



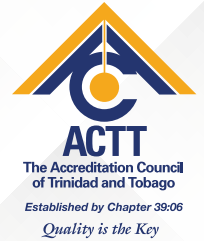
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ACTT NOW

A Publication of The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago

2017: Iss. 1

Who We Are

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) was established by Chapter 39:06 as the principal body in Trinidad and Tobago for conducting and advising on the accreditation and recognition of post secondary and tertiary education training institutions, programmes and awards, whether local and foreign and for the promotion of quality and standards for post secondary and tertiary education and training in Trinidad and Tobago.

What We Do

- » Conferment of Institutional Title
- » Registration of Higher Education Institutions
- » Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes and Institutions
- » Recognition of Foreign Programmes and Awards
- » Equivalence Assessment
- » Programme Approval
- » Institutional Development

From its establishment in 2004 to now, ACTT has firmly upheld and championed the principle of “Quality is Key!” It views quality in higher education and training as having the potential to redound great benefits to all concerned – the institutions, the society and, most importantly, the graduates. Consequently, the Council has consistently advanced and focussed its efforts and actions in developing a “culture of quality” in this country’s higher education and training sector. One initiative that has served this purpose is the QuiTE Awards, which celebrates the efforts and achievements in demonstrating quality in post secondary and tertiary education by ACTT’s stakeholders.

The coveted Excellence in Quality Management Systems was most recently awarded to UWI School of Business and Applied Studies Limited (trading as ROYTEC). Second and third place were awarded to the Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute and CTS College of Business and Computer Science Limited, respectively. The first-place awards for Excellence in Teaching and Learning were won by the University of the Southern Caribbean (in the large category) and Hugh Wooding Law School (in the medium category). CTS College also copped a second award, placing first in the category of Excellence in Student Support Services for medium-sized institutions, with Arthur Lok



Michael Bradshaw
Executive Director

In The Know

Executive Director, continued on pg 2 >

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Jack Graduate School of Business – UWI placing second. The individual awards were won by Professor Jayaraj Jayaraman, for Excellence in Applied Academic Research; and Dr Farid Youssef, for Excellence in Teaching.

In keeping with its mandate to promote quality in the sector it serves, the Council will continue to invest in activities for students in 2017. As an example, ACTT intends to enhance its well-established Essay Competition with a new Poster component for secondary school students, in addition to maintaining its National Quiz.

I take this opportunity to congratulate those winners on their hard-earned successes in 2016. Your efforts are truly positive examples to institutions and students alike. To those who will participate in the Council's 2017 activities, remember: the secret to getting ahead is to get started. Let's begin the journey together. ■



QuiTE Awards 2017

ACTT is pleased to invite faculty and staff of registered and/or accredited institutions/providers to submit nominees for the Annual **Quality in Tertiary Education (QuiTE) Awards 2017**.

INDIVIDUAL Awards

Heads of institutions, faculty members and peers are encouraged to submit nominees for the following Awards:

- Leadership in Tertiary Education (LiTE)
- Excellence in Teaching
- Excellence in Applied and Academic Research

Eligibility Requirements –
Individuals nominated for a QuiTE Individual Award must comprise the administration or teaching staff of registered and/or accredited post secondary or tertiary institution

INSTITUTIONAL Awards

Institutions may make submissions for the following:

- Excellence in Quality Management Systems (QMS)
- Excellence in Student Support Services in Tertiary Education (SSSiTE)
- Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Eligibility Requirements –
To be eligible for a QuiTE Institutional Award, a post secondary or tertiary institution must be:

- registered or accredited by ACTT
- in compliance with the guidelines and stipulations of The General Conditions of Registration, Recognition or Institutional Accreditation

Deadline for the submission of all nominations for ACTT's QuiTE Awards:
August 18, 2017
 For further information, please visit www.actt.org.tt



ACCREDITED AND REGISTERED POST SECONDARY AND TERTIARY LEVEL INSTITUTIONS IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) is the principal body in law to accredit and register post secondary and tertiary institutions operating in Trinidad and Tobago. The following is a list of accredited and registered institutions that have been quality assured by ACTT as at June 01, 2017:

Accredited Institutions (12)

- Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business – UWI
- Caribbean Nazarene College
- Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies
- College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago
- MIC Institute of Technology
- St Andrew's Theological College
- The University of Trinidad and Tobago
- The University of the West Indies, St Augustine
- Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute
- Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute
- University of the Southern Caribbean
- West Indies School of Theology

The public is advised that ACTT is in receipt of applications for registration, continuing registration, accreditation and continuing accreditation from institutions. Further details on these institutions can be obtained from ACTT.

Registered Institutions (59)

- Academy of Tertiary Studies (ATS) Limited
- Advanced Solutions Technical Institute Limited (ASTI)
- Aerial World Services Limited
- ARIA Technical Institute Limited
- Automation Technology College Limited
- Briko Air Services Limited
- Caribbean College of the Bible International Limited
- Caribbean Corporate Governance Institute
- Caribbean Institute for Security and Public Safety Ltd
- Catholic Religious Education Development Institute (CREDI)
- College of Health Environmental & Safety Studies Limited
- College of Legal Studies Limited
- College of Ultrasound Sciences Ltd
- Council of Legal Education (Hugh Wooding Law School)
- CTS College of Business and Computer Science Ltd
- Darul Uloom Trinidad and Tobago Limited
- Emergency Training Institute of Trinidad and Tobago Company Limited
- Employers Solution Centre Limited
- ENSAFE: Institute for Health, Safety & Counselling Training Limited
- Experts Fire and Safety Limited
- Global Centre for Advanced Training
- Institute of Law and Academic Studies Ltd
- Institute of Tertiary Tutors Limited
- International Forensics & Business Institute Ltd
- International Institute of Cosmetology and Aesthetics Limited
- K. Beckles and Associates Law Tutors Limited
- Kenson School of Production Technology Limited
- Madonna Doyle & Associates Ltd
- National Energy Skills Centre
- Occupational Safety and Health and Environmental Services Ltd
- Omardeen School of Accountancy Limited
- Omega Advanced School of Interdisciplinary Studies (OASIS)
- Open Bible Institute of Theology
- Pixels Education Limited
- Premier Accountancy Specialist School Limited
- Professional Institute of Marketing and Business Studies Ltd
- Professional School of Accountancy Limited
- SAM Caribbean Limited
- School of Business and Computer Science Ltd
- School of Higher Education Limited
- School of Practical Accounting and Accounting Services Ltd
- SERVOL Limited
- Shadrack Safety Institute Company Limited
- SITAL College of Tertiary Education Ltd
- Streamline Management & Engineering Solutions Limited
- Students Accountancy Centre Limited
- Summa Cum Laude Educational Institution (SCL) Limited
- Technical Institute for Learning Limited

