Students and staff donate 48 units of blood

Students and staff at the Turkeyen campus donated 48 units of blood in a sterling effort to make a difference in saving lives, by contributing to the Guyana Red Cross (GRCS) Blood Drive on the campus on Friday, April 8.

The Voluntary Blood Donner Recruitment/Blood Drive was jointly organised by GRCS and four students from the Faculty of Natural Sciences: Gavin Dalton, Sunil Richards, Marvin Lawrence and Curissa Alexander. According to Ms Kerensa Singh, Communications Officer, GRCS, “These students were very supportive in ensuring that the Blood Drive was a success.” She further stated that the response from the Turkeyen campus was overwhelming and many persons pledged to donate blood in the future.

Assistant Registrar (Students’ Welfare), Daniella King, said that the University is pleased by the student’s participation in the humanitarian activity. She further stated that apart from the immeasurable life skills the four students acquired, “There is the added incentive in documentation of their participation in their individual co-curricular records.”

The student body is encouraged to be involved in similar meaningful activities outside the classroom. While participation in such activities is entirely voluntary, the University administration recognises that education is not purely academic and is intended to encourage involvement in other worthwhile activities.

The co-curricular and academic transcripts will together reflect the complete record of a student’s life on campus. Co-curricular transcripts give details of responsible positions held in clubs and societies at the University, and outstanding participation in sports and other co-curricular activities.

The Blood Recruitment Programme of the GRCS targets young people from as early as 16 years. Sensitisation sessions have been held with secondary schools on the East Coast of Demerara and will continue with other high schools. The sessions focused on the importance of living healthy lifestyles and making wise and safe choices.

Meanwhile, discussions are ongoing between the Guyana Red Cross Society and the Students’ Welfare Division, on plans to hold another blood drive on the Turkeyen Campus in October.

Students donating blood in the Health Centre
**CCS hosts sound engineering workshop**

The Centre for Communication Studies (CCS) at the Turkeyen campus hosted a one-week Sound Engineering Workshop facilitated by award-winning Professor of Sound at Ohio University, Eddie Ashworth and funded by the CIDA Media and Democracy Project.

The intense workshop provided the twelve participants with introductory audio instruction and intermediate practical techniques in the art and science of recording and reproducing sound in studios and live settings. Topics such as audio fundamentals, microphone types and techniques, recording and mixing methods, delivery of finished product, audio techniques for video, and issues associated with recording in live venues, were discussed.

His Excellency Mr. Francois Montour, High Commissioner of Canada declared the workshop open on Monday, April 18.

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**MEDICAL CENTRE**

New Opening Hours

The new opening hours of the Medical Centre will be 8:30 h-20:30 h from Monday to Friday

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**MoU for Technical Cooperation**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Technical Cooperation was signed between the University of Guyana and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) on Friday, April 8, on the Turkeyen campus.

The signatories to the agreement were Professor Lawrence Carrington, Vice Chancellor of the University of Guyana and Dr. Arlington Chesney, Executive Director of CARDI. The MoU was premised on the parties’ mutual interest in advancing agricultural and rural development in Guyana. Among the areas of mutual interest are: the enhancement of the financial, technical, physical and social capabilities of the public and private sector for sustainable agriculture and rural development; streamlining of the agriculture technology, innovation and production infrastructure in order to enhance more viable trade in all markets and to respond to emerging issues.
MEDICAL TECHNOLOGISTS
-The UG Connection

The observance of National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week (NMLPW) commenced on April 24. The week is observed by laboratory professionals throughout the world.

What is medical technology

Have you ever wondered what happens to the sample you gave at the clinic or the doctor’s office? Have you ever considered what takes place ‘behind the scenes’ in the lab at the hospital?

The medical laboratory technologist is a key member of today’s health care team. Laboratory professionals have skills to unlock important medical information pivotal to the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease. They take the guesswork out of diagnosing disease.

Any changes that occur during a disease process are reflected in the body fluids of the affected area. Samples of blood, urine, faeces, cerebrospinal fluid or pus can therefore be taken and analysed to determine the diagnosis of the disease. Using modern biomedical equipment and complicated analysis, medical technologists detect the presence of cancer or sickle cell anemia, identify infectious viruses and bacteria and measure glucose and cholesterol in blood, just to name a few.

