



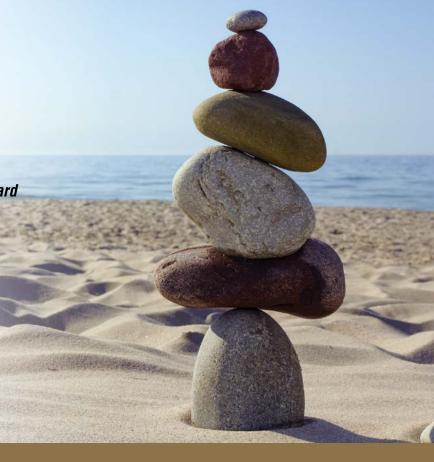
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Antigua and Barbuda National Accreditation Board

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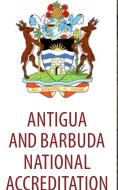
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ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA NATIONAL ACCREDITATION BOARD

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**BOARD** 



### FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MRS. ELOISE HAMILTON

## QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

I doubt that there will be people in progressive societies araue about the value of education for all. It regarded by many as a social good and aovernments all the world try to provide greater access to education for its citizens. Some of the more affluent countries have been able to achieve the goal of providing free education up to the tertiary level.

At the level of the individual, the empowering effect of a sound education has enabled persons to move towards the fulfillment of their personal or professional goals. For many families, education has been a way out of poverty. At great sacrifice, parents provide the best education for their children with the expectation that they will obtain good jobs or even become good

entrepreneurs, and so become financially secure. Communities have been transformed because residents have been able to have greater access to quality education.

The provision of quality education goes beyond benefits for the individual and families however. An educated citizenry is a powerful tool. Throughout the region, there are both private and public tertiary level institutions which provide the academic and technical knowledge so important for development. Nation-building is enhanced with a more qualified and productive workforce, and greater creativity and innovativeness have been realised.

In this issue of our newsletter, you will find that, in addition to our regular features and updates on the activities of ABNAB, some emphasis is placed on the socio-economic impact that the provision of quality education can have, and indeed is having, on the countries in the region.

Specific mention is made of Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis and also Trinidad and Tobago where quality assurance in education is having significant quantifiable benefits like jobs, cultural diversity and most importantly, impact on the GDP.

In addition, reflections on the CANQATE Conference 2015 in St. Kitts 2015 are highlighted.

The theme of that conference was "Quality Assurance and Socioeconomic Development-Regional and International Perspectives".

Quality in education must be prioritized.

Enjoy your reading.

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#### **ACCREDITATION OFFICER,** EUSTACE HILL, INTERVIEWS ABIIT'S INTERN RASHON OSBORNE ABOUT THE WEBSITE HE BUILT FOR ABNAB



## LOCAL ACTIVITIES

- Intern Rashon Osborne
- **ABNAB Visits**
- Presentations" a Priority for our School **Visits**
- Comments from Secondary School Principals on ABNAB's Visit
- **Growing Interest in Programme**

- Interview with ABIIT
- **Stakeholders**
- Making "Quality

**Accreditation** 

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal. It is the

Winston Churchill

#### O. What were you asked to do?

A. To build a website that is unique to ABNAB, and also to stay coherent with the previous branding.

#### Q. Could you outline the

#### specific areas that you were given to address?

A. I was asked to address the following three issues: Content, design and functionality:

Content

Design

*Ensuring that content is* clear cut and attractive. Ensuring the design

utilizes the three main colors of ABNAB

**Functionality** Ensuring the necessary

functionalities are put in place to make the website user friendly.

#### Q. What methods did you utilize to accomplish the stated goals?

A. I dealt with issues concerning the color, the design and the features/functionality in the following ways:

#### a) Concerning the colors of ABNAB:

- The maroon color was the most dominant color so it was used as the base color
- The remaining colors were used for the other elements

#### b) Concerning the Design:

- I used the design from the previous branding to make it coherent
- c) Concerning the Features/ **Functionality:**

I ensured that the following features were in the website:

- 1. Internal Links
- **2. External Links** to Social Networks like Twitter. Face book, and Instagram
- **3. Search Bar** to search for any item in the website
- **4. Analytics** this provides information on Gender, Age, Demographics and so on)
- **5. Contact Form** so that we can be easily contacted
- **6. Google Maps** and slider for easy location of our premises

#### Q. What were the results of your methods?

- A. A completed website with a unique design specific to ABNAB, and in addition, the design and layout are very minimal and professional. As a result, the website is easy to understand and very user friendly, and the links and functionality work well.
- Q. What letter grade were you given from the eight member Board of ABNAB for the work done on the website and also for your presentation?
- A. I was given an A.
- Q. Congratulations Rashon. You have done excellently. Your internship has added significant value to ABNAB, and we would be delighted to recommend you to any prospective employer. Every success in your future endeavors; it was an honour and a pleasure working with you. By the way, can I visit the website?
- A. Yes. It will be live later this month, so keep checking.



