routine medical laboratory. Compared with some "first-world" countries, these tools are generally available only to a limited extent in most of the Caribbean. Immunohistochemistry (IHC) for example, the most valuable adjunct to histopathological interpretation today is, in Jamaica, only available at the University Hospital and even so, with only a limited variety of antigens being offered. The limitation is invariably due to the cost which becomes more prohibitive as one attempts to provide an increasing array of antigens. Similar facilities for IHC are, from all reports, rudimentary in the other Caribbean territories where available at all.

Unlike the results of medical laboratory tests of the other sub-disciplines of pathology which are quantitative, the results of histological examination are essentially qualitative. In its practice, interpretation of the microscopic details can and often is the subject of discussion and "second opinions." A pathologist working alone is at a distinct disadvantage. Because of the limited numbers of pathologists in the region those, particularly in the smaller territories, often do find themselves working alone. In my opinion, this is a highly unsatisfactory situation as the need to obtain opinions from colleagues is a necessary part of quality assurance and of growth in competence of an anatomical pathologist.

Conclusion

It is with great pride that I consider myself integral to the process of building a cadre of pathologists in the region and with regards to this process, my strongest asset is my ability as a teacher. Being a teacher also provides me with a unique opportunity for mentorship, something that has always played a significant role in my professional life. In recent years I have had immense personal satisfaction from merging the two university mandates: that of teaching (with its opportunity for mentorship) with research. I have been honoured to receive the Commander of the British Empire (CBE) award from Her Majesty the Queen in 2010. The UWI has honoured me with the Vice Chancellor's Award for teaching in 2011, and awards in two subsequent years for research. Hopefully, while training the young protégés, I have been able to encourage a "culture of research", impressing on them that research does not have to be earth-shattering to make an important contribution to our society and region.

2011 Laureates
Prof. Surujpal Teelucksingh
Dr. Kim Johnson
Dr. Lennox Honychurch

2011

Introduction

Her Excellency, Dame Pearlette Louisy
Governor General, St. Lucia

It was always going to be just a matter of time before the Caribbean mustered enough confidence to assert itself as a significant creative contributor to the process of generation of human knowledge and the furthering of human civilisation. And just as surely, it was only a matter of time before those who drove that movement would be recognised and rewarded for their unerring commitment to excellence and their award-deserving achievement.

H.E. Dame Pearlette Louisy

It has fallen to the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence to lead the field in seeking out, rewarding and promoting excellence in key fields of endeavour for the benefit of all, not only in the region, but everywhere excellence and personal achievement are celebrated.

We are reminded that the Caribbean has always been at the intersections of civilisation: at their crossing of swords as much as their crossing of ships, as much as the crossing of peoples and the mixing of races. Yet, for all this centrality, it has remained on the periphery of global movements and happenings, almost marginalised; fought over, battered and traded for many a year.

But Errol Miller, an eminent Caribbean educator would argue that this position outside of the maelstrom of things would put us in a favoured position to convert disadvantage into opportunity, and move to a more central place in the continued development of human civilisation. Removed from the fray, we would have been able to discern order out of chaos, harmony out of dissonance, to create something new and different in our own image and likeness. We would have been in a privileged position to enjoy the energy, the motivation and the momentum of new possibilities. This was the beginning of our journey—the pursuit and achievement of excellence in many walks of life.

Derek Walcott, a Caribbean-grown Nobel Laureate of considerable stature, would speak of our region, our

Caribbean archipelago, as a broken vase. But he recognised and applauded the love with which we strive to piece the shards together to restore our shattered histories, our shattered hopes and dreams. The sheer effort, grit and determination needed to make the Caribbean whole again is most probably that which has led so many in our region to excel and to achieve.

One of the region's Prime Ministers would argue that the process of creating from scratch, with no tool but determination, is so much a part of the Caribbean experience, that we often fail to congratulate ourselves for our own tremendous ambition. Preoccupied always with the need to provide and survive, we pause too seldom to look back on what we have built. The Caribbean Awards for Excellence have no doubt been created for this express purpose: to recognise excellence and celebrate achievement in our region, to reward the efforts of the best among us in Science and Technology, Arts and Letters, and Public and Civic Contribution, as well as to encourage them to extend their reach, to expand the boundaries of their achievement, to raise the bar among their peers and contemporaries, to give those who are to follow a goal to strive towards and to surpass.

This recognition of excellence and achievement is a reminder to Caribbean people that there is tremendous potential among us, just waiting to be unlocked and unleashed. But we need first to create the enabling environment which would stimulate, energise and encourage our early strivings, and help us on our journey to excellence and achievement, both at the individual and collective levels.

We learn for example, that Dr. Lennox Honychurch, in spite of not having a Bachelors' Degree, would successfully read for a doctoral degree at one of the leading academic institutions in the world; that Dr. Kim Johnson would devote years to the study of a then little-applauded indigenous musical instrument—the steel pan, now recognised as the foremost musical invention of the twentieth century; that Dr. Surujpal Teelucksingh would concentrate on the human element in medicine, on sociological rather than pedagogic or prescriptive methods to bring about healthy lifestyle changes in the communities in which he serves.

The Caribbean community for the most part walked with them on their journey, on the long road to excellence and achievement, by nurturing their dreams, by providing opportunities for the exercise of their creative imagination, by recognising their work and encouraging their ambitions. Now that they have reached this point in their journey, we celebrate their achievement which, in many ways, is as much ours as it is theirs. The Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence is a fitting tribute to pay to these Caribbean luminaries, and we applaud the founder for his vision, both for establishing the Awards and for the future plans that he has for expanding it. In its short life, the Awards scheme has already had the desired effect of providing inspiration and encouraging innovation, and they have captured the imagination of the people of the region.

I congratulate this year's Laureates, Dr. Lennox Honychurch, Dr. Kim Johnson and Prof. Surujpal Teelucksingh on their awards. As we become more familiar with the excellent work that they have produced and the nature of their achievements, we will appreciate even more the significant contribution that they have made to the Caribbean and indeed to the whole community of nations. I wish them every success in their future endeavours.

This recognition of excellence and achievement is a reminder to Caribbean people that there is tremendous potential among us, just waiting to be unlocked and unleashed.

Dr. Kim Johnson

Trinidad & Tobago
Arts & Letters, 2011

It is always a great pleasure to be commended by eminent persons, who have scrutinised our accomplishments and limitations. To be placed alongside men and women such as the laureates of this and previous years is a compliment of the highest order.

I. On Excellence

And there is more to it insofar as the congratulations from my family and friends have allowed me another bite of the cherry because, if the award comprises a very gracious pat on the back, by suggesting that I had earned it my well-wishers have given me another pat on the back.

In a way—and I hope it does not seem presumptuous—the award feels like a homecoming. That is because twenty years ago the ANSA McAL Credit Union inaugurated its first award, a scholarship for children entering secondary school: the Irving Johnson Scholarship, named after my father, who had died the previous year. He had worked with Trinidad and Tobago Insurance Limited (TATIL) from its founding to his retirement, and with the credit union from its creation till his death.

With my father being unavoidably absent my mother was invited in his stead to decide whether the scholarship should be awarded on the basis of need or merit. She said to me later: "What you think?"

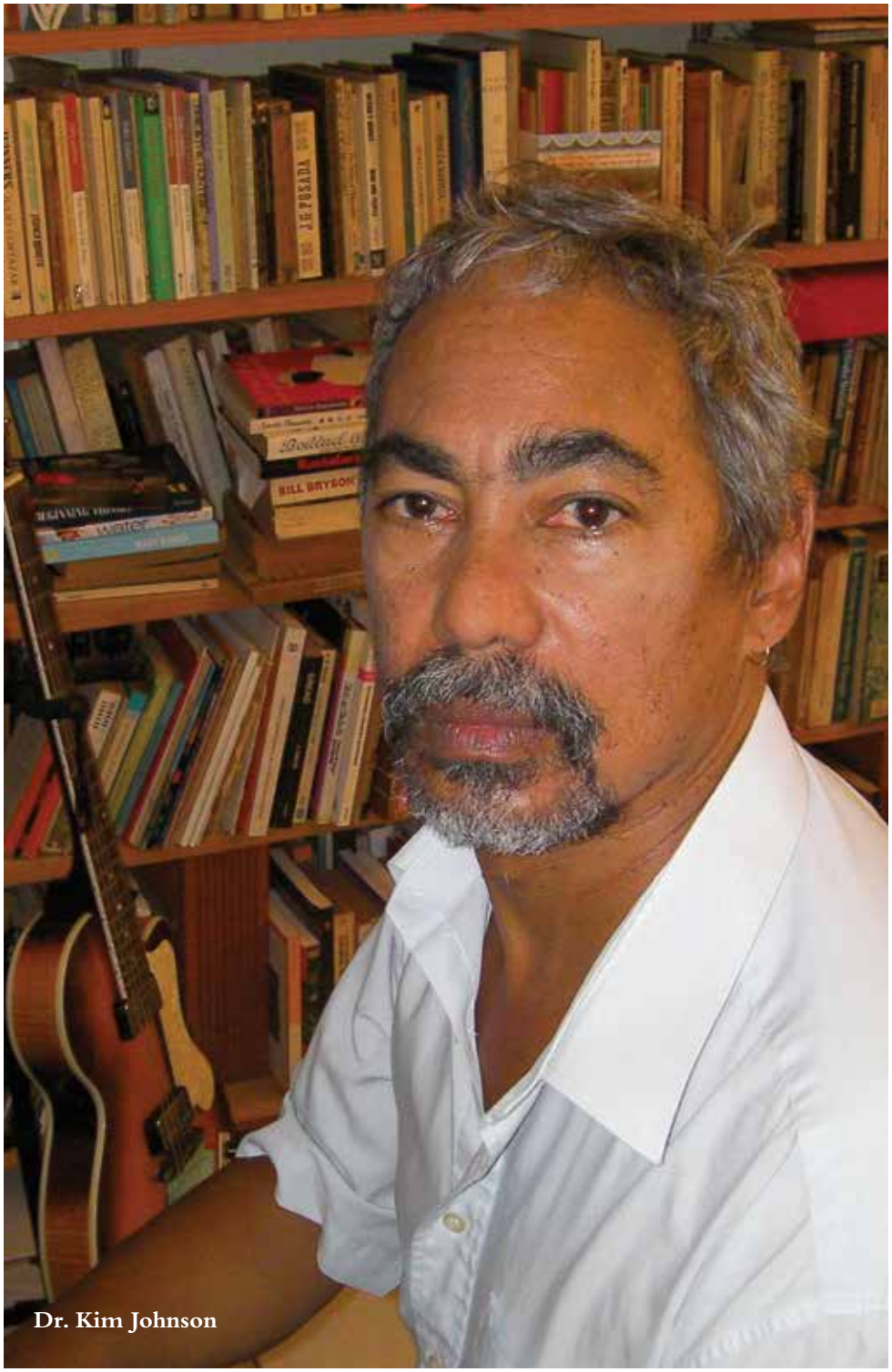
It was a rhetorical question. She knew my answer as I hers, but I responded anyway. "Merit," I replied, "of course."

The law of excellence was an ethos in our family, like a law of nature—cause and effect. You win the race = you get the prize. It was especially drummed into my head because I was the one who didn't win prizes. My older brother Lee was always and remains a high achiever and my younger sister Cathy won the Island Scholarship a year after I scraped through A Levels. Although I wouldn't recommend it as a coping strategy in a high-achievement environment, I developed an indifference to prevailing fashion which has allowed me in later life to be content without laurels and, relatedly, some independence of thought.

Since then I have learned that excellence is protean. It can be found in activities which aren't at all competitive. In some cases, like virtue, it is its own reward. You can excel at conversation, at preparing meals quickly, or even, sometimes with dire consequences, at love. I remember once pointing out to Keith Smith that Lord Kitchener was as inarticulate as an autistic child. "That's great, isn't it?" he replied with his eyes wide in wonder.

"Why?" I asked in surprise.

"Because it shows that genius takes many forms," he explained.



Dr. Kim Johnson

Yet no matter in which sphere of human endeavour it is found, every achievement of excellence shares one criterion with all others. Once VS Naipaul, in judging a literary competition, refused to award a first or second prize: no entry deserved one. Excellence has to stand above and apart from others. As such it is intrinsically elitist. CLR James, Bob Marley, Edna Manley, Louise Bennett, Usain Bolt, Derek Walcott, Brian Lara, Boogsie Sharpe, and those I have been fortunate to work with, including Keith Smith, Judy Raymond in journalism, Hollis Liverpool and Ken Ramchand at UTT, are all members of that exclusive club.

The establishment of measures of achievement is one of the most important tasks today. For too long we have sacrificed standards on the altar of national vanity. "One would have thought, one would have hoped, that as our society became independent, and matured, that we would have built upon [the] practice of critical assessment," complained Peter Minshall recently, "Instead we have regressed… a pall of mediocrity blankets the landscape."

Today fewer tasks are of greater importance than the establishment of standards if our nation is to climb out of the morass. Instead of standards of achievement to which people can aspire, we have a worthless celebrity and the cynicism that views every successful Trini as just a smartman who hasn't been caught. It is an important step taken by the ANSA McAL group towards lifting the pall by rewarding excellence on a

regional basis and away from the bounds of "we thing". The establishment of standards is not a nationalist statement nor is it a humanitarian gesture. It has nothing to do with helping people. Our great achievers of the past stood for fairness because they lived in a society with a history of slavery, colonialism and racism, in which to strive for excellence was to fight for equality. Yet it falls outside the province of justice, insofar as Nature's gifts do not necessarily go to those most needing or deserving them.

In another way there is an underlying fairness about excellence, because research has shown that it is almost always based on effort rather than luck or inheritance. Although we like the stories about the naturally talented person who can demolish all competitors without breaking stride, reality is usually quite different. For instance, in Outliers, Malcolm Gladwell's recent study of great achievers in many different fields, he argues that each one has spent at least 10,000 hours working at it.

To such marathon dedication must be added a toughness of hide. "I've failed and I've failed and I've failed," admitted Michael Jordan, who then concluded: "That's why I succeed." It sounds paradoxical but what he is saying is that to achieve excellence you have to be willing to try something, push against your limits and sometimes fail. Then you must pick yourself up, shake off the dust and, having learnt a lesson, try again. The point isn't to never fail but to never let failure defeat you. It involves persistence and stamina—which can be a problem in a society which revels in the sprint but loses enthusiasm over the long distance. Furthermore, in addition to dogged persistence Jordan is advocating a thick-skinned honesty too, because you can't learn from failure if you don't admit you've failed.

Everything I've done has been influenced by my years in journalism, particularly my acute awareness that the public has no obligation to listen to what I say or read what I write, but rather must be entertained, inveigled or seduced.

II. What have I done to deserve this?

There comes a time when the recipient of any great honour must reflect on its deservedness, not in the eyes of others but his own. And although I am quite lenient in judging myself, the question did give cause for reflection: what excellence in arts and letters have I achieved? My early educational career through college and university was undistinguished. In my twenties and thirties I drifted through a series of jobs that broadened rather than honed any talents I might have enjoyed, until June 1991 when, after two extremely happy years idling with friends in a reggae band, I joined the *Sunday Express*. Almost immediately I knew that I had found my métier. Only now, however, have I given thought to what that might have been.

What is it? Everything I've done has been influenced by my years in journalism, particularly my acute awareness that the public has no obligation to listen to what I say or read what I write, but rather must be entertained, inveigled or seduced. Although I can claim some modest journalistic successes, I left it in 2005 and do not foresee a return and thus cannot be considered a journalist. I published books before, during and after my stint in the profession so maybe I am a more generic "writer". Still, my most recent projects are a multi-media Museum exhibition, a book of photographs and two documentary movies. I am attached to a university but rarely lecture. As I contemplate the path of my life I seem to have made a career out of an attention-deficit disorder. Nevertheless, a thread links all of my projects, starting in the 1980s with my reports (for the Caribbean Conference of Churches) on the illegal immigrants in Guadeloupe and Suriname. After came my first publication—a history of Trinidad and Tobago in the Insight

Guides series. Next was a travelogue on Tobago, *Crusoe's Isle*; followed by *The Fragrance of Gold: Trinidad in the Age of Discovery*. Then I became a journalist and my written words appeared weekly in first the *Sunday Express* and later the *Sunday Guardian*. During that phase I published *Renegades*, an illustrated book about the steelband, and wrote *The Soul in Iron: Origins of the Steelband Movement 1939 - 1951*. I left the media and worked for Fujitsu, an IT integration company, and published *If Yuh Iron Good You Is King* and *Descendants of the Dragon*. Throughout, down to my most recent works—*The Audacity of the Creole Imagination* (a multi-media museum exhibition), *The Illustrated Story of Pan* and *Jahaji Tempo* (coffee-table books), and the documentary *Talk with the Hands*—the common denominator has been a presentation of stories I have gathered.

I am, I must conclude, a retailer of stories.

Note: a retailer. I do not fabricate them like, say, Vidia Naipaul or Earl Lovelace. I wish I could. During adolescence, when I purported to be a student of the natural sciences, literature spoke to me. Not in English nor American voices—a whisper of George Orwell and Graham Greene, that's all. Not even West Indians did I hear other than the laughter and sadness in Selvon's *Lonely Londoners*. But Dostoevsky knew my solitude, and Cervantes made my bookish idealism heroic. I admired the scathing wit of Voltaire but the Latin Americans Jorge Luis Borges, Mario Vargas Llosa and Gabriel Garcia Marquez were my masters, so that, although I abandoned Spanish from age 12, I still recall those novels by their original titles—*Cien Años de Soledad, La Ciudad y Los Perros*. Sadly, when I tried to emulate my heroes I encountered an inability to invent stories. I failed and failed and failed. So I turned to collecting them second-hand, mainly from history, which I then tried to retell more memorably or to a larger audience.

The daily news, two decades ago, bored me (now I am repulsed by its lazy cynicism). "There's nothing as stale as yesterday's news," Keith Smith informed me early on in the game.

Journalism eventually offered the perfect avenue. I was not drawn to investigative reporting, as important as it is. To me it seemed parochial and transient. And the daily news, two decades ago, bored me (now I am repulsed by its lazy cynicism). "There's nothing as stale as yesterday's news," Keith Smith informed me early on in the game. I took that as a challenge to invest my stories with a longer shelf life. In that I was inspired by a meeting with CLR James years before, when he told a visiting newspaper photographer, "You are a journalist, a member of a very noble profession, never forget that. I've been a journalist my entire working life." Feature-writing, which I practised almost exclusively, fitted the bill perfectly. It allowed me to write stories that had a chance to outlive the daily news.

The dizzying variety of stories I found cannot be squeezed into a coconutshell. They ranged from tales of courage and endurance to eccentricity and humour; from sublime intelligence to madness and horror. One lunatic embodied all those qualities when he murdered a cashier who had sold him a defective ballpoint pen and refused to refund his $1.25. "Well," he explained afterwards to a psychiatrist, "Somebody has to maintain standards in this country."

I met uneducated men who mastered the sciences. One sixth-form art student won a young inventors award three times in a row. One travel agent had been a child movie star in East Europe but lost everything, including her entire family, in the World War II Holocaust. One doctor's method for combating malnourishment was so successful that it was adopted by the World Health Organisation and used in Asia and Africa to save hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of children's lives. On the 50th anniversary of the film *Casablanca* I found half-dozen "Bogarts" in Trinidad, including a champion table-tennis player and batsman, who had been bypassed for the national squad because of his Humphrey-Bogart surliness. Another one was, needless to say, the captain of Casablanca Steel Orchestra. I told the story of John Archer, a stevedore who was convicted over 100 times for fighting early in the 20th century, and gave us the term "badjohn", but was decorated as a hero because of the

many men he'd saved from drowning. I recounted the Emancipation Day which was celebrated as a Carnival, after which a Baptist woman called down fire and brimstone for the sacrilege, upon which a storm descended and washed away much of the city.

III. Is this activity of any utility?

Storytelling? An acceptable occupation for an adult to occupy himself with? The idea was dismissed very early in the Western tradition, which finds storytelling suitable only for children.

The Ancient Greek '*Istoria*', which gives us both "history" and "story", studied failures and achievements and the causes of conflicts. But philosophy came along and knocked it as a fount of knowledge out of the ring. Plato, for instance, denigrated poetry, drama and mythology for trafficking in illusions and things that are always changing, as opposed to philosophy and mathematics, which are concerned with the eternal.

Plato's prejudice found its way into Christianity, which likewise condemned the temporal realm of change, as contained in myths and stories, and favoured the universal and eternal, as found by reason and revelation.

The long and continuing rise of science, from Galileo and Newton onwards, reinforced the ancient denigration of narrative knowledge, even in the field of history.

Yet our appetite for stories has grown. For recreation we look at a television drama or film, or listen to songs about lost or recently-found love; for knowledge of our social world we read or watch the news, and share gossip (or jokes) with friends. Darwinists offer an obvious explanation for our fascination with true stories: we are an ultra-social species and each individual has an interest in knowing what's going on with the others. Even chimpanzees monitor each other closely and one will draw another's attention to a pair copulating behind a tree. Add language, an ability to comprehend past events and an ultra-social need to know who is with who else, and you're bound to get storytelling of who is doing, or has done, what to whom.

I think our need for stories lies much, much deeper, however. I believe that the very structure of our thoughts is narrative. That is, we are hardwired to interpret our lives and all of reality in the form of stories. That's why most books of spiritual wisdom, including the Bible, are collections of stories. The Mighty Sparrow, who disparaged children's stories in "Dan is the man" is himself one of our greatest purveyor of stories in song. Neuropsychologist Michael Gazzaniga, who heads the SAGE Center for the Study of the Mind, argues that the human brain's left hemisphere, "makes strange input logical, it includes a special region that interprets the inputs we receive every moment and weaves them into stories to form the ongoing narrative of our self-image and our beliefs. I have called this area of the left hemisphere the interpreter because it seeks explanations for internal and external events and expands on the actual facts we experience to make sense of, or interpret, the events of our life."

And what holds for every individual is collectively the case for entire societies as a whole. That is what is meant by the West African proverb that "a people without knowledge of their history is like a tree without roots." When British Columbia officials sought to claim the land on which a group of aboriginal

As social beings we want to know about others because we need to predict their future actions towards us.

Gitksan people lived, they called a meeting to explain their cause to them. An elder asked the officials (admittedly, to no avail), "If this is your land, where are your stories?"

The nature of the story is important but more important is that there be many stories. Eric Williams gave Trinidad and Tobago a strong foundation story of our rise from slavery and colonialism, but it was just one story and people are now discovering that's not enough, we need many stories.

So far I have spoken as if stories reflect a person's or society's concern with their past, but the opposite is the truth. As social beings we want to know about others because we need to predict their future actions towards us. Our concern with their past is to guide our future, and the that's where a multiplicity of stories is important: to allow us to consider many different possible courses of action. Thus, my great disappointment with today's press, which retails the same, solitary, limiting story over and over, the lazy story of who killed who without being caught.

If the stories I tell hit their mark they will have contributed to broadening our idea of who we are, how we live and what we are capable of becoming.

IV. So what's up, Doc?

Practice does not make it inevitable that you will produce anything worthwhile. Even Roger Federer double-faults. But it can improve your prospects considerably. And when things go right, experience prepares you to take advantage of circumstances, which might mean nothing more than checking out an interesting possibility. My work with the deaf is an example of serendipity and opportunity-grabbing:

We understand and appreciate the working of any part of our bodies when it goes on strike. Having written about music for years and that relying on oral data, I began a book with the self-explanatory title *Ways of Hearing*. So I thought I'd study deafness. The principal of the Cascade School for the Deaf agreed to teach me sign language and allow me to meet her pupils if I publicised the plight of the kids. I'd just discovered the excitement of filmmaking so I suggested a documentary, which could let the students tell their own stories rather than hearing people (mis-) telling them, as has always been the case. On April 10 my film *Talk With The Hands* was premiered to an auditorium in NAPA filled, I am pleased to say, with deaf people.

At the school the students were enthralled by what my cameraman Kats Imai and I were doing, and it struck me that the deaf are particularly attentive to the visual, just as the blind are attentive to sound. Since the best way for the deaf to tell their own stories, then, would be to make their own films, I proposed to teach the kids moviemaking, although I was myself just a student. When she heard of my project Jacqueline Emmanuel, then CEO of the TT Association for the Hearing Impaired, advised me to apply to Director of Student Support Services in the Education Ministry Steve Williams. He instantly agreed. With their assistance I bought camcorders, tripods, and so forth. Enquiring about possible teachers, I discovered Maureen Arneaud's TGN Media, which teaches

filmmaking to at-risk youth in Toco, Rio Claro and Tunapuna. They joined the project and sourced their own funds. UWI linguist Ben Braithwaite facilitated a classroom at the university and the assistance of interpreters, and on February 26 the course was launched with 18 deaf students.

I never set out to write about pan pioneers, I never even set out to be a journalist, I needed a job just when there were openings in the press, and I stumbled on that rich vein of stories at Tokyo panyard. More recently, it was never my idea to commemorate the bicentennial of Chinese arrival, but when invited to give ideas I proposed a book on 200 years of Chinese presence because I was a writer. I knew where I'd look and what I'd find, and as ever I was quite wrong. What I discovered was quite different and far more interesting than I'd foreseen. If you must have a destination in mind when you start a journey you must also be open to changing plans. Most exciting and unforeseen were the photos I received, especially one of my severe-looking great-grandmother, shortly after she'd arrived from Guangdong around 1900. I knew nothing of her. That and other photos were a revelation that invaluable components of us were lying in private photo albums.

It might have gone no further but someone invited me to write an illustrated book on mas, and I immediately thought: why not, instead, pan? The result after four years is several thousand archival photos, hundreds of interviews, a museum exhibition and film, one illustrated book on pan that was supposed to be published last year and will no doubt appear one day when the publisher gets his act together, and another book on Indo-Trini music that still requires sponsorship but will maybe become a reality this year.

So what's in the pot? The pan project has dovetailed into another exhibition and a film. The exhibition is *TASPO Today—Repercussions*, a travelling multi-media exhibition to be mounted by Ray Funk and me in collaboration with the National Museum to mark the 60th anniversary of the Trinidad All Steel Percussion Orchestra, which performed at the Festival of Britain. TASPO, musically directed by a Bajan police bandsman, was the first modern steel orchestra. Its trip to England launched a major public fund-raising campaign which united people across boundaries of race, class, ethnicity and geography as never before.

The success of the pan photos project has pitchforked me into another ambitious scheme, the Virtual Museum of T&T, an online multidisciplinary, multisensory website of all aspects of Trinidad and Tobago, past and present.

The film project—*PAN! The Soul In Iron*—in collaboration with Jean-Michel Gibert and a French co-producer, started off as an attempt to make the first high-quality documentary on pan to broadcast on international networks and at top film festivals. In it I hoped to show the world one of our national great epics. Now it's shed that innocent disguise and grown into a monster—eight 52-minute films, each targeting a specific audience in a different country, all sharing 30 minutes of common footage of pan in T&T but differing in the remaining 22 minutes.

The success of the pan photos project has pitchforked me into another ambitious scheme, the Virtual Museum of T&T, an online multidisciplinary, multisensory website of all aspects of Trinidad and Tobago, past and present. Its broad themes include Society, Culture, Economy, Politics, History, Physical Geography and Infrastructure. This project, which will require heavy financial and manpower support from stakeholders, is vital because:

- There is no archive of still or moving images of T&T, nor of audio recordings of music or oral history.

- The electronic and print communications media (radio, television and newspapers) have lost or abandoned their authority as truth-tellers.
- The young look for heritage documentation electronically, outside existing culture/heritage institutions.
- Trinidad and Tobago has an extensive diaspora, which is an untapped knowledge resource. The needs of these "virtual" citizens are not being met.
- The rate of physical and cultural change in Trinidad and Tobago is accelerating, with familiar places and things now disappearing more quickly than formerly, leaving a profound sense of loss.

My pan archive project accumulated thousands of digital photos of the steelband movement from 1940 to 1980, thousands of pre-1950 general photos of Trinidad and Tobago; over 500 transcribed interviews with pan pioneers, 1,000 pages of archival documents; out-of-print or unreleased audio recordings; and unreleased 8mm footage of Carnival and steelbands in the 1950s and 1960s. That took four years, working first on my own and more recently with Ray Funk. Imagine what can be achieved if we tap the resources of the entire nation.

V. Back to the Future

Although my ongoing or soon-to-be launched projects are all long-term exercises, it's unlikely I will be working on any of them in a decade's time, God permitting life and health. The ADD is bound to kick in. Already I find I have dwelled on the national instrument for way too long and must move on. Where to I can't say. I can only speculate the media in which I expect to work, which will be my first and forever love, the written word; and possibly my recent mistress, video. There are two other related possibilities, more faint on the horizon and maybe for that reason not unrealistic. One is music and the other is drama. At present I am studying guitar and working (fitfully) on a libretto.

Otherwise there are just hints as to what the future might hold. Since I started research on Ways of Hearing, for instance, I have become fascinated by psychology, psychiatry and neurology, to the point of having attempted to establish, with Prof. Gerard Hutchinson, head of the UWI Faculty of Medicine's Psychiatric Unit, a unit for the study of music and cognition. That has scaled down to a proposed conference on the topic, but who knows what could come out of it? I for one never suspected my visit to the School for the Deaf to enquire about learning Sign would result in a documentary on deafness and an exciting and empowering moviemaking programme for deaf youth. Who knows what opportunities the future will bring? I for one only hope and pray that I am both alert and curious enough to open the door when they come a-calling, and follow wherever they might lead.

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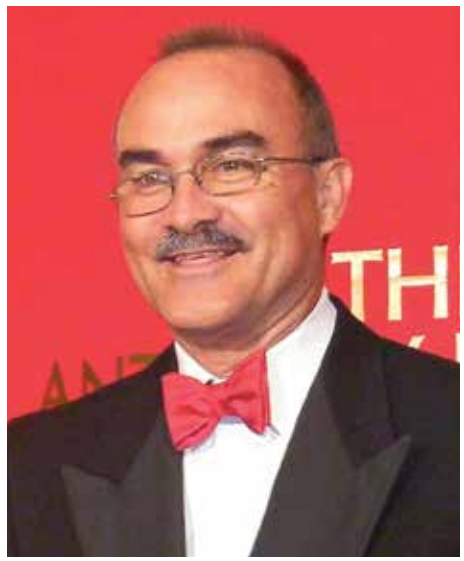
Dr. Lennox Honychurch

Dominica
Public & Civic Contributions, 2011

I was born on a Saturday morning in the small cottage hospital of Portsmouth that served the northern district of Dominica, one of the Windward Islands, part of the Caribbean chain of islands known as the Lesser Antilles. It was two days after Christmas, the 27th December 1952.



For the rest of my life I saw Christmas and birthday as one event and so did the givers of gifts. "Merry Christmas and Happy Birthday" was the usual greeting. But when that is all you have ever known it was never an issue with me.

In those days there was no motorable road between one end of the island and the other. Rugged mountains and thick jungle divided Dominica into two halves. There was a district commissioner in the north acting as a sort of deputy administrator to his superior in the capital, Roseau, in the south. The people of the south were more in contact with Barbados and St. Lucia. In the north we had more contact with Guadeloupe, Mariegalante and the British Leeward Islands. To commute from one end of the island to the other people travelled by a public launch, rather like a floating bus that chugged along the coast from one village to the other. I just remember those journeys. They ceased in 1957 when I was about five years old and a road had been cut through the mountains to connect with Marigot, the main village on the north east coast.

I was born at Portsmouth because my mother's family had settled near the north coast village of Calibishie and my mother was a friend of the district doctor. Because I was going to be born by Caesarean section it was important to her that the surgeon was someone she trusted. She was also near to her mother and so it was convenient all round. In later life I was most grateful for being born at Portsmouth. When I got involved in projects there and when I built my own house at Woodford Hill, I could proudly say like the others "I am a Portsmouth boy!" as opposed to coming from the commonplace rival, Roseau. After my 'navel string' was cut it was kept in powder for a couple years

Dr. Lennox Honychurch

so that when I was a toddler I could drop it into a hole in the ground on my father's estate at Gomier near Giraudel. I then placed a coconut seedling on top of it which grew into a very productive 'navel string tree' from which I picked and drank many coconuts in the years ahead.

Where I was born and the families that I was born into had a profound effect on the life that I would lead and the career choices that I would make as an adult. The particular natural and social history of Dominica had a great impact on me from my earliest memories of childhood. I was a sensitive and very observant child, absorbing and recording images and experiences in my little brain as a sponge sucks water. I was, to put it quite frankly, a little drama queen, finding myself "in every sauce", in every action, and with outrageous opinions to go with it. This often exasperated my father, but my mother had been given a book written by the child psychologist Dr. Spock that was all the rage in the 1950s. He advocated that a child's creativity and creative expression should not be hindered in any way and so I was let loose to, within reason, do as I pleased. I had the liberty to explore, invent, perform and produce.

That was fine by me, but my sister Sara, born two years after me, has always regretted the lack of a firm hand and guidance that would have helped her make decisions on her path through life. She also had to cope with the setbacks, in such societies at the time, of being born a girl and the fact that she was two years younger and so did not have some of the early experiences that I had. Perhaps too it had something to do with our different psychologies which affect ones' differing approaches to life.

I had the freedom to wander where I pleased. Up rivers, along the sea shore, through forests and into villages I roamed. Fishermen took me out in their boats so far that Dominica and Guadeloupe became hazy pyramids floating on the ocean.

Although we were considered to be among the most elite of families in Dominica at the time, this did not mean that we were elitist. In tune with Dr. Spock's no boundaries notions and in an era where crime was miniscule I had the freedom to wander where I pleased. Up rivers, along the sea shore, through forests and into villages I roamed. Fishermen took me out in their boats so far that Dominica and Guadeloupe became hazy pyramids floating on the ocean. Women in the yards that I passed through gave me accras and Johnny Cakes, roast breadfruit and 'ton ton' (pounded root tubers) covered in gravy. There were also snacks of stewed sea snails called 'bwigo' and crunchy smoked fish from their soot filled outside kitchens. I was told stories by the people who worked on the estates that my father managed, about soucouyans who shed their skin and sucked blood, about the La Diabless who would trick me when I was away in the bush and could be identified by the cloven hoof on one foot. The Mama Dleau who would drown me in the river pools and the Papa Bwa who would let boa constrictor 'tete chiens' loose on me. The shadows of the banana leaves on the road at night were coffins, and the spirits of the dead lived between the huge buttress roots of the silk cotton trees.

My father was a great carnival lover and I was at first dressed up on decorated trucks for the Sunday afternoon float parade. I remember being a turbaned and bejewelled attendant in a palace from the Arabian Nights. But when I was older I graduated to putting on a traditional wire mask and to 'run mas' in full disguise. That was the best, for I was then no longer Mr. Ted's child or Ma Napier's grandson. No one knew who I was and I could jump and 'wine' and 'roll my waist' like all the other little 'kawants' or 'street urchins' of Roseau. When the bands stopped for lunch we would congregate in the large back

yards of Roseau merchants where the adults would serve traditional West Indian food such as pudding and souse, herring, codfish and sweet 'baignets' like round doughnuts. The string band of fiddle, accordion, brass trumpets, saxophone and drums would take a rest. Barmen, hired for the day, would know by heart the favourite drinks of the most important people and concoctions of rum, whisky, gin and coconut water would flow until the band struck up a signal that it was time to hit the road again. The 'masquerade' band my parents always joined was called Revellers. But the people in the street called it Band Mulatre (the Mulattos Band) or sometimes more unkindly "Alcoholics Band".

Almost every village in Dominica has a patron saint with a feast day to go with it, whether it was the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul for fishermen, St. Isidore for farmers or St. Antony of Padua. Once the church service was over it was time for the fete. There was a 'patakua' or merry go round with carved wooden horses that was spun around by hand to the beat of drums. There were dances such as the Bélé, Quadrille, Mazook and Flirtations which were danced in the yards between the village houses. In one mountain village called Cochrane I stood spellbound, my father laughing, as a small wooden house packed with dancers, literally rocked to the rhythm of the music, its wooden supports, like legs of a centipede, shifting this way and that. Every detail, every stately woman in her bandana Madras head tie, every tight muscled fisherman drawing in a net, each chantuelle belting out a song awaiting the response or 'lavway', was imprinted on my mind, sucked into the sponge of my brain for later use. Little did I realise at the time that here was being laid the foundation of my interest in folklore and anthropology that would eventually end up in the books that I wrote and take me to university.

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I first went to school at the age of five to the Convent Preparatory School, always known simply as Convent Prep. White shirt, navy blue short pants, navy blue socks, tie and cap. My family were not Roman Catholics but apart from the village primary schools it was the only such school available. We were Anglicans in a very loose sense and I assume that the condition for our presence at the school was that we participated in all religious instruction and events. We were marched off to Mass at the Cathedral on special feast days and made 'pilgrimages' chanting the rosary as we climbed Morne Bruce, behind Roseau, to end at the large white concrete shrine of Christ on the cross that looked over the town. I was quite content with this world of hymns, the Latin intonations, the incense and the flowing soutanes and lace of the priests and acolytes, the lifelike plaster saints and painted walls. I think it satisfied my sense of drama.

We were taught by a combination of Belgian nuns headed by the principal Mother Aloysius and local female teachers. I remember Miss Peltier, Miss Stephenson and Miss Alfred in their tight skirts, high heels and bouffant hairstyles of the late 1950s to early 1960s. The nuns were all covered up in black and white habits with not a strand of hair peeking out from behind their tight wimples. Then one day, shortly after the decisions of Vatican II made sweeping reforms in the Roman Catholic Church, the nuns appeared in short dresses and little veils attached to a thin 'band' around their heads with their hair well exposed. We were told from henceforth to address them as 'Sister'. To us children all this was a revolution that was whispered about for days.

My family lived in the countryside and the trip to and from school was always quite a hassle particularly when we lived in the hills at Gomier and the trip had to be made in my father's jeep over an unpaved rocky road. My parents changed homes to make it easier to get to school. But, for all of their efforts, from the day I arrived, I treated school as a sideline, a necessary evil that had to be tolerated so that I could enjoy the real educational delights of the highways and byways of the world outside the class room. I did not excel here. My marks hovered somewhere from the middle to the bottom of the form. But I

was an entertaining student. Always first to volunteer to be in the school plays, usually the first to drag some latest news from the street into the playground. I can recall the drama of the Cuban Missile Crisis when I regaled my wide eyed fellow pupils about the threat of "dangerous communists" arriving in Dominica to take us all out of school and lock us up in prison. This was one of the more colourful fabricated exposés of mine.

When it came time to go to high school, it was decided that I should be sent to the Lodge School in Barbados as a 'termly boarder', flying back and forth to Dominica each holidays. When I got to Barbados it was a bit of a culture shock. Dominica was wild and untamed, Barbados was manicured and ordered. In landscape as in society the two islands were opposites. The Lodge School was situated in the sugar cane fields of the rural parish of St. John and had been founded as way back as 1745. It was considered to be among the most distinguished schools in the British West Indies. It was run on the lines of a British 'public school' with houses and housemasters, matrons and dinners where we wore blue woollen blazers with silver trim and the school crest on the pocket. We were once told that we must consider ourselves very fortunate to be going to "the Eton of the West Indies". And indeed, in retrospect, we were fortunate. But from the day I arrived there one January afternoon in 1963 I hated the place. Everything about it seemed to conspire against

My ten year old brain realised that the Caribbean was changing very rapidly.

my sense of liberty and creativity. It seemed designed to produce estate managers and businessmen when even my ten year old brain realised that the Caribbean was changing very rapidly and that by the time I left school there would be more to careers than that.

My parents arranged that I would have art classes on Saturday mornings and this had a great influence on my future work in painting and design. I do not know whether the headmaster was in some peculiar way encouraging my talents or penalising me for being talented, but he took to getting me to do any painting work that needed to be done in the school: the large school crests in the memorial hall, the gold letters of the word 'REMEMBER' that stood over the door, the backs of all the chairs in the science labs, the numbers on tin panels to record the cricket scores. I was 'on call' to paint whatever took his fancy.

One great advantage of the Lodge School however, and one that had a long term impact on me, was that it drew pupils from all over the Caribbean. There were fellow students from British Guiana (BG as it was then) from Trinidad and Jamaica and almost everywhere in between, even one from Canada and two from Bogota, Colombia. Studying and growing up with each other

among the large core of Barbadian pupils, we learned so much about each others' territories and this set a firm foundation for my later interests in the wider Caribbean. It was also a time of great change in the region. Jamaica and Trinidad had just gained their independence and others did so during the 1960s, while the smaller islands moved to forms of self government during that period as well. After the school vacations we would return with our new state flags that replaced the British Union Jack. Events in the wider world were having their influence on our perceptions of our Caribbean space: the Civil Rights movement in the USA and the Black Power phase that followed; the assassinations of the Kennedy brothers and Martin Luther King; the rumblings of the Cold War and the feared influence of Fidel Castro's Cuba. I was very inspired by our history teacher FAB 'Fabby' Hoyos, later knighted as Sir Alexander Hoyos, who mixed his teaching of British and Empire history with vibrant accounts of current Barbadian political affairs. The changes in music and dress and politics also fused together as a psychadelic backdrop of influences on our teenage years during that decade.