- Techsafe Training and Consulting Limited
- The Institute of Medical Education Ltd
- The Trinidad and Tobago Association of Insurance and Financial Advisers (T.T.A.I.F.A.) Limited
- The Trinidad and Tobago Civil Aviation Authority
- Tobago Technical School
- Total Counselling and Management Institute Limited
- Trinidad and Tobago Bible College
- Trinidad and Tobago College of Therapeutic Massage and Beauty Culture Ltd (TTCOTM&BCL)
- Trinizuella Technical and Vocational College
- UWI School of Business and Applied Studies Limited (Trading as ROYTEC)
- West Indies Theological College (WITC)

Pending

Conferment of *Initial Registration* status is pending for the following institution:

- Trinidad Institute of Medical Technology Ltd



Achievement

SITAL's college graduation

Accomplishments celebrated in an ambiance of warmth and happiness. These words are the hallmark of graduations hosted in honour of SITAL College graduates of the MBA, BBA and Diploma programmes. The Graduation Award Ceremony and Dinner, held at the Trinidad Hilton on Sunday 23 October, was no different. With just over 300 persons in attendance, the ceremony was marked by encouraging words of advice, exceptional speeches by MBA Valedictorian, Anastasia Mulrairie-Campbell, and BBA Valedictorian, Nicole Harewood (who was jointly awarded the BBA Valedictory prize with Madan McCoon).

Among specially invited guests were His Excellency, the Australian High Commissioner, John Pilbeam, who brought greetings from the Government of Australia; the Executive Director of The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago, Michael Bradshaw, who gave the congratulatory speech; Keynote Speaker, Academic Advisor at the Australian Institute of Business, Dr Donald Fuller; Deputy Director of Funding and Grants (GATE Unit) from the Ministry of Education, Urban Higgins; and other key stakeholders from industry and government.

SITAL College is very proud of its graduates and very happy to have been part of their success story that will continue beyond the year 2016! ■

An investment in knowledge pays the best interest»



The path of higher education is less intimidating than you believe.

Refer first to ACTT's **Compendium** online at actt.org.tt to see which local institutions are legitimately registered and accredited.

Government funding in higher education in many countries is inextricably linked to quality assurance of institutions and programmes. In Trinidad and Tobago, like many other countries worldwide, quality assurance is used as a basis for allocating funding at the tertiary level especially for accredited higher education institutions.

In the United States of America and the United Kingdom, state funding is provided to institutions that are quality assured by the recognised quality assurance body of the country. In the UK, for example, the Higher Education Funding Council for England allocates funds to institutions based on the recommendation by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

In Trinidad and Tobago, the Government invests in higher education in an effort to improve national development and economic productivity and uses various mechanisms to finance education. The Government subsidizes the cost of education to Trinidad and Tobago nationals in public institutions such as The University of the West Indies, The University of Trinidad and Tobago, College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago, National Energy Skills Center, and MIC Institute of Technology. Institutions receive funding to make education more accessible and equitable to nationals and expand the education and training system at all levels. These institutions provide graduates for employment in critical areas to

meet national needs and facilitate national development.

The Government has implemented the Government Assistance for Tuition Expenses (GATE) programme, which provides financial assistance to citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. Investment in higher education can result in a more competent workforce, trained in skilled labour, in areas that are required for sustainable development. With Government being a main financing stakeholder of higher education, effort must be made to ensure gain or return on investment. Thus far, clauses in the terms and conditions of the GATE application seek to ensure that individuals benefitting from the GATE programme undergo a period of obligatory service in alignment with the value of their award. In instances where students do not fulfil the terms and conditions, they may be liable to refund the Government the monies expended to them, or they may not be eligible for further funding. The quality assurance of institutions and programmes by ACTT is one requirement the GATE programme considers when deciding on which programmes to fund.

Government utilises the Scholarships and Advanced Training Division (SATD), a division of the Ministry of Education, to administer scholarships and long-term technical assistance awards offered by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mano/Baird, continued on pg 17 >

Money Matters

Financing Higher Education

BY **KASSANDRA MANO**
RESEARCH OFFICER (AG.) – ACTT
AND **ZIANN BAIRD**
ASSESSMENT OFFICER – ACTT



Investment can result in a more competent workforce, trained in skilled labour»

Today's decisions impact tomorrow's successes.

When you're confident that you have earned your degree from a legitimate institution, you'll have one more reason to celebrate.

Let ACTT assist you in making an informed decision about programmes and institutions. Call 623-2500.

A new day awaits!