#### **LOCAL ACTIVITIES**

#### **ABNAB VISITS STAKEHOLDERS**

ABNAB has been visiting and making presentations to a number of its cherished stakeholders over the past several months. These stakeholders include the American University of Antigua (AUA), the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers. Here are some observations and comments.

#### AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ANTIGUA (AUA)

Mr. Vernon Solomon, Vice President for Administrative Services and Community Affairs



University of Antigua is one of our most important stakeholders. AUA is a medical school with an international student body operating in Antigua since 2004. In 2011, its enrolment reached 1950 students. Furthermore, in 2012, AUA was approved by the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) as the leader in international medical education, the only medical school with this approval.

AUA is accredited by Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and other Health Professions (CAAM-HP). CAAM-HP is an accrediting body for medical, veterinary, and dental schools in the 15 member nations of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). CAAM-HP was established in 2003. AUA is one of the Caribbean Medical schools to be accredited by CAAM-HP, approved by New York State Education Department, recognized by the Medical Board of California and licensed by the Commission for Independent Education of the Florida Department of Education.

On January 22nd 2016, ABNAB paid a visit to the Campus and met with Mr. Vernon Solomon, the Vice President for Administrative Services and Community Affairs. In our discussions, we outlined the new ABNAB procedures for the registration of institutions. We also spoke about ABNAB's role in encouraging and supporting institutions as they seek to raise standards and develop a quality culture.

#### MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Mrs. Rosa Greenaway Permanent Secretary Education, Science and Technology



#### THE ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA UNION OF TEACHERS

Mr Ashworth Azille, President Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers (A&BUT)



ABNAB was very surprised and a bit disturbed to learn that many officers in the Ministry of Education were not aware of the services and activities of ABNAB. As a consequence, with the support of the Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Rosa Greenaway, a meeting was arranged for 25th February 2016

All technical and administrative staff members were required to be in attendance. In our presentation we explained in great detail the work at ABNAB, and pointed out the various ways that we could work together for the cause of Education. Very pleasingly, in the interactive session, the participants came up with a plethora of strategies for collaboration with the Ministry. One such collaboration became a reality on Thursday, June 2, 2016 when a workshop with 22 School Counsellors was convened at the National Public Library.

Mrs. Rosa Greenaway expressed her sincere appreciation for the overtures made by ABNAB. The Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers (A&BUT) is another important stakeholder. We arranged to meet with the members of their executive body to enlighten them about our services and to enlist their support for the work of ABNAB. We also stressed the importance of the information provided for the teachers in their own lives as they pursued further education. The presentation was well received. At the end of the presentation, Mr. Ashworth Azille, President of Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers (A&BUT), thanked ABNAB publicly and registered the support of the Union.

The teachers left the session armed with relevant information that they could share with their students and other teachers.

#### **LOCAL ACTIVITIES**



#### MAKING "QUALITY PRESENTATIONS" A PRIORITY FOR OUR SCHOOL VISITS

During this academic year (2015-16), a concerted effort was made to make "Quality Presentations, a Priority" as we made our visits to the secondary schools in Antigua and Barbuda. Undoubtedly, this strategic initiative was intended to fulfill our mandate to "promote an ethos of quality in Antigua and Barbuda," by example not just by precept.

#### **SCHOOLS VISITED**

This year, our goal is to visit the 21 secondary schools including our sister island Barbuda. It is our intention to address the 1202 fifth form students. To date, we have visited 16 of the 21 secondary schools and have addressed 956 students.

Last year, for the first time, ABNAB visited the government secondary schools. However, the experience was so enlightening, so invigorating and so inspiring that a decision was made to make annual visits to both government and private schools.

#### **OUR CHALLENGE TO STUDENTS**

As we visited the schools this year, we shared passionately the need for all students to achieve a tertiary education. We bemoaned the present numbers of Antiguans and Barbudans accessing tertiary education to a first degree level, in spite of the significant strides made by the Board of Education. The Board of Education has invested 100 million dollars in scholarships in the past 21 years.

We argued that if we are to be competitive as a nation; the number of persons

attending University must drastically increase.

Trinidad boasts of 57%, USA 65% and Japan 98% assessing tertiary education. The unconfirmed percentage for Antigua and Barbuda is less than 20%. This, we stated, is untenable.

#### **ENSURING EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION**

To ensure quality presentation, we adhered to all the best practices in "Effective Public Speaking". With the precision and skill of a brain surgeon, we followed the relevant tips for "before, during and after" presentations.