I also became much more aware of my Barbadian and wider Caribbean roots. In Dominica I had been more immersed in the stories of my mother's side of the family, the links with England and Scotland. But in Barbados there were uncles, aunts and cousins on my father's side whose ancestors went far back in the islands' history. I discovered that my father's mother was from San Fernando, Trinidad and that her father died of fever while working on the building of the Panama Canal. I was very fortunate to be related through my Aunt Ellice, to one of the pioneers of the development of West Indian literature. She was married to Frank Collymore, Uncle Colly, we called him, who was a well known teacher in Barbados and editor of the Caribbean literary magazine, Bim. On 'exeat weekends' I and my sister would usually stay with my aunt and uncle at their house 'Woodville' on Chelsea Road, St. Michael. People dropped in from around the Caribbean, writers passing through Barbados on the way to somewhere else; budding poets in search of advice; senior schoolboys given the freedom of the library; prospective contributors to Bim magazine dropping off their manuscripts. I was not yet around to have found the young George Lamming sitting there skimming through the books (although we became friends later), or to have listened to the intense arguments of the popular white politician T.T. Lewis who had married the Dominican girl Marjorie Perryman, or to have met Derek Walcott fresh on his first journey out of St.Lucia overnighting on his way to university. But I did sit in on the periphery of adult gatherings with others such as Lenny St.Hill, John Wickham or John Figueroa visiting from Jamaica. In contrast to the bracketed nature of Barbados social relationships at the time, where everyone seemed sorted into contented pigeon holes, this house was an intellectual and artistic oasis open to all. It was the house in which my literary career, if it could be called that, took off.

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In the weeks before Barbados gained independence in 1966 there were rehearsals and school preparations for the historic event. Up at Lodge I had led a sort of dramatised public explanation of the new coat of arms. We were learning about the flag and rehearsing the new national anthem. I was to be one of the Jacobean settlers of Barbados in a grand pageant of island's history to be performed on Independence Day at Kensington Oval before the Prime Minister Errol Barrow and the Duke and Duchess of Kent. It was a period of great excitement.

Some time before midnight on the night of 29 November 1966, we children left Woodville and immersed ourselves in the crowds that surged towards the Garrison Savannah, probably the largest gathering of Bajans ever. Grainy grey images of the ceremony were being relayed on the new fangled CBC TV interspersed with advertisements for Pepsodent toothpaste, but I wanted to see it all for real. There was no way I

Top left-right: Mrs. Maria Superville-Neilson, Mr. Christopher Bovell, The Hon. Stephen Cadiz (representing the Prime Minister), Mrs. Judy Chang, Dr. Sabga, Prof. Compton Bourne, Dr. Kim Johnson, Sir Shridath Ramphal, Prof. Surujpal Teelucksingh, Maj.-Gen. Joseph Singh, Dr. Lennox Honychurch, Mr. Michael Mansoor, Senator Timothy Hamel-Smith (Acting President), Sr. Paul D'Ornellas, Justice Christopher Blackman, and H.E. Nicholas J.O. Liverpool, President of the Commonweath of Dominica (2003–2012).

Bottom left: H.E. Nicholas Liverpool with Maria Superville-Neilson and Dr. Sabga.

Bottom right: The 2011 Laureates and Dr. Sabga pay a courtesy call on H.E. Prof. George Maxwell Richards

could see over the crowd so I climbed up into the highest branches of an evergreen tree and saw the new flag go up and Sir John Stow hold up Errol Barrow's hand and the fireworks burst into a portrait of 'The Dipper'. Twelve years later I would be directly involved with the independence night in Dominica, on stage as a member of the new parliament when we gained our independence on 3 November 1978.

When I was in fifth form, my parents decided to let me come back to do the rest of my schooling in Dominica. I had only scraped through with three 'O Levels' at Lodge. Predictably they were in history, geography and English, the subjects that I enjoyed. Once back in Dominica I went to the St. Mary's Academy, Dominica's main Roman Catholic School for boys. But the diversions were too many. Academically it really would have been better that I had stayed in Barbados. But in a creative sense Dominica was treasure chest for me and two years of more formal education spun by in a flurry of extra curricular activities that had nothing to do with gaining more 'O levels'. I built my first Carnival costumes, joined the People's Action Theatre group, acted and assisted with plays and National Day shows and became more aware of the traditional folklore than I had been in my younger days. I began to paint in earnest. My mother's sister and a friend of hers ran a cafe in Roseau called the Green Parrot where I exhibited and sold my paintings.

When I left school in 1970 I took a job as reporter and odd job boy at a very small weekly newspaper called the Dominica Star. The pay was miniscule but the experience was rich. The Star was edited by Phyllis Shand Allfrey, one of Dominica's leading politicians and writers. I had sent articles and short stories to be published even while I was still at Lodge and Ma Allfrey, as everyone called her, had always been very encouraging. She had founded the Dominica Labour Party in 1955

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and some years earlier had published her only novel, The Orchid House, a seminal Caribbean work that was made into a TV mini-series by Channel 4 in Britain. Her husband, Robert, operated the creaking printer and did the accounts. Working for the Allfreys was an valuable education but hardly a money earner, and they were very disappointed when I moved on.

In 1971 the Dominica government was preparing to open a national radio station. They were going to break away from the regional Windward Islands Broadcasting Station (WIBS) and establish their own Radio Dominica and they needed a basic staff. I applied for the job of reporter and was selected. Training was given on the job while still operating as WIBS in a crowded one room studio that doubled up as office and news room. On 1 November 1971, Radio Dominica opened with great fanfare in a new building opposite the High Court and House of Assembly. I collected and read the news and participated in outside broadcasts. I had dreams of being a DJ, but the manager quite rightly quashed the idea.

By the following year I was restless again and political tensions were rising in Dominica. My liberal views on freedom of speech were being tested by working in a government controlled radio station that did not allow the opposition a voice in any broadcasts. Members of my family were well known opposition party supporters and things were becoming occasionally difficult for me at the station. I decide it was time to further my education. But with only three O levels the options were limited. My mother obtained prospectuses for art schools and drama schools in England. I was left on my own as usual with no guidance to choose. I made a mistake, I believe, by choosing drama over art, and was given a place at Mountview Theatre School in north London. Before one year of the two year course was over, I realised that there was no future for me in this field. The experience of freezing drives on bleak highways to do small plays at outlying universities made me realise that I did not want to give myself up to this precarious profession. I decided to return to Dominica, but on a whim, before I departed, I went on a cheap student study tour of Israel. It was as

they say a life changing experience. It was very hands on. We travelled together across Israel in a bus and slept in tents in the desert and small town inns and kibbutz dormitories we explored historic sites and geological formations. We roamed from the boarders with Lebanon to the tip of Sharm el Sheik on the Red Sea. What struck me most profoundly was the open air education of Israeli children at the historic sites. The importance of field trips in learning about their history and the importance of archaeology and building restoration as part of national identity was a great way to learn about ones' past. I thought of the historic sites in Dominica and the Caribbean languishing in vine covered ruins and of the rigid class room learning by rote that drummed out imagination and innovation. I stored my Israeli experiences in the back of my brain for future use.

Back home I shied away from going back to Radio Dominica full time but did some contractual work. One day, the manager, Barnet Defoe, asked me to do some short programmes to fill an early morning slot. "Some information tips about Dominica". And thus began The Dominica Story, a set of serialised episodes made up of eight to ten minute slots every week day morning that told the history of Dominica up to the 1960s. It was an instant hit. Children listened to it on their way to school. People gathered around radios in the village shops. At homes around the island and beyond it blared out while families prepared breakfast and left for work. I was taken aback by the intensity of the response. It ran for 70 episodes and when it was over people told me that it should be made into a book. I revised the script and using money from my share of the sale of some of my parents' land, I got the book printed in Barbados. Thirty six years later after three subsequent editions, it is still in print.

The Caribbean People, in three volumes, was accepted, contracts were signed, and the series, now in its third edition, is still being studied by school children across the region.

The publication of *The Dominica Story* opened other doors. It was 1975 and I was back at Woodville, Chelsea Road, Barbados. An old friend my Uncle Colly's, Freya Watkinson, an editor at Thomas Nelson publishers was visiting from the London office looking for someone to write a new Caribbean history series for Nelsons. I was going through the proof sheets of *The Dominica Story*. I happened to be in the house that afternoon and Colly introduced us. Freya invited me to submit a draft outline of the series to her hotel for consideration by the time she flew out two days later. The work, *The Caribbean People*, in three volumes, was accepted, contracts were signed, and the series, now in its third edition, is still being studied by school children across the region.

Back in Dominica, my profile had risen since the radio programmes and participation in other national events. Visiting journalists and diplomats wanted to get my insight into the island and unfolding events. Village groups and schools wanted me to come and talk to them about their history. There was a general election in March 1975 which gave the ruling Dominica Labour Party a landslide victory. The opposition Dominica Freedom Party scraped in with two seats but the constitution allowed it to have one nominated seat in the House of Assembly. The leader of the Opposition, Miss Eugenia Charles decided that that seat, designated as the Third Nominated Member would be held by me. My Aunt Daphne, my mother's sister told me about this plan while I was coming down the street from reading the news at the radio station. She told me that if I did not accept she would never speak to me again. I did not know whether she was joking or not and she could be pretty fierce at times. At Miss Charles' office further pressure was put on me. Eventually I said yes. Perhaps I was tempted by the drama, "to be on stage where the drama is real" I wrote in a

poem some years later. Perhaps it was some romantic notion of following in my grandmother's footsteps of being a member of parliament. Whatever it was, once I said yes, there was no going back. The full impact of what I had got myself into came home to me at the first sitting of the House. The invective and innuendo was new to me. The rough and tumble of politics was grating. I stood it for just over four years.

During that time Dominica was negotiating its way to full independence. I accompanied Miss Charles to London twice in 1977 to discuss independence, the second meeting being the actual Constitutional Conference in May. Back home together we took the message to the villages explaining the type of constitution we wanted. We covered 45 villages in six weeks with our Independence Seminars. I produced at my own expense a booklet entitled Think it Over, which presented all the options with cartoon pictures and diagrams that I had drawn so that the debate could be easily understood. It was a hectic time but I attended the flag raising ceremony at the Windsor Park in Roseau along with thousands to herald in another miniscule nation to the world.

Political intrigue intensified after independence and I was there every step of the way in every part of the unfolding drama. A political crisis in May and June 1979 brought the regime of Prime Minister Patrick John down. To facilitate a revised membership in the House of assembly all of the nominated senators had to resign so that their places could be filled by persons representing different interest groups. It was with some relief that I wrote my letter of resignation. Two months later on 29 August, Hurricane David devastated Dominica. I joined the International Red Cross team to bring relief supplies to outlying districts by truck and by boat and my experiences in the role added remarkably to my life experience.

Political intrigue intensified after independence and I was there every step of the way in every part of the unfolding drama.

Political activity intensified in the run up to the general election of 1980. I was participating less on the front line, but I wrote and produced the political manifesto for the DFP. The party won a landslide at the polls and Eugenia Charles became the first woman prime minister in the history of the Caribbean. I accepted the post of her press secretary in charge of the Government Information Service: attending functions, writing releases, producing radio programmes. Then in February 1981 my father got entrapped in a side event related to a larger plot to overthrow the government with a coup d'état. His home was attacked by an armed gang, it was set ablaze, all my books, papers and other belongings were destroyed. He, his wife, the cook and gardener were taken into the forest and he was forced to write a ransom note. The others were released to take it to the government and my father was marched further into the forest where he was murdered that night. I was numb. Stunned beyond tears but continued working in the manner of a programmed zombie until I resigned in June. During that time I was even hosting a night time radio programme called 'Scrapbook'. I looked on it as a form of therapy.

I was totally disillusioned by politics. I decided that I had to take a completely new direction. The memory of my Israeli study tour came back to me. April 12, 1982 would be the 200th anniversary of the Battle of the Saints, the largest sea battle ever fought in the Caribbean. It was fought off the north coast of Dominica within sight of the historic Cabrits Garrison near Portsmouth. I decide to merge the two together: have a big event to commemorate the battle and use it as a step off point to begin the restoration of the garrison abandoned in the forest. The commemoration was a great success with thousands gathering at Fort Shirley for the event.

For over two decades since then, whenever funds have been available, masons, carpenters and bush cutters have been engaged at Fort Shirley recapturing the fortress from the encroaching forest and resurrecting the ruined buildings.

The restored Officer's Quarters is now a popular venue for wedding receptions, dinners, conferences and open air concerts such as Jazz 'n Creole in June. It gives me great satisfaction to welcome school groups to hike over the site and to witness people enjoying the buildings and grounds. It stimulated the Cabrits to be declared a National Park in 1986 and for a cruise ship berth to be constructed in the old dockyard in the early 1990s.

While this was in progress, the British High Commission in the Eastern Caribbean granted me a Chevening Scholarship to study in the United Kingdom at a university of my choice. I was accepted by Oxford University to read Anthropology based not on my previous academic results, which remained my three O Levels, but on the basis of the quality and amount of work that I had produced thus far. At university my focus of research was the history of the indigenous people of the Caribbean. I got a distinction for my Masters Degree exam and thesis and this allowed me to extend my scholarship to a doctorate. I returned to Dominica in 1995 to do fieldwork, part of which was to establish the Dominica Museum in the old General Post Office on the Roseau waterfront. I completed my doctorate in 1998 and worked for a few years as staff tutor at the Dominica Open Campus of the University of the West Indies and was made an honourary research fellow of the University. Then an offer to return to work at Fort Shirley to carry out a major European Union funded project at the Cabrits caused me to resign as staff tutor and concentrate on Fort Shirley. This I have continued to do, interspersed with lectures overseas, mainly at Cave Hill in Barbados and UWI related conferences elsewhere. I have focused lately on protecting the archaeological heritage of Dominica, extending my village talks around the island and acting as tour leader and guest lecturer on small special interest cruise ships around the Caribbean. The award by the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence in 2011 for Civic and Public Contributions is crowning accolade for work which I have carried out mainly as a result of my own passion in various fields. It is a fitting platform on which to end this short autobiography.

The award by the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence in 2011 for Civic and Public Contributions is crowning accolade for work which I have carried out mainly as a result of my own passion in various fields.

Prof. Surujpal Teelucksingh

Trinidad & Tobago
Science & Technology, 2011

The practice of medicine, particularly academic medicine, cannot be conducted in an ivory tower without consideration for the needs of our time and our place. For all the embedded science and for the much-touted art the practice of medicine entails, I would feel incomplete if I could not serve larger sociological needs. I suppose this is because the backdrop to my life and work is the riotous and chaotic town of Cunupia.

The Beginning

I have a vivid memory from early childhood of a hearse transporting a boy no more than my own age to the Hassarath Road Cemetery. That was 50 years ago, but to me it is not a distant memory, for it had generated a great deal of anxiety among the village folk. The fear of decimation of the village by the much talked about hookworm, never materialised. It might seem inconceivable today, but back then, a very real imminent threat was averted.

By the time I became ready to attend primary school, the public health measures to deal with this problem were well established. What we were taught at school about waste and sewage disposal, and how we attended to hand-washing before meals and washing fruits before eating, were valuable weapons. Their gravity and value were matched only by the noxious purgatives and pungent antihelminthic medications administered to unwilling and screaming pupils, class after class in succession. These measures went a long way towards solving that public health problem.

This made an impression on me. When one is born into disorder and squalor it is easy for apathy to ensue and for this state to be perpetuated. Unless, of course, you were born to my mother. My mother lived fast and died young. At age 21 she was already widowed and with two young children. Whether it was her natural character or an ability developed out of need, she guarded every black penny.

In the same way she guarded her pennies, she kept us both, my brother and I, preciously protected from the disorder that constantly encircled her short but productive life. By the careful selection of a new and appropriate father she invested heavily in a stable home and family life. These were to prove crucial, but they were not the only ingredient to a happy outcome in my own, and many other cases.

I have already acknowledged the role of schooling and public health in averting a feared disaster in my village. But by the time I reached secondary school, my appreciation for the powers good teachers can wield increased manifold. Teachers possess the magical powers to weave the complex fabric of which society is eventually made. In the broadest sense, teachers are not just

weavers but doctors, too. Good teachers have mastered the skills of diagnosis and therapeutics.

In taking time to understand those under their care, they can judiciously prescribe doses of stimulation and discipline to mould precious minds. One incident particularly sticks out for me. When I was about 14 or 15 years old at Presentation College, Chaguanas, the principal, Bro Lennard Dennehy, challenged a few students, including myself, to take a piece of heavy furniture into the library. If you know Presentation College Chaguanas, the library is atop the Principal's office, and the stairs leading up windy and narrow. During the course of moving the furniture, we were having difficulties, and Bro Lennard said to us: "Now I don't expect you'll give up on this. You're the future leaders of the country and you'll have to solve the problems of the country."

That did two things for me: I never thought of myself as a future professional, and I never envisaged that I would be asked to find solutions to the nation's problems. But here, at age 14 a teacher was seeding that idea into my mind.

That is one of the high points of my educational life, but I am aware of its shortcomings. Our educational system has traditionally been very didactic, very top down, so students engaging in conversations with teachers has not been the norm. Certainly not the education I experienced. And communication is a highly valuable commodity, especially

Prof. Surujpal Teelucksingh

occur and to take responsibility for their actions. Hubris has no place in this. But it should also be appreciated that doctors are at the battlefront in war, and they are often held accountable and liable, and they meet situations for which they are sometimes not empowered. They function in a complex system where demand exceeds supply, and it is because health infrastructure has not been upgraded or modernised for many years, which creates another set of problems.

The lack of communications skills has been a key ingredient in the discord. All good citizens, doctors or not, have a responsibility to recognise when errors occur and to take responsibility for their actions. Hubris has no place in this.

to people in need. And it must be an important element in our training, especially the training of doctors.

Another element I've become aware of later in life, is the value of reading widely, for pleasure and professional purposes. Fiction and creative writing sharpen the abilities of doctors, or anyone, to think in a non-linear way. They sharpen powers of observation, and create a strong empathy and appreciation for the complexities of human life which surround patients.

My Work

There have been public outcries over the way doctors go about their business in recent years, and the lack of communications skills has been a key ingredient in the discord. All good citizens, doctors or not, have a responsibility to recognise when errors

This all affects the practice of medicine, for clinicians and researchers. Perhaps it is inevitable given my history that my own research and work have been largely intuitive, looking at the smaller things which hide in plain sight. Intuition is key to making connections which in retrospect are obvious, but not a priori. For example, the London cholera epidemic of the nineteenth century gave birth to the idea that disease could be water-borne. This discovery came out of simple observations, and it has transformed the way we approach disease. So I've focused on small-seeming problems which are of interest to me, but which I've found are also of interest to the region.

A good example of a problem whose importance is underestimated is diabetes among children.That intrigued me not because it is uncommon among children, but the type of diabetes we were beginning to see in Trinidad was uncommon among children. I noticed this about 12 years ago when out of curiosity I felt it was necessary to set up an endocrine service which catered to the needs of children. I was amazed as to the number of children presenting with diabetes—not the Type I, which affects them normally, but the Type 2 which their parents and grandparents should be getting. That intrigued me, and stimulated a great deal of my later work.

This observation of diabetes was merely one node in a network of research and professional interests—diabetes, obesity, and dengue, my research interest in the skin—which are interconnected. In the average human, the skin it can be stretched to occupy a cricket pitch. It is the organ through which we define beauty. It serves the biologic function through which, in some lower species, and even the higher ones, the mating game is initiated. This latter point is not lost on the advertising industry and clever marketing often plays on this primal instinct which causes suitors responses to the skin's appearance in a potential mate. Conversely, the appearance of the skin can also act as an early warning system for disease.

Most if not all the previous visitations by plagues have all declared signs in the skin: small pox, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, yellow fever, and malaria have all found expression through the skin. Such stigmata may have served two

important functions: first, to bring awareness of an underlying problem and therefore propel the sufferer to seek help; and second, to alert those around him of danger, especially if and when the disease has an infectious aetiology. And the skin is also a guide to the latest plague, obesity, which often accompanies the incidence of Type II Diabetes in children.

Obesity affects more than 30 per cent or more of us in Western civilisation, and though currently less prevalent among poorer nations, its imminence poses a major challenge to economic development. Data from research from our group (the Diabetes Education Research and Prevention Institute, DERPI) in Trinidad, have demonstrated a three-fold increase in obesity among schoolchildren over the last decade—yes, a 300 per cent increase within one decade.

Much of our hospital bed occupancy and a substantial part of our health budget are consumed by obesity and the disorders that emanate from it. The direct costs to individuals and the indirect costs of time lost from productive employment have the potential to pauperise families. There is good evidence as well that poorer classes carry the greater part of the burden of these chronic disorders, perpetuating the vicious cycle of poverty.

The Diabetes Education Research and Prevention Institute came about because of a charitable gesture by Trinidadian businesswoman, Helen Bhagwansingh, who donated nearly

Data in Trinidad have demonstrated a three-fold increase in obesity among schoolchildren over the last decade—yes, a 300 per cent increase within one decade.

US$1 million to the university. And that was the fillip for the kind of work we're now producing. And we felt it was important to target school children because they are the next generation, and in my view there is nothing more important as empowering the next generation to solve the problems of the next generation.

The Future

My observations, and trends in medicine worldwide, point to a change in the conduct of medicine, in the paradigmatic sense. The emphasis is already shifting from the institutional practice—hospitals and conventional patient care—to preemptive practice, or public health medicine.

We can look at the public medicine approach in Ontario, Canada. Their economists estimated that within a few years 80 cents of every tax dollar would go into public health costs. This was not sustainable. So they divided their ministry of health into two sectors: first, the traditional care model hospitals and institutions which wait for people to become ill, then treat them. And the second sector was preventive medicine—diminishing the prevalence of disease, and reducing the queue for entering the hospital. It is a strategy, that has potential in the region, and it has

worked for infectious diseases, which, with the exception of TB and HIV, have all been eradicated.

A public health approach is what solved those problems. As in the London cholera epidemic, making potable water widely available is the single most important public health intervention that transformed the control of disease in the world. Of course many parts of the world, and some parts of this country, don't have it. But simple measures like that can have a tremendous impact.

The new plagues, like obesity, require a similar approach: non-traditional intervention. In combating this wave of chronic non communicable disease, surveillance is of critical importance. It is like good police work—it's better to be vigilant, and prevent the crime rather than dealing with the consequences. So it is with medicine. Good surveillance will give us that advantage in recognising disease before it occurs. We have recently been awarded a grant from the IADB (InterAmerican Development Bank) to conduct needed surveillance. It's a cross regional project, it involves six Caricom IADB countries. PAHO has been mandated to study this, and we are partnering with them, and gathering data we need.

Through this data collection, I think we are developing a model which can be shared with other countries in similar modes of development—in Asia, the Caribbean, the Pacific. This is very costly, and despite the fact that we have secured grant funding, unfortunately, I do not think health has been traditionally viewed as a resource per se, much like the way the environment was traditionally taken for granted. I think the time is coming when populations and investors are going to see health as a capital resource, in the same way raw materials are, and the environment is now seen as valuable.

Spending on research, medical, scientific, and otherwise have non-linear benefits. Just being able to look at data presents policy makers with means to make better decisions. And the effects are not local. Research here impacts all over the world.

Trinidad & Tobago went into its development phase about 50 years ago, and can teach a lot to countries now entering their own development phases. For example, the evolution of the diabetes epidemic in Trinidad has taught the world a lot. When, in the 1960s, Dr. Theo Poon King did a study of the diabetes here, he found that even then, the prevalence of diabetes in Trinidad was already the highest in the Western Hemisphere. Now the developmental model that occurred here can teach countries now about to undergo that kind of transition and transformation, an important lesson.

The greatest natural asset of any country is its human resource, and if we can have citizens live long and healthy lives, we will be richer for it. We can even measure it: we are able to show the cost of intervening at an early stage in a school child's life might yield exponential benefits in ten years time. So the outcomes of the investments in public health are real and tangible, we just have to expand our horizon.

Spending on research, medical, scientific, and otherwise have non-linear benefits. Just being able to look at data presents policy makers with means to make better decisions. And the effects are not local. Research here impacts all over the world.

2012 Laureates
Prof. Leonard O'Garro
Paula Lucie-Smith
George Simon

2012

Introduction

His Excellency, Professor George Maxwell Richards, TC, CMTT, Ph.D., President of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago

As I understand it, at the heart of these awards is a vision for social development in the Caribbean, nurtured by a person who has walked, resolutely, a road toward social development, where many have faltered.

It is a vision shared by many, not all of whom are, at the same time, both willing and able to add matter to it. It is to the credit of Anthony N. Sabga that he has turned his personal journey and triumphs into beacons that may give light for the benefit of others.

Inaugurated in 2005, the Caribbean Awards for Excellence has already begun to carve a significant space in the Caribbean mind. It is a space that must be consolidated and advanced in such a way that it becomes a feature in the thinking even of children of school age, who will cherish gaining one of the awards as an important goal to be achieved, not as the culmination of their work, but as another step in their growth, in whatever field they have chosen to pursue.

The commitment to and quest for excellence must be grasped from a tender age, and therefore, parents, guardians and teachers are critical because of the influence they wield in this regard. Such commitment and quest begin in ordinary things. How many master potters, for example were stillborn because, as very small children, their experiments in mud were tossed aside or thrown away?

The panorama of excellence is vast and we must be careful not to place contrived limits upon it, limits that would even vaguely suggest that academic brilliance is the only route to good success. I am unshakeably convinced that our region's establishing, for all times, a place of preeminence among the world's leading innovators, is through education—education that effectively takes account of the strengths and weaknesses in our human resource pool.

H.E. Prof. George Maxwell Richards

Taking account must go well beyond platitudinous statements, without follow-through, uttered at convenient times, by those who are empowered to provide the opportunities for making our education systems truly relevant and up to the objective of nurturing people who see themselves as able and valuable and whose first validation comes from the very environment that

has nurtured them. Self-knowledge and self-acceptance are critical, if we are to embrace excellence.

This is not at all intended to suggest that external standards can be disregarded. If we are to be relevant, we must be able to hold our own in the international arena, in whatever field. The requirement is, however, that we bring our own ideas and inventions to the contest. But to achieve this, we must move, as entire nations, from the attitude of welfare to that of development. That is the frontlet we must wear, throughout our years of formal and informal education, being properly and unremittingly prepared, at each stage, for the next level. Proper foundations must be laid, at the ground level, so that at the higher end, that is to say, at the tertiary level, momentum must not be lost and the requirements and expectations must not be stymied or compromised. University education in the region must be allowed to bear the hallmark of excellence, in every point, if the human face of it is to have the international respect that is necessary, as one of the significant elements in establishing our entitlement to a say in the rules of engagement at the international level. Such respect as has already been gained must not be diminished.

We are no less talented or gifted than people elsewhere, but we have been lulled into a culture of mediocrity, for the most part, because the demand for excellence is largely absent. Too few of us clamour for excellence in our own space. The vast majority of us depend on the few to insist. We tend to put that extra effort into our tasks outside of our region, where we do not have the support system for basic living. It is not always a fact that in our region, there is a lack of the support for quality endeavour. And even if this were so, should we be daunted? The best motivation comes from within, but that, too, comes from the environment that compels it.

We are no longer new to independence as nations, so we are without excuse, if we fail to rise above the mundane.

A nation cannot be built on excuses, particularly excuses for mediocrity and regrettably, we have accommodated and applauded mediocrity for far too long, in every conceivable sphere of our lives. I am not at all unmindful of the circumstances that are very real, at many levels in our social structure, which have placed many of us in survival mode. We are condemned to stasis, in that regard, so much so that we accept our responsibility to move the disadvantaged beyond their current status? On close examination, we may find that genuine compassion becomes the excuse for not being the best that we can be. We cheer wildly at one-off successes and inertia becomes characteristic. Too many of us are yet to understand that silver and bronze are not gold. We are not sufficiently hungry for the excellence of gold or the gold of excellence. Excellence demand that our record of success is sustained, in whatever we do.

We must face the reality that perhaps, because of social dislocation in families, children, particularly teenagers, in their desire for acceptance, are afraid to do well. We have a duty to deal with this serious impediment to personal and collective development and to let them know it is alright to be successful and excellent. They, who will replace us, must know that they have a responsibility to contribute to our making our mark, and that this can only be achieved through excellence.

Those among us who have earned the accolade of outstanding performers have got there by way of the road of excellence, which always takes the long view. Given the assets with which our region has been endowed, excellence should be commonplace. It should indeed be a habit. Whatever we offer, including our crafts, should bear its stamp. In this regard, we need to challenge ourselves and bring others with us. Economic success is not achievable without the planks of success in science and technology, arts and letters, and a clear and correct understanding of civic responsibility.

We are no longer new to independence as nations, so we are without excuse, if we fail to rise above the mundane. We have been equipped, even by some of our hardships, to push harder against the circumstances that would stand in the way of being a people who are known for the quality of life that goes beyond the banal. Even ordinary people can do extraordinary things. Therefore we all have a duty to change the environment of our region to one in which excellence becomes the norm, and we are not satisfied with just making a living, but are determined to create lives that bear testimony of our understanding of a more excellent way.

Mr. George Simon

George Simon

Guyana
Arts & Letters, 2012

The Solemn whistle of the Bone Flute

In the forest, Kanaima-man, like Jaguar, moves stealthily
Hunting tirelessly, night and day.
Kanaima - man whistles at night,
Tragic sound,
Paralyses his victim with fear.
Swiftly, he strikes!

I was brought up in St. Cuthbert's Mission, a Lokono Arawak village in north-east Guyana. In those days, an unconscious understanding of my intimate connection with the environment ran through every vein of my life: the myriad bat-whistles, bird-calls and animal cries that surrounded the village were as familiar to me as my mother's voice.

This spiritual connection was severed when I left my home at thirteen to live with an Anglican priest in Linden, on the Demerara River. And it grew even more distant when I went to study in London in 1972—to the point, in fact, that I would no longer own up to being Amerindian.

Some years later, however, my attitude began to change. Whilst working as research assistant to Denis Williams at the Walter Roth Museum of Anthropology in Georgetown, I was sent to accompany two anthropologists on a month-long visit to the Wai-Wai village of Sheparyimo. The experience catapulted me back to my early childhood in the Mission and I began to realise how profoundly those early years had shaped my perspectives and beliefs.

As a child, I was brought up to believe that the Semi-Chi-Chi, as we Lokono call our Shaman, was a great healer, a benefactor. I never realised then that Kanaima was also a shaman—I knew him only as a killer and assassin. When people told stories about him, they always told them in a whisper, out of fear. We Lokono know him as "Beswado"—the Great Shapeshifter, Jaguar Spirit, ever-watching....

I

I have sketchy memories of my father. Haunting, fragmented memories of his sickness and sudden death remain with me.

"Sonny, see if yu father coming yet," said my mother one evening, from inside the kitchen. Smoke, heavy with the smell of roasted fish, was drifting through the slatted wooden fence from the fire-side. My mother was cooking dinner. It was becoming dark and she was worried that my father was long in returning from the nearby farm where he had gone to harvest pineapples.

Ignoring her, I continued playing with the bee I had attached to a piece

of string. I amused myself by letting the insect fly away and then, just when it was about to go out of reach, jumping, catching the string, and bringing the creature back.

One of my favourite childhood pastimes was to look for these particular bees that would burrow into the sand. I would wait until the creature dug itself into the ground and then, with a thick leaf in hand, I would pounce on the insect and cover the burrow with the leaf. Carefully, holding the insect in the leaf I would yank the darting sting out, making it harmless. Then, without permission, I would rummage through my mother's sewing basket for a piece of her precious cotton thread. I would tie it to the insect, between its head and thorax then fly it like a kite.

"Sonny, you don't hear me? Go and see if yo father coming", she said again. Sensing her anxiety, I let the thread loose and ran to the jamoon tree. Confidently, I climbed up as quickly as I could. I had done this time and again to pick the purple fruit. I climbed high enough to see the savannah, over the bushes and palm-trees. From here, I was sure to see him walking across the open savannah. There was no one in sight. I sat on a branch and waited, hoping he would appear.

One of my favourite childhood pastimes was to look for these particular bees that would burrow into the sand. I would wait until the creature dug itself into the ground and then, with a thick leaf in hand, I would pounce on the insect and cover the burrow with the leaf.

"You see he?" she asked from under the tree. She was really worried now. "I don't know what is taking him so long."

"Come down and come have yo dinner. It getting dark," she ordered. I slid down the tree and followed her to the kitchen. She helped me wash my hands and sat me down at the table, placing roasted fish, cassava bread and cassareep sauce before me.

"Yu eat. I will wait for yo father," she said.

"Eh! Look he coming from de landing," she said, peeping through the window slats. She was looking in the opposite direction of the farm.

"Why he didn't stop to tell me he going to bathe?" she murmured.

She went outside to have a better look.

"Is na he, me eyes fooling me" she said. "I coulda swear was he." Disappointed, she came back into the kitchen. No sooner had she gone into the house to prepare our hammocks when my father walked in, quake on his back and full of pineapples.

"Wha keep you so long, Maxie?" she asked. She fondly called him Maxie instead of Mark.

"Well, I had to check all the pines so I didn't miss a ripe one." He replied

"Anyway a-home," he said.

"An you know Maxie, I just se yo coming from landing side?" she remarked, with a smile on her face. Ignoring her remark he said, "Le we go and bathe, it dark already." My mother picked up her aluminium bucket and joined him outside the house.

"Sonny, you wash yu hand and go and lie down. I going with yo father to the landing. We gon' hurry and come back quickly," she assured me. I watched them disappear into the darkness before going back into the house, where I found my hammock and fell fast asleep.

"Sonny get up, you father sick bad." My mother was shaking me awake.

"He gat fever and diarrhoea" she said. "I want yo to come with me to get some cashew bark from behind the house. Kanaima whistling plenty tonight."

"Whistling?"

"Yes, Kanaima whistling all night," she said.

I was familiar with the Kanaima whistle, as my parents would mimic it to frighten me into bed when it was past my bed-time.

With my father's flashlight and a kerosene lamp in hand, my mother walked across the yard to the cashew tree. I held the flash-light while she peeled some bark off with a knife. We returned to the kitchen and placed the bark into a cupful of water and left it

to brew. She went back to my father, who was hot with fever; I returned to my hammock.

The details of the morning elude me now, but, as if in a dream, I recall we were in a corial, a dug-out, going down the Mahaica River. I was perched on the bow of the boat; my father was lying, wrapped in a bed sheet. Our luggage was in the middle of the craft and my mother was at the stern, paddling. I was undisturbed by my father's illness. Instead, I wondered with amazement at the environment and the ambience, colourful birds on exotic trees with branches overhanging the river and an occasional king-fisher darting into the water. It was a thrilling moment. On occasion, my mother would ask me to pay some attention to my sick father. I would take a quick peek under the sheet that covered his head and tell her that he was asleep.

At last we pulled in. We had travelled some six miles down the Mahaica River and to the Maduni creek - a tributary of the Mahaica. We canoed up the creek to the "stop-off", which is a dam built across the Maduni, and we over-nighted there.

Early next morning, we continued to Cane Grove where we took a car to the hospital in Georgetown.

Next thing, I was transported into a huge room where people were milling around beds with men lying on them. Mother was sitting on the bed next to my father, chatting and looking happy. I left them and wandered on to the veranda. There were people on

the streets and houses with different coloured roof tops. I was fascinated. It must have made a deep impression on me, because years later, when studying art in England, I relived that moment as I made drawings and lithographs of the cityscape.

I stood there, gazing meditatively at the scene, when suddenly, jerking me out of my daydream, my mother took me by the arm and said that the visiting hour was up. We went back to my father's bed to say goodbye. He kissed us both.

"Ah am feeling better. Ah coming out tomorrow", he announced with a reassuring smile. We left. It was the last time I saw my father alive.

At the grave-side, I was standing next to my mother staring at a deep hole. My father's coffin was placed over it on two logs. I saw nothing but his coffin, I heard no sound.

Very early next morning, my mother left my aunt's house in Charlestown, where we were staying, to take breakfast to my father. She said she would wait for him to be discharged and bring him back home. After a long time, she came back, crying. Father had died overnight.

Next instant, I was in a hearse sitting next to my mother. I do not remember if there was anyone with us. I remember sitting next to the coffin. I noticed nothing else.

As we got close, the guides stopped and pointed us in the right direction. They did not want to accompany us any further; they were scared of getting sick from disturbing a burial site.

At the grave-side, I was standing next to my mother staring at a deep hole. My father's coffin was placed over it on two logs. I saw nothing but his coffin, I heard no sound. They lifted the coffin, removed the logs and began lowering it into the hole. I screamed in pain. I made an attempt to jump into the grave but my mother held me firmly. I cried bitterly. To this day, I can hear the sound of the coffin when it hit the slush at the bottom of the grave. Nothing else remained with me.

Many years after, I was told by other members of my family that my father had been killed by Kanaima, the fearful assassin. My mother, however, had always told me that my father had hurt himself while logging in the forest, so I paid little attention to these stories of the Kanaima attack on my father.

II

Life continued. My mother, being a widow, left the village to look for work on the Coast. My sister and I were left on the Mission with my aunts and cousins.

I grew up very fast, learning from my uncles to fish and hunt. Fearlessly, I would often go night fishing with Uncle Dali, who was suspected of being Kanaima. He had married into the family and was a stranger to the village. No one really knew what part of the country he came from. He was not Lokono so he was Kanaima and was not to be trusted.

I remember one of our night-fishing trips particularly vividly. On this occasion, we left home after mid-day and walked across savannahs to a creek in the forest. We dug up worms for our bait as we waited for nightfall. When night came, Uncle Dali took me to a clearing on the bank of the creek where he told me to fish; he, in the meantime, disappeared in the dark bushes.

I don't remember catching any fish that night; I spent most of my time struggling with baiting my hook in the darkness. One particularly bad attempt resulted in my line getting entangled in a branch. I pulled and tugged to retrieve it but only succeeded in breaking the hook; then I reached into my pocket for a spare one but could not attach it to the line. In desperation, I shouted for Uncle Dali, and he came trotting through the bushes to my rescue. When I complained that I had broken my hook and could not see to replace it, he chided me saying, "You must learn to see in the darkness". It took me years to understand what Uncle Dali was saying to me. "He is indeed a Kanaima! He sees in darkness! Like jaguars!" I thought to myself at the time.

Afterwards, he took me to his fishing spot. He caught a few more fishes and then we left. He guided me back through the forest and into the savannah that stretched all the way to the village. The moon was just appearing over the tree tops, and I welcomed the light. I walked confidently back home.

III

In 1991 I went on a month-long field trip to record burial sites in the Pakaraima Mountains and the North Rupununi Savannahs. I travelled large distances: from Georgetown to the North Pakaraimas in the far west of the country; then south to the Brazilian border; then back to Georgetown again via the Rupununi cattle trail, which I followed on foot, and the Soesdyke-Linden highway. It was a long and tedious journey.

I reported my findings to my dear friend, Dr. Neil Whitehead, anthropologist at Oxford University. Neil was excited about my survey, so he organised to come to Guyana the following year. We flew in to the Pakaraima Mountains and landed at Paramakatoi on a Friday. The very next day we went to see a burial site that I had located in the forest on the other side of the Yawong Creek. We trekked to the site, led by a local field assistant

named Matterson and two other guides. As we got close, the guides stopped and pointed us in the right direction. They did not want to accompany us any further; they were scared of getting sick from disturbing a burial site.

Neil and I proceeded to the place where I had seen several huge urns the previous year, nested in a rock-shelter. Surprisingly, there were no urns this time, only impressions on the ground where the pots had rested. Someone had clearly moved the pots.

Disappointed, I began a thorough search of the shelter. In a far corner, I spotted a crevice created by two rocks. I grabbed my flash-light and, kneeling down, explored what turned out to be a cave. The crevice was wide enough for me to squeeze through, so I eased myself, cautiously, between the rocks and then let loose my grip and fell some six feet to the ground. With flash-light in hand, I scanned the cave for snakes. Once I had assured myself it was safe, I began to explore the walls and floor, looking for drawings or any signs of human occupation. Nothing! I followed the corridor around a turn, flashing my light into every corner. Sure enough, perched high up in the ceiling of the cave, was a small pot.

Excitedly, I ran back to Neil and told him what I had seen. He squeezed down and followed me to where the pot was.

The local nurse, who had just walked in, explained: "At one time a Kanaima-man said to my husband I can kill you and bring you back to life in three days. That is how powerful I am."

We needed to get it into the light to be photographed, so, using the natural stairs of crumbled rocks, I climbed up to the ceiling and whispered to the pot: "I will take you outside to give you a little sunlight and bring you back". To speak to a pot seemed ludicrous at the time but I remembered a Tao teaching which says: "Speak to a rock every day, and one day it will answer you". I had also been advised by Te Te Marge, an old Carib woman, to show respect to the ancestral spirits by speaking to them and offering tobacco and alcohol.

We brought the pot out and examined it. Inside were human bones. We could tell by their whiteness that they had been tampered with recently. On the outside of the rim there was an appliqué design showing a serpent eating its own tail. This was significant for me, as I had seen photographs of the serpent eating its tail on walls of Egyptian caves. It led me, later, to research the significance of the serpent and serpent-energy around the world.

Having satisfied our curiosity, we returned the pot to its place in the cave. Neil took samples of the bones for analysis.

On our way back, we passed a lone house that was isolated from the village, and there I noticed a man sitting under a tree behind the building. I stopped to say hello. The man waved his hands, acknowledging my greetings. I stayed behind to have a conversation with him but he did not respond. He seemed angry. I was later told that the man was upset with Matterson for taking us to the site. Matterson explained that the man lived alone in the jungle. He was suspected of having assassinated individuals in distant villages, and Matterson had publicly accused him of being a practicing Kanaima. So as we passed his house the Kanaima-man shouted to Matterson: "I will get you". Matterson took it as a real threat.

This conversation put a twist in our research as Neil and I became interested in the practice of Kanaima.

That evening, while we were having dinner in the school dormitory, Neil and I began talking about it. I told him about my father's death. According to local rumours, my father was mistakenly killed. Kanaima was targeting another person, who looked like my father, and who had left the village the week before my father's attack. As we talked, our local cook joined in the conversation. She recounted stories of people who had died from Kanaima attacks. They would come home from their farms looking well but would fall sick with diarrhoea and fever at night, and die soon after.

The local nurse, who had just walked in, explained: "At one time a Kanaima-man said to my husband I can kill you and bring you back to life in three days. That is how powerful I am."