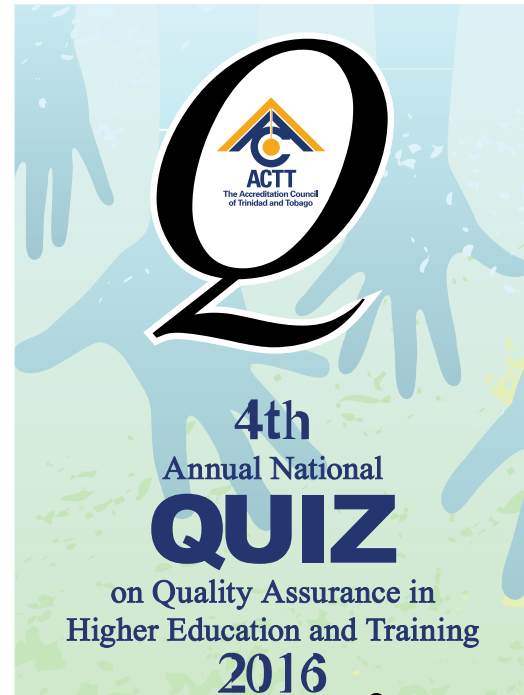
Students



Bishop's High School, Tobago

To ensure that the Quiz team from Bishop's High School, Tobago, was celebrated in spite of its unfortunate absence from the official Prize-Giving Ceremony, ACTT's staff visited the school during its morning assembly. Our team was met by enthusiastic students, awaiting the opportunity to give due recognition to their peers who would have achieved a worthy Third Place in ACTT's 4th National Quiz on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Training 2016.

Michael Bradshaw, Executive Director, was invited to speak by Vice Principal, Ann Second. He referenced the history of the Quiz, remarking that Bishop's was the first-ever Champion in 2013 and that, through the years, the school has continued to excel in varied co- and extra-curricular activities. He encouraged the students to participate again in the 2017 edition of the competition, enticing them with the cash prizes to be awarded. This was met with loud applause and excitement by the student body. ACTT's team then presented the team members with their third place trophy and school cheque, along with Certificates of Participation and RIK vouchers. The Coach's prize was presented to Ms Kalifa Hislop, on behalf of the school's Quiz coach, Mrs Cherise Jack-Elie.



CONGRATS TO THE CHAMPS!

ACTT hosted a Prize-Giving Ceremony on November 18, 2016, to recognise winners of its 4th National Quiz on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Training for third- and fourth-form secondary school students, which took place during July to November, 2016.

The major aims of this recurring initiative is to increase students' awareness of:

- the need to make informed decisions when choosing a higher education institution and programme of study, based on the vast options available to them for their higher education pursuits; and
- the importance of quality assurance in higher education and recognition of programmes and institutions.

ACTT was pleased to present **St Joseph's Convent, San Fernando** with the Championship trophies and team prizes for its 1st place performance. 'San'do Convent' is no stranger to ACTT; its girls earned 2nd place in 2015, before returning to claim the top position in 2016.

4th National Quiz:

- 1st – St Joseph's Convent, San Fernando
- 2nd – Cowen Hamilton Secondary School
- 3rd – Bishops' High School, Tobago
- 4th – Naparima College



Indigenous research

Fresh blood initiatives are needed for improving scientific research capability in the Caribbean



BY **JAYARAJ JAYARAMAN**
PROF., BIOTECHNOLOGY AND
PLANT MICROBIOLOGY – UWI

There is a pressing need to build resource capacity and human capabilities in the Caribbean region. This pursuit would help the region, on a sustained basis, to address present and future challenges faced by the communities in all fields, including environment, agriculture, health, energy and economic development. This could be better achieved by strengthening and promoting indigenous research and innovation in key sectors. Indigenous research is an essential activity that would enable the region to achieve self-reliance and to cope with challenges that are unique to it and which cannot be resolved by imported or borrowed solutions. The Caribbean region is still far behind in research and development, though many of the countries of the region have individually attained developed status in terms of economic development.

None of the countries, including the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, is investing enough into research and development. The smallest country in Asia, Singapore, invests 2% of its GDP towards research. Trinidad and Tobago invests barely 0.05%, which is a decrease from 0.1% in 1996. Improving scientific research capacity requires a complete change in perception towards research: from subsistence to outcome-based, from academic to practical and applied, from isolation to more inclusive and integrated. The very culture and concept of research requires strengthening by integrating various disciplines in order to allow organisational inputs at multiple levels (communities, NGOs, governmental) to interact, and incorporate sectoral perspectives in a way that is practical and sustainable.

Research academies and research

universities, in particular, ought to be the hotbed for scientific research and innovation for any country. Research universities are academic institutions committed to the creation and dissemination of knowledge in a range of disciplines that permit teaching and research at the highest possible level. Research universities generate growing enthusiasm worldwide and countries have recognised that research universities are the key to the knowledge economy of the 21st century. If innovation is likely to be the principal driver of growth of a country, then universities could and should emerge as the most dynamic knowledge factories and a commercial force in their own right.

Of all island states in the Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago is adequately equipped with a regional university, The University of the West Indies (UWI), and a state university, The University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT). These academies can strategically project and position themselves as research universities in the country and the region. Both Universities have Master's programmes and research-based graduate level programmes. However, only a fraction of students enrolls in Master's or graduate research programmes in Trinidad and Tobago. While the cream of students prefers to go to Europe or North America for higher studies, those who cannot still have a choice of selecting one of the two Universities for their studies. Taught Master's programmes in the Caribbean have only a small research component, that is, a research project/dissertation. Students are provided an opportunity to choose their research problem at the Master's level, which can give them an opportunity to move towards graduate research

should they choose to continue. However, many students hardly have sustained motivation to do research through M.Phil./Ph.D. programmes. The reason is a lack of strong support mechanisms available in other countries, including graduate assistantship or other sources of funding. Though there are scholarships available, they are meagre in number and size. Further, there are less placement opportunities for graduates with research Master's or Doctoral degrees resulting in their having to go out of country to upgrade their research experience or to seek jobs. Lack of right opportunities and career options within Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean makes graduate

all around T&T, we are seriously constrained by paucity of funding, facilities and research students.