We engaged the students. We informed them. We inspired them. We disturbed them.

We shocked them with the exponential **C**ost of tertiary education; intrigued them with the varied **O**pportunities offered by colleges; unveiled the need to go for **L**egitimate colleges as we walked them through the continuum of "Diploma Mills to Accredited Colleges". Then we offered them the possible **L**ocation options including on-line learning; then asked them to consider their preferred **E**nvironment. We told them to **G**enerate a list

of about four (4) colleges, then choose two (2). Finally, we requested that they make a decision based on extensive research of the varied **E**xperiences of many. Hence, the use of the acronym **COLLEGE**.

#### **THEIR PLEDGE**

Most importantly, having walked them through our "7 Tips for choosing the right overseas college", we asked them to pledge that they will be the first member of their family to have a Bachelor's, Master's or even a Doctoral Degree.

Then, we encouraged them to take home the signed hand-out in order to have a serious and intelligent conversation with their parents.

#### **FUTURE**

As we complete the five (5) remaining schools in the next several weeks, we will attempt to further enhance our presentation by having an evaluation by the students. However, for this issue of the newsletter, we have asked some principals to share with you their assessment of our presentation.





#### **COMMENTS FROM SECONDARY SCHOOL** PRINCIPALS ON ABNAB'S VISIT

We asked the following Principals to comment on ABNAB's visit to their schools. The Principals included: Mr. Samuel Roberts-Antigua Grammar School, Mrs. Rosemond Dinard-Gordon (Deputy), Pares Secondary School, Mrs. Joanne Boulos-Callias - St. Anthony's Secondary, Mr. Casey Phillip- St. Mary's Secondary School, and Mr. John Mussington - Sir Mc Chesney George Secondary School

Mr. Samuel Roberts - Principal Antiqua Grammar School

The presentation was very informative and the feedback from the students suggests that they left presentation much more

informed than they were prior to the discussion.

Paramount in their discussion was the topic of accredited universities as opposed to diploma mills. This was something that they had apparently never given any consideration and they were indeed grateful for the enlightenment provided.

The delivery by Mrs. Hamilton and Mr. Hill was very well received. Students are always more receptive when addressed by experienced teachers. The mode of presenting the material made it more interactive and added just the right amount of visuals which ably supported the speakers.

Mrs. Joanne **Boulos-Callias Principal** St. Anthony Secondary School

Sessions like this one held by Mrs. Hamilton Mr. Hill are extremely important

and beneficial to our students. Very often, they are not sure which course of study they want to pursue; where they want to go; and how to interpret the amount of information which bombards them once they go on-line to start searching for possible Colleges and Universities. The help given in these sessions to decide what option would be best, most affordable and at an institution that is "recognized" is of utmost importance.



Mrs. Rosemond **Dinard-Gordon Deputy Principal** Pares Secondary School- (Ag)

I had the distinct pleasure of sitting and participating in a presentation to my

fifth form students by Mrs. Eloise Hamilton and Mr. Eustace Hill.

I was particularly pleased how both presenters utilized technology to bring across their message. Additionally, their personal examples of university experiences were auite interestina.

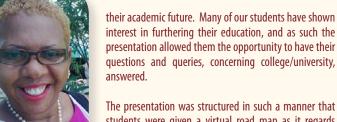
end, sufficient and vital information was available to the students. Students' questions were answered and in the end, they were better equipped to make wise choices about the cost of Tertiary Education pertinent to their needs. In addition, students were able to differentiate between "Diploma Mills and Accredited Universities".

I, too, was able to learn much, and was happy to have

Mr. Phillip **Principal** St. Mary's Secondary School

The presentation made by the National Accreditation Board to the Form Five students and staff of St. Mary's Secondary was timely, well structured and informative.

The presentation came at a most opportune with regards to our form five students getting information pertinent to



The presentation was structured in such a manner that students were given a virtual road map as it regards college/university preparation, the pitfalls to avoid and the best possible options in choosing a college/university.

The information presented was most informative providing both students and staff with a wealth of knowledge in the college/university preparation process.

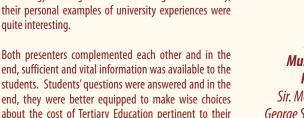
Mr. John Mussington **Principal** Sir. Mc Chesney George Secondary School

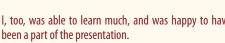
The presentation made to students and staff was quite informative.

There is now the awareness that there is an Antigua and Barbuda National Accreditation Board and that knowing whether or not programs and institutions are accredited can save you money and prevent embarrassment.

The presenters were well organized and the delivery was such that both students and staff were kept engaged.

There was the added bonus of useful advice on planning one's career path. This was quite motivating for the students. We all look forward to further collaboration with the team at the National Accreditation Board.