She continued, "In the forest, at a flash, Kanaima-man, with a club, hits his victim on the back of the neck. With him on the ground Kanaima-man quickly pierces the under-side of the tongue with the fangs of a poisonous snake then shoves the saw-like tail of the "tengere" fish into the anus, pulls it in and out to sever the sphincter muscles. He then embalms him with poisonous herbs and revives him. In three days he is dead. Kanaima-man returns to the grave of the dead person and sucks the nectar from the decaying body to energise himself. He is ready for the next victim."

After a while, we retired to our rooms. During the night I was woken by Neil calling out to me. He said he was ill, and asked me to show him to the latrine.

The next day we were up early and we followed the trail to the Yawong valley. Our guides raced ahead, leaving Neil and I behind, carrying on at snail's pace. At one point, lost in my own thoughts, I must have walked away from Neil, leaving him far behind. I took off my back-pack and ran in search of him. It wasn't long before I spotted him: he was laying crumpled, face-down in the ground, at a turning in the trail. I rushed over, released his back-pack and turned him over. He seemed as if in a deep sleep. I slackened his belt, took his boots off and unbuttoned his wet shirt. I cut a large leaf and started to fan him, slapping his face from time to time to wake him up. Eventually his eyes opened. He was in a daze. I helped him to sit up.

"Where am I?" He asked.

"On the trail to Turuka," I replied, handing him some water.

I washed his face. He looked very pale. "I am feeling very weak. I don't think I can make it to the mountain top." He said.

2012 painting by George Simon

That night we were kept awake with whistling around the camp. The haunting sound of Kanaima whistle, as from a bone flute, came from all directions. We stayed alert all night.

"Yes, you can and we will," I said stubbornly. "We will leave your back-pack behind. I will cut you a walking stick to support you and I will help you along" I said.

We started walking, his one arm slung over my shoulder and the other clutching his walking stick. We arrived at the top of the mountain late that evening. Thoughtfully, the guides had prepared a camp and cooked some food, anticipating that we would not make it to Turuka.

I took Neil over to a log by a stream. He was trembling, sweating profusely. I called for a blanket and wrapped it around him. He covered his face with his hands and cried.

"What is going to happen to me here?" he sobbed. "What is going to happen to my family, my children?" he was in great pain and distress. "I will die here," he said.

"We will get to Turuka tomorrow and we will be in a more comfortable situation," I assured him.

That night we were kept awake with whistling around the camp. The haunting sound of Kanaima whistle, as from a bone flute, came from all directions. We stayed alert all night.

Next morning we made our way to Turuka. Once there, he called out to me: "George, it is them bones. Kanaima bones. Take them out of my bag and throw them away"

"Neil, I cannot take human bones and throw them away like that" I replied. "I will get them and put them safely away."

"Whatever... but get them away from me," he snapped. "They are coming to get me," he said, tears trickling from his eyes. "I think I was poisoned."

"Oh?" I asked.

"At Paramakatoi..."

He was hallucinating, I thought. I took the bones from his bag and walked across the savannah, to a lone, distant tree. There at the root of the tree, I whispered a valediction to the bones and placed a piece of tobacco in the bag and left it.

Neil gradually felt better after this, but was still exhausted and fragile. We agreed to abandon the rest of the survey and return to Georgetown instead. I hired a horse to carry Neil to the nearest air-strip at Monkey Mountain, a day's journey away. Over there, Neil said that he saw a young boy he recognised from our evening in Paramakatoi. He claimed that the boy was wandering in our house while I went sight-seeing around the village.

"Are you sure? I enquired.

"Yes. Kanaima has sent him to look for me," he said. I asked Matterson if he had seen a young boy from Paramakatoi. He said he hadn't and suggested that Neil was jet-lagged and delirious from his long journey.

Once in Georgetown Neil recovered swiftly. By the end of the first week he was recovered most of his strength, and suggested that I take him to my research area in the Middle Berbice. He wanted to see the mounds.

It is not possible to say how much of Neil's collapse in the Pakaraimas was caused by self-suggestion and how much was the effect of Kanaima. Part of Kanaima's power is ambiguity. Sadly, in March this year Neil passed away unexpectedly from a short illness. He was diagnosed with cancer.

Since then, I developed an interest in the workings of Kanaima. My pre-occupation with the spirituality of Indigenous peoples of Guyana has deeply influenced the two main facets of my life, art and archaeology. Intrigued, I always felt impelled to explore the magic and the mystery of dark shamanism and try to demonstrate these in my recent paintings.

Kanaima imitates the jaguar spirit. He wonders fearlessly alone in the jungle, one with nature. He uses Jaguar pelts and masks to camouflage and to disguise himself, concealing his identity as assassin. These are elements that I try to capture in the works.

As archaeologist, knowledge of indigenous spirituality certainly helps in interpreting the cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible in the archaeological remains of the Middle Berbice region which I am presently researching. With the study of recovered artefacts such as decorated pottery, stone tools and stone figurines, we can trace the cultural evolution of mankind in the region. Understanding the cultural landscape, the remains of traditional beliefs, customs, skills, songs and dances helps in reasoning how and why man deliberately reshaped the land.

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Mrs. Paula Lucie-Smith

Paula Lucie-Smith

Trinidad & Tobago
Public & Civic Contributions, 2012

In the beginning is The Word

I cannot conceive of my life without reading. When my world threatens to overwhelm, I read myself into another world. When my brain overheats with too many ideas, I write them out onto paper or screen. So much of what I know has come through the printed word.

From my schooldays, I have taught others. I love to teach. I see the teacher as supremely important, for teaching develops thinking, which is the key to all development.

Adult literacy brings together my love of reading and my love of teaching, but the odds are firmly against learning to read as an adult. The factors that prevented adults from becoming literate in their childhood seldom go away as the years pass. Often they were the children whose first day of school was also the first time they saw a book or heard a story read, a cycle set to be repeated for their own children.

Their homes were places of strife, instability and often abuse. ALTA student Pamela writes, "Life for me was a challenge because the day that my mother give birth and she came out of hospital, she discard her baby in a dustbin. My body was covered in biting ants and worms." When Presencia proudly showed her school work to her grandmother, she flung the book against the wall so violently the pages fell out. Her grandmother said, "Girls don't need school."

Without home support, the child drowns in our overloaded primary curriculum. Lessons and therapy might overcome barriers to literacy, but these require money. Another cycle is destined to be repeated, as very few can break out of the cycle of poverty without literacy.

Far from diminishing over time, the obstacles to literacy are compounded by age, the responsibilities of adulthood and experience of school failure. To beat the odds and create readers and writers of those who have left their school days long behind, an adult literacy programme must tackle the hurdles to literacy one by one.

Hurdle 1: Fear that I cannot learn to read and write

The oft-quoted Caribbean literacy rates of over 90 per cent are in fact the rate of enrolment in primary school, the assumption being that access to primary education equals literacy. It is safe to say, then, that most Caribbean adult non-readers have attended primary school and already given literacy a try, maybe even what they consider their best shot. Past failure makes us all hesitant to try again, and when that experience comes with judgements that you are stupid and "cyar learn", the biggest hurdle is


ALTA
20th
Anniversary

to believe that you can learn to read and write. ALTA student Ellis Moore writes, "I hated school! Mainly because of all the licks I got. The teacher called me a dunce only because I got my work wrong. That had a serious effect on me all my life. I spent my entire school time playing the fool. I would get myself into all sorts of trouble with all of my teachers." Students have said to me, "Plenty people try with me already you know." and "My head real hard." This first hurdle stops many from even starting.

The first task of an adult literacy programme is to give the student success, since telling them "You can do it," will not erase decades of being told the opposite. They have to feel the success for themselves.

The key is to assess the student and start them where they know enough so they feel they can cope. In an ideal world, each student could have an individual education plan, but the only practical option is to create levels, which of necessity will encompass students with a range of skills—from those nearer the lower level to those who almost made it into the level above.

ALTA has four levels: Beginner and Levels 1, 2 and 3. While there is more to distinguish the levels, this is a rough guide: Beginners do not even recognise all the letters of the alphabet; Level 1s do not recognise many common words nor link all letters to their individual sounds; Level 2s read, but slowly, missing out or guessing words in everyday text, hindering comprehension; Level 3s recognise most words but want to improve comprehension and writing skills, often with a view to passing CXC subjects.

The second critical factor is one-on-one support, so the student is never left struggling. Once the task overwhelms, brain-freeze looms. Brain-freeze reinforces "I can't", so timely intervention is a must.

How help is offered is just as important as the offer of help. Help does not mean doing the task for the student or providing the answer.

ALTA provides individual support in two ways—first through an 8:1 student-tutor ratio to allow the tutor to work directly with individuals or pairs of students. The ALTA tutor spends 80 per cent or more of class time moving around the room to give help where needed, vigilant to avert brain-freeze and offering help to those who would not venture to ask for it.

How help is offered is just as important as the offer of help. Help does not mean doing the task for the student or providing the answer. That does not engender an "I can" feeling—it in fact reinforces the "I can't". The ALTA approach is to use questions to guide the student to discover what is to be learnt or to apply previous learning. The tutor's questions provide clues to move thinking in the right direction and towards the answer. The question also picks up on how the student is thinking—it "responds to the response" (Dr. Tim Conway). The good teacher is master of the art of questioning, a far more demanding skill than telling, as the teacher must know the answer themselves and also understand how they arrived at that knowing. The questions should give just enough to stimulate thought. This trains the thinking process to arrive at "I can".

In ALTA, we evaluate students' progress not by how much of a task they cannot do, but by how much help they needed to complete the task. The small student-tutor ratio makes it possible to get everyone to complete the tasks, but only when they can do these fairly independently are they ready for the next level. ALTA has no tests, therefore no one fails. ALTA students do not need more scar tissue.

The tutor is one arm of support; just as important is support from other students. ALTA fosters a cooperative rather than competitive classroom, with respect for all being enshrined as the number one rule of the ALTA classroom. Students work in pairs to fill out their workbook and to practise reading,

taking turns to read a paragraph, with tutors walking around to help when neither knows. Card games and walk-around activities bring groups together as does class discussion and trips. A literacy objective is worked into each of these group activities, e.g. we discuss the words in the lesson to promote word recognition and comprehension.

Creating the right learning environment is essential, but will only lead to literacy if your teaching approach develops the skills of reading and writing. This brings us to the second hurdle.

Hurdle 2: Aptitude in areas other than literacy

The greatest myth about literacy is that it is easy—perhaps because we see children reading and writing. Reading and writing are skills and, as for all skills, the wiring of our brain determines our level of ease. For those without an aptitude for literacy, learning to read, write and spell is often the hardest task of their lives. Just as in a pan side, different pans play different parts and come together to create music, so too the different parts of the brain play different parts to create meaning out of the assortment of shapes that comprise written text. The dyslexic brain has an "organising disability which impairs hand skills, short term memory and perception, so inhibiting the development of reading, writing and spelling, and sometimes numeracy." (Dr. H. Chasty, Director Dyslexia Institute UK.)

To most of us, the alphabet comes in a fixed sequence which needs little explanation—not so for the dyslexic.

The challenges the dyslexic faces were brought home to me as I sat reading with David, one of my first students. He read the first line and glanced at me, no doubt saw a confused expression, and blithely said, "Oh, you want it the other way." He began this time to read left to right. Imagine having to work out where to start every time you face print.

This ability to see things from both sides produces great designers, architects and techies, but really messes up spelling, which requires letters to be in a specific sequence. The dyslexic can write 'the' and 'teh', 'ti' and 'it' in the same piece of writing and not perceive any difference between them. They produce wonderfully inventive spelling, like "onet", [for "want"] which uses a good strategy, taking a word you know to spell one you don't know. The problem is that the word "one" is irregular with a final silent "e", so you can't use "one" to spell "want". The dyslexic brain needs to be taught the patterns of spelling.

During an exercise to put words into alphabetical order, I remember Linton saying to me, "Paula, I know we do this a lot, but what really I supposed to be doing?" To most of us, the alphabet comes in a fixed sequence which needs little explanation—not so for the dyslexic. Linton needed detailed instruction for anything in sequence. With this, he went on to pass School Leaving English with distinction.

So if you found reading, writing and spelling difficult as a child, these will not be any easier to grasp with age—unless a different method is used.

In my first two years teaching adults, I examined school programmes to see how literacy was taught. I pored through programmes from the UK, US and Canada. The latter were rich in material interesting for adults, but most of my students could not recognise the words in even their first levels. Adults would come to my class armed with West Indian Reader First Primer, that little red book written in the 1930s featuring Dan in the van (not a van, but a horse drawn cart). This book presents lists of rhyming words, which can help you to link letters and sounds but only if your brain is wired for reading. Those wired for reading pick up reading at school, so will not be in an adult literacy class.

Eureka for me was attending the Dyslexia Association Training in Methods for Teaching Dyslexics in July 1992. Not only was it tremendously useful for my teaching, but for my own

understanding of the why and how of written language. Phonics was never part of my education, so it was fascinating to discover the 44 sounds used in English and the many ways these are represented by letters and letter combinations; to understand my own spelling errors and begin exploring how to remedy these.

The course went beyond the phonic code to the structure of words. We have all heard readers tell non-readers to break unrecognised words into syllables. Here finally was a system of steps and rules to do this. Here was analysis. Here was a multi-sensory system using cards for built-in review and games for practice. Best of all, the word recognition skills came with a teaching sequence.

Missing from the programmes I had looked at previously was this structured and explicit teaching of word recognition. Missing too was a methodology that would engage the thinking skills of adult learners. Here I learnt the directed discovery approach mentioned earlier. Developed to take advantage of the average-plus IQs of dyslexics, this was a perfect match for adult learners.

The dyslexia programme however was designed for individual remedial teaching, but I had a class of 10 to 20 students. I divided the programme into levels and began to build lessons around the skills. From local literacy expert, Wallis Wyke, I got a framework for grouping reading skills into four components—word recognition, vocabulary development, comprehension, and study skills.

Because literacy is a skill, you can choose any content as the vehicle to teach reading and writing. ALTA has chosen life skills as the content for instruction—students learn to read and they learn to manage their lives and even transform these.

Like the dyslexia programme, ALTA lessons must be taught in sequence to progressively build each skill. ALTA added more games and created six board games using folklore, local maps and Carnival.

Why use the methods for teaching dyslexics? Though seldom diagnosed, up to half of an ALTA class may be dyslexic, as opposed to the estimated 10 per cent of the entire population. Also, non-dyslexics, like me, benefit equally from analysing the written code. This is clear in international trends in reading instruction. Over the last two decades I have seen the explicit teaching

of phonics, now dubbed synthetic phonics, make its way into mainstream education, a trend that is picking up real speed. This is different from the implicit phonics of the West Indian Reader.

But decoding is not the only route to reading. There is a visual route, and fluent reading relies on building a bank of sight words which we recognise instantly. We store whole words, almost like pictures, in the brain's visual memory—much like when we see a face and a name pops into our head. The reader's brain learns to take a snapshot of new words to constantly expand the words instantly recognised. The non-reader's brain, especially those not wired for reading, has to be taught to do this.

My first exposure to this was the Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) tutor training video. In the LVA approach to teaching sight words, the tutor selects high frequency words one-by-one from a reading text, writes each on a small card and teaches these using a series of steps. The cards provide easy review until the words become instant. With some modification, I still use this approach with ALTA Beginners and Level 1s.

From LVA too I learned the Language Experience Approach (LEA), where the tutor writes the words the student says and then uses the written text as reading and teaching material. This proved an ideal early tool for ALTA Beginners whose minimal word recognition skills make it difficult to find text that they are able to read. While students are not really reading, just remembering what they have said, they begin to match spoken to written text and, just as importantly, they get that critical early success. Also, it's cheap!

The reader's brain learns to take a snapshot of new words to constantly expand the words instantly recognised. The non-reader's brain, especially those not wired for reading, has to be taught to do this.

However, LEA stories can be time-consuming to create, especially for six or more students, and students may not remember their exact words after that class, thus limiting future use. Another tool was needed for beginner readers and this I picked up in Atlanta in 1997, at the only International Reading Association (IRA) conference I have been able to attend. One of the presentations discussed predictable books for children, like The Little Red Hen, where the stories follow a pattern. The reader can predict the repeated words on every page and use the pictures to guess the words that don't follow the pattern. Reading an entire book gives the student a feeling of accomplishment. I thought, "Why not make predictable books for adults?" With help from an IRA grant, I published 18 predictable books, which form most of the reading for the Beginner level and the context for teaching high frequency sight words.

The IRA conference confirmed for me that the field of literacy instruction was just as fraught with conflicting theories a decade after I'd completed my course in the teaching of reading in my Post Graduate Certificate of Education at Leicester University. The challenge is not a lack of materials and approaches, but the multiplicity of these—albeit with much overlap and often just different packaging and terminology. A collection of strategies and tools without coherence does not lead to reading, especially for the dyslexic.

I think my particular talent is seeing through the fluff to the core strategies that work, applying and adapting these to match the needs of the adults I teach and weaving them into a comprehensive programme of literacy instruction—creating order, structure and sequence.

Hurdle 3: Spoken word and written word

Low aptitude for literacy often goes hand in hand with low aptitude for language. In the Caribbean, difficulty acquiring language is compounded because we have two forms of English—Standard and Creole. The difference everyone notices is in pronunciation. This only occasionally leads to misinterpretation, as in the newspaper story that mentioned square pegs in wrong holes.

In implementing my dyslexia training in the ALTA classroom, I realised that phonics had to change to match my students' speech rather than the other way around. For adults to forge a meaningful link between letters and sounds, the sounds have to be those they use. ALTA Students choose

between Creole and Standard English pronunciation for the 'th' phonics card and, because Trinis say the words peer, pear, pare, pair exactly the same, at ALTA these four, three-letter endings have the same sound.

The difference in grammar is much harder to address. Most of our ancestors arrived in the Caribbean, many unwillingly, and were faced with extreme language immersion with no instruction. They picked up the vocabulary, but ignored features not essential for communication and continued to apply the only grammar they knew—that of their native language. The shared vocabulary makes it easier to communicate, but has the big drawback of making it very difficult to distinguish Creole from Standard. The common perception that Creole English has no past tense shows this clearly. The form of the verb which Creole uses to show the past is that used in Standard English to denote present tense, e.g. "They play mas" is past in Creole, present in Standard. For present, Creole would say, "They does play mas."

ALTA has a well-established language policy shaped heavily by lectures given at ALTA tutor meetings in the early 1990s by Dr. Lawrence Carrington and Merle Hodge. ALTA recognises that Creole English has a different grammar to Standard English and accepts the language students come with. We replace the terms 'good English' and 'bad English', or correct and incorrect English, with Standard English and Creole English. When students begin to write for themselves, according to their goals and needs, ALTA teaches the differences between Creole and Standard English, one by one in a structured way.

ALTA recognises that Creole English has a different grammar to Standard English and accepts the language students come with. We replace the terms 'good English' and 'bad English', or correct and incorrect English, with Standard English and Creole English.

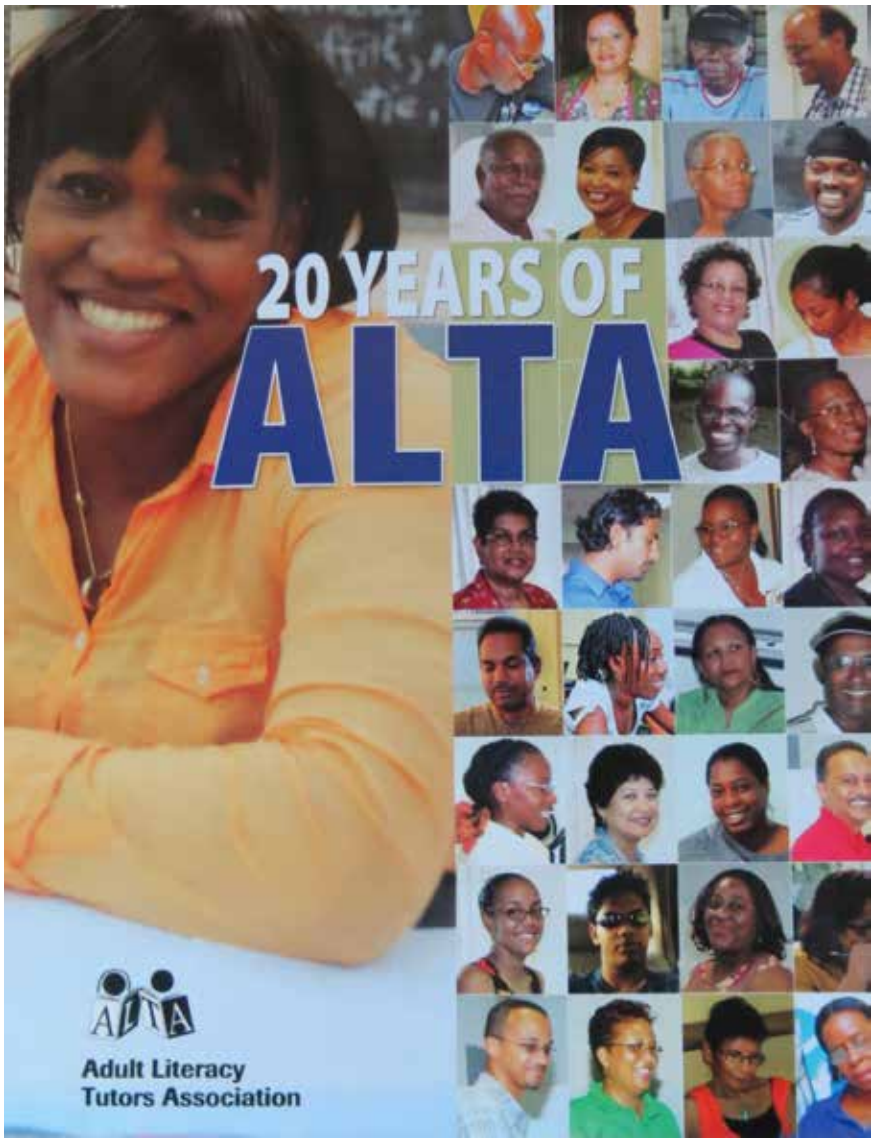
Hurdle 4: Time, energy and worries

The best programme and teacher can't help you if you are not present, in body and mind. The students who learn to read and write are those who have the will to make the time and effort, an ingredient of success in any endeavour. However the choice is particularly difficult for many literacy students. The jobs available to the non-literate often mean they must work long hours, over which they have no control. Time spent at class is time when they could be earning a few dollars. Only when you can think beyond the next meal can you think about education, so for the really poor the dollar has to come first. This, added to the responsibilities of job, home, children, aging parents and the health challenges of aging yourself, can stretch out attendance at ALTA over a decade.

So while ALTA follows the academic calendar with a start in September and an end in July, once you have enrolled at ALTA, you will not be turned away. Some students leave to pick fruit in Canada for six months or work in catering so miss from Christmas to Carnival, but we welcome them back, maybe advising that they go for extra practice at an ALTA Reading Circle.

Adult learners have many demands on their time, so time spent in a literacy class must be relevant, must impact on their everyday lives, must empower them. This is where Brazilian educational theorist Paolo Freire steps into ALTA. In his ground-breaking "Pedagogy of the Oppressed', he proposes replacing the banking approach to education, where the teacher is a narrator and the student a listening object, with problem-posing education: "The educator constantly re-forms his reflections in the reflections of the students, [who] are now critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher"—education as the practice of freedom rather than the practice of domination. This kind of literacy instruction transforms the student from object to subject in his world.

Freire's thinking was embraced by the rapidly-growing informal education sector which had the openness to innovation absent in formal schooling. Freire is godfather to the learner-



Adult learners have many demands on their time, so time spent in a literacy class must be relevant, must impact on their everyday lives, must empower them.

centred approach of adult literacy with its emphasis on engaging student interest and using material relevant to the student's life. The aim is to equip students not only to function independently in their society, but to transform their worlds. Literacy combined with critical thinking skills has the power to transform lives.

Reading Freire gave a theoretical base to what I was doing in the classroom. Freire's emphasis on respect and nurturing of the spirit is obvious in an adult class, while maybe it is not as evident in a room full of children or teens—though of course, respect there is just as important. At age 30 when I first stood before a class of adults, most of them were older than I was. They outstripped me in their wealth of life experience and their ability to endure and transcend grave mistreatment. As I got to know my students, I was amazed that they could smile, laugh, be thankful and kind to others when the world had been far from kind to them.

Because literacy is a skill, you can choose any content as the vehicle to teach reading and writing. ALTA has chosen life skills as the content for instruction—students learn to read and they learn to manage their lives and even transform these. One POS student in her middle years, when faced with an ultimatum from the children's father that she leave ALTA class or leave him, chose to leave him. She told the tutor that he was keeping her down, and ALTA was taking her up.

The ALTA Programme uses material adults would come across in daily living in T&T, but simplified to their reading level. It engages students in topics ranging from relationships and handling anger to budgeting and health, with some fun lessons on jokes and excerpts from Samuel Selvon. We draw on students' experience and start them thinking about this, e.g. is beating a child the best way to mould behaviour?

ALTA was a life-skills programme long before the current buzz about life skills in adult education. Unfortunately the life-skills courses I have seen in T&T are content-laden, as are our primary and secondary curricula, and demand a level of reading and writing which most who seek alternatives to mainstream education simply do not have.

Hurdle 5: Money and resources

While adults who attend literacy classes are not the poorest of the poor, even those who could pay for instruction cannot sustain payment for the time needed to meet their literacy goals. Thus instruction must be free, which means inventive ways to cover costs.

Paying the teacher is the first obvious expense, and the obvious solution is volunteer tutors. But, with much of the ALTA approach not taught in schools and akin to specialist teaching, it follows that training is necessary to deliver the programme effectively. Simply being able to read yourself does not qualify you to teach literacy, especially to someone who has been to school and has already received literacy instruction. The musician who plays by ear cannot teach the tone-deaf person, as that person needs to learn the notes.

ALTA conducted the first two tutor training courses in 1993, guided by materials sponsored by the British High Commission and the US Embassy. The most influential of these were six training videos from Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) and the training package for the UK Initial Certificate in Teaching Basic Communication Skills. For the first years we built the training around the LVA videos. As the ALTA programme took shape, our own material replaced these elements. I still use one item from the UK package. The ALTA course opens with participants reading this paragraph and I think its developers would be amazed at how we extract the essence of ALTA from these few lines.

The number one problem faced by all programmes reliant on volunteers, is getting volunteers to do what they say they will do. ALTA conducted the first two tutor training courses in 1993, guided by materials sponsored by the British High Commission and the US Embassy.

The number one problem faced by all programmes reliant on volunteers, is getting volunteers to do what they say they will do. On our first two training courses in 1993, I was so pleased to get people interested in attending the course and teaching that I asked not much more than the reason for wanting to teach adults to read and how they would implement the training. I realised the training was often not reaching the students and began to spot the people who collect courses. I remember the lady who had told me God had called her to teach the adults in her church to read. When she did no teaching after the free training, she explained that God had changed his mind and called her to do something else. Then there was the volunteer who had 13 children. Volunteers are well-intentioned, but adrift. They need a firm hand to steer them and continuous guidance to keep them on course.

By the next year, 1994, we had started ALTA classes and developed the ALTA volunteer contract—free tutor training in exchange for one academic year of teaching twice weekly at an ALTA class. At the request of the committed tutors (often being let down by unreliable newcomers), we added a $100 refundable deposit, an interview and eight consecutive observation sessions at an ALTA venue. Out of the hundred-plus new tutors trained annually, no more than five fail to fulfil their commitment and some of these honour their contract and pay the full cost of training.

Not all teachers are created equal, so ALTA teams tutors to offer students their combined strengths and to model cooperative practice.

Most volunteers have work and family commitments. I soon learnt that if you don't provide ready-made lessons, they will revert to what they learnt to read with and bring in children's

reading schemes. The first ALTA Adult Workbooks, with their accompanying tutor books explaining step by step how to teach every lesson, were published in 1994. Creating your own materials deals with the other major cost, and since books can be branded and last for years, publishing is something that attracts donors.

NGOs only exist because there are donors, since some costs are unavoidable. Unfortunately, the one cost that is inescapable, administration, is the one no one wants to fund. In the first years, volunteers staffed the ALTA office, luckily rent-free in the former barber shop at the back of the Queen's Park Hotel as the building awaited demolition. Two issues quickly arose—reliability (office work is boring so volunteers don't stay) and accountability. The third time that $20 appeared in a drawer and no volunteer knew where it came from, it was time for paid staff.

This meant fundraising, starting with the cake sale and BBQ, working up to the art auction and bazaar with fashion show. Whatever the venture, it moves the focus away from your mission and the burden is borne by a few stalwarts who have never done anything like this before. All in all, fundraising is not the best use of resources, but every NGO must pay its dues until hopefully the work itself attracts funding, from foundations or through an award like the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence.

But few donors sign on for more than a year or two as they want to sponsor something "new" every year. This in turn means that NGOs are always searching for new donors—once again, not the most efficient system. Sometimes the small donors are the steady ones. In the post-millennium economic slump, we reached out to individuals to sponsor a student and follow their progress through ALTA. A decade later we have 50 regular sponsors and our eye is on our goal of 200 student sponsors.

Risking an Act of Love

While ALTA harnesses the combined energy of 300-plus volunteers annually to bring literacy to some 2000, the gains are not just on the student side. Raphael Sookram, Health Inspector and ALTA tutor of 11 years, writes, "The gnawing emptiness inside has been replaced with a genuine sense of purpose, renewed self-confidence, and a deep sense of fulfilment." Jeanette Williams, a geography teacher for 30 years, describes ALTA teaching as stimulating and exciting, adding, "I am amused by friends who suggest that being an ALTA tutor is a good idea as it gives me something to do in my retirement. ALTA is not my hobby. It is a social movement to which I am committed."

Freire talks of false charity versus true generosity. False charity gives a little something to the extended hands of the have-nots, but preserves the haves' power. True generosity lies in "striving so that these hands need be extended less and less in supplication. … The oppressor truly helps the oppressed only when he stops viewing them as an abstract category and sees them as unique persons who have been unjustly dealt with. This requires … risking an act of love."

Individuals meet at ALTA whose paths would not otherwise cross, and this changes perceptions. Us and them become we.

After more than 20 years working in adult literacy, I still marvel that students and teachers actually surmount the huge obstacles, so ALTA students do read, do write, do look up and out at the world where before they looked down at the ground at their feet. One of my first students, Yvonne, captured the wonder when she told me, "Paula, I was in church Sunday gone and I look up at the big, big sign at the front. I take it in syllables. I see the word 'come'. I look at the first part and I get it. Imagine all these years they telling me 'welcome' and I didn't know!"

If every person felt welcome in their world, perhaps each of us would want to look after our world rather than lash out against it.

Prof. Leonard O'Garro

St. Vincent & The Grenadines
Science & Technology, 2012

Many persons familiar with my work as an academic and scientific researcher have from time to time recommended me for accolades of various types. For example, in February of this year, I was selected by the Eminent Persons Panel as the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence Laureate in Science and Technology for 2012.

In 2009 I was also selected by a project administered by the National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology of Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology, as one of 38 Caribbean Icons in Science, Technology and Innovation over a span of more than 150 years. I do not have strong opinions about whether or not I am deserving of these and other recognition. I harbour self-doubt about the impact of my work, and this has to do with my view that I can do much better under more conducive circumstances. For this reason, I am haunted by the feeling that I am functioning well below capacity. I am, however, always very thankful and grateful for people's interest in my work.

Despite my reluctance to promote myself, I feel comfortable saying that I am highly motivated and focused to find solutions to problems affecting livelihoods, or to understand basic research ideas better, with the objective that they will have practical applications. I am also particularly mindful to make my work and the approach to it thorough, creative and original, and aim to provide an enriching experience for persons coming into contact with it.

I was born in Kingstown but spent my childhood years in rural St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in the village of Coull's Hill. I grew up with maternal grandparents, Ernest Quow

Prof. Leonard O'Garro

and Margaret Browne and 5 of their 8 children, Irvin, Luthel, Donalie, Phil and Dan. My grandparents were landowners and farmers. I attended the Westwood Methodist School for primary education. My wife is Dr. Juliet Melville, an economist from Trinidad and Tobago, and we have two boys, Leonard and Jules, who are currently 9 and 4 years old, respectively. Our sons were born in Barbados, where we currently live.

My childhood was impacted by the natural resource assets of my immediate surroundings. My home was practically located on the beach and my friends and I fished often and frequently swam along the coastline to nearby villages or beaches for fun. About 15 minutes' walk from my home, a river snaked through rich vegetation, all teeming with abundant and varied wild life. It was a favourite pastime for my friends and I to catch crawfish and fish from this river and hunt wild meat with the aid of dogs from the surrounding bush. At the end of our outings, we pooled our catch for big cook-ups with dumplings in communal setting on open fire.

I was very fond of my grandparents. They are amongst the most amazing people I have encountered, each for different reasons. My grandfather was an enormously generous man who made me feel special. He was unrestrained in expressing his affection and pride. My fondest recollections of his affection were the times he would meet me half-way home on the end of many school days. He would dig deep into long trouser pockets and retrieve treats of bread, cakes, sugar-cakes or sugarcane he had for me.

My earliest recollection of my desire to do well was planted by my guardians. Conversations frequently revolved around personalities and how they were excelling. There was overwhelming expression of pride in other people's accomplishments.

I idolised my grandmother for her sharpness of mind and strong and feisty personality. She loved carnival street jump-ups and made it a point of travelling to Kingstown every year to participate in them. She would stay with my mother, Rocina, during these times. Initially, my mother and her siblings were not quite sure what my grandmother was up to, but eventually everyone in the family found out through gossips and sightings, much to their dismay. In her very advanced years, she continued with the carnival street jigs. By then, everyone conceded that she would not be deterred and was enjoying herself, so they dropped their opposition to the feting and left her alone. She even re-married at the age of 85!

During my childhood, my grandmother put me in charge of the home finances for groceries. I was responsible for safe-keeping of the money and for running all of the shopping errands in Coull's Hill and the nearby village of Troumaca for the family. At the end of each week I had to account for every cent spent. Once, she found out that I stole 4 cents and I felt really ashamed of myself. She noticed my feelings of deep remorse and nothing was said of my misdemeanour. I really appreciated her reaction and I retained her trust and disavowed myself from ever stealing again.

My earliest recollection of my desire to do well was planted by my guardians. This mostly happened at nights when the family retired to bed. The household was usually abuzz with conversations, which were often a review of daily or recent activities in Coull's Hill and the surrounding villages. What was interesting is that the conversations frequently revolved around personalities and how they were excelling. There was overwhelming expression of pride in other people's accomplishments. I felt that I would want people to regard me in this way for my accomplishments when I grow up.

My journey on this path began early in my childhood also and those who

attended the awards ceremony of the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence in 2012 would have heard aspects of it in my acceptance speech. I recall that my grandparents, parents and other members of my innermost family circle thought that I was special based on my performance at primary school. I enjoyed their affection and admiration very much and continued to do well, mainly because it was fun for me. Another lasting memory was about my time at primary school, when I arrived at final grade at the age of 11 instead of the usual age of 15 or 16 due to accelerated promotions which were practiced in those days.

At that time I wrote the School Leaving Examination, which was a path to teacher training for primary school, and the entrance examination to secondary school. There was no Common Entrance Examination in those days. Each secondary school had its entrance examination. I first passed the examination to secondary school and entered the St. Martins School in Kingstown on full scholarship. I do not know why I did not write the entrance examination for the Grammar School, which was considered the leading secondary school in St. Vincent and the Grenadines at that time. I did not know about the standing of the Grammar School at the time but was told so later, after I started secondary school.

I was already attending secondary school when my aunt, Luthel, brought news that I had done very well in the School Leaving Examination and that the Ministry of Education had selected me to start teacher training to become a primary school teacher. What was particularly interesting about the encounter with my aunt on later reflection was that it was left up to me to decide whether I remained at school or started teacher training. I was having lots of fun at secondary school

I recall that my grandparents, parents and other members of my innermost family circle thought that I was special based on my performance at primary school. I enjoyed their affection and admiration very much.

and decided to stay there. My decision was based on where I would have had the most fun. This is probably what you would expect of an 11-year-old child!

I once recounted this story to my wife and she remarked that had I decided to become a primary school teacher instead of remaining in secondary school, I would have aged prematurely, had lots of children and would have been riding a bicycle. This was a summation of the possibilities of rural St. Vincent during my childhood.

My stint at the St. Martins School was memorable. I was fortunate to meet up excellent teachers, most of whom took personal interest in my education. As a result, I returned the best General Certificate in Education (GCE) Ordinary Level results, in terms of the number of subjects passed in one sitting of examination, in the history of the school up to that time. I was further advised by the principal of the school and other teachers to continue with my education to the GCE Advanced Level and beyond.

Had I decided to become a primary school teacher instead of remaining in secondary school, I would have aged prematurely, had lots of children and would have been riding a bicycle.

I had no doubts about carrying on with my education, but the first step was made so much easier, when, in an unsolicited gesture, the St. Martins School extended my full scholarship to the Grammar School. In retrospect, this was remarkable, given that I was to become a pupil of another school. The gesture reminded me that I was a product of the St. Martins School. Maybe this was the intention. Overall, these developments played to my childhood dream of wanting to be held in regard for my work.

My transfer to the Grammar School to pursue GCE Advanced Level studies was an interesting affair. At that time, this school had a monopoly of this aspect of secondary school education. I first had to appear for an interview to be

Top: **Country Nominating Chairs and members with the 2012 Laureates and Programme Director.**
Bottom left: **2012 Eminent Persons Panel.**
Bottom right: **2012 Selection meeting.**

considered for entry. I was subsequently accepted by the school but the terms for my entry were not to my liking. I wanted to pursue GCE Advanced Level studies in the subjects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics but was instead signed up for Economics, History and Mathematics. The reason given was that my best GCE Ordinary Level results were in History and Mathematics. I did not know how Economics ended up on my slate of subjects, as I had not done it before. I later assumed that the school operated this way because of limited class room space and that it was trying to make sure that all of the teachers had classes to teach.

It took a while to settle into my new school, but eventually I came to terms with my challenges and participated fully in school activities. I even became the School's Head Boy, editor of the school's magazine and the cricket team's fast bowler. Academically, I continued to do well despite the fact that my study areas were not well aligned with the ideas I began to have for a career. After a successful year of GCE Advanced Level studies, I made further representation to gain entry into the school's science programme to pursue Biology, Chemistry and Physics. This time the school knew much more about my academic record and capabilities, and I was successful. This meant that I had to demote myself and start all over again. I however continued with Mathematics under private tutorship, as students were allowed to take a maximum of 3 GCE Advanced Level subjects only at the Grammar School at any one time.

The GCE Advanced Level science programme at school was quite erratic. There were times, lasting for more than up to one term on occasions, when physics classes were not held because a physics teacher could not be found on the island and the teaching of chemistry and biology fared marginally better. In some cases, we, the students, took turns teaching ourselves by preparing and presenting lectures.

There was large-scale unionisation of school teachers. We were all caught up in this sea of change and there were frequent strikes and marches for or against one cause or another.

When we did have classes, it was often the personalities of the teachers that took centre stage rather than the presentation of the subject material. Some of the teachers were colourful and amusing while some tried to be intimidating. One teacher constantly washed and dried his hands through the course of each lecture and another appeared only to own and wear one suit of clothing for work and partying, which seemed to be his favourite activity. One biology teacher once had us bring in chicken eggs and potato as samples for laboratory sessions and we were all shocked when we turned up for labs to find him cooking the samples in a beaker on Bunsen burner and having them for lunch!

The country was also going through dramatic social change associated with what was commonly referred to as the "Black Power Movement", and in the education sector there was large-scale unionisation of school teachers. We were all caught up in this sea of change and there were frequent strikes and marches for or against one cause or another. We participated in some of these and on one occasion the entire GCE Advanced Level class was suspended for one week for participating in a public march in Kingstown in support of the Teachers Union. We tried to be defiant in our own ways but we were often too divided to have impact. The reason was that my classmates were the sons, daughters and relatives of the elite of the political establishment we were targeting. My own father, Robert O'Garro, who was the Commissioner of Police, threatened to lock me up if I participated in any public demonstrations. I took his threat seriously and stayed away. The reason was that on a previous occasion, one brother, Robbie, who was a school teacher, ignored a similar threat and was locked up with my father's consent. I am

not implying any fractured relationship with my father. I simply knew he was a man of his word! Despite the unsettling school situation, I worked hard, enjoyed doing so and passed all of my GCE Advanced Level subjects.

Away from school activities, I was fully immersed in social and political issues of the day. For example, I was a member of a youth group called Save Our State, which was later re-branded as Movement for Social Progress. The group assisted vulnerable groups in the society, and a notable achievement was the setting up of a library of books for inmates of the main prison in Kingstown. Most of all, the group enjoyed taking on the political establishment!

While attending school, I was very fortunate to secure an appointment as Youth Development Officer of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Planned Parenthood Association, under the leadership of Lady Faustina Eustace. I worked in the breaks between school terms and during evenings at the end of each school day. I was responsible for researching and writing a weekly column in the local newspaper, The Vincentian, organising panel discussions across the country and producing the Association's magazine Dig In! in addition to posters and billboards for public display. I am truly grateful to Lady Faustina Eustace for having such confidence in me while I was still a student at secondary school.

It would be remiss of me if I do not recall an aspect of my life that may have shaped my personality and attitude to challenges. There is a saying or part of a song which has a refrain like this or something similar: "Nobody knows the trouble I've seen". I mentioned this because I have seen trouble! Before my third birthday I was affected by a permanent disability through an accident and subsequently almost died on at least 3 occasions through other mishaps. My grandparents and parents almost suffered a similar fate through the grief I caused them. In this regard following one mishap, my grandmother took refuge under her bed and it required yeoman efforts from the village elders to get her out!

I have seen trouble! Before my third birthday I was affected by a permanent disability through an accident and subsequently almost died on at least 3 occasions through other mishaps.