The evolution of the UG medical technology programme

The formal training of the Medical Technologist at the University of Guyana began in 1966. Prior to 1966, medical technologists were trained and certified under the auspices of the Society of Medical Technologists attached to the University of West Indies.

Representatives of the Ministry of Health and the University of Guyana – Faculty of Natural Sciences led by Professor Harold Drayton, met on numerous occasions and fully developed the syllabus for the Medical Technology programme.

In 1966, the programme was launched by the Department of Biology in the Faculty of Natural Sciences as a two-year period of training (practical and theoretical) leading to a Certificate in Medical Technology. There were 3 students at that time. Also, it was possible to do an additional year of specialised study in one of the major areas of Medical Technology (Haematology, Chemical Pathology, Microbiology and Histopathology) and be awarded a Diploma.

The Department of Health Sciences was formed in 1974 and after the establishment of the Faculty of Health Sciences in 1981, the three year Diploma programme continued and in 1988 the Certificate programme was brought to an end. Leading up to 1997, there was a CAREC/PAHO/WHO sponsored harmonisation of the Medical Technology programmes throughout the CARICOM Region and consequently, the UG programme was further modified. From 1997 the programme was accredited as an Associate in Science Degree – as with the Diploma programme, students were required to specialise in a specific area. In 1999, the first batch of 35 students graduated.

In 2005 the Programme was accorded full Bachelors Degree status (but students do not specialise - instead they covered all areas) and in 2009 the first batch of 25 students graduated with a BSc degree in Medical Technology.

Some of the graduates later pursued the Bachelor’s Degree in Medicine. Many graduates are now working here in Guyana and in other countries either as Medical Technologists or as Medical Doctors.

UG activities

As the institution responsible for training medical laboratory technologists in Guyana, the University of Guyana also played its role in the observance of National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week. The Department of Medical Technology planned a series of events including An Open House/Exhibition on Thursday, April 28, in the Faculty of Health Sciences. The Department displayed various tests carried out by Medical Technologists. Free testing was also available.

Ms Edé Tyrell
Head, Department of Medical Technology

Mr Dickson Hooper
Lecturer, Department of Medical Technology

Final year Medical Technology students
Professor Tewari appointed Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry

Professor Brij Bhushan Tewari, lecturer in Chemistry and former Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences, has been conferred with the title of Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), Cambridge, United Kingdom. Professor Tewari is now entitled to use the designatory letters FRSC after his name.

According to Dr. David Barn, Membership and Qualification Manager, RSC, Professor Tewari’s name “will be included in a list of recently admitted Fellows of the RSC which will be published in the Times (London) newspaper.”

The University of Guyana congratulates Professor Brij Tewari BSc, MSc, DPhil, FRSC, and wish him well in the future.

Republic Bank holds successful Career Coach

Republic Bank (Guyana) Ltd., in collaboration with the University’s Office of Resource Mobilisation & Planning, conducted its fourth two-day professional development workshop, entitled Career Coach at the Education Lecture Theatre, Turkeyen campus on March 29 & 30.

Career Coach aims at equipping final-year students with the necessary tools for succeeding in today’s work environment. The workshop attracted 123 students from Faculties and Schools on campus.

The theme of the workshop was Propel Your Career and it comprised sessions on: Your Professional Image, facilitated by Ms. Joyce Sinclair, Management & Training Consultant; Résumé Writing, by Mrs. Ingrid Fung, English Teacher; Mastering the Interview, by Ms. Bonita Hunter, Lecturer, School of Education & Humanities; Time Management, by Mrs. Jannis London, Manager’s Assistant, Republic Bank; Money Management, by Mr. Devan Khemraj, Manager, Branch Operations, Republic Bank; Occupational Health & Safety, by Ms. Lydia Greene, Assistant Chief Labour Occupational Safety and Health Officer, Ministry of Labour; and Labour Law & Policies, by Ms. Christine McGowan, Manager, Legal Services, Republic Bank.

Other resource persons included Dr. Ken Hunte, Ms Youlande Foo and Ms. Anita Mohabeer.

