



UNIVERSITY OF WEST INDIES UPDATE

Remarks by:
The Hon. Dame Jennifer M. Smith, DBE, JP, DHumL, MP

Minister of Education

10, May 2011

Good afternoon,

Ladies and gentlemen, the Ministry of Education recognises that it is critical to develop strategic partnerships with overseas learning institutions in order to ensure that our students are afforded the best possible opportunities to reach their full potential.

Last August, then Premier Dr. the Hon. Ewart F. Brown, signed an **Agreement with the University of West Indies (UWI)** agreeing that Bermuda would become an Associate Contributing Member of the University.

This relationship with the University provides our students with access to 800 undergraduate degree courses, which span three campuses in - Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad.

In light of the fact that the Agreement is set to be operative by September of this year, it was vital that we meet UWI officials face to face to determine the details of the agreement.

Accordingly, two weeks ago, a delegation composed of myself, the Permanent Secretary Mr. Warren Jones, the President of the Bermuda College Dr. Duranda Greene and the Ministry of Education Policy Analyst Mrs. Kimberley McKeown visited the Mona Campus of the University in Kingston, Jamaica.

During our visit, we met with senior members of the University including Vice Chancellor Dr. Nigel Harris, Principal Dr. Gordon Shirley, and we also had an opportunity to meet with the Minister of Education, the Hon. Andrew Holness.

We toured the UWI facilities, including the University Hospital, School of Nursing, School of Education, School of Medicine, School of Social Sciences, Port Royal Marine Laboratory and Biodiversity Centre, University Library and the International Centre.

I point out that Bermuda's status as an Associate Contributing Member of the University is a new and unique status created expressly for Bermuda. All other contributing members allow the University to own land in their countries.

Outside of the funding for scholarships, our annual commitment to UWI is **thirty-seven thousand Bermuda dollars**. This represents Bermuda's contribution to

the University's hospital where those studying nursing or medicine do their practicum.

We believe that the cost benefits to our students and their families is extremely attractive in this current economic climate.

I think it's important to note that that Dr. Greene was also present in Jamaica. We have managed to do some extraordinary things at the Bermuda College under the guidance and direction of Dr. Greene and I want to take this opportunity to thank her for her pioneering efforts.

In Jamaica, Dr. Greene held talks with the Heads of the School of Nursing, the School of Education and the Director of the Open University. She may wish to say something about the options and opportunities BC students will be afforded through the University of the West Indies.

I am pleased to announce that the Ministry has developed criteria for UWI Scholarships. There will be a total of **four** (4) undergraduate and **one** (1) graduate scholarship available.

We have also requested the names and areas of study of any Bermudian students seeking to be admitted for the 2011/12 school year since the application date for the upcoming school year has passed.

Finally, the possibilities created by our relationship with the University of the West Indies are limitless! It means that Bermudian students now have a wider sphere to choose from in terms of tertiary educational options which can only benefit their educational and personal growth, understanding and development.

Thank you.