In this era of an open world, the region's valuable biological resources are at the risk of exposure and loss unless the researchers in the region seriously study them carefully and protect the intellectual components. Though Universities keep this as a priority on their agendas, lack of focus and mobilisation of resources make it an underachieved objective always. With the rising cost of university research due to expensive inputs and infrastructure, it becomes increasingly difficult to pursue high quality and product-oriented research in the region. Even large

Basic research is the mother of technology development»

research degrees a less attractive choice for young graduates. The Caribbean region, and Trinidad and Tobago in particular, is endowed with a rich source of biodiversity which is unique and has enormous potential to provide solutions for the region or even the world. Some of the pioneering work being conducted by UWI-DLS research group underlines the value of our rich biodiversity. An example of this is the novel strains of microbes isolated from unique environments in Trinidad and Tobago, including mud volcanoes, the Pitch Lake and the Caroni swamp, which have never been reported elsewhere in the world. The research group at UWI-DLS, have engaged in in-depth studying of a handful of them and all were found to produce very novel compounds which are of potential value to medicine, health and industry. Though there is a great deal of exciting things scattered

and well-funded universities in the industrialised countries struggle to support cutting-edge research. The country should adopt the good models wherein research universities select and match fields of research that are affordable and linked to national needs and priorities, for example, agriculture, biotechnology, renewable energy and environmental conservation. Appropriate links with private-sector companies, including multinational corporations, become necessary, and a balance between applied and basic research will need to be worked out. Due to the financial pressures, the trend is moving toward applied and often profit-oriented research, which can be more easily funded than basic research and may yield profits for the university. However, a balance between basic and applied research must be maintained since basic research is the mother of technology development.

Institutional members, particularly university teachers and research personnel, are not motivated or attracted enough to research. The obvious reasons include work pressure towards teaching and academic activities, lack of incentives, lack of recognition and hesitancy in choosing research as a career path. These are the constraints seen in the universities of the developing world and T&T is no exception, despite attaining economically developed status.

While basic resources received from Government and through institutional funding are barely adequate for teaching and doing preliminary research, funding for specific research projects can come only from outside sources which are less accessible to our community and for which competition is high. The only way to access such external funding is through developing inter-disciplinary teams and external collaboration. This has been successfully demonstrated by the external grants awarded in the recent past through collaborative efforts. The country should also strategically develop a system of competitive research awards, as found in several other countries, which specifically assists product and cutting-edge, knowledge-oriented research matching national needs. It is high time the country develops such opportunities, particularly to explore our vast biological resources and biodiversity. Funds can come from government ministries and granting agencies and also from private and business firms. An appropriate mix of funding sources and allocation mechanisms encourages competition for research funds.

Jayarajan, continued on pg 18 >

ACTT rewards Excellence at Quite Awards Ceremony 2016

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) hosted its annual Excellence in Higher Education Awards Ceremony and Dinner on Wednesday, November 02, 2016. The Quality in Tertiary Education (QuiTE) Awards aims to promote quality assurance in registered, accredited and recognised post secondary and tertiary level institutions operating in Trinidad and Tobago. The ceremony recognised the sterling achievements of these stellar QuiTE Awardees.



Dr the Honourable Lovell Francis; Wanda Chesney, VP for Academic Administration, USC – Excellence in Teaching and Learning; Lyndon Abdool, Manager, Quality Assurance Research and Effectiveness, Hugh Wooding Law School – Excellence in Teaching and Learning; Ravi Ragoonath, Academic Director, CTS College of Business and Computer Science Ltd – Excellence in Student Support Services; Jaidath Maharaj, Manager, Quality Assurance, ALJGSB – Excellence in Student Support Services; and Michael Bradshaw.

Awards are granted to institutions that demonstrate excellence in the implementation of their quality assurance systems, student monitoring and tracking systems, institutional research capacity and overall improvement. Institutions are grouped based on student enrolment levels, with first, second and third place awards for each classification.

At the event, awards were presented to exemplary institutions for *Excellence for an Established Quality Management System*, as well as *Excellence for Student Support*

Services in Tertiary Education and Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

ACTT also presented awards to individuals in the higher education sector for *Excellence in Applied and Academic Research*, as well as *Excellence in Teaching.*

The Excellence in Higher Education Awards Ceremony and Dinner also concluded ACTT's Quality Assurance Month 2016, which included External Evaluator and Team Chair workshops and outreach initiatives at different school across Trinidad and Tobago. ■



Dr The Honourable Lovell Francis, Minister of State in the Ministry of Education (left) and Michael Bradshaw, Executive Director of The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) (right) with awardees during ACTT's Excellence in Higher Education Awards Ceremony on November 02, 2016, at Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre. From left: Dr Farid Youssef, Excellence in Teaching; Prof. Jayaraj Jayaraman, Excellence in Applied and Academic Research; and awardees for Excellence for an Established Quality Management System – Wendy Augustus, Chief Executive Officer, UWI School of Business and Applied Studies (Trading as ROYTEC), Dr Patricia Butcher, Executive Director, TTHTI, and Ravi Ragoonath, Academic Director, CTS College of Business and Computer Science Ltd.