Closure of UG is not an option under consideration

With reference to the article in Kaieteur News (April 15) titled “The University of Guyana may be forced to close next year,” the University Administration wishes to advise that while its operation has been challenged for some time by its low financial resources, closure of the Institution is not an option under consideration.

Indeed, various initiatives are being undertaken that are aimed to address the situation.
Today is an historic day in the life of the University. It marks the completion of version 1 of the Students’ Record Management System, a piece of software which is intended to revolutionise the administration of student affairs at the University.

The day is historic because it marks the completion of an in-house project of significant magnitude that was undertaken by the University’s Software Department. At the University of the West Indies, they opted to purchase similar software at a cost over 788,222 USD (157,644,400 GD) with additional cost of 1,299,500 USD (259,900,000 GD) for process services and 119,060 USD (23,812,000 GD) for maintenance. A total cost of 2,206,782 USD (441,356,400 GD) which is equivalent to approximately ⅓ of UG’s budget in any recent year. UG’s circumstances would not have allowed us to purchase, install and operate such software. The University’s often maligned administration, must therefore be recognised for its foresight in establishing the Software Department and the Software Department for delivering the product, the acquisition of which had eluded the University over the years.

However, may I hasten to say that what today marks is more than the production, installation and management of the aforementioned software. This software is but the technological node in a process of restructuring which the University’s Registry has undertaken. The restructuring encompassed the evaluation and upgrading of the jobs in the Registry; the introduction of new procedures across the Registry; and the provision of a wider range of services by the Registry.

The objective being to provide a better quality of service to the students and other users of the system. There are many who have equated what we are doing to online registration, but it is much more than that. It is the management of students’ records, electronically, from application to graduation and beyond. It is the enhancement of efficient and effective delivery of services to our students. It has also introduced a far more user friendly and transparent system of administration of student affairs. Almost every detail is now being made available to students on line.

In that regard, the time is opportune to restate that the University’s Medical Centre recently extended its working hours unto 8:30 h in the evenings and that the Admissions and Examinations Divisions of the Registry will as of Tuesday, May 03, 2011, be rendering uninterrupted service from 8:30 h to 20:30 h from Monday – Friday and from 9:00 h to 12:00 h on Saturdays.

Now that the Registry is fairly settled, in terms of its reorganised structure and operations, it will be undertaking an outreach to other internal stakeholders, including the Students’ Loan Agency (SLA) in an effort to create greater synergies with those bodies. Some of this has already occurred, and is evident in the operation of the Bursary and the integration of the Faculties into the electronic administration of the students’ records.

It therefore means that as we receive version I of the SRMS, which will now be managed in the Registry, we will immediately embark upon the development of version II which will accommodate the embrace that was referred to earlier as much as it will seek to enhance version I.
The Registry is most grateful to all of the actors who contributed to the progress that has been made, so far. In that regard, special mention has to be made of Mr Sekhar, the Software Engineer and his team.

The support of the University’s Administration has also been critical. The commitment and the tireless work of the team in the Registry should also be recognised, even as we continue the journey with the completion of our flow charts, the production of our manuals and the intense training of our staff being the immediate tasks ahead of us. We are also eagerly looking forward to the Government’s stated intention to include UG in its e-government network and the opportunities that that should present for the establishment of a UG wide area network.

Today, as we mark this milestone, we also acknowledge that there is much more to be done. In that regard we solicit the continued support of our partners.

May I close in saying that our CUP is not half empty, it is half full and our vision is to keep filling it even as we upgrade its size. We are on the march, probably to be ridiculed but never to be distracted.

Vincent Alexander
Registrar
April 29, 2011

Health Sciences to research tropical diseases

The Faculty of Health Sciences in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Caribbean Opedimeological Centre, World Health Organisation and Pan American Health Organisation, plans to implement a US$210,000 research that will study three tropical diseases in Guyana.

According to Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Dr Emanuel Cummings, the research will focus on the diseases of Dengue Fever, Leishmaniasis ("Bush Yaws") and Chagas Disease. The research will also involve the students from the Faculties of Natural Sciences, Agriculture and Forestry, and Social Sciences.

This new development in the Faculty of Health Sciences aims to significantly contribute towards the further improvement of Guyana’s health sector.