In one accident I was unable to walk for awhile and had to ride a donkey called "Jim Reeves" to and from school daily. There was no other source of transportation in the village at that time! In my last serious calamity during childhood, I ended up with three seriously broken limbs and a knock-out bump to the head and missed nearly the entire year of my second year at secondary school as a result. At home and at hospital, I did all that I could to recuperate from my injuries and did as much as possible to keep up with school work, mainly though the effort of a school friend, Ellsworth Dennie. I returned to school just in time to write the usual end of year examination and had no idea why I was allowed to sit it. However, when the examination results came out, I was shocked that I got a placement in the top 10 of a class of 28. With this experience in particular, I confidently felt undaunted by challenges, no matter how large they loomed. A few of my friends who are aware of some of the past challenges I encountered and know how determined I can be, would jokingly warn others not to get on my wrong side as it could spell serious trouble for them as I am affected by a knock-out bump I once took on the head!

On the basis of my GCE Advanced Level results, I secured a full scholarship to the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus where I pursued a BSc degree combining biology and chemistry. I participated fully in campus life and continued with my cricket fast-bowling, representing the University in the Barbados cricket competition. I also enjoyed my academic programme. My lecturers encouraged hard work, independent thought, originality and creativity and I felt that this approach played well to my strengths and personality. I therefore continued to do well and towards the end of my BSc programme, my professors were impressed with my work and they arranged a full scholarship for me to pursue PhD studies. I became the first Sir Frank Worrell Memorial Scholar, presumably as a purveyor of excellence based on the selection criteria.

My PhD study was in the area of genetics and I flourished in this programme, mainly because the topic for research was primarily of my choosing and I was given full responsibility for planning and executing the research. Again, I felt that this approach was well aligned with my strengths and personality. I had great fun and completed my research in two and a half years, although it took another year or so to complete examination of the thesis and award of the PhD degree, due to illness on the part of a thesis examiner. I became the first person who, having completed a first degree at Cave Hill Campus, went on to obtain the PhD degree at the same campus.

Despite the rapid progress mentioned above, I faced a peculiar difficulty pursuing postgraduate study. This had to do with the plant pathology section of the Ministry of Agriculture in Barbados. The Ministry was of the view that my PhD work was particularly dangerous to the plant crop sector as I was conducting experiments on a plant pathogen which was not endemic to Barbados. I understood the concern but my work was completely confined to a laboratory specially fitted with containment systems to address concerns about pathogen spread to the environment. Moreover, the Ministry had previously granted the University of the West Indies the relevant permit to obtain the pathogen samples. With applicable legal authority, personnel from the Ministry visited my laboratory one day in full-body protective suits, confiscated my samples and stock of laboratory glassware and took them away for incineration. My work was shut down for about one month to clarify issues and when it resumed my laboratory was subjected to intrusive and un-announced spot checks by the Ministry.

My research programme catered for viable agriculture, mainly in Barbados and the OECS and it impacted on commercial cultivation of many important crops. This programme contributed immensely to the body of work for which I have been recently recognised.

Partly in response to the Ministry's action, I completed my PhD programme at the University of Bath in England, where my supervisor, Dr. John Clarkson, took up an appointment after resigning from the University of the West Indies during the course of my PhD study. It is a triumph of the human spirit that the Ministry of Agriculture and I have subsequently forged very excellent collaborations at the levels of research and policy.

On completion of my PhD studies and after research stints in Europe, I returned to the Cave Hill campus as a lecturer in the Biology Department of the Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences. I quickly settled down to chart a career as an academic and scientific researcher. I was highly motivated and went through the various career grades fairly quickly and became one of the youngest professors by rank at the University of the West Indies, all in a span of about 10 years.

This was a very prolific period for me in my career, particularly in the core areas of research publications in international peer reviewed journals, many ranked 1 to 10 in over 1000 in my field. I was also able to secure millions of dollars for my research, and enabled and assisted in the training of significant numbers of students for their masters' and doctoral degrees in various aspects of genetics and plant pathology. Moreover, my research programme catered for viable agriculture, mainly in Barbados and the OECS and it impacted on commercial cultivation of many important crops. This programme contributed immensely to the body of work for which I have been recently recognised.

Several factors contributing to the success of this work should be singled out for special mention. First was the support I received from funding sources such as UNESCO, the Agricultural Development Fund of the then Barclays Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the University of the West Indies itself, all of which collectively contributed millions of dollars of funds and other resources to my research. I am grateful to the representatives of these funding sources for clearly recognising the importance of the work I was setting up at the University of the West Indies. I also received invaluable support from key members of the wider international scientific community in which I sought recognition. I was fortunate to be able to come into personal contact with some of the most accomplished and

recognised researchers in my field at the time and was also able to establish genuine research collaboration with many of them at an early stage of my career. As a result, I was able to clearly understand the gold standard for scientific excellence and sought to operate at this level at all times.

In 2005 I left the University of the West Indies to join the United Nations as one of 6 global managers of its biosafety for modern biotechnology programme. The intention was to align my work more closely to global development for greater impact and resources. I am no longer with the United Nations, but I am succeeding in accessing global development funds for the CARICOM area countries. These countries are currently implementing a project which will allow them to access the benefits of modern biotechnology, while taking relevant safety considerations into account. I am coordinating this project out of the UWI, where I am the Senior International Adviser on biosafety and modern biotechnology. In addition to this work, I am pioneering transformative research and development projects in Dominica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines and participating in several research projects with colleagues, mainly in the United Kingdom, United States of America and Asia.

For personal and ethical reasons, I will not recall here the challenges and tensions of an inter-personal nature I encountered in my workplace in response to my professional work. Another reason is that they are numerous and will require another article to write about them. I am however compelled to say something about the workplace in this regard by way of offering advice to young people who are setting about their careers and entering the world of work.

This advice is mainly for high achievers. High achievers are associated with a pattern of high achievement. My advice is to make it a point of doing well, even for the fun of it. Cleverness is a gift but you require wisdom to use it responsibly. Embrace competition fully as a means of giving of your best and to improve your standards and capabilities. Move on from your work place if and when the need arises and be on the lookout for career advancement opportunities. Remember that the excellence brand is associated with a body of work, often over long periods, so you have to stay the course.

High achievers are usually catalysts for change which frequently spark challenges and inter-personal tensions in the work place. Accept these as inevitable developments and come to terms with them as quickly as possible. The worst and best of work relations play out in the work place. Make sure however that when conflicts arise and you are involved that they are about work and not personalities. This is an approach to retain the respect of your colleagues in the long term. Above all, be mindful of the resources your country, family and other sponsors have invested in you. In return for this investment, be good ambassadors.

Cleverness is a gift but you require wisdom to use it responsibly. Embrace competition fully as a means of giving of your best and to improve your standards and capabilities.

2013 Laureates
Prof. Caryl Phillips
Dr. Rhonda Maingot
Prof. Anselm Hennis
Prof. Dave Chadee

2013

Introduction

His Excellency, Donald Ramotar
President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana

The pages of history's illustrious, famed and respected are decorated with the names of many Caribbean men and women. For a region so small, setback, constrained and shackled by our legacy of colonialism, the Caribbean can nonetheless proudly boast of producing a disproportionately high number of super achievers and geniuses.

We have produced world-beaters in sport, Noble laureates in the arts, statesmen and stateswomen of high repute, brilliant intellectuals and a vast array of professionals, artistes and artists whose works have enjoyed and attracted international fame and prestige.

The triumphs of these innumerable sons and daughters of our region serve as a constant reminder that the Region is a place of creativity, achievement and worth. What our people have gained through hard work and dedication in the midst of the most formidable of odds is inextricably linked with our history and culture.

The legacy of colonialism created structural impediments to development but our history of struggle, fierce determination and our culture of resistance and resilience have imbued in West Indian people that self-belief to succeed. We have taken our destinies in our own hands and created our own sphere of mastery and excellence.

We are driven by high ideals as we seek to overcome and now better what went before. This quest for constant improvement, this desire to surmount odds, defy expectations and reach towards higher levels of competence and achievement, is present in almost every facet of life in the Caribbean. And we must look for it not just amongst those who have achieved fame, fortune and repute but also and especially in the common things that we often take for granted.

H.E. Donald Ramotar

Excellence is not an exclusive club. It emerges in various shapes, forms and in every station of life. It is to be found on the cricket field in the scintillating stroke play of Chris Gale and the dogged

resistance of Shivnarine Chanderpaul. It is to be seen in the electrifying speeds of Usain Bolt and Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce. It is to be discovered in the lucid prose of V.S Naipaul, the vivid poetry of Derek Walcott and the noteworthy and emulative career achievements of Hon. Justice Desiree Bernard of the Caribbean Court of Justice, just to name a few of our truly outstanding sons and daughters.

But excellence is also to be experienced in the simple folk who each day do "ordinary things in extraordinary ways". Excellence is to be found in the fisherman who braves the elements to make his catch; it is also to be found in the single parent who juggles the responsibilities of career and home. Excellence is to be found in the amazing skills of the housewife having to manage a budget; it is present in the numerous acts of heroism of our teachers, doctors, nurses and members of the disciplined services, indeed of the ordinary man and woman.

Each day these simple folk, the salt of our earth, create small acts of miracles and wonders. They too are exemplars of excellence who remind us that in a world of blinding competition, there is excellence to be found in ordinary and noble pursuits.

Excellence is not only about achievements. It is also about the difference that those achievements make, how they help people, how they contribute to the common good. Excellence is also not just about the goal, it is also about the process. A life spent in sustained service to others is a priceless crown no less valuable than Olympic Gold.

Excellence must be encouraged. It inspires and empowers. A commitment to excellence allows us to explore our own boundaries and to see how far these can be stretched. Human progress would be stagnated if persons do not aim to be better and more virtuous. This is why we must encourage and value excellence.

The Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence gives recognition and reward to meritocracy and excellence. I hail its significant contribution to sustaining a culture of excellence within our region. I commend the vision and the personalities behind these awards and take this opportunity to congratulate all those who will be honoured in 2013.

It is my hope that the recipients will be held up as role models for the citizens of the Caribbean and the wider world, and that their example will inspire others to pursue greater mastery. May these awards continue to promote higher standards and in so doing allow our people to continue to thrive and excel!

Excellence must be encouraged. It inspires and empowers. A commitment to excellence allows us to explore our own boundaries and to see how far these can be stretched. Human progress would be stagnated if persons do not aim to be better and more virtuous. This is why we must encourage and value excellence.

Prof. Caryl Phillips

Prof. Caryl Phillips

St. Kitts & Nevis
Arts & Letters, 2013

Chapter One

He lives in Leeds, in the North of England. His is a strange school for there is a broad white line in the middle of the playground. The boys and girls from the local housing estate have to play on one side of the line. His immigrant parents own their small house and so he is instructed to play on the other side of the line. He is the only black boy in the school. When the bell signals the end of playtime the two groups, one neatly dressed, the other group more discernibly scruffy, retreat into their separate buildings. The five-year-old boy is beginning to understand difference - in the form of class. The final lesson of the day is story time. The neatly dressed children sit cross-legged on the floor at the feet of their teacher. Miss Teale. She begins to read them a tale about 'Little Black Samba'. He can feel eyes upon him. He now wishes that he was on the other side of the line with the scruffy children. Either that, or would the teacher please read them a different story?

Chapter Two

He is a seven-year-old boy, and he has changed schools. At this new school there are 110 girls. His teacher asks him to stay behind after the lesson has finished. He is told that he must take his story and show it to the teacher in the next classroom. He isn't sure if he is being punished, but slowly he walks the short way up the corridor and shows the story to the other teacher, Miss Holmes. She sits on the edge of her desk and reads it. Then Miss Holmes looks down at him, but at first no words are exchanged. And then she speaks. "Well done. I'll hold on to this."

Chapter Three

The eight-year-old boy seems to spend his whole day with his head stuck in books. His mother encourages him to get into the habit of going to the

local library every Saturday, but he can only take our four books at a time and by Monday he has read them all. Two brothers up the street sometimes let him borrow their Enid Blyton paperbacks. The Famous Five adventure stories. Julian, Dick. Anne. George and Timmy the dog are the first literary lives that he intimately engages with. However, he tells his mother that he does not understand why the boys' mother warms the Enid Blyton paperbacks in the oven when he returns them. The two brothers have mentioned something to him about germs. His mother is furious. She forbids him to borrow any more books from these two boys. He begins to lose touch with Julian, Dick. Anne, George and Timmy the dog.

Chapter Four

His parents have recently divorced. He is nine and he is spending the weekend with his father, who seems to have little real interest in his son. He senses that his father is merely fulfilling a duty, but the son needs his father's attention and so he writes a story. The story includes the words "glistening" and "glittering" which have a glamour that the son finds alluring. When the son eventually hands the story to his father, the father seems somewhat baffled by this offering. His father is an immigrant, this much he already understands. But it is only later that he realises that imaginative writing played no part in his father's colonial education as a subject of the British Empire. His father's rudimentary schooling never embraced poetic conceits such as those his son seems determined to indulge in. As the father hands back the story to his son, a gap begins to open up between the two of them.

Chapter Five

He is only ten years old when his father decides that it is fine to leave him all alone in his spartan flat while he goes to work the night shift at the local factory There is no television. No radio nothing to seize his attention beyond the few comic books and soccer magazines that the son has brought with him from his mother's house. Then, late at night, alone in the huge double bed, he leans over and discovers a paperback in the drawer of the bedside table and he begins to read the book. It is a true story about a white American man who has made himself black in order that he might experience what it is like to be a coloured man. The ten-year-old boy reads John Howard Griffin's Black Like Me and, alone in his father's double bed, he tries hard not to be afraid. That night he leaves the lights on, and in the morning he is still awake as his exhausted father slides into bed next to him.

Chapter Six

At sixteen he has no girlfriend. The truth is, his brothers aside, he has few friends of any kind, and he seldom speaks with his father or stepmother. During the long summer holiday he locks himself away in his bedroom and he reads one large nineteenth century novel after another. He learns how to lose himself in the world and lives of others, and in this way he does not have to think about the woeful state of his own life. At the moment he is reading Anna Karenina. Towards the end of one afternoon his heart leaps and he has to catch his breath. He puts the book down and whispers to himself: "My God". His stepmother calls him downstairs for dinner. He sits at the table in silence but he cannot eat. He stares at his brothers, at his father, at his stepmother. Do they not understand? Anna has thrown herself in front of a train.

Chapter Seven

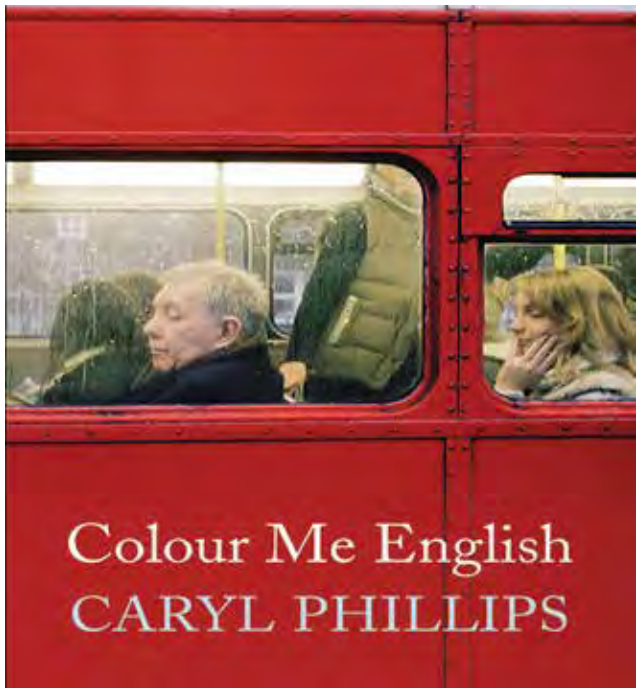
He is eighteen and he has completed his first term at university He cannot go back to his father's house and so he travels 150 miles north to his mother's place. Mother and son have not, of late, spent much time in each other's company. His mother does not understand that her eighteen-year-old son is now, according to him, a man. They argue, and he gets in the car and drives off in a fit of frustration. He stops the car in the local park and opens his book. However he cannot get past the sheer audacity of the first sentence of James Baldwin's Blues for Mr. Charlie. "And may every nigger like this nigger end like this nigger - face down in the weeds!" This eighteen-year-old "man" is completely overwhelmed by Baldwin's brutal prose. He reads this one sentence over and over and over again. And then he closes the book and decides that he should go back and make up with his mother.

Chapter Eight

His tutor has asked to see him in his office. Dr. Rabbitt informs the student that he has passed the first part of his degree in Psychology. Neurophysiology and Statistics, but he reassures the student that at nineteen there is still time for him to reconsider his choice of a degree. Does he really wish to pursue psychology? The student patiently explains that he wishes to understand people, and that before university he was assiduously reading Jung and Freud for pleasure. His unmoved tutor takes some snuff and then he rubs his beard. So you want to know about people, do you? He patiently explains to the student that William James was the first professor of psychology at Harvard, but it was his brother, Henry, who really knew about people. The student looks at Dr. Rabbitt, but he is unsure what to say. His tutor helps him to make the decision. "Literature. If you want to know about people study English literature, not psychology."

Chapter Nine

He is twenty, and for the first time since arriving in England as a four-month-old baby he has left the country. He has travelled to the United States and crossed the huge exciting nation by Greyhound bus. After three weeks on the road, he knows that soon he will have to return to England and complete his final year of university. In California he goes into a bookstore. He buys a copy of a book that has on the cover a picture of a young man who looks somewhat like himself. He takes the book to the beach, and sits on a deckchair and begins to read. When he finishes Richard Wright's Native Son it is almost dark, and the beach is deserted. But he now knows what he wishes to do with his life. And then, sometime later, he is grateful to discover that mere ambition is fading and is being replaced by something infinitely more powerful; purpose.



Chapter Ten

He sits with his great-grandmother in the small village at the far end of St. Kitts, the island on which he was born 28 years earlier. He has now published two novels. And on each publication day he has asked his editor to send a copy of the book to his great-grandmother. But she has never mentioned the books and so, gingerly, he now asks her if she ever received them? Does she have them? When she moves it is like watching a statue come to life. She reaches beneath the chair and slowly pulls out two brown cardboard bundles. The books are still in their packaging. She has opened the bundles, looked at the books, and then neatly replaced them. Again she opens the packaging. She fingers the books the same way that he has seen her finger her Bible. Then she looks at her great-grandson and smiles. "I was the teacher's favourite," she said. She was born in 1898 and so he realises that she is talking to him about life at the dawn of the twentieth century. And she continues. 'I missed a lot of school for I had to do all the errands': Suddenly he understands what she means. She cannot read. He swallows deeply and lowers his eyes. How could he be clumsy enough to cause her this embarrassment? She carefully puts the books back in their cardboard packaging and rucks them back under the chair. She looks at her great-grandson. She doted on this boy for the first four months of his life. The great-grandson who disappeared to England. The great-grandson who all these years later now sends her stories from England.

(Re-published from *Colour Me English*, Harvill Secker, 2011, with permission from the Author).

Dr. Rhonda Maingot, CMT

Trinidad & Tobago
Public & Civic Contributions, 2013

The Well of Living Water

Late one Sunday night, our family was returning home after visiting the grandparents when, on approaching Couva junction, we saw a man lying on the road. The headlights on the old car picked up his form on the ground just in time for my father to not run over him.

I remember being afraid. Why did my father stop? What is he going to do? In this darkness, will we be safe? My thoughts were interrupted by the sound of my father's voice. Addressing a man on the pavement, he said, "Hi, do you see this man lying on the road? Someone is going to run over him. Why don't you pick him up?"

"Oh, he's a drunk, leave him there, if they run over him he deserve dat," was the reply.

Without another word, my father got out of the car, scooped up the man like a baby, carried him to the pavement and put him down, went back into the middle of the road, picked up a bag (which must have belonged to the man), placed it near to him on the pavement, got back into the car and drove off. I must have been eight or nine years old at the time and to this day, that act of compassion by my father on that dark and lonely road lives on vividly in my memory.

Children learn by watching, by listening and by doing. I thank God every day for the wonderful examples I had from which to learn, examples from my mother, my father, siblings, grandparents, family, teachers, catechists—examples of love, caring, compassion, and trust in a God who sent his Son to teach us this amazing life of love and faith.

Growing up in the oilfield camp in Pointe-à-Pierre, Trinidad, for the first 17 years of my life, was another experience that helped shaped me. A humble French Creole family, my grandparents were not land-owners, like many of those families were, but land workers! My father worked hard and long hours in the oil refinery, sometimes in dangerous circumstances, and my mother stayed at home and looked after the family of 7 children.

I remember my father buying a car from a friend who owned chickens, for which he paid two bags of laying mash! It was an old Ford Prefect and it was in that car—in the backyard—that I learned to drive. Another car I remember was a big American car with a Dickie-seat over what should have been the tray. We all fought to sit there on our family outings—unless it was raining! We did not always have a car as sometimes a boat was the preferred means of transportation, and was especially useful for weekends and holidays to accommodate our large family. These boats were built at home by my father, with the help of a few

Dr. Rhonda Maingot

of his friends and a few of us children (including me), in the backyard or in the living room—just about anywhere!

I recall building the mast of our sailboat *Lady Lyn*, named after the eldest girl in the family, in our living room and having to remove the window so that the mast could exit the house! The phenomenon of the extended family on those oilfield camps was another important part of our growing up. Your friends' parents were like an uncle or aunt who could hug you, correct you, send you home or call your parents. If, as they say, "it takes a village to raise a child", then we were indeed raised well!

Our life had the makings of a very good life and, as in most families, we also had something to keep us on our knees: my father was an alcoholic. To cope with this required a lot of emotional energy, to say the least. But we came to understand life at an early stage, along with the need for one another, for love, forgiveness, prayer, and trust in a God who is compassion and love.

Unfortunately, in our world today so many of our children have little or no experience of a good life, no examples of love, life or faith. Many don't even know their fathers or mothers and, if they do, the family life they experience is filled with negatives and strife. This has become the norm for children in our beloved nation of Trinidad & Tobago and today we are reaping the whirlwind that we have sown. Just look around.

If I were to say what was the singular most important moment in my life, I would have to say it was that night, when I was 28 years old, when The Lord exploded into my consciousness with a loud booming voice, and commissioned me to "Love and show the world how to love".

Immediately I knew I would have to spend the rest of my life seeking this God who had captured me. Metanoia! I began a "metamorphosis", an ongoing transformation in my life that would take me on a journey that I had never dreamt I could ever be on. Suddenly, at age 28, the wisdom of the Church and the Saints was helping me discern the path I was to follow. Within a few years my prayer, spiritual reading, learning the scriptures and reflection soon concretised into living a life in community, sharing with other sisters and brothers all who were committed to the building of a civilisation of love.

Living Water Community had been born. Of course, I had the perfect examples of community life to follow as we see in the Gospels that Jesus himself formed a community around him as he began his ministry and in this way showed us how his disciples were to live. Following in their master's footsteps, the Apostles too, after the ascension of Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, formed a community of believers as they began the awesome task of evangelising the world.

St. Paul gave some guidelines for discipleship in *Colossians 3:12*:

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

This was how we would have to live if we really wanted to follow the call to be Living Water, the call to love and show the world how to love. It's no easy task to live out such a vocation in this secular world, whether as a married or consecrated single person. In fact, this vocation to love contradicts the secular world's view of what constitutes a life worth living.

Top: 2013 Laureates Prof. Anselm Hennis, Prof. Dave Chadee, Dr. Rhonda Maingot, Dr. Sabga and Prof. Caryl Phillips.

Bottom: Dr. Charmaine Gardner (OECS Chair), Mrs. Diane Chatoor (T&T Member), Mrs. Vivian-Anne Gittens (Barbados Chair), Prof. Chadee, Prof. Phillips, Prof. Hennis, Dr. Maingot, Dr. Barbara Gloudon (Jamaica Chair), Dr. David Singh (Guyana Chair), and Prof. Bridget Brereton (T&T Chair).

Country Nominating Chairs and Members with Laureates.

Living in the secular world can actually sap one's spiritual life. Living in Community nurtures the vocation to love and moulds us into who God desires us to be—but this is not achieved without some discomfort. God moulds us by chipping away at our rough edges to make us smooth and beautiful; think of God as the potter and we his clay. Community life requires keeping love promises to God and to one another. Life in Community nurtures our prayer life, through individual and common prayer time.

In short, life in Community is a life lived out in love and obedience to the will of Him who has called us and chosen us. From this well of life-giving water, from which we draw daily, we go out to be missionaries of love and life to a world so in need of God's grace. Our little family begins to embrace the family of God. We do this by ministering to the poor, the dispossessed, the addicted, the sick, the elderly, the homeless, the abandoned children and all who are in need—spiritually and temporally.

Oh, come to the water all you who are thirsty; though you have no money, come! Buy and eat; come, buy wine and milk without money, free! Why spend money on what cannot nourish and your wages on what fails to satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and you will have good things to eat and rich food to enjoy.

(Isaiah 55:1-2)

Our outreach is matched by inner work—work to make the inner self grow strong. In spite of our weakness and sinfulness, God has a way of bringing about his desires, through the Holy Spirit's action in our lives. He just needs us to open our hearts and say "Yes", like Mary did:

I am the handmaid of the Lord, let what you have said be done unto me.

(Luke 1:38)

A quotation hangs in my office as a gentle reminder to me what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. It is the opening paragraph of 'Church in the Modern World', a Vatican II document, which states: The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well.

This type of discipleship is reflected in the ministry of the Community which crystallised one night, many years ago, as our community life began. As was our custom, we took soup and sandwiches to the homeless on the streets of Port of Spain. Nicholas, one of our brothers living under an awning of a building, had just returned from the hospital where we had taken him for treatment of a terrible ulcer on his leg.

Seeing him in his usual position, sitting on the steps and leaning against the door of the building, I knelt in front of him with the cup of soup and the sandwich, saying, "Goodnight Nicholas, how are you feeling tonight?" And, as I looked up at him I saw the face of Jesus looking back at me. I then heard myself saying, "Oh Jesus, this is you!"

I knew from that moment that this was where we would meet Jesus—in the poor and needy. Over the years, as the ministry to those in need has continued, the pain, hunger, brokenness and strife we have encountered have been sobering. The funny thing is, that we set out to help others in their plight and soon we realise that it is a two-way street, we receive so much, maybe much more than we give.

We work and toil and are busy with many things but we learn that there is only one thing that is really important. Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta explains it so well: "At the end of our lives we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made or how many great things we have done. We will be judged by: I was hungry and you gave me to eat. I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless and you took me in. Hungry not only for bread—but hungry for love. Naked not only for clothing—but naked of human dignity and respect. Homeless not only for want of a room of bricks—but homeless because of rejection. This is Christ in distressing disguise."

That's the other quotation that hangs on a wall of my office. Of course, without the time, talent and treasure of so many people, organisations and foundations, such ministry would be

impossible. I am grateful and humbled to have experienced tremendous support from all sectors of society over the years. I believe people are intrinsically good and desire what is good for humankind. That is how we were made. The Bible tells us that we are made in the image and likeness of God, therefore we must be intrinsically good. It is unfortunate that, using the free will with which God has blessed us, sometimes we choose death and not life, resulting in the sick world we have today.

Like everyone else, I had no idea where life would take me but my faith made me certain of who I was supposed to be, a holy woman of God. Yes, my faith tells me that God, who knit me together in my mother's womb, called me from before all time to be holy and spotless before him. The grace that I have received over the years is what has enabled my journey of faith, not that I have reached any particular place on the journey, but, knowing that I am on the journey, I am eternally grateful to Almighty God.

I will also be forever grateful for the Living Water Community family, a real gift and blessing to me and to so many others. Words are inadequate. What beautiful sisters and brothers the Lord has given me to share my life with in our households and to work with in our ministry, all zealous to bring about the civilisation of love. What a privilege. What an amazing grace.

The psalmist asks: "How can I thank the Lord for his goodness to me?" In the Evening Prayer of the Church, we repeat daily the words of Mary, the Blessed Mother of our Lord, as we sing together her Magnificat, which is also our thanksgiving to God:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord
and my spirit exults in God my Saviour,
for He that is mighty has done great things for me
and holy is His name.

Prof. Dave Chadee

Prof. Dave Chadee

Trinidad & Tobago
Science & Technology (Joint) 2013

Growing up on a cocoa estate in Tableland no more than 200 meters from the Elswick Presbyterian School allowed me the opportunity to attend school, but more importantly to play on the estate in my spare time.

At age five while playing among chennette trees in our front yard I held on to the trees and felt a surge of pain run up my arms. I screamed as loudly as I could. My mother ran from the kitchen and my father, a teacher at Elswick school, heard my cry and propelled by parental instinct, also bolted down the road to find me in tears and pain but smashing to bits black and green coloured caterpillars which were in a massive cluster on the tree trunk.

My swollen arms were washed, barbs from the caterpillars removed and cream applied. My father then placed caterpillars in a jar with leaves from the chennette tree. Each morning my father and I would examine the jar but one day I thought they were dead because they were dark colored, stationary and looked different. The explanation given by my father was the caterpillar had pupated, or became a chrysalis, and assured me they were alive. More than a week elapsed and nothing happened, at which point I really questioned whether my father was telling me the truth. But one morning as we opened the jar and the most exquisite, beautiful mint green butterfly with brown stripes emerged, the Bamboo Phage it was called, and a wonder to behold for a five-year-old. At that point I knew what my future occupation would be.

At the same age I also caught my first fish, no more than 3 mm long, but soon I was able to identify the differences between sardines, guarbine, coscorub, and catfish by the way the cork moved on the surface of the water or when it was taken under the water surface. Next came the catching of songbirds and the use of "larglee" latex to capture the birds. Latex was removed from breadfruit trees, boiled and chewed. The soft sticky substance was then spun on a cocoyea broom stick or palm leaf. These larglee sticks were set on tree branches that were used as perches for these song birds.

They were called chansay because it was by luck or chance that birds were caught—many days we caught nothing. But we sat quietly in the grass whistling/mimicking the sounds of the birds and waiting for their arrival. Once caught, the trees were climbed and bird removed from the latex with coconut oil and gently cleaned and released in our bois canon cage. We fed them banana and honey to sweeten their vocals (as we thought in those days).

The experience at Naparima College was unique since many of my parents' friends were teachers so my transition was relatively easy.

Going to San Fernando

Attending Naparima College in San Fernando meant boarding at a family friend's home a short distance from school. Life was changing from the comfort of home to adapting to a new life with a family in San Fernando. It was a strange and an eventful learning experience but after one year I started commuting from Tableland to San Fernando. In this way I was still able to live, study and play at home on the estate.

The experience at Naparima College was unique since many of my parents' friends were teachers so my transition was relatively easy. My cricketing skills were further developed at Naparima College and I started representing the school at both junior and senior levels. I became a medium pace bowler by accident. I was first picked as a spinner but in the first over of the day the fast bowler was unable to bowl due to cramp. Who would complete his over and who would continue using the new ball? The captain asked me to bowl—the ball was new and spinners usually have a hard time spinning old balls, never mind new ones, at least in those days. I held the ball like an off break bowler, ran in, bowled and the stumps were disturbed. I became the opening bowler for Naparima College for the next four years until completing A-levels and going off to University. Interestingly, on retracing my education on the cocoa estate between ages five and 14, I learned many crucial lessons which would guide me through my life:

- Power of Observation
- Creativity
- Problem solving
- Appreciation of Nature
- Patience and the ability to stick to a task
- Freedom (no extra lessons)
- University Education

On completion of A-Levels I attended Dalhousie University, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. The drama of leaving Tableland at 5 am to arrive at Piarco Airport, meeting my cousins who lived in Toronto, and going on to Halifax via Montreal remains with me. At midnight I arrived and shared a taxi with a distinguished looking gentleman who lived near the Dalhousie Campus. He turned out to be the MP for Halifax.

At Dalhousie University I was one of a few students of colour and because I played football and soccer for the University, many felt I should have done Physical Education rather than a Science degree. Some people make life very difficult for foreigners because of their life experiences but I made many friends, many that I am still in contact with after 40 years. After my Honours Project Seminar on "The reasons for the high incidence of Aedes aegypti in Trinidad" my undergraduate supervisor Prof. D.P. Pielou gave me an A-grade and indicated if I wanted to work on Canadian mosquitoes he would be happy to be my MSc supervisor but that I should consider going back to Trinidad and work on tropical mosquitoes.

During the summer of 1976 while doing the research for my Dalhousie project I met Dr. Elisha Tikasingh, an internationally recognised Entomologist/Parasitologist who had kindly seen me and showed me the CAREC entomology laboratories and insectaries. On my return to Trinidad to start the Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in the Department of Zoology, UWI, and with an interest in working on mosquitoes, I visited Dr. Tikasingh and inquired whether be would be my supervisor. He immediately agreed.

My research project involved the taxonomic separation of a mosquito species complex (No 17 complex) which included three species and studies on the life cycle and ecology of one mosquito species from the complex, Culex caudelli, was proposed. In October 1977, I started doing my MPhil degree at UWI St. Augustine working on mosquitoes in the Aripo Forest and Savannah where many of the theoretical concepts learned at Dalhousie came alive as I studied the Aripo field site. Most of my undergraduate courses were relevant to my fieldwork in Trinidad and therefore within 18 months I had completed the field work required for my degree.

Dr. Tikasingh was an excellent facilitator; a stickler for detail methodology under whom I learned the art and science involved in field work and of developing research projects. Dr. Gene Pollard also started as my supervisor but left UWI to take up another job. It was during this time I met Ray Martinez, Ambrose Guerra and Joe O Hing Wa—these men influenced my life and career because of their dedication to duty and their passion for research.

At the end of my UWI sojourn I was asked whether I really liked working with mosquitoes and if I wanted another project. My response was simply to thank the person who asked for his kind offer, and indicated that I had come to Trinidad from Canada to work on tropical mosquitoes. This act of perceived rejection and my association with a former lecturer probably influenced the date of my return to UWI for well over 20 years.

My introduction to the Insect Vector Control Division workers in the laboratory and field was also traumatic for some workers, as some workers regularly left work at 10.30 am for the day.

Work Experience

In 1979 having completed my research for the thesis, I was offered the job of Entomologist at Insect Vector Control Division, Ministry of Health, Trinidad: in one day I moved from minimum wage to the equivalent salary of a Senior Lecturer at UWI. My appointment in the Ministry of Health came during the height of the 1978-1980 yellow fever outbreaks, so vector control operations had to be implemented. At this point I realised that many aspects of the biology of the mosquito vectors in the forest and the urban environment were not fully understood. How can you control an insect whose behaviour, ecology and life cycle are poorly understood? On hearing my explanation for program failure the older "experts" at Insect Vector Control Division were upset on being questioned by a 22-year-old who had just left university. In retrospect I should have been more diplomatic, needless to say control strategies remained unchanged.

My introduction to the Insect Vector Control Division workers in the laboratory and field was also traumatic for some workers, as some workers regularly left work at 10.30 am for the day. Within one week of my arrival this all changed with laboratory and field studies being conducted, and those not willing to work being transferred to other sections. By 1984 the laboratory at Insect Vector Control Division had been certified by the Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, Georgia, USA, with proficiency in Malaria Microscopy and operational research work was ongoing.

Going back to University

Having worked for 5 years in the Ministry of Health I was eligible for study leave. Scholarships were not available to me (others got them but my face did not fit) so I requested no-pay leave and left for The University of Dundee, Scotland to start my PhD with Prof. Philip Corbet in October 1984. It was the best period of my life as a student; I worked hard and was amply rewarded. Working with Philip was a

joy. We had the same work ethic: we worked long hours, about 15 hours per day. This period was an apprenticeship under the grand master who had published over 300 scientific papers and 6 books. At the end of my first year I received the Wellcome Scholarship and by November 1987 I had completed my PhD and had found my life partner, Dr. Joan Sutherland.

Return to Ministry of Health

My return to Insect Vector Control Division was welcomed because no one had replaced me during my absence. Laboratory and field research over the period 1987-1997 can best be described as the "golden decade" with work being conducted in the forest and urban environments, and resulting in over 100 publications in international peer reviewed journals. Collaborations with John Hopkins University, Tulane University and University of Wisconsin were established and advances in malaria and dengue fever research made.

During the 24 years I spent at Insect Vector Control Division Laboratory I met and worked with many people but two individuals stand out, Mr. Rajpaul Ganesh (may his soul rest in peace) and Mr. Robin C Persad (fondly referred to as "Junior" by the field men). These two were really the nucleus upon which the team of dedicated field workers was built. We worked with flexible guidelines, it was important to develop flexible guidelines because mosquitoes are not only active during working hours (7am to 4pm) but during the night.

My daily interactions with the field workers established a bond which still exists today, over a decade after leaving the Ministry of Health and returning to UWI.

During this period we worked on Haemagogus mosquitoes, the forest vectors of yellow fever in Trinidad; Anopheline mosquitoes, the vectors of malaria, found in swamps, rivers, rice fields and in bromeliads in the forested areas; Aedes aegypti mosquitoes the urban vector of dengue fever, chikingunya and yellow fever found in primarily artificial and natural containers; and Culex quinquefasciatus mosquitoes the vector of Filariasis or 'big foot' found in drains, canals and in water with a high organic content.

The 1978-1980 yellow fever outbreak was the first outbreak since the 1950s. During this period I went to the field at least three times per week collecting forest mosquitoes in Saunders Trace, Moruga, Guayaguayare Forest, Coromandel Forest, Cedros, Chagaramas Forest,Vega de Oropouche Forest, Mamoral Forest and Biche Forest. This work was physically demanding and required committed workers so management was key to keep motivation high among the men. My daily interactions with the field workers established a bond which still exists today, over a decade after leaving the Ministry of Health and returning to UWI.

My philosophy was simple: "Do not ask workers to do any job you are not willing or able to do yourself", so walking across flooded rivers, climbing the Southern Mountain Range in Guayaguayare to collect dead monkeys and mosquitoes, being attacked by extremely aggressive dogs and hostile people, collecting mosquito larvae for six hours in the sunshine in rice fields, working at night and early morning became part of the routine work.

Over the years at IVCD I worked on four Yellow Fever outbreaks which involved primarily infected monkeys and infected Haemagogus mosquitoes. It was only in 1977-1981 that human cases of Yellow Fever were identified but with a safe vaccine available and a well-established vaccination program it is unlikely to recur.

I had also developed a standard operating procedure (SOP) or action plan which was followed when an imported case of malaria was detected or identified. In 1991 we found a case of Plasmodium vivax malaria in

a national of Trinidad who lived in Icacos—he had travelled to Venezuela. On confirmation of the laboratory diagnosis, the Government Rest House in Bonase Village, Cedros was booked and a team of men mobilised under the leadership of Mr. Ramdeo Manwah HCO, and Mr. Rajpaul Ganesh (Medical Laboratory Technologist).

Our quick response time resulted in identifying the index case with malaria parasites; the breeding sites of the Anopheles mosquitoes and the 10 other positive malaria cases (which were locally acquired through the infected bites of Anopheles aquasalis mosquitoes) were identified. All the patients lived within 1 kilometer of the infected index case but blood smears were taken from the entire village. These blood slides had to be transported to the laboratory on a daily basis for staining and diagnosis. All positive malaria cases were hospitalised and treated. During this period I spent all of my time working on regaining our malaria-free status because this outbreak had the potential to threaten our malaria eradication status which was gained from the World Health Organisation in 1965.

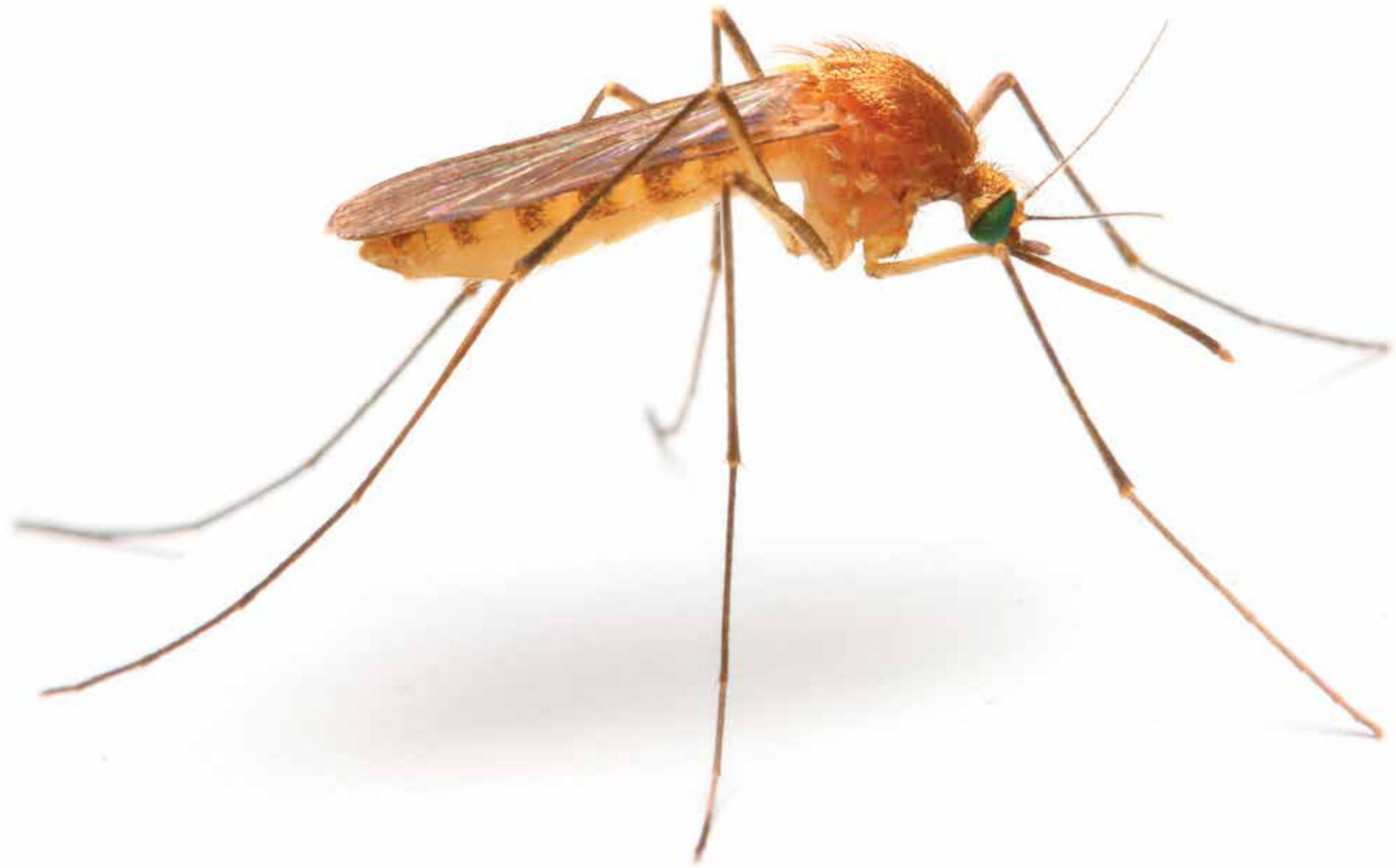
Reports were written every day and sent to the Specialist Medical Officer and although Trinidad retained its malaria free status no expression of gratitude or appreciation has ever been extended to these heroes. The full scientific report of this outbreak was subsequently published in the Annals of Tropical Medicine and Parasitology.