INSTITUTIONAL CATEGORIES

Excellence for an Established Quality Management System

- 1st place: UWI School of Business and Applied Studies Limited (trading as ROYTEC)
- 2nd place: Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute (TTHTI)
- 3rd place: CTS College of Business and Computer Science Limited

Excellence in Student Support Services

Medium Category

- 1st place: CTS College of

Business and Computer Science Limited

- 2nd place: Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business – UWI

Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Medium Category

- 1st place: Hugh Wooding Law School

Large Category

- 1st place: University of the Southern Caribbean (USC)

INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIES

Excellence in Applied and Academic Research

Professor Jayaraj Jayaraman
Professor of Biotechnology and Plant Microbiology,
Department of Life Sciences,
Faculty of Science and Technology,
The University of the West Indies,
St Augustine

Excellence in Teaching

Dr Farid Youssef
Lecturer in Human Physiology,
Faculty of Medical Sciences,
The University of the West Indies,
St Augustine



Development

Benefitting from the QuiTE Awards



BY **RAVI JOHNSON**
QMS REPRESENTATIVE – CTS
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND
COMPUTER SCIENCE LIMITED

Regarded as the premier awards programme in tertiary education in Trinidad and Tobago, ACTT's Quality in Tertiary Education (QuiTE) Awards have rewarded befitting post secondary and tertiary institutions who have participated over the years. CTS College has participated in the esteemed awards initiative since 2011 and has received institutional awards for Excellence in Student Support Services in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2016. We have also earned awards for Excellence for an Established Quality Management System in 2012, 2014 and 2016; and for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in 2014 and 2015. The distinction of achieving these awards has benefitted our institution significantly and we have enjoyed immense success over the years as a result: from marketing our institution as one that is congruent with quality by consistently winning at the Awards, to promoting the institution as one that upholds and fosters student support excellence and genuine care for our students, as evidenced by our five awards in the last six years for Student Support Services.

Yet, there is more justifiable value for our institution participating in the QuiTE Awards beyond winning the actual awards. And one would wonder, why participate in an awards initiative, if not to attain the accolades of winning? It is undeniable that CTS College is a much better institution now than it was prior to the QuiTE Awards – and here are our reasons why:

Compliance with ACTT's Continuing Registration Criteria

The criteria and standards for each of the categories in the institutional awards are effectively aligned with the criteria and standards for registered institutions. By documenting the narratives and evidence for each of the institutional awards, CTS College was, in effect, documenting narratives and developing evidence that supported and were aligned with the criteria and standards for ACTT's Continuing registration. This effectively meant that the actual process of Continuing Registration was not a triennial process for CTS College but, rather, a process which was constantly practised and documented throughout the year. Prior to the QuiTE Awards, when CTS College applied for Continuing Registration with ACTT, our submission contained several gaps or discrepancies, which needed to be addressed. In our last application, however, there were just a few suggestions outlined by the external evaluators. This significant improvement can be partly attributed to the fact that our narratives, documentation and approach to the QuiTE Awards had holistically contributed to the overall improvement of quality at CTS College.

Continuous Improvement

By recognising that our submissions in each of the institutional categories could be improved, each year CTS College analysed the criteria and standards and sought to implement improvements in the desired areas for improved quality of submissions the following year. We were, in effect, implementing best practices and continuous improvement activities in all aspects of our operations in the delivery of quality education provision.

Improved Relationship with ACTT

By participating in the QuiTE Awards each year, CTS's relationship with ACTT has significantly improved. We no longer regard ACTT as

CTS CBCS, continued on pg 18 >

ACTT's Prize-Giving Ceremony on November 18, 2016, also honoured winners of its 6th National Essay Competition, which is geared toward fifth- and sixth-form secondary school students and students pursuing undergraduate degrees at tertiary level institutions.



Like the Quiz, the major aims of this recurring initiative are to increase students' awareness of the need to make informed decisions when choosing a higher education institution and programme of study, based on the vast options available to them for their higher education pursuits; and the importance of quality assurance in higher education and recognition of programmes and institutions.

6th National Essay Competition Winners

Secondary – Form 5

- 1st – Marcus James, St Mary's College
- 2nd – Josie Pillai, St Mary's College

Secondary – Form 6

- 1st – Joshua Parris, St Stephen's College
- 2nd – Meagan Gopaulsingh, Naparima Girls' High School
- 3rd – Celine Rasool, ASJA Girl's College San Fernando
- Honourable Mention: Arun Seeram Maharaj, Naparima College

Tertiary

- 1st – Darcel Bernard, SAM Caribbean
- 2nd – Ariea Cobham, COSTAATT
- 3rd – Sarah Jagoonanan, UTT, San Fernando
- Honourable Mention: Lisa Cindy Thomas, UWI, St Augustine

School Prizes

- Form 5 – St Mary's College
- Form 6 – St Stephen's College

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago's
**6TH NATIONAL
Essay
COMPETITION 2016**

CONGRATULATIONS!



Accountability

Promoting an awareness of quality throughout the Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute (THTI)

BY GERREN COLLYMORE
MANAGER, QUALITY – THTI



As part of the World Quality Month, celebrated in November 2016, the THTI Quality Department embarked on various quality initiatives to create an awareness of the importance of quality to the THTI staff. The management of THTI recognises that being institutionally accredited is the first step in ensuring that quality is recognised as strategically important in facilitating continuous improvement. In order to accomplish this, every employee must be aware of his/her role in providing quality service to our students. As Edwards Deming, one of the quality gurus, stated: “Quality is everyone’s responsibility.” At THTI, Quality Sensitisation Sessions and a Quality Competition were the quality initiatives used to heighten staff awareness.

Quality Sensitisation Sessions were conducted from September 2016 to October 2016 using three (3) themes: Institutional Accreditation, Hospitality Assured and Risk Management. The institute is currently preparing to be recertified to ‘Hospitality Assured’, a hospitality and tourism quality standard, and had commenced risk assessments throughout the campus in 2016. During the institutional accreditation sessions, emphasis was placed on employees’ understanding the importance of THTI having Institutional Accreditation. Institutional Accreditation should not be perceived as only a form of tertiary education certification for marketing purposes. Instead, the primary purpose should be to meet and exceed students’ requirements through facilitating continuous improvement.

The various benefits of tertiary education accreditation were highlighted, such as easier transfer of credits for students between institutions, and facilitating continuous improvement through internal self assessments or audits. Employees were able to internalise that the benefits of THTI being accredited outweigh any subsequent monetary certification cost required by an independent Accreditation Body. Additionally, staff were apprised of the ACTT’s institutional accreditation standards and how they relate to different aspects of the organisation and their roles in ensuring that the institute meets these standards. A team-based approach to maintaining our institutional accreditation status was emphasised throughout the sessions.

A Quality Competition was initiated in November 2016 to familiarise staff with the quality standards that THTI uses to facilitate improvement. Quality Competitions are used by many organisations to motivate employees, foster team spirit and facilitate improvement.

Employees were required to answer all the Quality Quiz questions correctly and submit their entries to the THTI Quality Department. Staff members were encouraged to collaborate with their colleagues if they did not know the answer to a question. Although executive management was excluded from participating, managers were encouraged to assist their line staff in ensuring that the Quality Quiz questions were answered correctly before submission. The prize of a gift voucher was used as an incentive to encourage participation. A draw was made in December, 2016 with the winner being announced to all staff. All staff who participated

THTI, continued on pg 18 >

Quality is everyone’s responsibility.»

UWI-ROYTEC was adjudicated the first place winner for Excellence for an Established Quality Management System (QMS) at the 2016 ACTT Quality in Tertiary Education (QuiTE) Awards ceremony held on November 2, 2016. The QMS award represents the highest level of implementation for an established quality management system among tertiary institutions in Trinidad and Tobago. UWI-ROYTEC had also captured first place for Excellence for an Established QMS in 2013 and 2014, and second place in 2015.

A distinctive QMS

UWI-ROYTEC was established in 1987 by the Royal Bank of Canada. In 2006, The UWI, St Augustine Campus assumed responsibility for the operations of the institution and the full transfer of the ROYTEC brand was concluded in January 2014. The Board of Directors and the management team of UWI-ROYTEC have consistently invested in the institution’s vision statement which outlines a commitment to ‘*meet national and international standards of quality*’. One of the main mechanisms to attain high standards of quality is the establishment and implementation of a Quality Management Policy that is appropriately supported by a robust QMS. In establishing and implementing its QMS, UWI-ROYTEC adopted a systems approach in which institutional stakeholders collaborate to develop interrelated procedures, as well as conduct regular formative

assessments through monitoring and evaluation.

The UWI-ROYTEC QMS consists of twenty-three (23) quality standards and an array of performance indicators, interdependencies and benchmarks in functional areas of operations such as governance and administration, institutional planning and accountability, teaching and learning, student support, the management of resources, programme review and continuous improvement. As a monitoring tool, the QMS commits the institution to regular assessments of the performance indicators in order to track performance in line with quality indicators. The assessments have afforded UWI-ROYTEC the opportunity to accumulate trend data which supports evidence-based decision making and continuous improvement. As

UWI-ROYTEC, continued on pg 18 >



From left to right: Heather John, Manager, New Business Development (UWI-ROYTEC); Dr The Honourable, Lovell Francis, Minister of State in the Ministry of Education; Wendy Augustus, Executive Director (UWI-ROYTEC); Errol Simms, Former Board Member and Chair, UWI-ROYTEC Quality Assurance Committee; Nickisha Hamilton, Manager, Quality Assurance and Programme Development (UWI-ROYTEC) and Adesh Latchman, Quality Assurance Officer (UWI-ROYTEC)

The institution’s vision statement outlines a commitment to *meet national and international standards of quality*»

Accolades

UWI-ROYTEC wins 2016 ACTT award for Excellence for an Established Quality Management System

Productivity

Skills development: a vital element of productivity enhancement

BY RONALD RAMLOGAN
TEAM LEAD, PUBLIC RELATIONS
AND RESEARCH – ECA



According to distinguished American economist, professor and columnist, Paul Krugman, *“A country’s ability to improve its standard of living over time depends almost entirely on its ability to raise its output per worker”* (1997, p. 11). This therefore connotes a direct link between productivity and the inherent desire we all possess to improve our national and personal economic and social situations.

While it is accepted that productivity, at any level, is a product of strong leadership, effective supervision and the enforcement of appropriate policies, the Employers’ Consultative Association of Trinidad and Tobago (ECA) contends that this is also directly related to the ability and capacity, both expressed and inert, of each individual. At the firm level, the development of capacity can only be achieved through skills development. At the national level, it requires investment in education. The significance of this issue was explored extensively at the 2008 International Labour Conference, at which constituents of the International Labour Organization’s (ILO’s) tripartite mechanism adopted several conclusions focused on the challenge of skills development, noting that “skills development can be an important tool for reducing poverty and exclusion and enhancing competitiveness and employability” (International Labour Organization, 2008, p. iii).

As our socio-economic paradigm in Trinidad and Tobago continues to experience developments and

disruptions from a confluence of economic, technological, social, political and environmental forces, it is incumbent on all stakeholders to respond with appropriate adjustments in a timely manner before the next wave of disruption takes effect. There have been significant changes in production patterns, trading patterns, the free flow of capital, customer preferences and global communication, all of which have resulted in the emergence of new forms of work organisation and structures and a resultant demand for new forms of employable skills.

21st century demands

The ECA is aware that an obvious gap continues to exist between the demands of the world of work and the skills that currently form part of the country’s education curricula. This therefore means that while there are current demands to fill vacancies, there lacks a synergy between education, training and the world of work to fill these demands.

The 21st century demands that a renewed focus be placed on people-centred development, building competencies for resilience and entrepreneurship so that enterprises will have access to the right skills for the jobs of the future and maintain a system that encourages continuous learning. At the very least, our education system must be on par with global standards to encourage future investment in our skilled labour force, which requires accreditation and upskilling. Additionally, some emphasis must be placed

ECA, continued on pg 19 >

» MANO/BAIRD, cont’d

Government scholarships enable nationals to acquire skills and training in areas based on the National Development Human Resource Needs List. This list identifies priority areas needed for economic productivity in Trinidad and Tobago. The SATD is guided by this priority listing as it forms the basis for which scholarships are allocated.