Many of the papers published in international journals were only possible because of the contribution of these unsung heroes.

Many of the papers published in international journals were only possible because of the contribution of these unsung heroes—whose sterling contributions were never recognised during their lifetime and not even in death except for a plaque of appreciation which I gave to every field worker on their retirement from the laboratory.

Did anyone understand what we had achieved? At this point one senior administrator started to question the need for research. I was then appointed to other positions in the Ministry of Health: Director of the Trinidad Public Health Laboratory in 1997 and eventually Deputy Director of Laboratory Services of Trinidad & Tobago. Interestingly, no increase in salary was forthcoming for these extra responsibilities and extra qualifications. As that door closed I received a phone call from the Head of Department of Life Sciences offering me the post of Lecturer in Parasitology at UWI—the head asked whether I would accept "only a Lecturer post" and I confirmed that I was happy to so do.

One of the lessons I have learned over the years is that the good work of men if left unsung will be forgotten and thus never recognised so it is essential that these events be documented. Another malaria outbreak in Navet/Biche occurred in 1994 and is another example of this rather depressing recurring theme of lack of respect and appreciation for the work of dedicated workers. The men who worked on this outbreak stayed in the Government Rest house in Mayaro for almost a year, away from their families



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except on weekends, had to cook for themselves, work long hours in the field and had long delays in receiving the overtime money due to them. The 21 cases of Plamodium malariae malaria identified in this area represented the classic long incubation period (over 30 years), renewal of transmission by the bromeliad inhabiting mosquitoes Anopheles bellator and Anopheles homunculus and the presence of monkey malaria.

On completion of 3 years of malaria surveillance in the Navet-Biche area it was clear that malaria transmission was successfully abated and this report was also published in an international peer reviewed journal. The IVCD laboratory staff especially Mr. Wayne Ramdath, Ms. Elizabeth Pierre, Mr. Calvin Peru and Mrs. Greer Smith, deserve thanks for their dedicated service and I appreciate your support throughout the two malaria outbreaks.

This chapter also gives me the rare opportunity to record my respect and offer a tribute to some of these distinguished gentlemen, to record their forgotten history, to say "Thank You" for the part they played in the development of my research career. The names below are listed in no particular order for they all made a significant contribution to Insect Vector Control Division, Ministry of Health and to my career:

Mr. Ramdeo Manwah Health Control Officer III;

Mr. Sonny Seesahai, Health Control Officer III;

Mr. Stephen Deonarine;
Mr. Lennox Punnette (RIP);
Mr. Devenish Pierre;
Mr. Feno Pierre;
Mr. Afzal Hamid;
Mr. Joseph Rampersad;
Mr. Jerome Alfonso;
Mr. Albert Brosco;
Mr. Kelvin Ram;
Mr. Lenny Fernando (RIP);
Mr. Lenny Rudolfo;
Mr. George Bally;
Mr. Ingram Ravello;
Mr. Doolam Lalla;
Mr. Carlyle Walters;
Mr. Siew Ramoutar (RIP);
Mr. Jogie Persad (RIP) and
Mr. George Pilgrim (Papa George).

The IVCD laboratory staff deserve thanks for their dedicated service and I appreciate your support throughout the two malaria outbreaks.

Going back to UWI

Having left UWI in 1979, it was now back in the same department but this time (2004) as a lecturer—and by the end of the first year, my teaching and research work began to attract attention. I said very little during this period and by 2006, was promoted to Senior Lecturer and in 2010, to the rank of professor. I have received many UWI awards for my research and from my experience the UWI system is a meritocracy and anyone who adheres to the criteria is promoted.

I have published over 225 research papers and book chapters in high impact peer-reviewed journals such as Science and The New England Journal of Medicine, and am probably one of the most published academics in the Caribbean region. Many aspects of my research have influenced the way vector-borne disease epidemiology and control is conducted, and have contributed to the high regard in which public health is currently held in the Region. I have developed new methods for vector-borne disease surveillance and control including the Xenomonitoring/PCR methods for Lymphatic Filariasis global elimination programs, as well as powerful new methods for dengue prevention and control, including an emergency vector control strategy which breaks disease transmission

within five days, thus reducing dengue morbidity and mortality rates. These strategies have significantly altered the way vector control is conducted within the Caribbean and Latin America, but many of the strategies are not used by vector control programs in Trinidad.

Due to my research work and experience I am called upon to advise, train and collaborate with scholars from the USA and UK. I am an advisor to the World Health Organisation, Pan American Health Organisation and International Atomic Energy Agency. I am also currently a member of the prestigious International Panel on Climate Change and am a lead author for Chapter 11—Health and Climate Change. In addition, I am also a special advisor to the International Atomic Energy Agency on dengue and Chickungunya fever control as well as Aedes albopictus control on six islands in the Indian Ocean including Mauritius, La Reunion, Madagascar, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Comoros.

Over the years I have held and currently hold numerous research grants and sub-contracts from the National Institute of Health (NIH), Bethesda, USA, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the International Atomic Energy Agency IAEA) and International Development Research Centre, Canada (IDRC). I have received many awards including the prestigious Wellcome Scholar, and Gorgas Memorial Awards. At UWI I was selected as one of the 60 scientists under 60 years of age, who received the Vice Chancellor's award for Research Excellence and was recognised as the most outstanding researcher in the Faculty of Science and Agriculture 2012.

I am also a Member of the Editorial Board of five international scientific Journals including: i) *Journal Entomologia Experimentalis et Applicata*; ii) the *European Journal of General Medicine*; iii) *Annals of Medical Entomology*; iv); *Open Public Health Journal*; and v) the *Journal of Parasitology Research*.

The Future

The last 10 years have been interesting and eventful and over the next 10 years I hope to continue to promote the culture of research and scholarship at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus. I am currently working as an invited editor on a Special Issue with 3 colleagues from the US and Europe on the Biology of Male Mosquitoes, which will be published by the journal *Acta Tropica* in 2014 and am also working on a book Flooding and Climate Change with colleagues from three UWI campuses.

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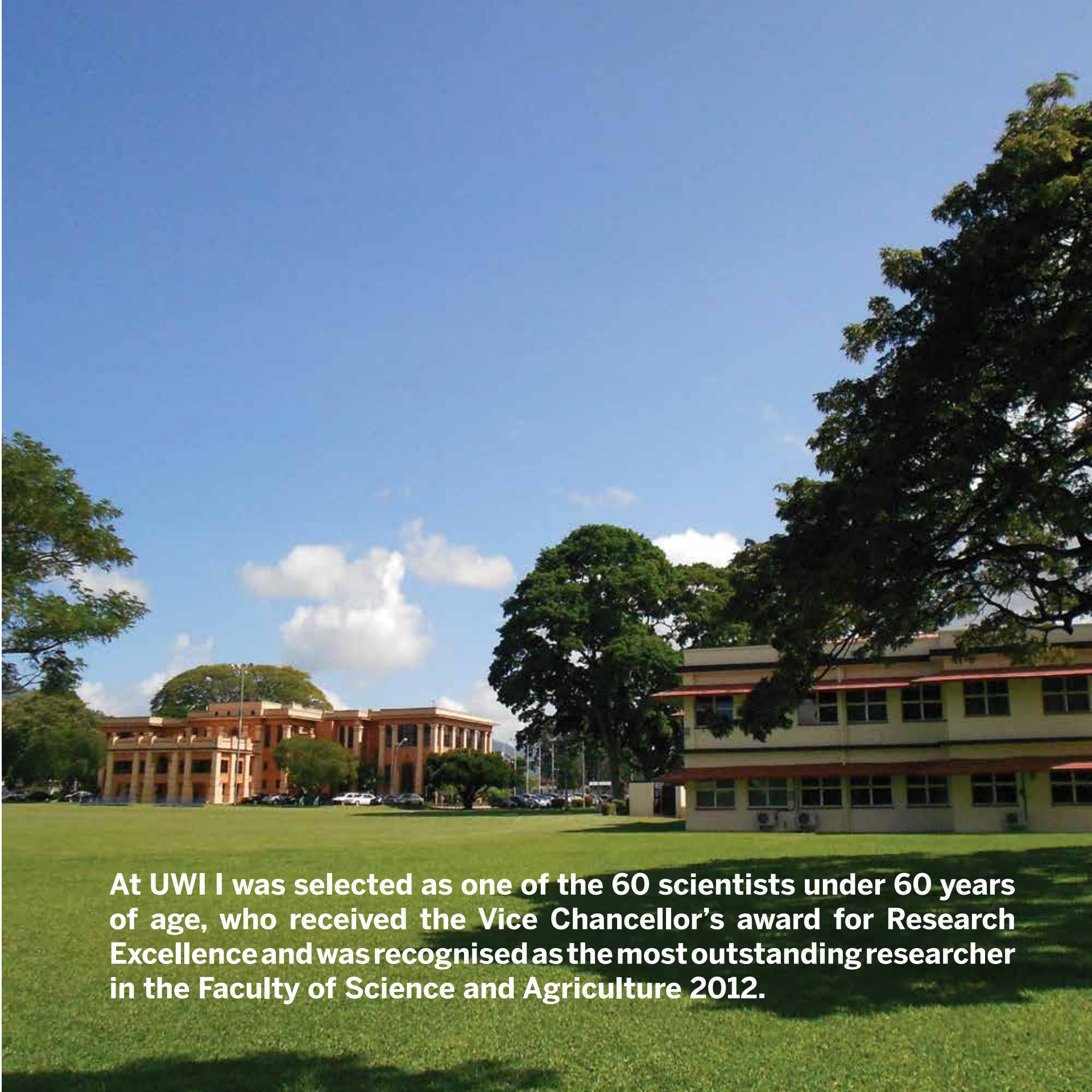

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Prof. Anselm Hennis

Prof. Anselm Hennis

Barbados
Science & Technology (Joint) 2013

Following Lucanus, Dear and Glorious Physician

I was born in a tiny hamlet in Montserrat, which now lies buried under cold hard lava. My father was away in Canada pursuing his studies on a fellowship and never laid eyes on me until I was 4 months old, when my mother, older brother and I joined him.

We returned to the Caribbean a year later and I spent my early childhood in Antigua. My brother and I were soon joined by two more brothers.

We lived in a rambling house in the country, where chickens, sheep and dogs roamed the property. Home was just down the road from the parish church around which our lives revolved. Life was idyllic; we raced our bikes, played cowboys and Indians, and looked forward to our father's return from distant lands bearing gifts and delicacies. All the while we read voraciously and under our mother's watchful eye, worked diligently at our schoolwork. I can recall the procession of siblings collecting prizes at speech day. I enjoyed writing at an early age, and recall placing third in a national competition when assessed against much older children. The arrival of the twins, boys again, led to the completion of the family when I was 6 years old. My mother did not get her wish for a daughter.

We moved to Barbados in 1972 and quickly adapted to our new life. The solitude and darkness of rural life was now replaced by activity and light. We lived on a bluff overlooking Bridgetown, and our patio looked out on to the city and the harbor. We looked out at night mesmerised by the twinkling city lights and large ships in the port. Passing the Common Entrance for Harrison College, I must confess to being intently focused on academics. But I also found time to pursue the piano, studying with the doyenne of piano teachers. I played football and enjoyed my studies in languages and sciences under the tutelage of excellent teachers.

I was thirteen when I read Taylor Caldwell's Lucanus, Dear and Glorious Physician. While I harboured ambitions of becoming a doctor, this book more than anything else confirmed my vocation as I read the account of the life and works of St. Luke, the second-century physician and author of the Gospel bearing his name. It was as though the words on the pages spoke directly to me.

I won the Barbados Scholarship and gained entry to study Medicine at the Mona Campus, the University of the West Indies in 1982. Yet this almost did not happen. I had also won another scholarship to the UK and was scheduled to travel on the Monday afternoon. It was rumoured that the local quota for medical students had already been filled before the scholarships had been determined. Therefore my pathway had

now reached the proverbial fork in the road, and the opportunity was in the UK.

Calls were made on my behalf, and it was around 8 pm on Friday night that I heard from the Dean for admissions at Mona, and my course was set. It was at Mona where I gained an appreciation for the Caribbean region for the first time, meeting fellow students not only from the island chain, but from Central and South America as well. I was struck by the diversity of peoples and wealth of culture of the Caribbean. I enjoyed my time at the University, achieving honours in several subjects. During my final year, I was blessed with a highly unusual opportunity. Christopher, a friend and former classmate from Harrison College, and who was studying at Cambridge University, invited me to join him on an expedition to Central Africa. This was to become a life changing experience.

We met Abraham Karpas, one of the earliest scientists to recognise the cause of HIV, and who had also developed a rapid slide test to screen for the disease. We trained in the use and interpretation of the test and flew out to Kampala, Uganda. We arrived in Kampala just after Yoweri Museveni had ousted Milton Obote, and it was an extremely volatile time to be in the country.

The trip opened my mind to the vastness of the world and the potential opportunities that could exist. It also taught me to question established dogma of my training.

Boy soldiers manned the check points all over Kampala armed with submachine guns, and a suspected false move could result in one's sudden demise. We visited the killing fields of the Luwero Triangle where the bones and skulls of persons massacred in the conflict were displayed on the market stalls outside destroyed villages. And we heard tales from the survivors of the depravities to which their compatriots went during the conflict.

Beyond the destruction and desolation there was the astonishment of seeing things that had previously only existed for me in books. Rhinoceri in a lake being startled by our boat captain throttling the engines and attempting to charge the boat. Observing lions stalking antelope from the safety of the game lodge, and seeing a tribe making its trek across the desert in the dead of night, walking in a straight line illuminated by the moon. These were absolutely amazing experiences. I saw people with tropical diseases that I had only vaguely considered from the cold illustrations of my text books. We conducted our research collecting blood samples from participating communities, while overcoming the seemingly never-ending challenges.

The trip opened my mind to the vastness of the world and the potential opportunities that could exist. It also taught me to question established dogma of my training. At the time, the view was that HIV originated in Africa and was spreading to the West. I recall passing through the village of Rakai which had been featured in the Time magazine as its adult population had been decimated by Slim disease, then a most apt description of AIDS, and where most of the children were orphans. What we learned in our research was that HIV appeared to be a new disease, with a prevalence of around 3% and was now spreading through Uganda. We published our findings and in so doing, the seeds of an entirely different aspect of my future career took root.

As a young intern, I made several observations in the course of my clinical practice. I noticed that a few patients with uncontrolled diabetes presented with seizures affecting a single limb. I reviewed the published literature and released that such a syndrome had been described by a few researchers. Working with two senior colleagues I wrote and published a case series on this phenomenon of focal seizures in diabetic non-ketotic hyperglycemic states, quite a mouthful, and this body

of work would later have implications for my future.

I met Kennedy Cruickshank at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital when he spent time in the department as a visiting consultant. Our collaboration with input from Professor Henry Fraser led to the submission of a proposal to the Wellcome Trust, UK, for me to pursue a Clinical Epidemiology Training Fellowship at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

This proposal (which I later learned was not even allowed on the basis of the application criteria), led to me being awarded a fellowship to pursue a Master's degree in Epidemiology. I also learned that my early publications had played a significant role in this decision. Much happened in 1991. My wife, Heather and I, were married in July in Port of Spain, and by August I was off to London. She resigned her management trainee position with Neal & Massy and joined me 4 months later.

London was another life changing situation. London life was absolutely wonderful and we made lifelong friendships. We enjoyed the culture and the enriching experiences. However, I was also required to work incredibly hard. I submitted a proposal to the Wellcome Trust which I was required to defend before their scientific panel. While I had to appear before panels of examiners or reviewers previously, that experience was unique. The panel consisted of 10 or so senior UK academics and they each asked in-depth questions on a wide range of topics. I

My area of research was about how obesity and pregnancy weight gain affected glucose tolerance during pregnancy.

was successful in the viva voce and my fellowship was extended to a 3-year period to allow me the opportunity to conduct a research project following the MSc.

I completed the MSc and then immediately took and passed the clinical exams leading to membership of the Royal College of Physicians in February 1993. I prepared for this latter series of exams whenever there was an opportunity, and am particularly grateful for the support of my friend Chris Buckley (now Professor of Rheumatology in Birmingham) and the help of Dan Ornadel and J. Malcolm Walker. I then commenced work on my doctoral research in earnest. My area of research was about how obesity and pregnancy weight gain affected glucose tolerance during pregnancy. I then packed my bags and returned to Barbados to conduct the research.

There were particular challenges conducting research in Barbados where there was no established research culture or infrastructure at the time, and it required a tremendous deal of perseverance to get things off the ground. In December 1993, I returned to London to welcome Edward, our firstborn, and the entire family relocated to the Caribbean a few months later.

The project progressed well and we were able to recruit over 300 women over the next year and a half. During this period I also participated in developing a proposal for Barbados' participation in the Hyperglycemia and Adverse Pregnancy Outcome study with Dr. Yvonne Rotchell (now deceased), a project that would involve

Top left-right: Dr. Raymond Ramcharitar, Prof Dave Chadee, Dr. Rhonda Maingot, Dr. Sabga, His Excellency Anthony Thomas Aquinas Carmona, SC, ORTT, Prof. Caryl Phillips, Prof. Anselm Harris and Maria Superville-Neilson.

Bottom left: Dr. and Mrs. Minerva Sabga surrounded by members of their family.

Bottom right: H.E. Anthony Carmona greets Mr. Michael Mansoor.

the study of 25,000 women during their pregnancies in 15 centres across the globe. This landmark study would later establish robust scientific criteria for the diagnosis of gestational diabetes, with Barbados being the only centre with a predominately black population.

Having completed the data collection phase of my doctoral studies, I returned to the UK in the fall of 1995 to complete the write up, a process which required tremendous application. For much of the final 6-month period of my stay at the university, I can recall functioning in a work cycle in which I arrived at my office around 10 am; worked through until around 4 am the next day, and caught the first train home. I would sleep until 9am and start the cycle again, and this would be my pattern during the week.

Physical training involved climbing over 300 steps from the train to the station entrance, and my thigh muscles became so developed as a result, that it later proved difficult to fit into my trousers. Throughout these situations, I always felt the abiding nurturing presence of God in my life, directing, guiding, supporting, enabling and loving, and being absolutely faithful to His word. So, while the volume of work was tremendous and the load did not diminish, but my ability and capacity to manage the work increased to allow me to cope.

Before I completed this body of work, I was introduced to the work of Professor M Cristina Leske who led the Barbados Eye Studies. I shared the information about the studies with a fellow doctoral student who exclaimed that this study was one of the most significant studies of eye disease in the world, and I must be sure to join! Dr. Leske and I communicated, and returned to Barbados, assuming the role of project director of the clinical centre.

So began an extremely productive relationship with the team at StonyBrook University which resulted in the establishment and development of my research career, as the studies became the principal body of work on eye diseases conducted in a Black population anywhere in the world. The Barbados Eye Studies has informed policy in the USA for the eye care of African Americans, and has contributed new information to our understanding of the major causes of visual loss.

The call from Trinidad informing me of the Sabga award came as I sat at my desk on the afternoon of February 14th 2013 contemplating the vagaries and uncertainties of life. At the time, I was deep in thought about an illness that had nearly ended my life prematurely in 2010, and the miracle of God's saving grace.

I was subsequently appointed Research Assistant Professor in 1998. My daughter Arianne was born in 2000, a vivacious bundle of joy. I was elevated to Research Associate Professor in 2003 at StonyBrook University. My career at the University of the West Indies also advanced. I was appointed Senior Lecturer in 2002 and then promoted to Director of the Chronic Disease Research Centre (CDRC) in 2006.

Then, in 2008, I was promoted to a chair, becoming Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology. The CDRC has grown tremendously over the past 8 or so years. Grants in which the department has participated have been funded to the tune of over US $50 million, principally based on awards from the National Institutes of Health, as well as the Wellcome Trust.

The staff complement has grown to over 30, with six faculty and two administrative staff, and the majority funded by project funds. There is now also a vibrant training programme with five persons enrolled in doctoral studies. We have benefited from the guidance of many through advisory committees and in this regard I will acknowledge the tremendous contribution of Professor Trevor Hassell, whose wisdom and foresight have been absolutely transformative. I have received many awards including the Edward Kass Memorial prize (Caribbean Health Research Council), them acknowledged

as one of the UWI '60 under 60' leading researchers, the inaugural Principal's Award for Research Excellence (Cave Hill Campus), and the Vice Chancellor's award for Excellence in November 2008. I was also a proud recipient of the Dr. Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence in 2013.

The call from Trinidad informing me of the Sabga award came as I sat at my desk on the afternoon of February 14th 2013 contemplating the vagaries and uncertainties of life. At the time, I was deep in thought about an illness that had nearly ended my life prematurely in 2010, and the miracle of God's saving grace.

Having been extremely ill and visibly deteriorating as those closest to me had begun to notice, I had made a diagnosis which comprehensively explained my symptoms. I sought the opinion of a colleague as I was now convinced that my condition had become urgent. Our opinions differed and I recall feeling quite deflated after the consultation, and wondered how I could have gotten it so wrong. Had I become a hypochondriac?

We did however, agree to a scan. My symptoms continued to progress and as I became more disabled and in greater pain, I was referred for therapy. On the morning of March 1st, I decided that I would not go into work. My schedule that month was shaping up to be extremely demanding. Trips had been scheduled to Mexico, Jamaica, Grenada and Canada, and I was just not well. That morning I went over to my travel agent to purchase a ticket for a trip to Vancouver in July. While there, I heard the still quiet voice cut through the 'busy-ness' of the day, "What's become of your scan?" The truth is, I had absolutely no idea about the scan, and so when I returned home, I called the radiology department. "Well Professor Hennis, your scan is booked for 3 pm, but we can reschedule."

By this time, my pain had become so debilitating that postponement was not an option. As I prepared for the study, the radiographers noticed my braces. "When are your braces coming off? We can't do the scan with them on." But I absolutely insisted. By the time the scan was over and I was asked to get up, I almost fell to the floor, but colleagues ran and caught me. I was immediately driven off to hospital and straight to surgery.

The period to full recovery was long, much longer than I am willing to admit, but I am grateful that I am alive and now fully recovered. How has my life changed? I am even more aware of God's grace and presence in my life and circumstances. I am more aware of the importance of my family and have learned to value relationships even more, now being very aware of the transience of life. I recall that when I lay in a bed in the Intensive Care, my work had absolutely no relevance but I strongly desired the presence of my loved ones.

There are many who have helped me along the way, my mentors, colleagues and collaborators, friends and above all my family, as I remain certain that in all things, To God be the glory.

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2014 Laureates
Karen de Souza
Dr. Richard Robertson
Prof. Liam Teague

2014

Introduction

Sir Frederick Ballantyne, GCMG, MD, DSc.
Governor General of St. Vincent & The Grenadines

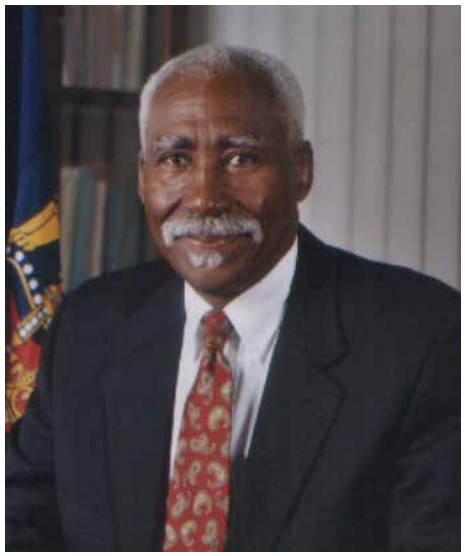
Leading the Caribbean into a Future of Excellence

For a population as small as we have in the Caribbean, we are fortunate to have many outstanding people among us. Many facets of global culture are influenced by the works of our accomplished authors, musicians, public and civil servants, scientists, and more.

The history of the Caribbean is rich with inspiring stories of impassioned individuals who have helped shape the destiny of our islands and affected the world. However, I suspect that the average West Indian person might not recognise the breadth and depth of the life work of these individuals, whose accomplishments should be heralded as sources of pride for our collective community of countries. Therefore, it is my pleasure and great honour to applaud and support the tradition of the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence.

By paying tribute to this growing family of noteworthy laureates, we celebrate the achievements of our friends and neighbours throughout the Caribbean who exemplify the passion, creativity, and commitment to excellence in their respective fields. They inspire us all. Excellence is an ongoing pursuit with the recognition that there is no true destination, no finish line to cross. It is a continuous journey of learning for self-improvement and the benefit of others. Individuals cut from the cloth of excellence have, throughout their lives and careers, remained true to their vision of what is achievable. They strive for superior performance beyond expectations.

These persons are vital Caribbean assets, in whom we must continue to invest, as they will lay the foundation for others to learn, grow and improve. Prior inductees, the current group



Sir Frederick Ballantyne

of laureates, and all who will follow, are beacons of inspiration for future generations. Without question, these future generations have several challenges they must address head-on in order to meet the demands of an evolving world. These include, among others, preservation of our culture, development of our economies and improved harmony with the environment.

We must all make investments in finding solutions. Achieving excellence

in the fields of visual, performing, and written artistic expression is the mark of a person who takes care in the preservation and development of their craft. Many of us are challenged by the rigors of a faster-paced society and therefore do not take the time to appreciate the relevance of artistic works as part of West Indian history and culture.

Some undervalue the painstaking detail required to breathe life into an artist's representation. It is inherently difficult for the more artistic among us to gain recognition, making it even harder to achieve popularity, let alone survive on the fruits of their labor. Yet the artist who concentrates on the purity of expression, in all of its forms, is one of the greatest contributors to society. Our region has produced many amazing individuals whose self-expressions have deeply influenced global arts and culture.

They should continue to be celebrated and praised for their work and commitment to excellence.

Civil servants are often undervalued in our society as compared with professionals such as lawyers, doctors and engineers. Our public and civic contributors should be held in the highest regard for their influence in formulating the policies of the future that drive our society and our economies forward.

They are architects of the Caribbean persona, and it is their ideas that motivate and mould the outcomes that benefit us all. Many times we fail to appreciate the deep commitment of these individuals to better our society through their work. However, we owe it to ourselves to challenge our educators, civic activists, and governments to produce a larger volume of high quality contributors to these endeavors.

Our countries are surrounded on all sides by the sea, with homes that bask in the sun, amongst unique vegetation and natural features of the Earth. This intimate relationship with nature requires that we have a better understanding of our role in the ecosystem in which we live. We must take into account the impact of our actions on our beautiful but fragile environment. With this in mind, we need to continue to develop our resources and agriculture, while monitoring the possibilities for reducing the impact of natural disasters.

Unfortunately, at this time, our region produces very few scientists while children in many small nations around the globe are focused on and driven into these disciplines at an early age.

More than ever we must set our sights on more specialised attention toward excellence in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. These fields collectively referred to as "STEM" Programs, will develop a pipeline of students and a cadre of professionals strategically positioned to address many of the environmental and economic obstacles we share.

Unfortunately, at this time, our region produces very few scientists while children in many small nations around the globe are focused on and driven into these disciplines at an early age. Investments in STEM are vital to our economic future and imperative to our survival. Opportunities in science and technology are boundless, predominantly because of the opportunities to pursue innovations in emerging technologies. The nations of the Caribbean must now strive for excellence in this area of untapped potential for our economic and societal growth.

It is important to recognise that those whom we honour are a subset of a larger cadre of persons whose leadership in their respective fields will make us all stronger. Among us are legions of individuals whose levels of excellence may never be publicly recognised or formally rewarded. It is up to each of us, every day, to find appropriate ways to recognise all of their valuable contributions to our Caribbean community and to humanity. They work to improve our world.

I congratulate this class of inductees on their accomplishments in pushing the Caribbean toward its greatest potential through artistic expression, public and civic contributions, and accomplishments in science and technology. Your achievements and commitment to excellence are a source of pride for all West Indians.

2014 Laureates pay a courtesy call on H.E. Anthony Carmona, flanked by Mr. Michael Mansoor and Mrs. Maria Superville-Neilson.

2014 Laureates with Chairs of the Country Nominating Committees. Left-right: Mrs. Maria Sperville-Neilson, Dr. Seeta Shah Roath, Prof. Bridget Brereton, Prof. Liam Teague, Ms. Karen de Souza, Dr. Richard Robertson, Dr. Charmaine Gardner and Mrs. Vivian-Anne Gittens.

Top: Trinidad & Tobago Nominating Committee. Left-right: Mr. Victor Mouttet, Mr. Vincent Pereira (Chair), Professor Dave Chadee, Professor Bridget Brereton, Professor Brinsley Samaroo, Mrs. Diana Mahabir Wyatt, Bro Noble Khan.

Bottom left: 2014 Ushers.
Bottom right: Head Usher Mrs. Hazel Moonsammy with Ms. Natalie Mansoor, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Michael Mansoor.

Ms. Karen de Souza

Ms. Karen de Souza

Guyana
Public & Civic Contributions, 2014

Growing up, education and work

I wouldn't like to romanticise it, but growing up in a rural space, the island of Leguan in Guyana, was as close as I could have gotten to an idyllic childhood. I lived there until I was 10.

We were a small family, parents and four children. It was an old fashioned community, fairly remote from the capital and there was no electricity, one motorised vehicle in a population of about one thousand, no television, and only a battery-powered radio. It was also a space where adults were responsible for children and it was a physically and psychically safe space for children. This need for security in a child's life has remained with me.

We left Leguan after I took and passed the 10+ exam. The family moved for me to go to a secondary school, Bishop's High School, in Georgetown. While moving was always on the cards as my father worked for the national transport authority, my gaining entrance to Bishop's made it necessary that we move then, to be closer to the school.

Bishops' provided a good education: it did not involve corporal punishment, and did not discourage questioning and reasoning, within limits. I left school after O' Levels, and started work at 16. My first job was in the Office of the Prime Minister. After two years on the job I volunteered for the newly formed Guyana National Service, a paramilitary organisation that provided training and skills mainly for unemployed youth. National Service was also compulsory for graduation from any tertiary education institution. It involved us in a combination of military training and agriculture. It was also about the political indoctrination of the Pioneers, as we were called.

I encountered Rupert Roopnarine and Walter Rodney, two leaders of a political movement called the Working People's Alliance (WPA), which started my (and many other people's) questioning of the politics of the ruling party I had already, after a fashion, begun to be politically active. In National Service I'd raised questions about the treatment of Pioneers and the levels of wastefulness at the centre. National Service was supposed to be egalitarian, but in practice I saw persistent social status conflicts and the abuse of power. The officers and junior leaders often used their positions to abuse and humiliate the Pioneers. The officials heard me but didn't hear me.

I went through a year or two of being arrested, apprehended, detained and searched, randomly. It felt like every time I went on the street I was arrested; it was certainly more than once a week.

It was in National Service that I also learned that literacy was not to be taken for granted and one of the things I did there was teach reading to other Pioneers who had less functional literacy.

How my activism developed

In the latter part of my secondary school days came an awareness of national politics, and the early formation of political opinions. This was in the 1970s, the period of nationalisation of the main industries, sugar and bauxite, and mine were very naïve nationalist views. I entered my job in the PM's office with a notion that the government was doing things in the national interest.

From National Service I went to the University of Guyana to study English and Geography. It was a disappointment, since it was most of the time worse than secondary school; classes which were not actually teaching you anything. But it was at the UG that

While at university I was involved in lobbying for public service union elections. I was in the Office of the Prime Minister distributing pamphlets for anti-government candidates (which meant candidates who were not government nominees) and found myself called in and grilled by a couple of government ministers. In the 1970s the ruling party had declared paramountcy of the party over the state but it was only then that the reality of paramountcy in a government employee's life came into focus. That was the beginning of the end of my public service career.

Not long after that I was arrested under suspicion for the arson of a building which housed the Office of the General Secretary (of the ruling People's National Congress) and Ministry of National Development. This was in 1979 and I was still working at the Office of the PM. I was also charged with larceny of a National Service uniform, and once I'd been charged, the people I worked with were afraid to talk to me, so I was isolated with just immediate family and people in the WPA as my social connection.

I decided that if this was how the government intended to go on ruling, I should not accept it for myself or others, and that's what launched my engagement with the WPA in 1979. I started out with ordinary opposition activities. I pulled people together and organised marches to protest government policies. During that year I was also accused of defacing public buildings, which meant I allegedly painted the slogan "Burnham (the then PM) must go" on the buildings. With that, I went through a year or two of being arrested, apprehended, detained and searched, randomly. It felt like every time I went on the street I was arrested; it was certainly more than once a week. Most times there were no charges, but among the charges that were filed were unlawful assembly and taking part in demonstrations. I eventually became a formal WPA member after Walter Rodney was assassinated in 1980.

Red Thread

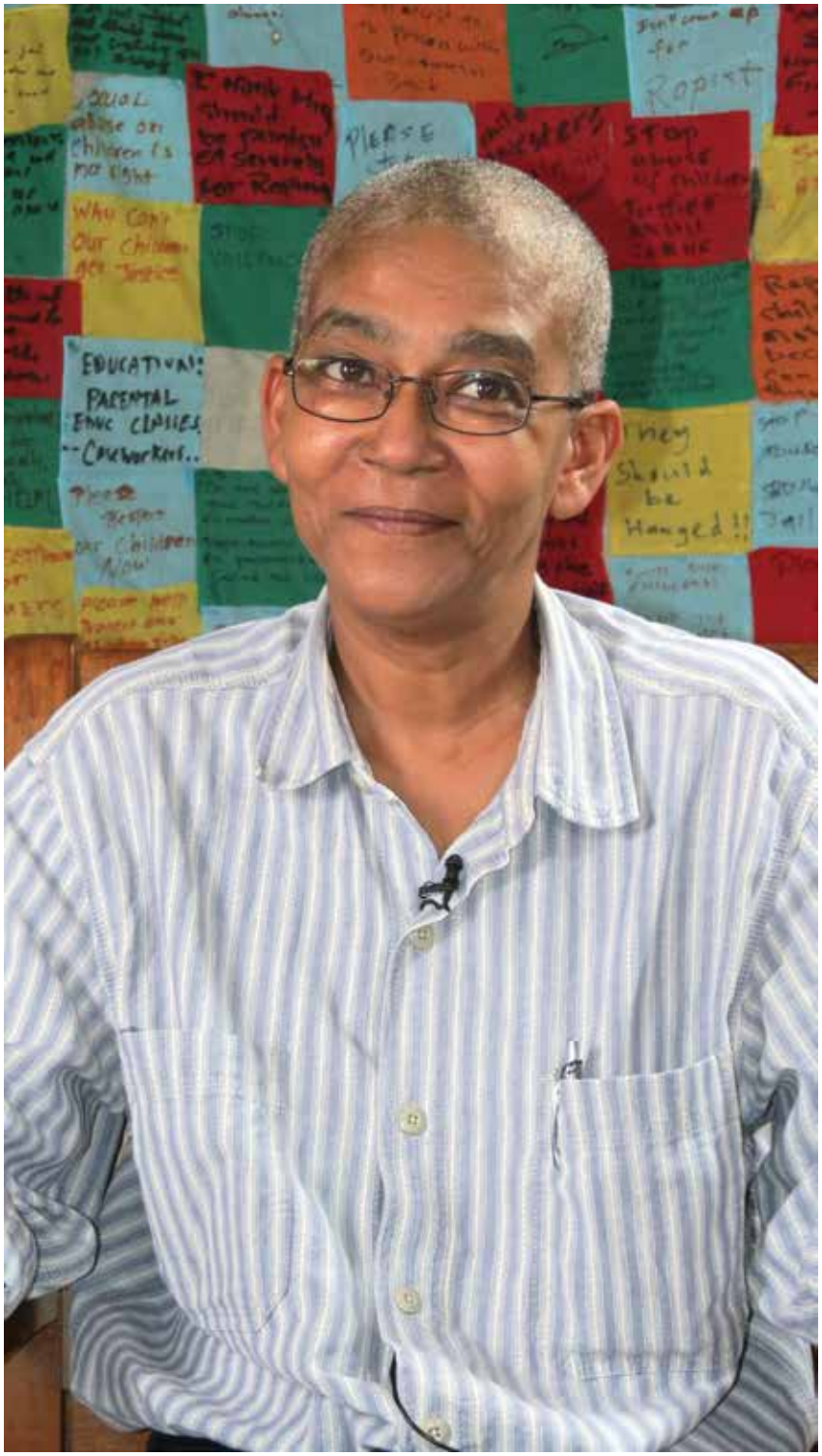
Walter's murder meant there were fewer public demonstrations, but WPA members, especially women, did more

community organising. The women in the party were trying to organise women autonomously, and by 1986 these efforts led to the founding of Red Thread by seven women—Bonita Harris, Diane Matthews, Danuta and Vanda Radzik, Andaiye, Jocelyn Dow and me. The immediate impetus was a demonstration organised by WPA women which led to a number of non-party women being arrested and briefly jailed. I was not at that demonstration, but was told that the women were turned off from politics by being arrested and jailed. They were saying: "We need food, we need money, not politics." And since we were interested in organising with grassroots women, the income-generating phase of Red Thread was born. In some communities women had little or no autonomy so we had to go to some homes to explain to mothers-in-law, fathers and husbands what we were inviting the women to participate in. I think we won through that because Red Thread was offering the opportunities for the women to earn.

They were saying: "We need food, we need money, not politics." And since we were interested in organising with grassroots women, the income-generating phase of Red Thread was born.

Given the commitment of the founders to crossing Guyana's deep race divides, we started with two African-Guyanese and two Indian-Guyanese communities. One of these divides is geographic so we brought women together from different communities so that each group could really see the other, sometimes for the first time. At first the women produced mainly embroidered household linens, wall hangings and cards but since Red Thread was never only about income-generation, the designs used for the embroidered products depicted women working and the natural environment. Later we also produced other items including school exercise books, textbooks and other kinds of craft. Caricom was our biggest market for the embroidered products.

We were also able to work in the hinterlands with Amerindian women who are worse off than women in the urban areas, since their work was all manual. Frequently there was no running water, and time and labour



saving household equipment we took for granted, were non-existent in these areas.

In 1988, Sistren of Jamaica came and taught us their methods of popular education. A small group of women from the Red Thread community-based groups wanted to be involved in that, and I was involved on a daily basis in training those women. This group went around to a number of communities, having discussions with women on a range of issues important to them.

In 1996 we saw domestic violence legislation passed, but even now, implementation of the law is still a challenge.

Our early popular education work was focused on domestic violence. We produced a radio serial which was aired on national radio and a stage play which we took around. In 1996 we saw domestic violence legislation passed, but even now, implementation of the law is still a challenge. From my exposure to court and lawyers during my WPA days, I had developed an interest in court proceedings. The court can be a very alienating place and much of the time people go in and come out and they really don't know what happened. I wanted to make sure people understood what was happening to them in court, so one of our early actions was to write and publish a 'Household Guide to the Domestic Violence Act'. We also started a programme of accompanying women to the police stations and the courts.

Aside from the issue of domestic violence, in consultation with the wider collectives we worked with, we determined a number of other important priorities. They included working with grassroots women to develop political voice, and campaigning for living incomes for the lowest economic strata. From that single theme we could talk about education, housing, healthcare.

A component of domestic violence which is often lumped with violence to women is the abuse and neglect of children in Guyana. One of the main consequences of this is illiteracy. In the education arena the authorities celebrate the one per cent of extraordinary performers at the regional (Caribbean) exams. For the 11+ exams they publicise the results achieved by slightly more than the 1 per cent. In Red Thread we saw the rest—the teenagers in secondary school who could not read and could barely write their names (products of Guyana's take on the "no child left behind" doctrine).

I reflect on my own earliest schooldays, perfecting my reading skills by reading to my visually impaired grandmother. I took it for granted that my father would be able to provide answers that I needed for my schoolwork, my mother ensuring that some time after school was spent revising or doing homework. Few of the children we worked with at Red Thread had this. They also are not assured that teachers are invested in their learning. I've spoken with parents who are prepared to spend money to send children to extra lessons from age 8 and sometimes younger, but who cannot afford the time to sit with them while they work. In fact, for too many children, no adult is available to them between the end of the school day and bedtime.

This brought us to a major part of the later work Red Thread has been able to do: provide data on social issues. One of the things we're fortunate about is the collaboration with professionals and academics. We've used that over the years to train grassroots women to use research instruments in their communities. One of the biggest projects we did for our own information was on domestic violence, which was done by grassroots women. But we don't respect academic distance. You go to a house, meet a woman in an abusive situation, you don't just take her information and leave, you have to get involved.

Much later, one of the watershed pieces of research we did was the time-use study of Guyanese women. The researchers would spend a day with women in homes, and record their time use.

Much later, one of the watershed pieces of research we did was the time-use study of Guyanese women. Red Thread adopted the analysis of the Global Women's Strike that the work women do in the home, and with children, must be considered an economic variable. The researchers would spend a day with women in homes, and record their time use. That research strengthened our conviction that caring/household work has to be recognised in national economic policy. We found that some women were working 18—20 hours per day. This was especially true of the Amerindian women, in the hinterlands. Their work was very strenuous and time consuming as they lacked the basic infrastructure (like running water) that other women took for granted. We also (in collaboration with UNICEF) helped to produce a report Voices of Children: Experiences with Violence in 2005.

When looked at through the lens of communities, it became clear that party politics seemed to concern itself with macro issues, without enough consideration of what was happening at the level of households, and this seems to be where our future lies.

The Future

In lots of ways after PM Burnham died in '85, government politics made even less sense to me. One of my earliest memories of his successor, Desmond Hoyte, was of him making a disrespectful statement about Haiti, rather than being supportive. It was the first time I said to myself: "this would never have been Burnham's posture."

Hoyte's coming to office coincided with the rise of neo-liberalism. He is praised for opening up the economy, but the concessions that had to be made were ridiculous. You went from a position where grocery shelves were empty, to seeing ten different kinds of cornflakes which very few could afford.

The neo-liberal economics did not and do make sense for a poor country. We were and are spending foreign exchange and not dealing with the poverty of the workers. And that has intensified with the political arrangements and policies successive governments have pursued. So in a sense, the new economics, like the old, seems to be concerned with macro growth and not households. In reality, the face of violence is the face

of the poor, and unless we address those inequities, 100 years from now, we'll be having the same conversation.

In Guyana, despite the so-called recent success story of economic development and the celebration of macro economic growth, we live with an ever-widening gap between the wealthy and the poor. The presence of mansions in gated communities (in which a number of our politicians live) lying cheek by jowl with the shacks in squatter communities gives voice to the artificiality of the current MDG indicators of development. Indeed, in all our territories we can see evidence of tremendous wealth and also the most abject poverty—we can talk about those who routinely fly to Miami for their weekend shopping and those who are challenged to find the next meal for their children.

This has brought a re-focusing of Red Thread's energies, toward income equity. It is in placing the latter at the heart of our concerns that Red Thread stands apart from other civil society organisations that have arisen from the neoliberal agenda. The so-called NGOisation of development has allowed NGOs to mushroom up but also to all too quickly disappear when the funding dries up. Red Thread's vision of social justice and transformed relations between our peoples is a denial of the view that development can come from such NGOs engaging in paid project after paid project. As a region, I would suggest that we must examine critically the economic and political policies and programmes that are contributing to the growing numbers of the voiceless and marginalised. It is madness to continue to implement programmes whose design is to further impoverish the poor and expect that the occasional alleviation measure will correct the imbalance. The "trickle-down" theories do not work—we have seen this since the first structural adjustment programmes in this region back in the 1970s and 1980s.

There are principles that one has to stand for, and regardless of the fears and challenges, I have never felt alone. One of the things I've learned in Red Thread, is that our culture looks for leaders and selects individuals, but we don't spend a lot of time recognising the enormous heroism among the poor in taking care of a family, making sure kids are fed and get to school. That's one of the things that keep me going.

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Dr. Richard Robertson

St. Vincent & The Grenadines
Science & Technology, 2014

Beyond doubt, my path to becoming a Volcanologist began with the spectacular eruption of La Soufriere Volcano on my homeland St. Vincent on April 13, 1979.

I recall vividly the awesome ash plumes that appeared alive as they rose expansively into the sky accompanied by loud explosions. The entire island seemed to be on the move as I travelled with my father to the rural village of Rose Hall to help to evacuate my grandmother. The eruption would continue for another six months with the explosions eventually giving way to effusive dome growth, but its impact on my young teenage mind, still largely undecided on my direction in life was to provide conviction and motivation to become a volcanologist.

My life began early Ash Wednesday morning in the rural fishing village of Barrouallie, St. Vincent. I am told that my mother, who was a Carnival lover, was actually on the road "jigging" the day before my birth. I mention this because, although I have mainly worked throughout my life in science I have always been interested in the arts, and music has been an important element in my life. My recollection of life in Barrouallie is very positive. I love the sea and for most of my early years I lived within 100 metres of the shoreline. I therefore spent most of my early life, up to the age of seven years when my family moved to Kingstown, on the seaside.

I was one of five boys borne to Grace and Ormond Robertson with one older sister, so there were many 'adventures' involved in growing up. My life was one filled with time spent on the sea shore (or the "bayside" as we called it then in Barrouallie), riding make-shift carts, playing games in the central field around which the town was built, going hunting for manicou (opossum) and catching small births with traps. I ran

and played and swam my way into a love for the outdoor (the "bush") so by the time we left Barrouallie there was no question that I would pursue the kind of career that involved working mainly outdoors.

Our move to Kingstown was not without its challenges and we had to change from Kingstown Preparatory to the Petersville Primary School due to problems adjusting to the new school environment. The latter was closer to our home and generally more welcoming to the bunch of five boys and one girl coming from a rural village. I stayed at this school until moving to the St.Vincent Grammar school.

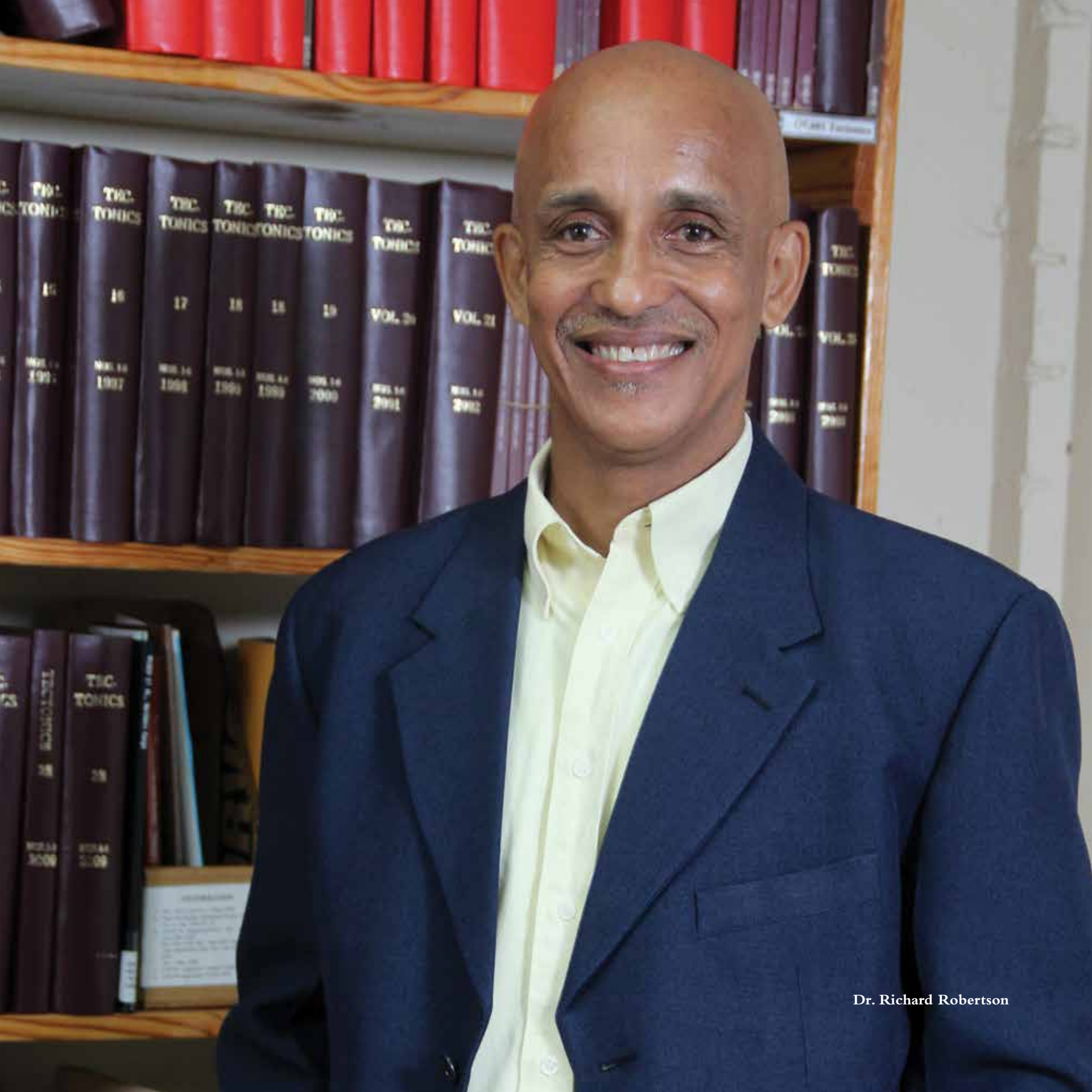
I don't think that I ever really excelled at academics although I was always above average. I mostly settled into primary school but do recall there being many fistfights, not necessarily started by myself. It must have been around this time that I developed the tendency to stand up for the underdog, to fight for what I perceived to be justice and to defend others. I suspect that this was the genesis of the desire to serve, which has dominated most of my adult life. I had always been loyal to my family and at this time I often "took over" fights started by my siblings—sometimes ending up alone and on the losing end as they abandoned the fight. I must have by then also had a strong sense of myself as a person of African heritage and at the time wore a big Afro hairstyle. I vaguely recall that this did not go down too well with the very conservative school administration. Interestingly one of the few things I recall from that period of my life is being made to stand in front of my class to demonstrate my Afro hairstyle, which my teacher at the time, took a very dim view of and was trying to convince the class not to emulate. I was also even then a bit more likely to take the radical view on issues than the conservative and so tended towards rebellion than conformity. My interest remained on the outdoors and I spent a lot of time on the fruit trees in our backyard and playing games (including marbles) at our home in Kingstown Park. I don't recall being particularly competitive in school although I was inquisitive and was an ardent reader

One of my clearest memories about my first year at school was standing up to a bully, which resulted in a bit of a scuffle and us being sent to the Principal's office where we were both punished.

I entered Grammar School in 1971 full of excitement. It was a great experience and I had some fantastic teachers. I believe it was there that my interest in science and particularly in a career that involved solving real world problems and involving travel was borne. We had a great Geography teacher who brought the world alive and stimulated an endearing interest in the earth and its interconnections. I don't think that I was too much of a bookworm but was always interested in the pursuit of knowledge. I continued to read a lot—often on a wide range of subjects, not necessary what was required for school. I continued to stand up for myself and for what I perceived to be any injustice and was not tolerant of anyone giving out such behaviour.

One of my clearest memories about my first year at school was standing up to a bully, which resulted in a bit of a scuffle and us being sent to the Principal's office where we were both punished. However I was never again harassed by this or any other bullies in the school and also did not get into any more scuffles. This was much different than what had occurred in primary school. I believe that this was largely due to my increased discipline largely due to my involvement with two organisations which I became involved with during my first few years at the school. I became a member of the St. Vincent Cadet Force and started the practise of Shotokan Karate.

The Cadet Force was an organisation that had a transformative effect on my life and helped immensely to instil both strength of character and self-discipline that has endured me throughout my life.Through the Cadet Force I was able



Dr. Richard Robertson

to explore my interest in music and the military, which was at that time a career path, which I seriously considered. I was also able to explore my interest in the outdoors since most of our activities involved working in the outdoors.

Around the second year at Secondary school I observed a demonstration given by a visiting karate teacher. One of the teachers at the school was a practitioner of this martial art and he had invited an exponent of the art to do a demonstration and teach some classes. This impressed me sufficiently that I subsequently enrolled in one of the clubs run by the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Karate Association. This began a practice and love of karate, which has both helped to keep me physically fit and healthy, both necessary in my current job, and also provided a mechanism for a more holistic development of self than would have otherwise been possible.

My involvement in karate and in cadets proved to be significant contributors to my development as a young man. The experiences gained from these two organisations to a large extent shaped who I became as a young man. They both instilled a strong sense of duty to my country and a desire to make a meaningful contribution to the development of human society.

All this changed in 1979 with the eruption of the Soufriere volcano. There was no previous information given about the state of the volcano and so when we awoke to the billowing eruption plume accompanied by the loud explosions on Friday, April 13, 1979, we were all surprised, frightened and impressed.

I believe that the most significant period of my time at the Grammar School was the last two years when I was fortunate to share classes with a bunch of students who had interest not simply in academics but also in a wide range of issues regarding our country. It was a period of time when our country was considering Independence, a period when the Black Power movement was affecting the country and as young persons we were all interested in what was happening. My classmates and I had wide-ranging and significant discussions about global geopolitics and black consciousness. It was therefore not surprising that at the time I was involved in various youth organisations and school clubs. My interest spanned a range of areas, which at the time included politics, the arts, the military and martial arts. I joined the debating society, the drama club and was already in cadets and actively practicing karate. Amazingly I also found time to join a steelband and was part of a drumming group. At the time I was seriously contemplating joining the military and had there been a local army would have seen this as the place to go once I had completed high school.

All this changed in 1979 with the eruption of the Soufriere volcano. At the time I was in the final year of secondary school preparing for GCE Advanced Level examinations due in a few months time. There was no previous information given about the state of the volcano and so when we awoke to the billowing eruption plume accompanied by the loud explosions on Friday, April 13, 1979, we were all surprised, frightened and impressed. I was fortunate to be in one of the first vehicles that reached the village of Rose Hall early on that morning as I accompanied my father in his bid to rescue my grandmother who lived in this village.

The impression of a country on the move, which in later life I would see on television in conflict zones, was unforgettable. As we moved towards the north, we saw thousands of people on the road. They were either walking, riding donkeys or packed into motor vehicles all moving towards the south with bundles of personal items of varying sizes. As we moved towards the north, the eruptions continued and we heard the explosions and saw the rising plumes, which as we got closer to Rose Hall (about 7 km from the volcano), resulted in ash fall. When we got to

the Rose Hall, the entire village was in uproar with people leaving, preparing to evacuate or staring at the mountain that seemed very close. My father's vehicle left Rose Hall packed to over capacity with villagers who were making use of any and every vehicle and mode of transport possible to leave the village.

The official government organised evacuation of the northern villages was called later that morning but by then many persons had already left or been moved by relatives. The Cadet Force was mobilised to assist by the next day and I then became involved in the evacuation effort helping initially to manage a shelter and later to assist with the transport of supplies. Apart from my initial impressions of the eruption and involvement in the evacuation effort, there were two other experiences that would later prove to be life changing.

In response to the eruption, scientists from the Seismic Research Centre (then the Seismic Research Unit) established a small base of operations at Belmont, which became the volcano observatory.

In response to the eruption, scientists from the Seismic Research Centre (then the Seismic Research Unit) established a small base of operations at Belmont, which became the volcano observatory. As the eruption intensified, they required volunteers to assist the scientists with manning the monitoring effort overnight and the Cadet Force was asked to assist. I volunteered and so got an opportunity to live and work directly with scientists at the Observatory for a few days. I subsequently had to leave since students of the Sixth Form were

recalled to classes, but this experience provided me with a direct view of the important work done by such persons. It was quite impressive and their dedication and commitment to their very important work was fascinating.

The other factor that made a significant impression on my psyche was my observation of the composition of the scientific group. The individual scientists all became household names on the island and we all got to see and hear them as they played a significant role during the eruption. They were able during their brief interactions with the public to engender a lot of confidence in their work. Their daily reports and other statements became a major contributor to our daily lives.

I was very impressed with their performance and their role in the crisis but to my young and then very nationalistic eyes they all had the common trait of being foreigners. I saw and heard no Vincentian voices despite the fact that this was a natural hazard that we all needed to learn to live with. They all spoke differently than we did and it worried me that despite the fact that we had this volcano, we (Vincentians) did not know very much about it. I pondered on this and concluded that we needed to develop our own expertise in the area. I had always been interested in a career that involved outdoors and had now been impacted by a huge natural event and the performance of the individuals responsible for providing expert advice. I decided that I would become as knowledgeable about volcanoes that I would become someone who in future crises could 'speak' to Vincentians about what the volcano was doing. I would become one of the many "ologists" that we had all been hearing from throughout the crisis.

I saw and heard no Vincentian voices despite the fact that this was a natural hazard that we all needed to learn to live with. Despite the fact that we had this volcano, we (Vincentians) did not know very much about it.

Of course up until that moment I was in the academic stream for arts students, not science, and so if I was to become a scientist it required some serious re-training. This meant that over the next few years after completing Sixth Form I had to do the necessary catch-up in the sciences in order to enable me to pursue the part towards becoming an Earth Scientist. I was fortunate to have a very good friend who was a science student and who was on a path to doing medicine. Through her kind assistance I was able to complete the necessary pre-requisites and subsequently got accepted to do Geology at the UWI Mona Campus.

When I left Sixth Form jobs were scarce to obtain and I returned to the Grammar School as teacher. I eventually spent four years teaching English Literature, English Language and Geography to Forms 1-5. My time at the St. Vincent Grammar School was a very active one. At the school, apart from my responsibilities as teacher, I formed a school steelband and karate club. I continued to be an active member of the Cadet Force eventually becoming the officer in charge of the Cadet Force Band. One of the most significant developments for me during this period was the time I spent with Dr. Earle I Kirby, one of the most knowledgeable Vincentian scientists I have ever met, who became a bit of a mentor.

To pursue a university degree at the time, funding was a critical issue but there were very limited options for scholarships, especially for non-traditional subjects such as geology. Fortunately an opportunity came as a direct result of the same event that sparked my interest in the subject.

Immediately after the 1979 eruption of the Soufriere volcano, funding was provided by the United Nations Development Programme to upgrade the St. Vincent Volcano Monitoring Network. Funds were also provided for the training of two Vincentians at the level of undergraduate and postgraduate

(Masters) respectively. The intention was for these individuals to oversee the local monitoring programme once they had been trained. This seemed to be the ideal opportunity for me and I applied enthusiastically to obtain the scholarship for the undergraduate degree (I would have done Geology). I was unsuccessful but due to the fact that the scholarship offered for the post-graduate degree was never taken up it was decided to change this to offer a second undergraduate scholarship, which I was successful in obtaining.

My trip to University in Jamaica was my first trip outside the Eastern Caribbean where I had previously only visited St. Lucia and Dominica for regional Cadet Force training camps. In addition, the administrative arrangements had been delayed and resulted in my arriving at Mona Campus one week after classes had started. This posed several challenges in terms of settling in to life in Jamaica and severely affected my performance and integration into university life during my first year. My adjustment was helped in no small measure by the same hobbies, which I had begun while at the Grammar School. I joined Panoridim, the campus steelband and also practised karate with a small campus club. Both of these provided a much-needed outlet for the much frustrations and helped in my adjustment to university life.

After the first frustrating year on Campus the remainder of my university life was both academically stimulating and culturally rewarding. The geology and geography departments were relatively small compared to other departments at Mona Campus and given the subject areas it allowed for a great deal of interaction between students. It also provided many opportunities to explore Jamaica. In addition my membership of Panoridim Steelband, which was then one of the only steel orchestras in Jamaica, enabled me to visit and perform at venues throughout Jamaica. My four years at Mona Campus were a period during which I grew to love the life and culture of another Caribbean country and would later call Jamaica my second home. Campus life also allowed one to learn a great deal about other Caribbean countries and fully prepared me for my role later as a regional scientist.

I was excited at the prospect of monitoring the Soufriere volcano but had been frustrated by my efforts to do my final year geology field course on St. Vincent.

I left Jamaica in July 1987 both glad and sad to leave. By then I had gotten restless with campus life and was ready to start my journey as a geologist. I was excited at the prospect of monitoring the Soufriere volcano but had been frustrated by my efforts to do my final year geology field course on St.Vincent. My knowledge of volcanic systems was at the time quite limited and I quickly realised that there was a lot to learn when I returned home.

I joined the Ministry of Agriculture as a young inexperienced university graduate and for the next year spent most of my time setting up the unit, which I was to lead for the next six years. I also developed and strengthened pre-existing links between this new Unit and the Seismic Research Unit (now Centre) in Trinidad. In those early years I enthusiastically applied my geological knowledge to all sorts of issues not only to volcano monitoring. I was then on a bit of a crusade to show local authorities the utility of having geological input to any kind of development involving land use on the island. I therefore investigated and wrote several reports concerning coastal zone erosion, beach mining, mass movement and the need for regulations regarding the extraction of earth materials.

The local unit, called the Soufriere Monitoring Unit, was established and became involved not only in routine maintenance of monitoring sites but also public education and outreach regarding volcanoes. I sought and read any materials I could find regarding the volcano and sought to learn as much as I could about volcanism. At the time I was also interested in engineering geology. I soon realised that in order to become the professional I had set out to be since 1979 I had to deepen my knowledge and understanding about volcanism and should attempt to obtain support to pursue my interest in volcanology.

The opportunity to pursue specialised studies in Volcanology was provided by a Commonwealth Scholarship in 1990, which allowed me to journey to Leeds

I quickly realised that staying in St. Vincent did not offer many opportunities to develop fully as a volcanologist. I also became increasingly frustrated by the bureaucracy and limitations typical of the civil service.

University in the UK to work with Professor Peter Baker. My choice of Leeds over UCL, the other University to which I had applied to do a MPhil (Volcanology) was decided when Professor Baker, who had done his PhD research on St. Kitts, expressed an interest in the area of research, volcanic hazard assessment, which I intended to pursue.

The next two years was spent in cold, overcast Leeds, where I learnt to appreciate our lovely Caribbean sunshine and met my life partner. The University of Leeds was even by then one of the top UK Universities and was noted for its excellent Earth Sciences department. I was therefore able to interact with some of the top persons in the field of igneous petrology, volcanology and seismology, all areas which I would later spend a lot of my life exploring. Due to my continued interest in and practise of karate I met the person who would later become my wife. The academic environment and social life of Leeds made up completely for its otherwise challenging weather and the two years flew by quickly.

I returned to my post, as Volcanologist and Head of the Soufriere Monitoring Unit in August 1992 but never really settled back into work in St. Vincent. I had been bitten by the bug of research and had become interested in examining regional volcanism. I quickly realised that staying in St. Vincent did not offer many opportunities to develop fully as a volcanologist. I also became increasingly frustrated by the bureaucracy and limitations typical of the civil service and so sought options that would enable me to fully develop my potential as a volcanologist while still making a contribution to my homeland and the region. A job with the Seismic Research Centre (then Unit) seemed ideal and when an opportunity opened up there I applied. I was third on the short-list for the job but the other expatriate candidates either did not take up the post, or when they were made aware of the challenges of working in the Eastern Caribbean quickly left the post. I was offered the post in 1993 and arrived at the Centre in September 1993.

Upon arrival in Trinidad I was immediately thrust into the diverse and varied activities undertaken by staff of

this small but very dynamic institute. The centre hosted a major regional conference during the first month of my arrival and I delivered my first presentation to a scientific conference. It was a strange and interesting experience to now be working at the agency that had played such a pivotal role in the eruption that inspired my choice of career. I still felt very inexperienced but was humbled by the ready acceptance of the team at the SRU who were all supportive of me as a young professional. The next few years were spent learning as much as I could about the islands and particularly about the volcanic hazard. The specialised library at the centre was ideal since it contained a treasure trove of publications on all aspects of the geology of the Eastern Caribbean. At the time we were even more short-staffed than we are now and this provided an opportunity to learn about every aspect of the monitoring programme. I continued to develop my interest in unravelling the geologic history of St. Vincent and develop a proposal for PhD research under the supervision of Dr. Trevor Jackson, then Head of the Geology Department at Mona.

The year 1995 was another significant year in my life, both professionally and personally. It began with my wedding to Deborah Hutson in April followed in June by the start of the eruption of the Soufriere Hills volcano in Montserrat. Both of these events would be the dominant influences on my life from then onwards. I spent an increasing amount of time away from Trinidad and involved in the monitoring programme on Montserrat. In those early years it was very stressful and at times very dangerous since there was great uncertainty on the future behaviour of the volcano. The eruption attracted an amazing number of scientists from around the world and offered a great opportunity to learn about every aspect of volcanology. It also demonstrated first-hand the importance of having a group of scientists based in the region and dedicated to monitoring volcanoes.

Knowledge must be shared and passed on and used in the interest of the betterment of our society. During the past 27 years working as a geologist/volcanologist in the Caribbean I have functioned in a variety of roles, as teacher, adviser and leader, all of which are a result of my love and commitment to this region.

It was my experience both as a monitoring scientist and increasingly as one of several leaders of the scientific group that cemented my interest and love for volcanology. It also sparked an interest in taking more of a leadership role, as I realised that my style of leadership had proved effective in managing a diverse group of scientists. Comments received from Montserratians indicated that they were particularly pleased with the work of the regional scientists. It helped to strengthen my belief in the Seismic Research Centre and in the career path that I had chosen. Life had come full circle and now I was one of those same scientists who I had observed in my teenage years in St.Vincent. During the eruption I met some of the top scientists in the world, one in particular, Professor Steve Sparks, would later prove to be a significant influence on my obtaining a PhD.

By 2004 I had become an experienced regional earth scientist who had worked in most aspects of the SRC operations, although I was most closely associated with the public education, hazards assessment, ground deformation and geothermal monitoring programs. I had learnt a lot from observing the work of various heads of the Centre and this, combined with the experience gained by helping to manage numerous non-government organisations over the past twenty-five years, had prepared me to take the helm of the Centre. I felt that

my training, experience and knowledge up to that point had placed me in an ideal position to lead the agency, which I had grown to love working with over the years.

The year was also a significant one since it was the year that my first daughter Anika joined our family. My other daughter Marley would come four years later coinciding with the SRC re-engagement in the monitoring operations in Montserrat. After this period my role as leader of the Seismic Research Centre and father of young children changed my personal and professional life as I became more measured, strategic and less risky in my approach to everything.

I have always had a keen interest in the dissemination of scientific information and my modus operandi throughout my career has been that of using every opportunity to transfer knowledge of geologic processes to people in the region so as to enable effective mitigation of their potentially negative impacts. I have always been interested in the pursuit of knowledge and driven by a desire to find solutions to mitigating natural hazards.

Knowledge must be shared and passed on and used in the interest of the betterment of our society. During the past 27 years working as a geologist/volcanologist in the Caribbean I have functioned in a variety of roles, as teacher, adviser and leader, all of which are a result of my love and commitment to this region. I consider it a duty by those of us who have most benefited from the large investments made in the region to the education sector, to try our utmost to repay this through a meaningful contribution to its continued development. The most significant developments in my career have followed opportunities provided for training and development and I am extremely thankful to the many individuals and organisations that have contributed to these developments.

My life's experience has taught me that we all need to find our purpose in life. Work is not 'work' if we have a passion for what we are doing and if in doing so we make a contribution to human development. Many people have lived their entire life trying to find this purpose, sometimes wasting time on pursuits that only serve to frustrate them. I was fortunate to have found this 'calling' and it has kept me fully engaged in activities, which I believe has made a difference. I am an Earth Scientist who has had the good fortune of working with a great team of people, in a region where the natural processes that have engaged our scientific interest, happen often enough, to provide sufficient data to keep us all fully engaged in solving scientific problems.

I urge young persons, or even those not so young, who are interested in finding whatever they conceive of as happiness, to choose a profession that they are passionate about, are reasonably good at and which makes a positive contribution to the greater good. This may not be very easy and one is fortunate when it all comes together. But happiness is not an end in itself but a journey and I believe that if we earnestly embark on this journey we will find that elusive goal which we seek, even if we may not be fully conscious of it.

I urge young persons, or even those not so young, who are interested in finding whatever they conceive of as happiness, to choose a profession that they are passionate about, are reasonably good at and which makes a positive contribution to the greater good.

Prof. Liam Teague

Trinidad & Tobago
Arts & Letters, 2014

I will never forget the day I first heard a steelpan played live. In the late 1980s, a member of the 1st Coffee Boys Cub Scout troop (a group that Russell Teague, my late father, founded) mesmerised us at one of our weekend meetings, with his dexterity on the instrument.

The experience left such an impression that I immediately asked my father to take me to a pan yard so that I could begin lessons. This was to become a life changing experience.

T&TEC Motown Steel Orchestra was the ensemble I joined. I was fed a very eclectic diet of music consisting of calypso, soca, classical, bolero, bossa nova, R&B, and pop. After a few years, my musical journey took me to the Hillside Symphony Steel orchestra and it was at this institution that, thanks to the generosity of Mr. Carlisle Holder, I was allowed to hone my skills as an improviser and arranger. To this day I do not know why Mr. Holder allowed me to arrange pieces for the band's stage side—especially since I hadn't had any previous experience in the art of steelpan arranging. Thanks to his faith in my ability I eventually assumed, at the tender age of 15, the role of the band's arranger for the National Panorama competition.

There have been a number of people like Mr. Holder who supported my early musical development and I hold a very special place in my heart for their generosity. Indeed, such kindness has deeply influenced the important role that mentoring up and coming musicians has become in my life. As Michelle Obama, First lady of the United States of America, said: *When you've worked hard, done well, and walked through that doorway of opportunity, you do not slam it shut behind you. You reach back and give others folks the same chances that helped you succeed.*

My high school education was at the San Fernando East Junior Secondary and Pleasantville Senior Comprehensive schools. Like other students my age, I was introduced to the rudiments of music and had basic instruction in playing the recorder. Unlike most of my classmates, I possessed an insatiable appetite for learning everything about the art of music.

At Pleasantville Senior Comprehensive I had the pleasure of being a member of its steelband. This was one of the main reasons why I was even remotely interested in attending high school—academia, at least at that age, did not motivate me and simply could not replicate the burning passion and exuberance that I found in music. Music became my sanctuary and, ultimately, has led to a life which is filled with creativity and happiness.

To find one's passion early in life is truly magical and to have had encouraging and supportive parents

Prof. Liam Teague

is a great blessing. My father, Russell Teague, was not a musician (he often jokingly said that he played with the piano) but he loved all types of music. So, too, did my mother Pearl, and she would sit religiously in front of the TV at Carnival time (still does, as a matter of fact), taking in all the steelbands—especially Amoco (now BPTT) Renegades. Daddy exposed me to the classical music, via old LPs and BBC radio programs, of many composers including Mozart, Beethoven and Tchaikovsky. From the age of 11 or 12, I marveled at the playing of virtuoso violinists such as Jasha Heifetz and Itzhak Pearlman, and conjured up images of one day appearing as a steelpan soloist with major orchestras.

Competitions

Within a few years of my steelpan initiation, I started participating in various competitions in Trinidad. By the age of 13, I had captured championships for my ability on the steelpan and recorder at the T&T National Music Festival. Probably because of my successes at this festival, I was eventually approached by Mrs. Shirley James, the founder of the then National Youth Orchestra of Trinidad and Tobago (NYOTT), about studying the violin and becoming a member of the NYOTT. I jumped at the offer. Mrs. James, a lifelong nurturer of young people, and, I am convinced, an angel living amongst us, organised violin lessons for me with Mrs. Gunilla Tang Kai, a Swedish violinist who lived in San Fernando and easily one of my most inspirational teachers. This experience paid huge dividends as my approach to playing the violin with sensitivity and musicality worked its way into the manner with which I engaged the steelpan. At the weekly NYTTO rehearsals I was surrounded by like-minded individuals, many of whom had a yearning for personal development and a deep seated love for music. The experience of being in that orchestra played a great role in moulding me and I remember them with gratitude.

Even though I had achieved relative success in my discipline, I knew that I was still at an elementary stage of my development. My thirst for knowledge needed to be quenched.

Northern Illinois University
Getting there

Between the ages of 15 and 17, I began to establish a reputation as a promising steelpan soloist and earned championships at several competitions, including the Schools' Steelband Music Festival and National Steelband Music Festival. By the early 1990s I had started composing solo pieces for the pan such as *The Firebird, Raindrops* and *A Visit to Hell*; and, even though I had achieved relative success in my discipline, I knew that I was still at an elementary stage of my development. My thirst for knowledge needed to be quenched.

In the late 1980s, Al O'Connor and Cliff Alexis of Northern Illinois University (NIU) in the USA were invited by Pan Trinbago to observe one of the Schools' Steelband Music Festivals. While in Trinidad, they informed a gathering of enthusiasts about NIU's steelband program, created by O'Connor, which included a music degree with a concentration on steelpan. This piqued my interest and, after a few years, I wrote to O'Connor inquiring as to what possibilities may have existed for me to matriculate as a student at the institution. Within a very short space of time, O'Connor and Alexis weaved their collaborative magic and my journey towards achieving Bachelors and Masters Degrees commenced.

NIU furnished me with a one year partial scholarship, but due to my limited means, I could not fund the rest of my education. Fortunately, Joy Caesar, then vice-president of Citibank,

became aware of my dire circumstances and convinced the bank to fund my first year of college. A fortuitous set of circumstances led Lester Trilla, a Chicago-based drum manufacturer whose drums Cliff Alexis (Co-director of the NIU Steelband and a legendary figure in the steelband universe) used to craft his exquisite instruments, to attend an NIU Steelband concert.

Trilla was not prepared for what he heard being elicited from the barrels that he produced primarily for shipping and immediately asked Alexis and O'Connor how he could contribute to the NIU Steelband programme's development. One of their collective answers was "that young man needs to get through college". As a result, Trilla founded the Les Trilla Scholarship Fund which provides assistantships to students hailing primarily from the Caribbean, and I became the first recipient of this honour. Between the support of NIU, Trilla, CLICO, ENRON, and another group of private donors who believed in my talent and promise, Carl and Cynthia Stiehl, I was able to comfortably focus on my educational and musical goals for the next six-and-a-half years.

College life

I started college in 1992 and it was both inspiring and incredibly humbling. Within my first week at the NIU School of Music any delusions of grandeur and musical self-assuredness that I may have possessed came to a crashing halt. The level of talent and artistry that I witnessed, from both students and faculty, was simply astonishing! I returned to a stage of relative infancy and willingly absorbed the daily lessons that were dealt in formal and informal settings at NIU. I matured as a human being and artiste. My technique became more disciplined and refined. The art of improvisation, which for so many years had been a mystery to me, was decoded. And, for the first time in my life, I began to learn about the rich and storied history of the steelpan. I devoted my life to music and have maintained the mindset of being an eternal student.

The art of improvisation, which for so many years had been a mystery to me, was decoded. And, for the first time in my life, I began to learn about the rich and storied history of the steelpan.

Preparation for life beyond NIU

Both O'Connor and Alexis made it a priority to prepare me for life as a professional musician and facilitated many avenues for me to demonstrate my humble gifts, including as a soloist with professional symphony orchestras, collegiate steelbands and percussion ensembles in the USA. Because of their vision and belief, I now am able to have a rewarding, sustainable and creative career as a tenured associate professor of music, steelpan soloist, composer and arranger.

The Dream

Nothing happens unless first a dream - Carl Sandburg

As a young man, I remember reading a biography of Jasha Heifetz, one of the 20th century's greatest violinists. Heifetz's legendary musical accomplishments and his dizzying globe- trotting schedule were outlined. This led me to often day dream about how fulfilling it would be to consistently perform for audiences around the world that were as emotionally and intellectually invested in the music and experience as the ones who attended the great violinist's recitals. Audiences that were cognizant of how important engaged listening was to the overall concert experience.

While I've enjoyed a career that has allowed me to travel to almost every continent, playing in a multitude of musical contexts, I still don't feel convinced that I and my steelpan colleagues enjoy the fruits of their labor in a manner consistent with other accomplished instrumentalists and vocalists--at least, on a consistent basis. However, I feel encouraged that

we will see the day when the careers of steelpan musicians might manifest themselves spectacularly, leading to reviews by critics like Howard Reich, of the Chicago Tribune who might write something headlined "The Musical Chameleon" which might read:

Mr. Teague performed the Jan Bach concerto for steelpan and orchestra with the Berlin Philharmonic and demonstrated full command of the instrument—simultaneously projecting the steelpan's lyricism while effortlessly executing the most demanding and virtuosic passages of the tour de force. Indeed, the patrons at his upcoming appearances with the New York and Chicago Symphonies, respectively, will bear witness to the eloquence, versatility and beauty of the steelpan—the national instrument of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Following his rendezvous on the symphonic circuit, Teague, once again demonstrating his well-earned reputation as a musical chameleon, will be the featured guest soloist at Jazz at Lincoln Center with the WDr. Jazz Orchestra; and, to conclude his season, the steelpan ambassador will join forces with the PCS Nitrogen Silver Stars Orchestra, Machel Montano and Destra Garcia at Carnegie Hall's annual "Celebrating the music of Trinidad and Tobago" concert series.

Nothing happens unless first a dream, right?

Following his rendezvous on the symphonic circuit, Teague, once again demonstrating his well-earned reputation as a musical chameleon, will be the featured guest soloist at Jazz at Lincoln Center. Nothing happens unless first a dream, right?

obstacles that the pan's champions had to hurdle, such as social ostracism and frequent bouts of police brutality which were inflicted upon them and their instruments. It is testament to the fortitude of these visionaries, most of whom had no formal training in science and music, that they were able to achieve such improbable and lofty goals. I am thankful to have benefited to such a great extent because of the hard work and sacrifices that were made by pan's forefathers, and I remain committed to being the best ambassador possible for this instrument.

The steelband is considered to be the most unique family of acoustic instruments invented in the 20th century and its rapid ascension from relatively simple beginnings to one of the world's most versatile and beautiful instruments is nothing short of miraculous.

Pan Night and Day

De Pan compel you to move
Ah doh care what anybody say
De Pan put you in de groove
Make you feel to jump up and prance on J'ouvert
One regret, de jamming does never last
Like ah jet, it start and it end so fast
Oh No, Panmen don't you run away
De Whole world want to hear you play

("Pan Night and Day"- Lord Kitchener)

The steelband is considered to be the most unique family of acoustic instruments invented in the 20th century and its rapid ascension from relatively simple beginnings to one of the world's most versatile and beautiful instruments is nothing short of miraculous. Its astronomical growth is even more impressive when one considers the

In my travels, I have witnessed how astonished people are upon first hearing the sound of a steelpan. Looks of bewilderment are common place when it is played in a sophisticated manner. In fact, many pan players can testify that people's curiosity and disbelief have led them to step on to concert stages (at times without being invited), convinced that some measure of sleight of hand must be taking place and are intent on discovering the secret(s) behind the illusion.

Sadly, I've also experienced the polar opposite. The facial contortions of some world class musicians with whom I have collaborated, but, I assume, may have only been previously exposed to novelty sounds of the pan, suggested: "What the hell does he think he's going to do with that strange looking garbage can?" These sentiments are usually quickly dispensed with when said musicians realise that the pan is indeed a legitimate and profound instrument which can play music, originally created for their respective instruments, just as beautifully and convincingly, if not more so.

While there is no denying that the steelpan has grown in notoriety and stature since its embryonic period, it is my humble opinion that it is primarily viewed by the non-Caribbean community as being most appropriately used for light entertainment e.g. at pool parties. This is not what genius steelpan artisans such as Anthony Williams, Ellie Mannette, Neville Jules, Bertie Marshall and Rudolph Charles had in mind when they toiled feverishly while withstanding the chastisement and ridicule of naysayers.

In the nation of its birth, the pan is rarely showered with the adoration, respect and financial backing necessary for its stakeholders to be able to have sustainable and rewarding careers. I often wrestle to find substance behind the pan's moniker of "national instrument", especially when it continues to be used conveniently as a political football, irrespective of which party governs. When support is given by the state and/or private sector, it frequently seems to be of an obligatory nature; though, admittedly, some genuine altruistic efforts do exist.

We in the steelpan community must recognise that this sad state of affairs

persists, in part, as a result of self-inflicted wounds, examples of which include:

- Failure to lend consistent and meaningful support to our fellow pannists and steelbands.
- Reluctance to recognise the importance of educating our up-and-coming generation about all things pan and also mould more business savvy musicians.
- Anachronistic thinking grounded in nostalgia, as opposed to the spearheading of ventures that has the instrument's best future at heart.
- Fixation on competitions which rarely bring tangible benefits, except to a select few.
- Dismissive attitudes with regard to properly documenting our music for the purposes of posterity and education.

Space does not allow for further elaboration on how we have continued shooting ourselves in the foot. But to be fair, culpability does not rest solely upon our shoulders.

As the following commentary to the editor of the Trinidad Guardian on June 6, 1946, clearly identifies, the steelband has always had its fair share of detractors:

"Can beating is pan beating in any language and in any form. It does nobody any good, and when it is indulged in all day all night, day in and day out, it is abominable. Why is there no legislation to control it? If it must continue and if by virtue of its alleged inherent beauty and charm it will someday bring popularity and fame to the island and fortune to the beaters, then by all means let it go on- but in the forests and other desolate places."

Such notions are by no means restricted to the past. Meager attendances at events such as Steelband Music Festivals seem consistent with a culture that generally has little interest in the pan. These types of events are not attractive to the general public as the consumption of food and alcohol and atmosphere for *ole talk* is not central to its objective; rather, it is the appreciation of steelpan music in all its glory and splendour. Indeed, one would be hard pressed to find anyone who could deny that the majority of Panorama attendees are not there mainly for "de lime". Most are unconcerned with the intellectual and emotional offerings by our Mozarts and Beethovens. This, mind you, includes the pannists themselves, as it is the rare steelpan aficionado who would listen impartially and intently to these, at times, brilliant arrangements. As a result, this musical warfare has given birth to an environment which does not effectively and respectfully celebrate our creative genius. The competition itself has become a breeding ground for conformity. But, that is a discussion for another time…

Panorama attendees are not there mainly for "de lime". Most are unconcerned with the intellectual and emotional offerings by our Mozarts and Beethovens. This, mind you, includes the pannists themselves.

PAN RISING
Realising the dream

Much is happening in Trinidad and Tobago, and globally, which will serve to keep pan's future alive and well. In my effort to highlight some of the progressive work that is taking place, I will refrain from specifically identifying these beacons of light, since doing so, as David Rudder sang in his *Dedication* (a homage to the steelband movement): To name a few would make the others seem small.

Many of our younger generation of steelpan musicians are musically literate and pursuing tertiary education. Institutions exists today which allow for our pannists to receive the necessary certification which will make them more attractive to employers and, by extension, foster the possibility of them have multi-faceted careers.