Government has also introduced the Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) where students can obtain financial assistance for tertiary-level education. HELP is a special soft loan facility that can help cover expenses such as tuition fees, accommodation expenses, airfare and other transportation costs. It also covers personal maintenance costs and living expenses, books and related materials, special equipment costs and other related tertiary education expenses.

There has been widespread debate as to whether Government should continue to finance higher

education and to what extent. Critics argue that ensuring that everyone has a tertiary education does not necessarily enhance the labour market but makes it more difficult to find jobs and may also dilute a university degree. In the current economic recession, higher education and training institutions may have to consider the prospect of reduced government funding and its related implications. In the event of reduced financial support mechanisms, higher education and training institutions may encounter challenges and/or situations such as:

- increased tuition to compensate for rising costs
- shifting costs to students
- low student enrolment
- reduced programme offerings
- reduced foreign students (decline in tourism)
- higher attrition rates

In a situation where funding is reduced, cost-cutting activities may affect the quality of the education at higher education

institutions, which can affect student learning outcomes. Therefore, higher education institutions must place emphasis on the quality of the programmes being offered. Quality assurance of institutions and programmes will be key determinants for students when choosing an institution to attend and pursue a course of study in an economic downturn. It is imperative, therefore, that institutions implement Quality Management Systems as a mechanism for improving their operations, achieving competitive advantage and maintaining/increasing student enrolment.

As a result, greater emphasis on ACTT’s role in the Registration and Accreditation processes and Programme Approval is critical to quality. ACTT views attainment of quality as a process rather than just an end result. This view is premised on the belief that higher education and training institutions must continually strive to improve their operations and surpass set standards. ■



I applied for a Statement on Recognition from ACTT to ensure that I didn’t enrol in a ‘diploma mill’. I made sure that my years of studies were not in vain. I graduated with my Bachelor’s degree from a legitimate institution!

I cannot wait to start the next phase of my academic journey – and I will include ACTT again.

The 21st century demands that a renewed focus be placed on people-centred development»

» **JAYARAMAN, cont'd**

To promote the culture of research among students, the seeds must be sown from early, from the secondary school level. Students should be provided with the opportunity to take credit-based courses at the University, according to their interests, as seen in other developed countries. They need to be provided with opportunities to do short-term projects and lab-based training during vacation periods. Once they are enrolled as full-time undergraduate students, the curriculum should provide more opportunities for a practicum and research-oriented learning. For instance, research projects are now available as a full credit course in many of the programmes and this provides insight into and hands-on leaning towards research. Once they enter into a graduate research programme, there should be adequate avenues for funding, including subsidies and financial waivers which will keep them engaged until the conclusion of the research.

On the subject of industry-university partnership, we must follow successful models found elsewhere. Many large elite universities have set up incubators to nurture firms that can become viable, sometimes with the help of venture capital provided by the university or with the help of university connections. Developing an adjacent science park to Universities generally requires the backing of national government and industries. There should also be the flexibility to invite industries and companies for both investment and establishment of manufacturing facilities.

In conclusion, the whole culture

of research needs to be nurtured and promoted and this can happen only through participation of all the stakeholders, communities, organisations and institutions. Ideological and physical assistance to the universities and upgrading their status to research universities can be the very effective driver for improving research and development in the region. ■

» **CTS CBCS, cont'd**

‘making life difficult’ for tertiary institutions through what is perceived as bureaucratic and procedural mandates, but as a partner who so readily provides us with guidance and assistance in all aspects of our operations.

For the aforementioned reasons, we at CTS College fully endorse the QuiTE Awards and we encourage all tertiary institutions to participate. It could only fare well for the standard and quality of tertiary education services in Trinidad and Tobago. ■

» **THTI, cont'd**

were acknowledged for their efforts, with the questions answer sheet being forwarded.

THTI management expects staff awareness of quality to increase significantly in the coming years as a result of these innovative strategies. THTI is also exploring other avenues, such as trivia games, quality projects, quality training, and an internal quality rewards event, in order to build a culture of quality in the future. ■

» **UWI-ROYTEC, cont'd**

an evaluative tool, data derived through the QMS standards are further analysed to improve academic quality; administrative

effectiveness and service quality. All stakeholders receive an orientation to the Quality Policy and QMS and also receive a personal copy of the UWI-ROYTEC Quality Assurance Handbook which summarises the QMS and communicates the minimum standards of practice for assuring quality standards.

Support for the QMS

The UWI-ROYTEC QMS is supported by various Board Appointed and Management Committees; overseas partners; faculty; staff and students. The Quality Assurance Department is headed by Nickisha Hamilton, who indicated that “the institution’s stakeholders demonstrate a shared vision for quality assurance which continues to inspire trust and confidence. Our overseas partners, such as the University of New Brunswick, Franklin University and the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), all contribute international best practices in quality assurance, which make the QMS a sustainable mechanism”. For UWI-ROYTEC, this approach has led to innovations in quality assurance, such as the establishment of a dedicated QMS for Online Distance Learning (ODL). The ODL QMS was established in 2014 and ensures the highest level of quality for online teaching and learning and online student support.

What does it mean for UWI-ROYTEC?

Wendy Augustus, Executive Director, confirmed that the UWI-ROYTEC QMS has matured into a comprehensive results-based mechanism that has been recognised by external evaluators as “a commitment

to assuring the quality of educational outcomes” at UWI-ROYTEC. Further, the QMS has served the institution through three (3) consecutive periods of institutional registration with ACTT and, at a more macro level, for institutional accreditation during the 2016 Self-Study exercise. Capturing first place in the QMS category in the ACTT Awards for three (3) years since 2013 indicates to the Board of Directors, staff, faculty, students and partners that UWI-ROYTEC maintains a high level of commitment to building and sustaining a culture of quality that not only supports the institution’s vision and mission but positions UWI-ROYTEC as an institution of choice. Mrs Augustus continues to encourage all tertiary institutions to subscribe to the QuiTE Awards for Excellence for an Established QMS as it provides an opportunity for engagement in continuous improvement and also creates an adaptive culture for sustainable quality assurance practice. ■

» **ECA, cont'd**

on upgrading the technology curriculum even as we stand on the cusp of an era of artificial intelligence and robotics.

On the personal level, however, the onus is on each individual to recognise that skills development is a vital tool for increasing capacity, marketability and employability. Furthermore, as we continue to navigate difficult and uncertain economic circumstances, this will prove to be a vital strategy for mitigating against the risk of job displacement and ensuring a faster recovery into other forms of productive work.

In this regard, the ECA’s subsidiary, The Employers’ Solution Centre, will continue to expand its range of professional training and development courses, available through its Training and Development Solutions Centre, with a continued commitment to both institutional and personal growth and development in the interest of Trinidad and Tobago.

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GET READY TO CREATE!
ACTT's Essay and Poster Competition 2017 is coming SOON!

The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago's *Essay and Poster Competition* intends to foster an appreciation for issues related to quality assurance in higher education and its impact on and benefit to students, institutions, society and the economy.

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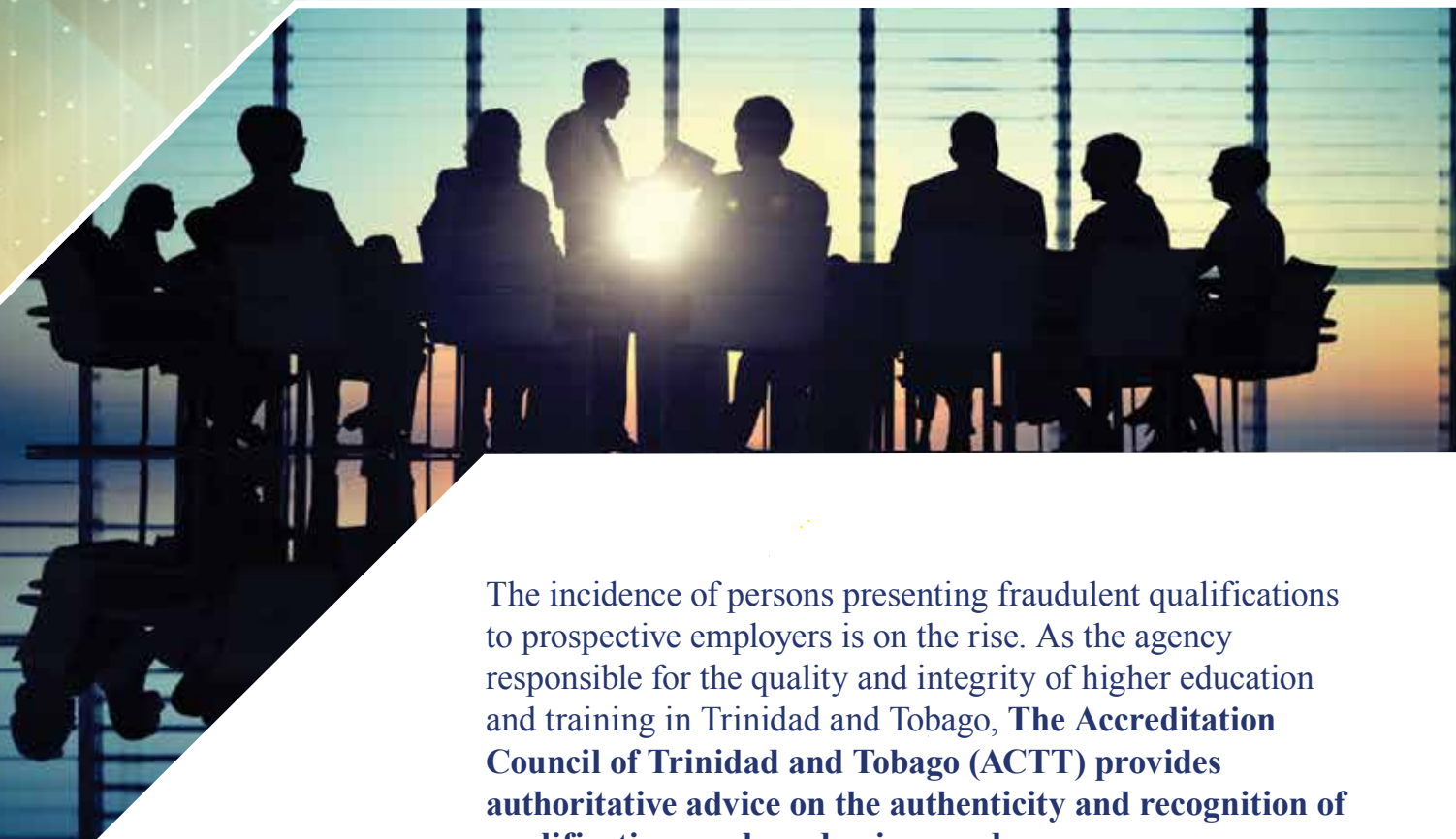
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EMPLOYERS: DO YOUR EMPLOYEES HAVE *RECOGNISED* QUALIFICATIONS?



The incidence of persons presenting fraudulent qualifications to prospective employers is on the rise. As the agency responsible for the quality and integrity of higher education and training in Trinidad and Tobago, **The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT)** provides authoritative advice on the authenticity and recognition of qualifications and academic awards.

Employees are your most valuable assets. Protect your investment! Before you hire, have your potential employee apply for a 'Statement on Recognition' from ACTT so that you are able to:

- validate the authenticity of his/her qualifications
- determine the level of qualifications, which impacts upon compensation packages, etc.



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