At least one NGO has been steadfastly working to champion music literacy as a viable instrument in the shaping and formation of young minds. New acoustic and electronic steelpans have been created; a newer and visionary crop of steelpan builders and tuners are being bred; original compositions are being commissioned for the solo steelpan, steelbands, and steelpan with conventional ensembles. Steelband programs in elementary and high schools, as well as in colleges, are growing at an impressive rate; in part due to school administrators recognising sociological, academic and musical benefits which result because of

the integration of steelband programs into the curriculum.

However, for the pan to have a mainstream presence, perhaps the main formula for success rests on our young people falling in love with the instrument. I look on with amazement at the thousands who annually flock to the Soca & Chutney Monarch competitions and wonder when the steelpan community will have such an equivalent. Could it happen? I think so, but it would take a monumental collaborative effort to be realised.

Our reality is that the supply is there, but not the demand. But, if we "package" our education of these young people in a manner which would lead them to embrace the steelpan in their hearts; this, theoretically, could translate into an influx of our youth playing the instrument; more airplay on the radio of steelpan music; greater attendance at steelband events (parents, relatives, friends) and a marked increase in the sales of CDs/DVDs/ accessories/ published music, etc. If this model works domestically, then its influence should, theoretically, be felt internationally. If successful, perhaps we will we truly have Pan, Night and Day.

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2015 Laureates
Dr. Paloma Mohamed-Martin
Herbert Samuel
Prof. Suresh Narine
Prof. Patrick Hosein

2015

Introduction

His Excellency The Most Honourable Sir Patrick Allen ON, GCMG, CD, KSt.J
Governor-General of Jamaica

The Inner Core of the Pursuit of Excellence

Excellence is a moving target. The moment one believes that one has achieved it and rests content in that achievement, one sinks into the contagion of mediocrity.

It is therefore best conceived as a state of mind which propels one to keep striving to be the best that one can be; never competing feverishly against others, but always seeking to develop to the maximum one's God-given potential to succeed. Yet the success to be achieved must rest on a solid basis of values and principles which are essential to strong families, strong communities and strong nations. Mere success in whatever field, which is not accompanied by strength of character, service to others and gratitude cannot engender a lasting perception of excellence.

This is the fundamental truth which links the stories of Dr. Anthony Sagba and all Laureates of the Caribbean Awards for Excellence. Participating in this laudable initiative to recognise our men and women of excellence is therefore an honour and a privilege for which I am grateful. Our region, in particular our youth, needs role models like them, not only for preserving our Caribbean identity, but also to secure the realisation of our development goals.

Centuries ago, Aristotle declared the following:

"Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but rather we have those because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit."

This speaks to three core ingredients in the pursuit of excellence: preparation through training; an abiding commitment to hard, effective work and

H.E. Sir Patrick Allen

rectitude. Clearly, one act of brilliance does not equate excellence. Even in the "small things" we must be consistent, since excellence is "a habit".

It certainly does not mean that we shall not suffer failure and disappointment. Experience has taught us that these can

be the gateway to success, depending on how we confront them. It often involves readiness to take calculated risks, in the knowledge that whatever the outcome the learning opportunity is invaluable. This reminds me of an old adage that the turtle can only move ahead if it is willing to risk its neck.

The pursuit of excellence demands a dream of its achievement, focused work towards the chosen objective and confidence in one's ability to realise that objective. This underlies the "I Believe" Initiative which I launched in May, 2011, in a campaign to motivate our youth to be self-confident and to escape the shackles of mediocrity and negativity which have stymied the performance of so many of our people.

I want our youth to understand that excellence abides not only in our star sportsmen and women, musicians, artists, writers and scientists, but within each one who is willing to sacrifice short-term gratification and commit unwaveringly to the attainment of their objective. I want them to believe that every decent, honest endeavour allows them an avenue to excel and grow to the next step. I want our youth to believe in themselves and in their capacity to be agents of societal transformation and so commit to participate in accelerating our national and regional development. Although the IBI targets youth, it reflects the vision I have for our Caribbean family.

Our region has an abundance of talent and therefore immense potential to achieve excellence in a variety of fields. Our National Heroes began the race and our history records numerous other sons and daughters whose intellect, expertise and selfless service continued the journey through to now. The Sagba Laureates, whom I warmly commend and congratulate, prove that it is within our power to find and implement the solutions to the difficulties we confront. Their message to all of our people is that we shall achieve when the pursuit of excellence becomes a state of mind which influences our individual and national lives.

Thanks to Dr. Anthony Sagba for his own journey along the pathway of excellence and for the commitment which inspired him to establish the Caribbean Awards For Excellence. May he and all our Laureates continue to motivate our people to serve diligently and creatively, with excellence as their hallmark.

Our region has an abundance of talent and therefore immense potential to achieve excellence in a variety of fields. Our National Heroes began the race and our history records numerous other sons and daughters whose intellect, expertise and selfless service continued the journey through to now.

Dr. Paloma Mohamed-Martin

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Trinidad & Tobago
Arts & Letters, 2015

On Dreams and Terrible Love
Fragments of a lyrical autobiography by Paloma Mohamed, PhD

Introduction

I was raised to believe that it is not for me to speak about myself. So, this lyrical fragment was created in response to a reasonable request from the Sabga Foundation for a biographical statement of three thousand words. Simple as it seemed, this request sent me on a journey of life-questions which I had not ever contemplated or attempted to document in any systematic way. I was troubled by a particular tension, the tension I often face, between which voice should speak, the social scientist or the creative artist --- for I am both. The conventions of the two forms of writing are radically different. The particular problems I have with ideas of superior knowledge and the fixity it attempts to impose, especially in circumstances like these and my own fundamental belief in perpetual flux, especially regarding individuals' internal states, all conspired against any possibility of a narrative autobiography. This would be like caging a butterfly or a honeybee because it assumes a particular way of seeing oneself which is somewhat alien to me. So what I have attempted in this first experiment is to work through this tension by exploring the feel of some formative moments, expressively incorporating as many statements of fact as I could endure. This approach I think allows me to escape the bounds of fixity, to gesture to the tension through form itself, to embed the piece with particular motifs of extensive community, compelling love, work as service, honesty, justice, individual authenticity and sublimation of the self which are central to the philosophy of how I seek to live.

If I could ever say "I am" this or that, I may never be able to separate the work and the space/place, from who that person becomes. So place is also embedded in the offering. I've also tried to grapple with this notion of "I" as fixed by using the hypothetical "say" (perhaps) , anytime I move to personal definition. "Say" is also used in other ways depending on the reading. I am also deliberately using the common "i" in place of its proper use "I" in the poem for similar reasons. I hope that beyond my lyrical representation of how I remember experiencing my life at important moments, a curriculum vitae, will fill in the dry chronologically fixed details of when, where and how many. I've tried to focus on why and how, to present a kind of embossed prose to be unlocked. Forgive me please if this approach seems an indulgence. For me it was the only possible response.

Proem

(who am i)(why am i)therefore (what am i)?
Writing about sel-f poses too many problems,
too many questions…what are we sel-ling?
What do we really know?
Are we the same today as tomorrow?
What is self and what is spirit?

i struggle with the enormity.
These ideas of fixity, superiority
that come with the simple request.

Be-ing cannot be captured like an equation,
re-present-ed on a poster, in isolation.
The expectation that anyone really is,
anyway, always confounds, terrifies.

Is self knowledge truly trustworthy?
Should any artist ever know who they really are?

Self-consciousness is like a prison with bars:
If pre-occupation with self-presentation negates self-awareness, then every artist
should fear this.

What could i write about my life,
not re-gurgitated elsewhere?
Am i worth a poem, a single word?
A life of such comingled silences ?
Could i say or should i show how it was,
Or what i believe today?

i believe i was born to be here,
to stay here, among this civilisation,
at this time to stand here,
till natural negation,
a nondescript wave washes me away.

Being here gives me breath.

i believe if i did not celebrate this space,
i negate myself.
What was i born to do if not to
raise my voice, peel my eyes,
prick up my ears, like a bird
winging to life, following sound
colliding with light, looking into all faces,
recording and reflecting this?

(You can)
Say, i am like a hyphen-
nated,
Living in my head like a hermit, termin-
nated,
Flow me shapes of islands
naked .
Love is purpose in me, un
-abated.

Come Fiah

Say, my life began like a tendril,
threatened and frail.
Tiny, tenacious, at 8 months
in a blaze of fire engulfing Marie.
Was Raymond who her doused her.
Was he who tended the tendril
trailing from the hand of God,
bathe her in the red Pyrex dish,
tiny and pink, wrapped in the blue blanket they'd bought, till
Marie became conscious,
long time later that both she
and the child, the girl, had been born.

He who loved to create with his hands,
named the tendril Paloma.
What other name could he give her,
But the name of Picasso's only daughter?
And then Francis, patron saint of unity,
for Marie's little brother and Ramona,
for himself -- lyric of a song he loved :"…Ramona, I hear the
mission bells above,
Ramona , they're ringing out our song of love…."
Papa was Raymond. Mama is Marie.

Prima Voce

There was always music.
On the radio, "Oh!Oh! Oh-oo!"
From Dad and Uncle Joey's box guitars,
from the melodious outbursts of Mama Marie,
from the Catholic Church --Holy Rosary,
from my Hindu primary school -- Rama Krishna,
"Oh Jai, Laxmie-Rama!"
And then chanting, from the Mosques,
where little girls are silent.

Silence.

Wonderful perversion!
Explosions will happen, inside and out!
Shut the mouth, pry the eyes,
prick up the ears, un-shackle the senses.
Soon explosions on the page, on the stage!

The stage??!

Thank God i was born in the Caribbean!
In-side-out-side-in-I-.
Indeed. Outside is harder than inside .

I still love silence, you see.

Terrible Love 1

They would break my heart at seven.
Came home too soon from school.
Caught him sneaking out the door.
Two suitcases and our future in his hands.
Never to return. Never to return.

Say i tried hard
Not to repeat that his-
tory,
Not to succumb to our own human
-ity.
Hoped we could rise above
what we were raised to be.

Reluctant Giants

Mama Marie, she,
chaste Catholic child,
raised by nuns,
knew only to pray out loud
that her four children, 3 boys-
twins in the set - and this single little girl,
the eldest–would not punish on Gods earth,
would not starve in this strange land,
where she far from Walcott's St.Lucy,
could not return.
Hilda, my Lucian grandmother,
fabulous seea-woman, and strong,
loved me beyond life ,
(seriously she said that!),
could never see anyone do or be wronged.
Came down to Mama, looked deep in her eyes
And dem two, decide ;Ce ne sera
pas comme ça.Vous suceed!

Aunty Blossom, Loris and
their daughters three,
Celeste, Francis, Helena, Catherine,
Charles, Zena, Ena, Fareeda, a country
let down its branches all around me,
providers, protectors, teachers, preachers,
ensured the tendril grew into a tree.
So if i ever dare to claim that i am,
T'would be far less than they have ever been.

Grounding

Wordsworth McAndrew, serious Banna !
what he loved, he loved so strong,
and what he rejected, he ejected
right or wrong.
He worked to capture,
things she could understand.
She was the French speaker.
No! No! Mac would say,
No! She spoke The Patios!
Mama's first job outside of the home,
translating from Macs' tapes
on a cassette recorder,
from Ithaca, from Madia, deep in Guyana,
from churches—Little Jones, Kali Mai Puja,
Masquerade, Ole Hique, Moon gazer.
Hours and hours banging on a typewriter, stopping the tap.
Rewind—the children calling.
Rewind –rice burning. Rewind –so tired- falling asleep –with
me, watching the twins,
sitting in the red and white basket chair,
same one I learned to walk on,
hearing all this—over and over again.
Mama working on Mac's recordings.
Working on my mind! Ah!
What things a child can learn
from just hearing tapes rewind!

Epiphany 2

One day Mr. Cox hopped into our class:
"Who writes poetry ?" He innocently asked.
"I do!" McAlmont and I, were quick to chime.
"You do?" said Cox with a special smile.
"But they're really not for people", I quietly sighed.
Teacher rose to his full five feet, clearly annoyed, peered through
his glasses, red faced, cried, "Then you're writing a diary!
Just spewing from your head!
Poems are only poems when enjoyed or read!".

First, a handwritten pamphlet, ten copies
only twelve poems inside this i would call " Lovechild". Then "Come Fiah", that book of protests followed by "Song" and then i let poetry rest, to tarry with drama, music and dance, and to follow a long social science romance.

Homage to Teacher Hendy, true Barbadian Lady, in first form who said that i should write.
Homage to Mr. Fredericks at Queen's,
Who marked with a critical eye;
Homage to Al whose knowledge and patience were so great;
Homage to all who nurtured what was innate.

1988

This year of gas lines and shortages
Frustrations, tribulations
Ras Michael published "Survival"!
In print, my poems "Gasline" and another one,
And my mind just would not settle down.
What was this particular feeling
boiling in my veins? It was rage.
The life of an artist they would
not let me choose, it was tragic,
unproductive, i had everything to lose.
Aubrey sang sublime blues, dead now.
David sought his fortune in London town.
i had nowhere to go so i looked around
and despite admonitions, poems
began to come, like slings sending stones
at inconvenient times, i just couldn't stop it.
Too much locked inside.

In 1988, a boon would eventually land,
tall trees from Jamaica and Trinidad.
Writing on anything that could be found,
one brought me used reams from Caricom.
"Respect the work, you must genuflect before the work. You are so young, slow down!
For great work the world is accustomed to waiting !" This I would learn.

The other read my scripts with the
scalpel of a critic, ripped them
to shreds but i understand how he meant it.

Cecily at Guysuco typing handwritten
manuscripts and sneaking Gestafax for free!
No predator, no poacher, no ill meaning poseur
Would touch me!
Ah how they nurtured thirty years ago !
But for the grace of God,
Terrible love, begets terrible sorrow.

Say i am artist vali/
dated,
Say i am scientist fascin/
ated.
Artist feels, scientist facts
Say i am a teach-er learn-ing
to grow.

The Hermit and the Butterfly Went Out To See

Hermit crabs should never marry.
And butterflies should not tarry near
the caves of Hermits, crabs or men.
They are fixed and set in their ways,
And by nature cannot share their space.
Those powerful pincers are there with reason
Only hidden inside shells for brief seasons.
They must come out to reach beyond the cave,
They're patient stalkers, quiet and brave.
They carry back in any vain young maid,
Who dithers to think that butterfly wings,
Are any match for shears.

Terrible Love 2

It was a terrible love.
With tumultuous tremors
of every great love.
Spanning decades and centuries,
continents and cities.
Scouring dark and illuminate places
Ideas, people, spaces,
productive, destructive,
obsessive but true.
To this is day.
Ah! How those who we love
often lead us astray.
Better passion for a thing than a person,
whose mind is not fixed,
Better life that is tepid, than this!

Behold The Only Thing Greater...

In the seventh year,
in the month of the Lion,
HE who is greater than us,
came through us.
And in Shabaka,
"beloved of Ptah who
blesses the two nations",
a love of eons survives.

Say i am a parable to be learn-
ed,
A crouching Cougar
with paw about her young,
Say i am language committed
not written down,
Say i am deep water,
Who won't swim may drown.

La Trinity

And so we came to rest again,
upon a high hill above Caribbean Spain.
Among high polished wood and flaming red Flamboyant trees,
mountains speckled green and blue-white distant sea, bake and shark at Natalie's.

Across the crest -- troubling Lavantille.

On that hill in a nest created there,
strange and beautiful creatures came to feast:
Here was Lover-of-the-Lace, Here was EYE,
here was Heidegeer's faithful knave,
here was Jazz- in- me-calaloo,
here was Malik dancing Flambeaux!
Jadulall, Edwards, Constance, Dani, Kenti,
here was Henk orchestrating drums,
here was Saba, Fulla,Villa, Pint, Davlin, Bruce,
Gibbons- diviner of dreams.
Here was Brown—dreadlocked and so true,
circling poets and days, by a Kannal, green,
J'overt, Rampersaud, Lise, Tambu, Laveaux.

Here was where I knew.

Sanakaralli - high-priest-rum-shopist-philospher, Averill, me and trunk load of shoes,
scouring South' for distant secondary schools.
Moonsammy-gentle chasing rapso-soca.
Ruba, Resistance, Renegades, Phase 2, Despa's, Invaders, Baron-Shadow and Rudder, Rudder, Rudder!

University, Marshall, Daphne, Chadee… Phd.

Here amidst the riotous thorny throngs of Bougainvillea,
on a porch above those hills on fire,
we linked lives, and prayed over Port of Spain,
knelt in Sister Ann's chapel, in her habit my tears. Dr. Michelle and Gloria, sanctum Dei, save us from this Leopard who gives me my keep,
prowling, intermittently pouncing,
knawing at my feet.

Here, in this erudite prism,
floating just beneath the sky,
visions like crystals, sound like chimes,
i reached up, disturbed them, then had to fly.

Yes, i love you, Trin-i-ty.

Terrible love,
does not require that we die.

Say i am a winged thing learning how to
fly –
Say i am a balmy day when the sun is
high
Say i am Ironpan, goatskin drum,
Say i am titanium

Butterfly.

Boston

She is thinking how
you do not hear the snow falling
yet it covers everything. Everything,
this dusting white covers trees, grass,
rooftops.

She is wondering how some trees
still protest with green beneath
all this white, and survive
till the summer and endure thru'
the spring-light.

She is thinking how a new-one can be
fooled by the sun shining still as
the silent white stings
a could- be-perfect morning.

She is thinking of
her world and its history
and this world and its ferocity.

And she is thinking
that there must be a
lesson for her in this
somewhere.

Guyana

Oh Guyana! Amore!
Centre of my soul!
i am with you.
Always, you are with me.
In your lap i grew rocked by auntie Bibi
By murky waters a great Ocean.
Skipped along its seawall
Earths returning bones to collect.
Your belly holds my secrets,
your moon my angels protect,
i inhale your musty salt, to daily free me.
Seawall, Atlantic, brown, fathomless ocean
you are with me.

Bourda market!
Call out my name! Say, daughter come!
Here is the sapodilla, here your Buxton spice, here is the Shaddock, sweet Salara
with cane juice!
Take these tales of a people like gifts
we made for you.
Heliconia, ginger flower, beloved marked-red Sunflower,
Parkia, black water caress my skin,
i am with you!
Big eye fish swim close to me,
Silvereyes nibble my knees,
Iron- green river bush release
your secrets to me.
Essequibo amore! i am with you.

Spew golden acorns from your rivers bottom,
and the diamonds girding your groin,
Say adorn her.
Here is the child now all grown up!
Long ago before the end of time, we knew her. Here is our child! The one to whom we whispered sweet nothings, and who
made them known,
who sat in small boats, landed on Kyk-over-Al stole a stone and took it home.
who we visited in dreams and told
the secrets that we hold.
Say, this is a scribe of scared mysteries
She is your own.

Mahaica! Summer home!
Sucking Gunips and pink-pink Guava's
at granny Hilda's house,
mud surfing on the beach, and night Cinema!
Ah! Cinema! Old westerns every day,

But Bollywood on Wednesdays.
Daddy Mac and Yogi arguing politics
and mystical things.
Aunties, Eleanor and Katherine
frying catfish and other wonderful things.
Me combing Granny's lovely waving hair,
sharing my secrets, unlocking her dreams.
Sunday mortar pounding plantain,
waiting by the gate for Ms. Latchmin'
"Fresh fresh"! from river or Ocean.
Idyllic days of freedom, where thoughts
and imaginations soared
just like the Egrets embossing the sky.

Georgetown adoro! Terrible love!
i am with you.
Born to your magnificent streets, the beats
of Masquerade, Mari-Mari, Congotee, Do-dop,
Chutney, Shanto, Chowtal, Calyspo –o-o-o
Somebody's always singing, a rhythm, a hymn,
"It's not my will but thine be done, praise Jee-sss-uus!"
Amen. In you hominem,
explodes to argument over earthly power.
Questions rise, never answers,
Even leaders from Queens could change us.
Georgetown, UG, heroines of dissent,
where so many heroes are spent ,
before their time, from slave to those who should be free to speak!
i am with you.

Though your streets have seen more
 than i can bear to know.
Guyana, amore!
Must i leave you too?

Terrible love
must never blind our eyes.

But For The Grace ....

Are talents and gifts the same?
Where do they come from?
And where do they go
When we are gone?

When i was 16 i had a dream
of flying through the air,
on a large Lotus aflame with energy.
And when i terrified looked down,
i could see those who were
 and would be excellent
looking back me.
Try as i might the vivid dream
seemed to stay
and several years later i wrote
 it as the poem-play.
Are talents the same as gifts?
i would have to say no.
A mere lotus pod was given
And i watched it grow,
With little help from me
 beyond my energies,
Beyond my wildest dreams.

So i know what i must do.
Gifts are blessing given,
to the few for the many.

Say, i did this for you.
Let loose my quivering arrow
to join these lands, these voices
across eons. In this sublime moment
to say, i see you—i see you!
So let the world see you!
Let them know you
ancestral, essential, central.

Say, for a moment i held you close,
And loved you, Caribbean.

With a terrible love.

(not the end…)

Conclusion

I have only been able to name or gesture to a precious few people who have impacted my life in the piece above. However, my memory for such things is good and I do remember most people at different moments. Though I have faced unthinkable challenges at points in my life, throughout it all I have received so much love and so many kindnesses, that it is impossible to recount and name everyone who has supported my development. For these gifts of humanity I am thankful, always. However, in this particular moment I wish to pay homage to the work of the Chair and members of the eminent panel of judges of the Sabaga Award for Caribbean Excellence, to the Chair Dr. Seeta Roath and the Guyana National Committee, to Guyanese researcher, Roxana Kawall, Professors Edward Greene, David Daybedeen, Vibert Cambridge, Juliet Emmanuel and Dr. Bruce Paddington for being such wonderful mentors and for supporting my nomination with their references. I am thankful also for the professionalism and patience of Dr. Raymond Ramcharitar and Ms. Maria Neilson of the Sabga Foundation and for the love and support of close family and friends Beverley Reynolds, Volderine Hackett , Fr. Montrose and Dr. Mark Tumbridge, Darryl and Debra Woo, Arnold, Ceronne, Brenda, Nan, Sisters Gloria Gray and Anne Bradshaw, Dr. Efebo and Lucille, Simeon Dowiding, Al, Winston and Marcia, Kris, Tivia and Lisa, my family, particularly Mama, Aunty Bloss and Sandi, Carri, Jackie, Ramon, Ray, Raoul and my own special boy Shabaka, and the memory of his father, Prof. Tony Martin; to my nieces Lilia and Tyra and my nephew Tyrease and all my nieces and nephews for the indulgence of your endurance these last few months. To B.J for CineGuyana.

That Dr. Anthony Sabga, a business tycoon could see the value of the arts and letters and through his Foundation should pay tribute to the muse is remarkable in this Caribbean where support for the arts is often minimal. In accepting the award I contemplated the tremendous boon it would present to many of the projects upon which I work often with slender external resources among them Healing Arts for children, Theatre Guild, CineGuyana, Moray House. I truly feel that the award is a "godsend" to my work for which I am truly grateful. Deepest gratitude to the Sabga Foundation for the vision, commitment, aspirations and investment that these awards represent. To my fellow and future laureates ah, yes, sometimes there is recognition of terrible love.

The End.

Herbert A (Haz) Samuel

St. Vincent & the Grenadines
Entrepreneurship, 2015

It's funny the things one remembers from childhood. One of my most vivid memories is of my father Claude driving me to school one day and in conversation, just as we were approaching the corner of James and Granby streets (Ju-C Corner, as it's locally known) he asked me "but is it feasible?"

He then enquired if I knew the meaning of the word (I didn't) which he proceeded to explain. Apparently I had been telling him about some idea or the other that I'd had and, as a trained economist, it was a logical question for him to ask. If I remember correctly, I was about 10 at the time.

My father is an avid reader and now in his early 80s, he reads every day, much of it online. Happily, I inherited from him an intellectual curiosity, a love for books and a penchant for ideas.

I was born 5th September 1960, the second of three children. My brother Malcolm is my senior by a year and a half and 8 years after me, my sister Camille came along. My mother Barbara (now retired) was a nurse, and had her first two children at home, assisted by a midwife. When I was four years old, my parents moved us to Jamaica, where my father, who was a mid-level civil servant with the government of St. Vincent, was attending the University of the West Indies on a scholarship. My formative years in Kingston explain my pseudo-Jamaican accent that survives to this day.

As a youngster I was not impressed with my name. Herbert. It sounded to me like an old man's name—and my middle name was infinitely worse! So, I started calling myself Haz, which has also stuck. As far as I can recall, I had a conventional and relatively uneventful childhood. My brother and I attended the Kingstown Preparatory school and the St. Vincent Boys Grammar School. I did well at school; I competed at sports and games (because of my gangly height, long jump and high jump were my specialties) and had a few extra-curricular interests. Apart from reading, I liked to draw and my godfather Charlie Small (RIP) had given me my first camera which I was getting quite attached to—and which led to the first crisis of my youth.

Our sixth-form math teacher at the Grammar School, a brilliant mathematician named Allan Compton, was reviving the photography club and I eventually took on the presidency of the club. By that time I was completely in love with the art of photography, to the detriment of my academic performance. In fact, I entirely lost interest in school, even though in class I had always been one of the top three performers when results were tallied, along with my best friends Perry Norris (RIP) and Hartley Phillips.

Eventually, I got back on an academic track and started thinking about going to university. All mothers worry about

Mr. Herbert Haz Samuel

their children, but when I was preparing to go off to university at 19, my mother worried specifically about whether I would bother to get out of bed to go to classes. She had good reason. I was intellectually curious, but lazy, unfocused and easily distracted. I really had no fixed idea what I wanted to be, or do. A short list of the things I wanted to be when I grew up includes: artist, photographer, jazz musician, architect. I eventually decided I did not wish to be a starving artist, and there was no money to send me off to a university outside of the region to study architecture. When an engineering scholarship was found to be available, I applied for it.

I went off to the University of The West Indies, from where I graduated in 1982 with an upper 2nd bachelor's degree in industrial engineering, along with 13 other students from what was the first cohort of the new programme. My university days seem, from this distance, not to have been particularly special. I generally did my work, but my focus on the engineering program was nominal. In any event, I had no epiphany at university and came out the other end much as I had entered, with no clear sense of what I wanted to do with the rest of my life.

My brother Malcolm, on the other hand, always knew from an insanely early age that he wanted to be a surgeon. Not just a doctor, but a surgeon. Today, he is a successful transplant surgeon in Trinidad & Tobago. I recently compared notes with a Jamaican colleague, David Mullings, who described how at age fifteen he drafted a plan for his entire life, setting out when he would go to college, what college he would attend, what course he would pursue, when he would get married, how many children he would have, and so on. He is in his forties now, a successful US-based entrepreneur with a plan that seems to be working out.

In an increasingly complex world, curiosity is just as important as intelligence and facilitates the creation of "simple solutions for complex problems".

It's no surprise to me that they are both successful in their careers, but I never had that laser-like focus and when I graduated, I still had a distracting curiosity about all sorts of things. (Which anyway seems a good thing, according to an August 2014 article in the *Harvard Business Review*, which suggests that in an increasingly complex world, curiosity is just as important as intelligence and facilitates the creation of "simple solutions for complex problems".)

On graduation in 1982, I entered the workforce at 22 as the country's first Energy Officer—an energy planner in the Ministry of Finance and Planning in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. That position, under the leadership of then Director of Planning, Karl John, was instrumental in shaping my interest in sustainability issues and has undoubtedly helped to lead me to where I am today, as someone keenly interested in the energy future of our region and planet.

In between then and now, I worked, on two separate occasions (first as a planning engineer and then as a project manager) for the local utility company St. Vincent Electricity Services Ltd (VINLEC); for Consulting Engineers Partnership (CEP) Ltd as a project engineer working on projects in St. Vincent and Montserrat and for the Caribbean Electric Utility Services Corporation (CARILEC) as a projects coordinator.

Within that time, as the 20th century was drawing to a close, I stumbled into entrepreneurship. I was living in Saint Lucia at the time and I was a dedicated fan of the excellent jazz festival which had been run by the Saint Lucia Tourist Board since 1992, and which took place on the island in May each year. Early in 1997, in anticipation of that year's event, I was browsing the then-relatively-new thing called the internet (Google hadn't even been born yet; that would happen a year later) and I was trying to find information on the dates

of the festival, who was performing, and so on. The festival in those days had one main sponsor—Cable and Wireless, the ubiquitous Caribbean telecoms monopoly that also provided dial-up internet access. Logically, I therefore went to the main sponsor's web page to find the relevant information.

After I got over the disappointment of finding nothing there, I decided that I would publish some information online, for others like me who wanted it. So I called up the tourist board, who gave me printed copies of whatever information they had, and I got started. Soon afterwards, it occurred to me that what I should be doing was not just publishing a list of information: I should build a full-fledged website, with pages for the festival schedule, performers' bios, accommodations and local attractions. So I registered the domain name stluciajazz.com and in my spare time designed and built a website, comprised of seven pages, including the home page, which was designed based on the festival's poster for that year.

When I launched the site, one month before the 1997 festival, I was elated. Finally, jazz enthusiasts like me could simply go online and find the information they needed! I eagerly kept the site up to date with new information as it came in, and the following year I did it again, building a customised version of the site based on the 1998 poster—essentially, a brand new website.

And so, as I had turned forty and the new century had dawned, my life as an entrepreneur was born. I learned then that entrepreneurship was able to be defined as a simple, three-step process.

At some point, I realised just how big a thing it was that I had started. My website, started as a hobby, was the first jazz festival website in the region, and it was certainly one of the first jazz festival websites in the world (for example, the Montreal and Montreux jazz festivals, the largest and second-largest in the world, appear to have both launched their first websites in 1998). With that in mind, I approached the tourist board to see if they would be interested in buying the site as a sponsor. They weren't.

I was amazed. The engineering-inclined part of my brain told me: *Build it and they will come!* and I didn't yet realise the error of that thinking: selling things successfully is often about the selling, not about the thing itself. (Of course, in hindsight I also realise that my selling skills were not as well-developed as they should be—and that remains the case). But I carried on nonetheless, because by then two critical things had happened: one was that the website was highly valued by a growing number of anonymous jazz fans from all over the world, who relied on it for timely information each year on something they were passionate about. And two: I loved it. I *completely* enjoyed creating this thing each year that was new and useful—even if just to a few people.

Eventually, the tourist board and I came to an agreement, which allowed me to recover some of the time and cost I had invested, which persuaded me to continue to develop my web development skills. By 2001 I had left my nine-to-five employment and set up shop as a full-time web developer, building websites for corporate clients in the Caribbean. And so, as I had turned forty and the new century had dawned, my life as an entrepreneur was born.

I learned then that entrepreneurship was able to be defined as a simple, three-step process. First, identify a problem or pain-point that affects a (preferably large) number of people; then, find a solution that solves the problem and finally, deliver that solution to the market.

But successful entrepreneurship means being able to scale, particularly at the end of the process. The solution must be delivered to a large enough number of customers so that an actual, growing company can result. By 2003 I was facing a crossroads. It was clear that I was ahead of the curve in the region: I had a handful of good, large corporate clients, but there were not enough of

them. Not enough large businesses were interested in having websites (the same dynamic is playing out now, where they all have basic websites but not enough have effective social media assets). For example, because of my work at CARILEC (whose website I inaugurated as an employee), I thought that the electricity companies in the region would be natural candidates for the service I was offering. The utilities themselves, with one or two notable exceptions, did not share this view.

In 2001, I registered the domain Welectricity.com. At the time oil prices, which had been flat and averaging less than $20 a barrel for the previous 14 years, had started to rise again. My idea at the time was to set up a website that would be a forum for providing information to electricity consumers across the Caribbean, and I had planned to start with information and explanations on the controversial issue of the fuel surcharges that are added onto electricity bills in most Caribbean countries—a vexed issue that was not being properly explained by the utilities themselves.

That idea was shelved even before it took off—an outcome which highlights the other lesson that I have learned about entrepreneurship: being an entrepreneur, particularly when you are innovating, is not a linear process. It does not look anything like a straight line; it more closely resembles a ball of string fallen on the floor!

During this period, the opportunity arose for me to return to my engineering and project management roots for a few years. VINLEC, my old employer, was planning to build a new flagship power station and they were looking for a project manager. I had maintained good relations with the then General Manager Joel Huggins and he had me on his shortlist for the assignment. I was actually number three on the list: Joel wanted me back at VINLEC but he had something slightly different in mind for me, which would have required me to go back to the company as an employee—which I wasn't interested in doing. As it turned out, the top two candidates for the project management assignment were both unavailable when the time came, and I got the job by default.

Clients were not beating a path to my door for advice on reducing their energy costs; the recession had taken care of that. Money was scarce and choices had to be made.

The project was brought in a year behind schedule and exactly on budget—and at the middle of 2007, I was ready for my next move, which was to return to self-employment, this time as a consultant in energy sustainability. Oil prices had more than doubled over the previous three years and the region and its people were feeling the pressure inflicted by energy prices that seemed to have no upper limit.

I didn't know it at the time, but I had stepped back into self-employment just as the final sequence of events that triggered the global financial crisis of 2007 was unfolding and the world's economy was unwinding into a severe and prolonged recession. As this played out, the price of oil continued to rise, peaked at just under $150 a barrel in July 2008, then dramatically collapsed as the global economy melted into recession.

Clients were not beating a path to my door for advice on reducing their energy costs; the recession had taken care of that. Money was scarce and choices had to be made, and in December 2008, when the registration of Welectricity.com came due for renewal, I didn't have the spare US$35 necessary to renew it. I hadn't used it for years anyway, so I let it lapse and the domain name went back onto the market.

But some work did come in, and my time spent advising government policymakers on energy sustainability issues was focusing my attention on energy efficiency as the quickest, cheapest, and cleanest way to build a sustainable energy future for the region. I had also identified a specific problem, which is that in the Caribbean, households account for a large share (in some cases more than half) of national electricity consumption—

and a significant part of the electricity consumed in some households is simply wasted, due to behavioural factors.

Traditionally, the approach to tackling this problem would be to mobilise what in recent times has come to be referred to as "public awareness and sensitisation" campaigns, to inform consumers how to change their behaviours. But my research suggested that such campaigns were missing two fundamental factors necessary to provide the motivation that consumers need to change their behaviours. One of these factors is related to the power of social proof, which is the ability to compare one's self to similar others.

My understanding of this particular behavioural factor was based on the work of psychologist and best-selling author Dr. Robert B Cialdini, PhD, who was at the time researching ways to influence consumers to reduce their household energy consumption. In a ground-breaking 2004 experiment, he demonstrated that consumers were highly motivated by information about what their neighbours were doing, and not by financial, economic or other factors that were previously assumed to be important.

This finding turned out to be a significant column of the intellectual underpinnings of Welectricity—the social network for energy efficiency, the idea for which was born late one night in March 2009.

As I was shutting down my computer, the lightbulb moment came: I should build a social network that would allow users to directly track and compare their electricity consumption at home!

My best friend Dr. Andrew Richardson was building a new house in Saint Lucia; he planned to install a solar photovoltaic system and I was analysing his electricity bills to estimate the size of the system he would need. In compiling his information, I noticed something peculiar: his electricity consumption was four times as high as mine, even though his household was only twice the size of mine and we lived in similar housing situations. I graphed his bill information and superimposed it on a graph of my own household's consumption (which of course, I had handy) and emailed it to him with a few comments. But I wondered about the numbers: why should they be using so much electricity? And what could be done about it?

As I was shutting down my computer, the lightbulb moment came: I should build a social network that would allow users to directly track and compare their electricity consumption at home! It would be linked to Facebook and would provide the information, feedback, goal-setting tools and opportunity for social proof that were critical, according to the theory, to provide the motivation to reduce their consumption. It would be useful to households anywhere in the region and in the world, because all they would need to use it would be the things they already had—a computer, an internet connection, electricity bills.

I didn't get much sleep that night. And in the light of the next day, it suddenly dawned on me: this was exactly what Welectricity.com was meant for! The domain name that I had registered eight years prior but had given up, was perfect for this new idea. Thankfully, my panic was short-lived. The domain name was still available, as I had left it months earlier, and I bought it for the second time.

So at that point, I had identified a problem and I had an approach to a solution, which recognised that the challenge of delivering household energy efficiency was as much a behavioural economics issue as it was an energy technology issue. In other words, throwing more technology at the problem would not provide the

optimal solution. My particular insight was that the approach could be enhanced by the use of modern internet and communications technology, to fashion a quintessentially 21st century solution.

The interesting thing about all of this, is that the fundamental insight that energy consumption has a significant behavioural aspect, goes all the way back to the 19th Century, to the work of British economist W Stanley Jevons. In his 1866 book The Coal Question Jevons noted the enormous increase in coal consumption that followed the introduction of James Watt's steam engine to England. Watt's engine converted coal to useful work with far greater efficiency than its predecessor and the conventional wisdom had therefore predicted that its introduction would cause England's coal consumption to decline. In fact, the opposite happened, causing Jevons to observe that it is wholly a confusion of ideas to suppose that the more economical use of fuel is equivalent to a diminished consumption. The very contrary is the truth.

The launch of Welectricity in 2010 and the aim to build a worldwide business around it represented a confirmation of a consistent theme in my life.

Today, Jevons' observation is encapsulated in the theory of the rebound effect, which says that as the cost of consuming energy decreases due to improved technical energy efficiency of our devices, our propensity to consume energy increases. The theory suggests that it is our behavioural response to the effects of technology that ultimately helps to shape our consumption outcomes.

By early 2010, with grant funding from GVEP International and the German government's GiZ programme, I had developed the Welectricity app, a social web-based application that packages the relevant behavioural factors into a framework that would engage and motivate consumers to use less electricity at home. At its launch on Earth Day 2010, Welectricity was one of the first customised social networks allowing users to track, compare and compete to reduce their electricity consumption at home, without the need for any additional smart meters or in-home devices.

The launch of Welectricity in 2010 and the aim to build a worldwide business around it represented a confirmation of a consistent theme in my life. I was a few months shy of fifty years old, and I was essentially reinventing myself and heading into the unknown - again. Many of life's significant events—marriage, children, a

career choice, etc.—came late to me. I had my first child, Miles, when I was 44 years old and I met my wife Sherydon in 2007 and we married two years later, a few months before I turned forty-nine. So I suppose that logically, though I was born just past the mid-20th century, I should consider myself a 21st century entrepreneur. But, I would point out, one with a 19th-century muse.

In recent years, many people have suggested that I should enter active politics. "Why don't you run for prime minister?" is a question I am asked surprisingly often. That won't happen, for two reasons. The first is I have no interest in active politics. I have never even bothered to join a political party and I vote sparingly, based mostly on the policy issues. But the more important, and personal reason is that I don't have the necessary "people skills". I understand John Donne's edict that *No man is an island / Entire of itself / Every man is a piece of the continent / A part of the main*, but empathy is not one of my core personality traits.

That deficiency changed for the better after I met my wife Sherydon. In our Caribbean culture we half-jokingly refer to wives as the 'better halves' of a couple, but in this case it is no exaggeration to say that Sherie has helped to make me a better person. Now, which was entirely her idea, we are preparing to embark on a formal process of giving back—and are in the planning stages of forming a philanthropic foundation that will focus on helping at-risk children and will provide assistance to the hungry, the homeless, the destitute, the mentally ill and the elderly.

Perhaps this parallel venture into social entrepreneurship will be a new and fulfilling branch of the entrepreneurial fork in the road that I took, a decade and a half ago. As with the previous journey, I hope and plan to approach it with an open mind and an appreciation for Hemingway's advice that it is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end.

Perhaps this parallel venture into social entrepreneurship will be a new and fulfilling branch of the entrepreneurial fork in the road that I took, a decade and a half ago.

Prof. Patrick Hosein

Trinidad & Tobago
Science & Technology (Joint), 2015

Life began on Knowles Street in Curepe. I was born to Amizool and Merle Hosein, an accountant and housewife respectively.

At birth I already had three older sisters, Jennifer, Margaret and Deborah, so naturally I was well taken care of, at least until the next new baby of the family came along, my brother Anthony. I was fortunate to be living close to one of the best primary schools of the day, the Curepe Presbyterian School, which I attended. My primary school days were uneventful but on reaching Standard Five I turned out to be one of the top students, a distinction which I shared with my friend Patricia Rampersad. My Common Entrance teacher, Steve Oudit, was one of the best but was also very stern and made use of his whip, even with me. I think that he was stern with me because, although I did well, he believed that I could do even better. In other words, that I should try to continuously improve my performance no matter how good I am or think I am. I have followed this philosophy over the years and to this day will always set objectives in life and measure my progress towards them. While I was still attending Curepe Presbyterian School we moved to Champs Fleurs briefly.

We moved to Crescent Gardens just around the time that I passed my Common Entrance examination for my first choice, St. Mary's College (CIC). In those days CIC was well known for its scholarship winners and the reputation of its teachers, many of whom were priests. Although I was a good student I was not considered "scholarship material" even when I reached Upper Six. However, I discovered that I loved mathematics and that I was actually good at it. I was also fortunate to have two of the best Advanced Level teachers, Fr. Valdez for Physics and Fr. Arthur Lai Fook for Pure Mathematics and Applied Mathematics. I do recall one time being given a problem to be solved in class by Fr Lai Fook. I came up with the solution but used a different approach than his. In characteristic fashion he had a look at my solution and was about to discredit it when he realised it was in fact correct at which point I witnessed a brief smile.

My high school days in the seventies were interspersed with many house parties where one was able to actually receive home cooked food and unlimited beers. During this period I got interested in music and electronics. This was, in part, due to my neighbour who repaired electronic equipment and whose daughter, Susanne Callender, was my first girlfriend.

My parents encouraged my interest in electronics and even bought me a Heath Kit for an audio amplifier. Several decades later my parents brought it to my home in San Diego, still in working condition, where I kept it until a few

Prof. Patrick Hosein

years ago. As a teenager my father one day took me to a lumberyard where I picked out wood to construct my very first speaker enclosure. At the time they did not know how much these gestures would influence my future.

My hard work at CIC paid off and I won the Mathematics Scholarship in 1978. However, not expecting a scholarship, I had not applied to any foreign universities. I also received a scholarship from T&TEC to pursue a BSc. degree in Electrical Engineering at UWI. Part of the evaluation for the T&TEC scholarship was an essay on future electrical engineering technologies and mine was written on solar energy. Interestingly I am presently working on a smart grid project (which includes solar energy) with some colleagues in the Electrical and Computer Engineering department as well as with T&TEC.

I decided to take a year off during which I applied to two US Universities, Caltech and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). During this one-year period I taught at St. Joseph's College but this was only after the Principal (Fr Tam) learned I had been working in a factory repairing tools. It was while teaching at St. Joseph's College that I met the woman, Deborah Vincent, who would eventually become my wife. I got accepted to MIT but, at the time, did not even know of its reputation.

University Years

When I arrived at MIT I was at first intimidated once I learned of its reputation and the caliber of the students who attended. In particular, many students had already started using computers while my only exposure to such technology was an electronic calculator. Fortunately my high school education in mathematics and physics proved to be better than what my fellow students had undergone and I excelled in these areas.

As a teenager I was interested in acoustics so naturally I took a class on Acoustics taught by Professor Amar Bose whose company, Bose Corporation, is well known.

After my first year I had to choose my degree, and picked Electrical Engineering. This was a four-year degree and I was on track to complete it in three years. Since I had a four-year scholarship I instead took additional courses in Mathematics and was able to simultaneously also obtain a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics. During my undergraduate days at MIT I was fortunate to work with many outstanding faculty since I spent my summers doing research. In my final year I decided to apply to graduate school and, although MIT tries to discourage their undergraduates remaining at MIT for graduate school, I was accepted to do my PhD. This was quite surprising since my grades were not outstanding but what helped tremendously was the research work I did as an undergraduate as well as my BSc thesis that was supervised by Professor Kenneth Stevens.

As a teenager I was interested in acoustics so naturally I took a class on Acoustics taught by Professor Amar Bose whose company, Bose Corporation, is well known. I did exceptionally well in his course and was chosen to be his teaching assistant while in graduate school. I remember well when it was time to prepare examinations for the course he and I would sit together and he would throw out possible questions to me and ask me how difficult I thought it would be for the students.

For my graduate research I wanted to do something mathematical and ended up in the area of network optimisation. I did my MSc thesis under the supervision of Professor Dimitri Bertsekas. I benefited tremendously from his guidance and approach to solving mathematical problems. The MSc was a prerequisite for doing a PhD, but another option (instead of a PhD) was an Engineer's degree that was more advanced than an MSc degree but was geared for those who wanted to do research in industry. I was also able to satisfy the requirements for this degree.

While doing my MSc my girlfriend, whom I met while teaching at St. Joseph's College, started attending University in the Boston area. We soon got married and had our son, Nicholas, just when I had started my PhD. By this time she was already working as a nurse but between she and I we did a great job of raising our son. Three years later, just after completing my PhD, our daughter Patricia was born.

This was the early 90s when few people (even faculty members) knew about the Internet and its potential.

For the PhD in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, in addition to completing an MSc, I also needed to take a written examination, which covered all areas of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, and an oral examination in which three Professors grilled you on essentially anything. The latter examination is extremely daunting since the questions are meant to determine your ability to be innovative and to quickly comprehend intricate problems and provide solutions or insights into possible solutions. I passed these examinations and was allowed to continue on to my PhD. The next difficult step was finding a thesis topic. I ended up working for Professor Michael Athans who was known internationally for his work in Control Theory. Three years later I completed my PhD and so left MIT with five degrees.

Work, Research, UWI

After graduation I was accepted for a research position at Bell Laboratories, considered one of the best research laboratories. Unfortunately it meant working in New Jersey and driving to Cambridge on weekends to spend time with my family. However my family eventually joined me in New Jersey. While at Bell Labs I was granted my first patent (this would be followed by another 37 over the years). I was only allowed to work at Bell Labs for eighteen months because my scholarship required that I return home after this period.

I returned to Trinidad and applied for, and was accepted for, a lecturer position in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at UWI. I immediately tried to continue the research I had started at Bell Laboratories (which was on fault tolerant network routing). However, I soon discovered that the lack of Internet access limited my ability to learn of the latest advances in the area and to communicate with my colleagues at Bell Laboratories. I therefore set about to obtain Internet access for the University.

This was the early 90s when few people (even faculty members) knew about the Internet and its potential. As a board member of NIHERST I learned of a project that allowed NIHERST staff to send and receive email but not in real time. I convinced my department head, Professor Kenneth Julien, to allow me to use the department's FAX line on evenings to form a dial-up connection with a University in Puerto Rico. This university was connected to the Internet and so I interconnected the Campus Local Area Network to the Internet via this low-speed dial-up connection. This allowed students in the Computer Center to access the Internet for the first time. Although painfully slow, this exposure to the Internet was greatly appreciated by the students.

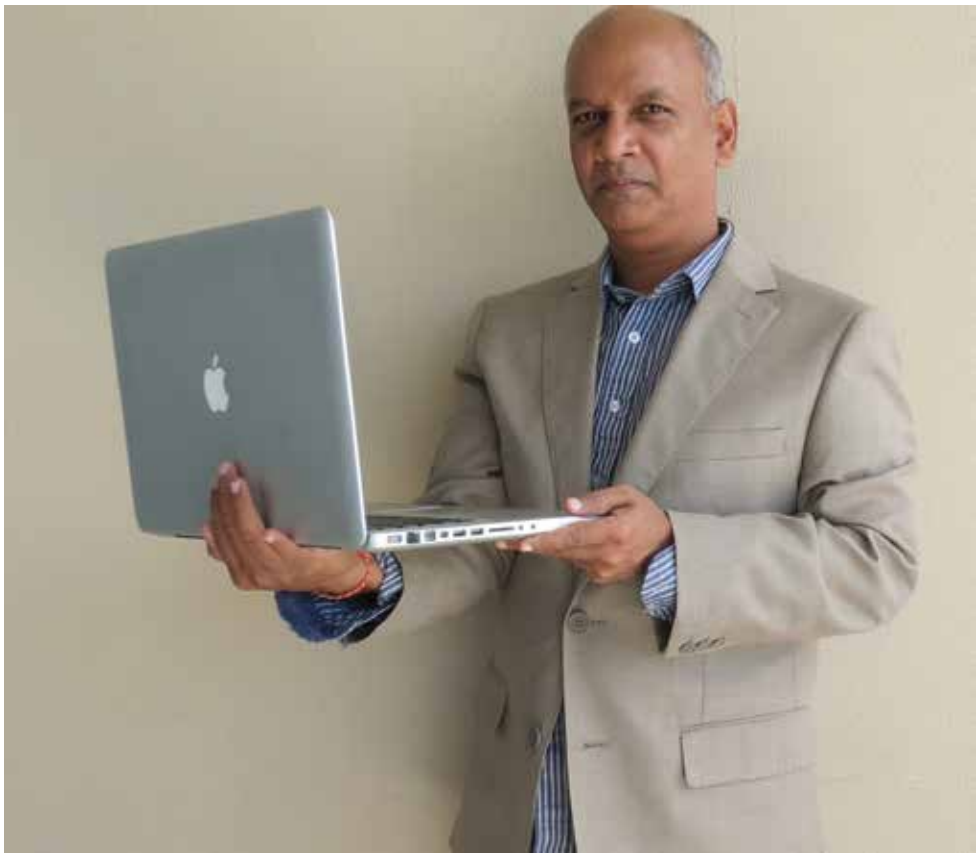
When the local telephone company, TSTT, decided that it was time to provide Internet access for the country Simon Fraser, who was then at IBM, asked if I would be willing to provide the necessary software if IBM provided the hardware. This software would manage the banks of modems required as well as the registration, management and billing functions. With the help of another Faculty member and three students we made our presentation to TSTT and, although the competing companies imported foreign expertise

for their presentation, we won the bid. Because of my involvement with the Internet I was asked to become the administrative and technical contact for the .tt country code top-level domain. I continue to perform these duties to this day as CEO of the Trinidad and Tobago Network Information Centre.

In addition to Internet access I felt that there was a need, or that there soon would be a need, for local expertise in telecommunications, data networking and Internet technologies. I therefore proposed and developed courses for and introduced a new MSc in Communication Systems for the department. This programme is still offered by the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering with many of the original courses.

The US & the Cell Phone Revolution

Although I enjoyed my time at UWI I missed doing leading-edge research and so, once my contractual obligations were fulfilled, we decided to move back to the United States where my previous supervisor at Bell Laboratories offered me a research position. I continued research in Telecommunication Networks (overload and congestion controls) and later in the area of performance analysis of Internet services. However the cold New Jersey winters were too much for us and I wanted to move into the rapidly emerging field of cellular communications. My family decided they would prefer to live in California and so I applied and received an offer for a research position at Ericsson Communications in San Diego.



In addition to Internet access I felt that there was a need, or that there soon would be a need, for local expertise in telecommunications, data networking and Internet technologies.

San Diego, California, USA

My job at Ericsson was in a relatively new area for me, namely cellular communications, and so I had to spend some time getting up to speed (although I already knew the basics). However I was soon contributing in research, standards and product development and also, once again, generating patents. I was able to use my expertise in Optimisation (from my MIT days) and my knowledge of controls (from Bell Labs) to come up with novel algorithms for resource management in wireless networks. A notable achievement was my nomination for the Ericsson Inventor of the Year award in 2004. Ericsson decided to close their San Diego office and, although I was offered positions at other locations, we decided to stay in San Diego and I joined another cellular company called Huawei Technologies.

My work at Huawei, which is a Chinese company, was similar to what I had done at Ericsson but the culture was different. I continued working on the latest cellular technologies and also generating patents. As with Ericsson, I worked mostly from home since this allowed me to better focus on ideas. A notable achievement at Huawei is the USA Wireless Research employee of the Year award for 2007. Eventually Huawei also decided to close their San Diego office and I was again offered positions elsewhere but I decided to stay in San Diego and re-join AT&T through their Los Angeles office. However after a year I decided that I wanted a change and felt that Trinidad and Tobago was now ready to make great strides in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and that I could contribute to that transformation as I had done in my earlier years there.

Home Again

I decided to move back to the UWI and had offers from the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering as well as the Department of Computing and Information Technology. I decided to try something different and accepted the latter offer. I am presently a Professor of Computer Science in that department. When I started, the department head asked me to revamp the MSc degree in Computer Science. I therefore designed new courses for a new MSc degree in Computer Science and Technology with specialisations in Cloud Technologies and Mobile Computing. I continue to work in wireless technologies as well as in ICT for agriculture, Open Data and Smart Grid technologies.

So what does the future hold? One area in which we lack local expertise is Operations Research (the application of optimisation and advanced analytical methods to improve decision making). Since this is one of my main areas of interest I am hoping to start an MSc degree in Operations Research. Based on my history of changing jobs roughly every five years I have no idea where my future interests will take me but I do hope that I can continue to use my background in Computer Science, Electrical Engineering and Mathematics for the benefit of society.

One area in which we lack local expertise is Operations Research (the application of optimisation and advanced analytical methods to improve decision making). Since this is one of my main areas of interest I am hoping to start an MSc degree in Operations Research.

Prof. Suresh Narine

Guyana
Science & Technology (Joint), 2015

Science, for the fun of it...

I am an unlikely academic. I grew up in the small rural village of Herstelling, nestled on the East Bank of the Demerara River, the youngest of four siblings and the only male.

I suppose growing up in a very traditional Hindu family accustomed to my well-behaved and accomplished sisters, I have always been a source of cautious consternation to my parents. Yet somehow my family managed to, if sometimes reluctantly, endure and even encourage my inquisitive, often rebellious nature. Having had such a nice placid run of things with my sisters, I imagine my parents coped with my behaviour by consoling themselves that they had had a more than fair share of fortune with three of their four children.

Despite their misgivings, I have always been webbed in a cocoon of love and caring which I think was responsible for the confidence I developed at a very young age, for despite my frequent falls from grace, my excommunications from the family's bosom have never lasted for more than a few days. Writing an autobiographical piece is always difficult, but I suppose for a life which has turned out to be a lifelong love affair with science, confidence is as good a place to start as any. I suppose confidence at its source stems from the conviction that one is loved, often despite oneself. And coming from the family I did, I believe this was the single most important pivot for a career in science and technology research; for their uncompromised love set the stage for a career which, almost by definition, would witness many more failures than successes.

Herstelling in the 1970's and 1980's was an impoverished community. For us village youth, there was little that seemed hopeful; I grew up in a period which saw the traditional heroes of village life—the teachers and the educated, the clergy—replaced by the growing number of, mainly men that were involved in an increasingly criminalised state in Guyana. The country was locked in the grip of a dictatorship and even the most basic things in life were absent - toilet paper, wheat flour, split peas.

As a criminalised economy emerged, the smugglers that were a source of this contraband became confused with modern day Robin Hoods. I watched as many of my school mates joined the parallel economy, the less fortunate of them resorting to a life of petty crime, or to selling contraband cigarettes by the singles at street corners. Education, it seemed, was the choice of people who earned a pittance, who were "rubes", to paraphrase one of my favorite Canadian authors, Robertson Davies. I needed that family-inspired confidence

pay for my education, rather than continuing her own at that time. It is a sacrifice for which I am to this day grateful, and I think that at many stages throughout my career, when quitting seemed to be a welcome respite from multiple challenges, her selfless sacrifice born out of love and familial duty kept me in the straight and narrow.

For me, then, the beginning of the journey towards a career in science and technology was nucleated in the latitude I enjoyed to question authority and prevailing norms, and the absolute conviction that those whose approbation and love I most valued would be constant in their support.

The beginning of the journey towards a career in science and technology was nucleated in the latitude I enjoyed to question authority and prevailing norms.

to stay in school, when, much to the surprise of both my family and village, I placed among the top students in the country at the primary school-leaving examinations (common entrance). The approbation of a village played its part also—I remember with exquisite clarity, the reception that myself and my friend, Nasir Jabar, enjoyed in Herstelling simply because we had secured places at the famous high school, Queen's College. Suddenly, there was not a single cake and soda parlour in Herstelling where we were required to pay. I am afraid the incidence of jaundice which followed this notoriety indicated that both me and Nasir were not shy to bask in the celebratory status that our accomplishment secured. I also remember, with a great degree of sadness, that when I chose to take my place at Queen's, my youngest sister chose to join the workforce, to help

Mentors, also, played a pivotal role. As a precocious child, I was easily bored, and learnt to read by the time I was three or four, because I was immersed in a family whose pastime was reading. I can't say I remember efforts to learn to read—it just seemed natural that the first time I read George Orwell's Animal Farm was when I was around five, as a fairy tale. There was a gentleman who everyone called Teacher Katchey in Herstelling; at the time he seemed to me like the most charming, debonair person ever. He was always neatly dressed, always had an umbrella, and always greeted the adults around me with such sobriquets as "Young Bowdnarine"…which had a remarkably enchanting effect on me—imagine, my larger than life dad being called "Young Bowdnarine!" I still remember how proud I was when Teacher Katchey learnt I could read, and insisted on telling "Young Bowdnarine" that he had spawned a child prodigy!

So Teacher Katchey become one of the first of a long list of mentors who gave their time freely to help along an unruly youngster within whom they must have seen some potential. There was teacher Sankar, who took me along to primary school, long before I was of age to even attend kindergarten! He got into trouble with the authorities for that, and I remember how devastated I was to no longer sit in the first standard with students who were eight, and having to go back to kindergarten to sit with students who wanted to play with toys.

Herstelling could be a violent place, too, though, and the growing criminality in the country sometimes collided with my heroes. I remember Teacher Sankar being quite badly beaten in the village. My common entrance teacher, Mr. Herman Sanichar, a popular young teacher, was also violently murdered in his own home. I realise now that these incidents had a deep effect on me, and have played a significant role in my commitment to community development, the promotion of positive role models to our youth, and the importance of developing economic growth models for exploitation of science and technology, which filters down to our small communities.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my work at the Institute of Applied

Science and Technology has been witnessing the impact our work has had on the economic well-being of small communities.

Attending Queen's College was very transformative for me—coming from our close-knit village, my first sense of class stratification in Guyanese society was when I encountered it at Queen's. This was where the elite of Guyanese society went to school, but also where all the kids who had done well at the "common entrance" examinations, across the length and breadth of Guyana, ended up.

I was painfully aware of my rural ways and speech, and I travelled to school using public transportation, whilst many of my peers had chauffeur-driven cars to take them to school.

I was painfully aware of my rural ways and speech, and I travelled to school using public transportation, whilst many of my peers had chauffeur-driven cars to take them to school. But while we didn't walk in the same circles, and our parents didn't belong to the same clubs, the teachers at Queen's College helped to propagate a culture at the school which was firmly egalitarian, and the friendships that sprang up across class and race lines have remained over the many years since.

At Queen's, you were recognised if you excelled at something, and academics were not the highest on the list—it didn't matter who your parents were or how highly placed in society your family was. We valued more than

Prof. Suresh Narine

anything else our athletes. It was at Queen's that I learnt the value of being rounded, and whilst I was never an athlete, I represented my house in table tennis and cricket, and was a devoted member of the Scouts. Indeed, I went on to become the Captain of Moulder House, and also represented that house at debating and elocution competitions.

I cannot say I excelled academically—quite the contrary, I regularly placed around 40th and 42nd in our class of 45 to 46 students. I think I learnt how to be a leader at Queen's - as House Captain, as President of the Hindu Society and a member of the Prefect's Council in the upper sixth form. I also became very politically involved, as a member of the GUARD movement—Guyanese Action for Reform and Democracy. I ended up speaking on the GUARD platform as a high school student, and started to spend a lot of my time in participating in and organising student protests. A growing awareness of the relationship of politics to the plights of unemployment, increasing criminality, racism and the devaluation of the role that educated people played in my little village began to emerge. And with it, my commitment to my community became even more deep seated.

When the Ordinary Levels examinations rolled around, I somehow did spectacularly well; it was as much a surprise to me as it were to my long-suffering teachers, including the phlegmatic Mrs. Ayer, who had calmly warned me "You are always absent, always late, always playing, always doing something other than your work—you can't learn anything." I remember being particularly pleased that I had scored a double distinction in English Language and Literature—recognised at Queen's with the Ivy Loncke prize, particularly because five years earlier I had entered the school being very conscious of my country-boy slang.

After a particularly rebellious year or two, during which I experimented heavily with drugs and alcohol, I finally settled down at Trent University to pursue an undergraduate degree.

It was at this time that I felt I would pursue a career in law. I was developing into a good writer, had acted in a number of plays at the National Cultural Centre, and was a good debater and public speaker. My early passion for reading had grown and I found myself more attracted to the arts, history and politics than to science. Yet, I really enjoyed physics, chemistry and mathematics. So, I sat for these subjects at A Levels and did very well, also.

Increasingly dissatisfied with the state of Guyana and the lack of opportunities for young people, I began noticing with increasing resentment the devastating effect politics had on my village and the rest of the country. I started working at the Barclay's Bank, got engaged to be married, and resigned myself to a career in banking, which I found to be dreadfully boring. Although I was offered a scholarship as a Guyana Scholar, I had become so dis-enamored with Guyana that I refused to take it up and migrated instead.

After a particularly rebellious year or two, during which I experimented heavily with drugs and alcohol, I finally settled down at Trent University to pursue an undergraduate degree. Still in love with the arts, I settled down to an ambitious first year of taking both science and arts courses. I was, like most international students, entirely broke, and so whilst taking seven courses, I also held down various menial jobs. Cocooned in the bosom of a doting family for most of my life, I had not even learnt to use a washing machine. I still remember throwing in my white and colored clothes into the laundromat's machine, together with a bar of Life Buoy soap (my ma had insisted on sending a carton of them up with me, figuring that the soaps in Canada would somehow alter her "one son"). Of course, the clothes all came out a charming shade of pink, with a thin coating of Life Buoy over everything.

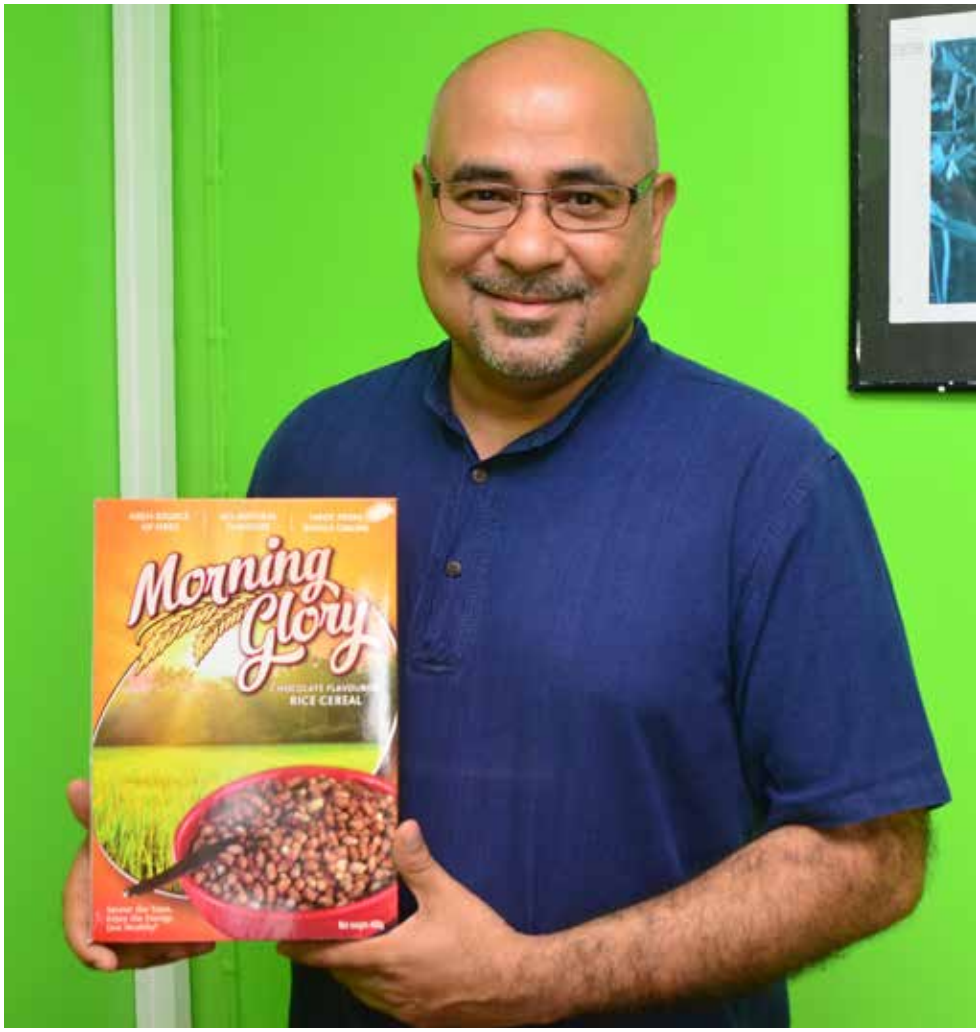
At Trent, I became immersed in all aspects of University life—I became

president of student cabinet, indulged my love for philosophy, economics and politics, and thoroughly enjoyed being at University. I met Professor Alan Slavin, who was to become a lifelong mentor to me. Al is one of those extremely rare mesmerising physics teachers—in his class, the world of Physics simply sprang to life. In my first undergraduate year, he invited me to work in his research laboratory in the summer, and this experience ended the flirtation with the possibility of a degree in history and politics.

Slavin's experimental condensed physics laboratory opened up a world of fun for me. I remember how sad I always was, growing up, whenever I would finish a good book. The world of discovery as an experimental physicist and chemist was for me like a good book that never ended. So, I pursued a joint degree in Chemistry and Physics, and earned minors in Economics and Philosophy at Trent.

By now, I was on my way to becoming an academic, though it had been a torturous road. I excelled at my classes because I was having fun; and reaped the benefits of this by receiving scholarships for the duration of my undergraduate degree. It seemed natural that I would simply move on to a masters degree in Chemical Physics in Slavin's laboratory, which I did, and received a prestigious Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) of Canada scholarship.

Yet, I had not entirely lost sight of my Herstelling. My mother, armed



I remember how sad I always was, growing up, whenever I would finish a good book. The world of discovery as an experimental physicist and chemist was for me like a good book that never ended.

with more Life Buoy, attended my MSc. Graduation, and seeing how she had aged since I was last at home forcefully reminded me of my origins and my little village on the Demerara. Rather than take up an offer to pursue my PhD in condensed matter physics at Princeton on a full scholarship, I chose instead to pursue a PhD in Food Science and Materials Physics at the University of Guelph, then and now, the premiere Food Science institution in Canada. My reasoning was simple—no one would hire a condensed matter physicist in Guyana, but a degree in Food Science may allow me to find gainful employment in Guyana.

This decision again changed my life—I had convinced my PhD supervisors to let me take a Materials Physics approach to understanding foods, in particular lipids. At the time, this was a somewhat risky step, but the risk was well worth it. I think I co-published 21 publications during this period, in some of the most well respected journals in the world.

Multiple all-expenses paid invitations to speak around the world at academic conferences followed, and by the time I had concluded my PhD, in two-and-a-half years, I was already considered among the top 5 academics in the field of lipids. In fact, I had not even finished my PhD, and was already offered a high paying job as a senior research scientist with the food giant, M&M Mars. Just around this time, my wife and I also learnt that we were having triplets.

So, on to Mars, I went, living in Pennsylvania and working in New Jersey. Indeed, my triplets were born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania—a source of many great conversations. At Mars, I learned that when the world of science is wedded to the world of commerce, amazing things can happen which had pivotal impacts on people's lives. I think I ceased to be a purely fundamental scientist from this time onwards. Mars remains one of my favorite companies, and to this day I still collaborate with them. For here, I learnt how to commercialise research.

Shortly after, I was recruited by the University of Alberta, as the Alberta Value-Added Research Chair. Whilst I thoroughly enjoyed working for M&M Mars, I disliked the vast differences in quality of life between haves and have-nots that I saw in the United States, and I felt that I would not like to live there. So I returned to Canada at the University of Alberta. I suppose to those reading this rambling soliloquy, if you have managed to make it this far, my academic career and accomplishments are well known, or would have been highlighted by the Sabga Award. So I will skip that part, and end with a word on what my work in Guyana has meant to me.

The opportunity I have had to work in Guyana has added meaning to a life spent in the pursuit of fun and science. When I returned, on the invitation of then President Bharrat Jagdeo, to take up the directorship of the Institute of Applied Science and Technology, one of my friends likened my task to the clean-up of the Aegean stables. There was literally no functioning scientific infrastructure, and no trained scientific staff left at the institute.

I learned that to inject science and technology into the agenda of a developing nation, you need to be a good lobbyist. I learnt that you need to win hearts and minds, and that our Caribbean people, not accustomed to a culture of research and innovation in science and technology, could be harsh critics of projects which did not succeed, even if in other places with more mature cultures of harnessing S&T, such attempts would be applauded. I learnt also to savor the looks on the faces of people whose lives have been changed by the commercialisation of S&T innovation, and that appropriate technology was more important than the most advanced technology.

Whilst I have brought many technologies to the marketplace, and have out of this enjoyed a life of success and some fame in Canada, the United States, Europe, Israel and Southeast Asia, I think my re-injection into Herstelling (where I still live when I am in Guyana) and the technologies we have commercialised in Guyana have been of most value to me. I am grateful to the government and people of Guyana for having placed enough trust in me and my staff to allow us to get to the stage where we now are able to make meaningful changes to the lives of young men and women in thousands of little Herstellings across the length and breadth of Guyana. In my own lifetime, I have watched the educated become heroes again in Herstelling.

I learned that to inject science and technology into the agenda of a developing nation, you need to be a good lobbyist. I learnt that you need to win hearts and minds.

The people behind ANSCAFE

Forewords for our ceremony booklets were provided by

2006: Sir Ellis Clarke, TC and Dr. Anthony N. Sabga, ORTT, CMT
2008: Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie—Pro Vice Chancellor for Planning & Development and Director of the Institute of Critical Thinking, UWI, St. Augustine
2010: Professor E Nigel Harris, Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies
2011: Her Excellency, Dame Pearlette Louisy, Governor General of St. Lucia
2012: His Excellency, Professor George Maxwell Richards, TC, CMTT, PhD, President of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago
2013: His Excellency, Donald Ramotar, President of the Republic of Guyana
2014: His Excellency, Sir Frederick Ballantyne, GCMG, MD, DSc, Governor General of St. Vincent and the Grenadines
2015: His Excellency, Sir Patrick Allen ON, GCMG, CD, KStJ

Members of our Regional Eminent Persons Selection Panel

Sir Shridath Ramphal, OE, OCC, GCMG, 2005, Chair 2015
Sir Ellis Clarke, TC, GCB, GCMG (dec) Chair 2005-2008
Mr. Michael K Mansoor, (dec) Chair 2009-2014
Dr. Wahid Ali, TC (dec) 2005-2008
Mr. Justice Christopher Blackman, GCM, 2005-
Professor Compton Bourne, OE, 2009-
Mr. Christopher Bovell, CD, 2005-
Mrs. Judy Y Chang, CA, CPA, CMT, 2005-
Rev Dr. Henry J Charles (dec), 2009-2013
Sister Paul D'Ornellas, PSM (Gold), 2005-
Mr. Justice Rolston Nelson, 2013-
Major General (Retired) Joseph G Singh, MSS, MSc, FCMI, FRGS, RCDS, 2007
Sir K Dwight Venner, CBE, Hon. LLD, SLC, 2005-

Top left: Dr. and Mrs. Minerva Sabga with sons Mr. A Norman Sabga and Mr. David B. Sabga.
Bottom left: Dr. Sabga with Laureate Prof. Surujpal Teelucksingh and Mrs. Teelucksingh.
Top right: Dr. and Mr.s Sabga with some of their grandchildren.
Bottom right: Senator Mrs. Hazel Manning, wife of former Prime Minister Patrick Manning, with Dr. Sabga and Dr. Raymond Ramcharitar.

2015 Chairs: Dr. Charmaine Gardner (OECS), Mrs. Vivian-Anne Gittens (Barbados), Mr. Vincent Pereira (T&T), Mrs. Jacqueline DaCcosta (Jamaica) and Dr. Seeta Shah Roath (Guyana)

Ms. Skye Hernandez,
Research Supervisor

Mrs. Maria Superville-Neilson,
Programme Director

Dr. Raymond Ramcharitar,
Communications Manager

COUNTRY NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Barbados:

Mrs. Vivian Anne Gittens, 2006-, Chair, 2013-2015
Senator Hon. Sir Branford Taitt (dec), 2006-2011, Chair, 2006-2008
Dr. Basil Springer, GCM, 2006-, Chair, 2010-2012
Mr. Peter Boos, 2006-2013
Dr. Marcia Burrowes, 2006-
Senator Dr. Frances Louise Chandler, 2006-2012
Mrs. Roberta Clarke, 2006-2012
Dr. H Adrian Cummins, AC 2013-
Professor Henry Fraser, GCM 2013
Dr. Peter Laurie, GCM, 2006-2010
Mr. Hilford A Murrell, 2013-
Dr. Leonard Nurse, 2006
Sir Leroy Trotman, 2006
Mrs. Jacqueline Wade, 2014-

Guyana:

Dr. Seeta Terry Shah Roath, 2011–, Chair, 2014-2015
Major General (Ret'd) Joseph G Singh, Chair, 2006.
Dr. Marlene Cox 2006-, Chair, 2008-2010
Dr. David Singh Chair, 2006-; Chair 2011-2013
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Mrs. Doreen De Caires 2006-2008
Mr. Alim Hosein 2011-
Mr. Vic Insanally, CCH 2006-2008
Professor Harold Lutchman 2008-2011
Mr. Stanley Lawrence Lachmansingh 2011
Mrs. Gem Madhoo-Nascimento 2006-2008
Laureate Mrs. Annette Arjoon Martins 2010-2011
Dr. Ian McDonald 2006-2008
Mr. Brynmor Pollard SC, CCH, 2006-
Dr. Joshua Ramsammy 2006
Rev Fr Malcolm Rodriguez, 2012-
Dr. Ulric O'D Trotz, 2012-
Ms. Josephine Whitehead, AA 2008-

Jamaica:

Mrs. Jacqueline DaCosta, CD, 2008-, Chair, 2015.
Hon. Dr. Barbara Gloudon, OJ, OD Chair 2006-2014
Dr. Audia Barnett 2008-2010
Professor Edward Baugh 2006-2011
Dr. David Boxer 2006
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Dr. Carlton Davis 2006
Mr. Conrad Douglas 2006
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Mr. Bob Fowler 2006
Mr. Marvin Goodman 2006
Dr. Brian Heap 2008-
Mr. Earl Jarrett 2008-2011
Professor Gerald Lalor, OJ, CD, PhD, 2006-
Sir Alister McIntyre, 2006
Dr. the Hon. Mervyn Morris, OM, 2011-
Miss Petrona Morrison 2011-
Professor Rex Nettleford, 2006
Mrs. Blossom O'Meally-Nelson, 2006
Mr. Douglas Orane, 2006
Mr. Morin Seymour, 2008-
Dr. Glenda Simms, 2008-
Miss Marjorie Whylie, 2010-
Professor Ronald Young, 2006-

The OECS:

Dr. Charmaine Gardner, SLMH, 2006-, Chair 2012-2015
H E Ambassador Charles Maynard (dec) Chair 2006-2011
Mr. Errol Allen 2006-
Dr. Cecil Cyrus 2006
Mr. J Emile Ferdinand 2006-
Professor Gerald Grell, MD, JP, SAH, 2006-
Ms. E Ann Henry, QC, 2013-
Mr. James DeVere Pitt, 2006-2011
Sir Paul Scoon (dec), 2006-2013
Dr. Beverley Steele, CBE, MH, 2006-
Mr. Marius St. Rose, 2006-

Trinidad and Tobago:

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Professor Kenneth Ramchand 2006-2010, 2014, Chair 2006-2008
Mr. Brian Lewis 2006-2011, Chair, 2010-2011
Professor Bridget Brereton, 2008-2014, Chair 2012-2014.
Mr. Justice Melville Baird, 2006
Dr. Pat Bishop (dec), 2006
Mr. Trevor Boopsingh (dec), 2006-2008
Rev Dr. Henry J Charles (dec), 2006
Bro Noble Khan 2006-
Senator Helen Drayton, 2014-
Professor Julian Kenny (dec), 2008-2011
Laureate Professor Dave Chadee, 2013-
Mrs. Diane Chatoor 2010-
Mrs. Diana Mahabir Wyatt 2010-
Mr. Ravindranath Maharaj 2006-2011
Rev Fr Ronald Mendes, CSSp 2012-2013
Mr.Victor Mouttet, 2013-
Miss Annette Rahael, 2006
Mr. Robert Riley, 2011
Professor Brinsley Samaroo, 2013-
Professor Ramsey Saunders, 2006-2013

Programme Directors:

2005-2006: Mr. Francis Lewis
2007-: Mrs. Maria Superville-Neilson

Programme Coordinator:

2006-2008: Ms. Patrice Khan

Communications Managers:

2008–2009 Ms. Lisa Allen-Agostini
2010-: Dr. Raymond Ramcharitar

Research Supervisors:

2006-2008: Mrs. Debbie Daniel
2010-2012: Mr. Nicholas Laughlin
2013: Ms. Katherine Atkinson
2014-2015: Ms. Skye Hernandez

2010 Eminent Persons Panel
Standing: Maj.-Gen. Joseph Singh, Mr. Christopher Bovell, Mr. MIchael Mansoor (Chair), Justice Christopher Blackman, Sir Dwight Venner and Rev. Dr. Henry Charles.
Seated: Sir Shridath Ramphal, Mrs. Judy Chang, Sir Ellis Clarke and Sr. Paul D'Ornellas.

2008 Eminent Persons Panel
Left–right: Maj.-Gen. Joseph Singh, Sir Ellis Clarke (Chair), Mr. Christopher Bovell, Mrs. Judy Chang, Mr. Michael Mansoor, Dr. Wahid Ali, Justice Christopher Blackman and Sr. Paul D'Ornellas.

Researchers:

Barbados:	2006-2010	Mr. John Hunte
	2006	Ms. Valdene Barrow-Searle
	2011	Mr. Robert Edison Sandiford
	2012-2015	Ms. Marita L Greenidge, MBA
Guyana:	2006	Mr. Kim Ramsay-Moore
	2008	Mr. Petamber Persaud
	2010-2011	Mr. Neil Marks
	2012-2015	Ms. Roxana Kawall
Jamaica:	2006	Ms. Brigette Levy
	2008	Mr. John Hunte
	2010	Mrs. Nicole Smythe-Johnson
	2011	Mrs. Jean Wilson
	2012-2015	Mrs. Nicole Smythe-Johnson
The OECS:	2008	Ms. Cassandra Pinard
	2010-2011	Ms. Katherine Atkinson
	2012	Ms. Shearlyn Joseph
	2013	Mrs. Nahdjla Bailey
	2014-2015	Mr. Vladimir Lucien
Trinidad & Tobago:	2008-2010	Miss Radica Mahase
	2011	Miss Sasha Ramcharan
	2012	Mr. Vladimir Lucien
	2013	Dr. Raymond Ramcharitar
	2014-2015	Ms. Erline Andrews

Annual Lectures and other Events

2010

2006 Arts & Letters Laureate, Mr. Robert Yao Ramesar, in conjunction with the University of the West Indies, delivered our First Annual Lecture on Caribbean Film on September 13, 2010, at the LRC, UWI, St. Augustine.

2011

2008 Science & Technology Laureate, Dr. James Husbands of Barbados, in conjunction with the University of the West Indies, delivered our second annual lecture "Renewable Energy, Achievements and Opportunities for the Caribbean" in the Caribbean on February 21, 2011, at the Daaga Auditorium, UWI, St. Augustine. (Lecture available on our YouTube Channel)

2012

2012 Public & Civic Contributions Laureate, Dr. Lennox Honychurch of Dominica delivered our third annual lecture, "All Ah We Was One; Fifty Years Since Federation and the Realities Ahead" on Caribbean Integration, in conjunction with the University of the West Indies, on November 5, 2012, at UWI's LRC. (Lecture available on our YouTube Channel)

2013

2012 Science & Technology Laureate, Prof. Leonard O'Garro of St. Vincent & The Grenadines, delivered our fourth annual lecture on "Declining Food Production in the Caribbean and How to Reverse it", at the Central Bank Auditorium in Port of Spain on November 13, 2013. (Lecture available on our YouTube Channel)

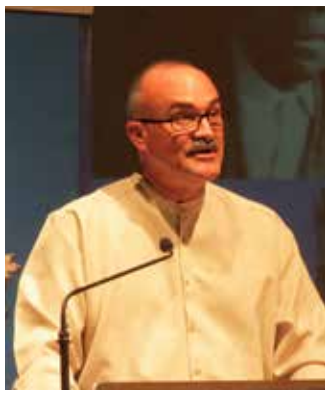
2014

2013 Laureate in Science & Technology (Joint) Prof. Dave Chadee, delivered our fifth annual lecture, "Bugs and Bites, Myths and Mites", on mosquito-borne infectious diseases, in conjunction with the City Corporation of San Fernando, at the San Fernando City Hall on November 19, 2014.

We collaborated with the Bocas Lit Fest in 2012, 2013, and 2014, as our laureates were featured.

Public Lecture 2010
Mr. Robert Yao Ramesar

Public Lecture 2011
Dr. James Husbands



Public Lecture 2012
Dr. Lennox Honychurch

Public Lecture 2014
Prof. Dave Chadee with Senator the Hon. Marlene Coudray (Minister of Local Government)

No one succeeds alone.

THE ANTHONY N. SABGA CARIBBEAN AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

2005 – 2015

"I look forward to the day that the ANSA Caribbean Awards will bring all the peoples of the Caribbean together; that they will foster goodwill; and that they will be an inspiration to all. My most fervent hope is that all our Laureates, those present and those yet to come, will be beacons of Caribbean unity, of entrepreneurship, and that they will be standards of excellence for growth and development in each of our islands. The Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence was given birth in Trinidad and Tobago, but it is a gift to all West Indians."
(Anthony N. Sabga, ORTT, Hon LL.D (UWI))

"In giving back to the society Anthony N. Sabga has sought to influence the nation in positive ways. And his impact has been regional as well as national. Anthony Sabga deserves to be recognised as one of the makers of the modern nation in the twentieth century."
(Prof. Bridget Brereton)

ANSCAFE is the first and only regional, non-governmental programme of its type, and it is a tribute to Anthony Sabga's reputation that it has attracted such distinguished men and women to serve on the Eminent Persons Panel and the Country Committees since 2005, when it began. The chosen Laureates have been widely recognised as icons of excellence in the region.

The Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence (ANSCAFE) were first awarded in 2006. This unique scheme was inspired by Wilfred Naimool, with the late Michael Mansoor working out the all-important details about categories (Arts & Letters, Public & Civic, Science & Technology), selection procedures and criteria.

The ANSCAFE Eminent Persons Panel makes the final selection from nominees sent up by five Country Nominating Committees (Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States and Trinidad & Tobago).

In the ten years that have passed since ANSCAFE's inception, seven ceremonies have been hosted in Port of Spain, and 23 exceptional men and women have been awarded. They range from solar energy entrepreneurs, medical researchers, geneticists, artists, archaeologists, museologists, and children's, environmental, and poverty alleviation activists throughout the region. ANSCAFE also recognised the contribution of the First Peoples and named three members of the Guyanese First People nations as laureates in the persons of Annette Arjoon-Martins in 2008, Sydney Allicock in 2010 and George Simon in 2012.

This book celebrates a decade of ANSCAFE and the achievements of the men and women who worked so diligently in making Anthony N. Sabga's dream come true: to make the Caribbean a better place for all.

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