#### **LOCAL ACTIVITIES**

## GROWING INTEREST IN PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION



At ABNAB, we have spent much time and effort in spreading the message of quality in education.

"No quality, no quantifiable value from ABNAB's point of view" is our unapologetic message.

We have encouraged education providers to strive for higher standards, and to ensure that they deliver quality. On the other side of the coin, we have encouraged students and potential students to look for and demand quality from their education providers.

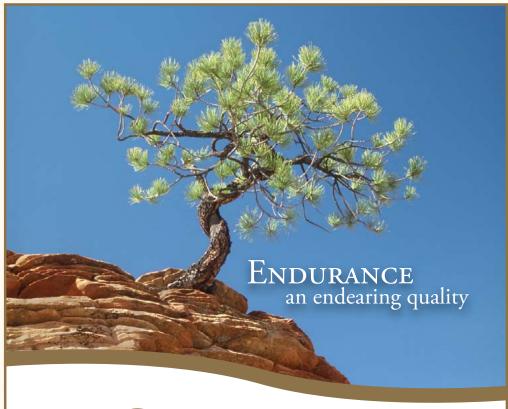
As a consequence, a number of these providers have come forward.

Over the past several months, ABNAB has had separate meetings with providers interested in obtaining programme accreditation. In some instances, the providers were themselves interested in taking that 'next step' to improve standards, and provide certification for graduates which would be fully recognized. In other cases, pressure came from the students who wanted the assurance that they were enrolled in an approved/accredited programme.

In each meeting, we indicated that the same rigour needed for institutional accreditation is also needed for programme accreditation. In short, the providers were told that their institutions must have financial viability, demonstrate good governance and also provide quality accommodation. In addition, they were informed that their lecturers must be from accredited or recognised universities possess professional qualification and furthermore, they must pursue continuing professional development.

ABNAB sees this interest in programme accreditation as an indicator that the message of quality in education is being heard. Institutions realize that it is in their best interest to improve quality and students are expecting quality, and if they do not find it, they are demanding it.

At the end of the day, Antigua and Barbuda will have a higher quality education because ABNAB adheres to internationally recognised standards and procedures.





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## ST GEORGE'S UNIVERSITY – THE MECCA OF CARIBBEAN EDUCATIONAL TOURISM

#### Colin E. Dowe - Associate Dean of Enrollment Planning

## REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

- St. George's University -Mecca of Caribbean Educational Tourism
- Quality Assurance and Socio-Economic
   Development the St. Kitts-Nevis
   Experience
- Reflections on CANQATE
  Conference 2015
- Quality Assurance and Socio-Economic Development - the Trinidad and Tobago Experience

"Economic prosperity and quality education for our children are inexorably linked"

John Huntsman Jr.

On January 17, 1977, St. George's University opened its doors to classes with fewer than 100 students. Today, this same University has expanded into a multidisciplinary global education center, educating thousands of students from all over the world and boasting almost 15,000 graduates. The **University maintains scores** of academic and scientific programs and affiliations that have at their center the major campus city established almost 40 years ago on the True Blue peninsula.

The University's student enrollment currently stands at just over 7000 with almost 1500 of those students being Caribbean citizens enrolled in its degree and certificate programs, or simply taking courses of interest.

There are over 2000 Caribbean graduates, who achieved degrees in medicine, veterinary medicine, business, public health, or another of the University's 43 academic degree programs.

To ensure that tertiary education is not only available, but accessible to as many as possible, each year the University awards over EC \$30,000,000 in scholarships. The University's faculty, staff and students are involved in many community outreach programs,

running fund-raisers for local charities, ecological programs, education programs, health fairs, and other activities that benefit the local communities.

Over 800 staff members, over 400 faculty, over 3,800 on-island non-Grenadian students and all their visitors, resulting in all the activities associated with living and doing and buying in Grenada, added to the direct contributions of the University, means that St. George's University is responsible for injecting over EC \$268,000,000 into the local economy annually.

In addition, St. George's University has created an intellectual academic environment that entices West Indians who had moved abroad to come back to the region, and be a part of this thriving academic community which boasts many accreditations, approvals and outstanding performance outcomes.

#### BRINGING THE WORLD TO GRENADA AND GRENADA TO THE WORLD

The University has brought thousands upon thousands of students and faculty to Grenada from over 140 countries. Many are accompanied by family members and friends, who in turn tell others about the beautiful island and people of Grenada.

The University also draws visiting faculty and scientists who travel to the school to teach every year. Now, as word of St. George's spreads, scientific, educational, and medical associations are choosing to host their meetings at the University, with their members enjoying all the island has to offer in their off time.

The University's allied Windward Islands Research and Education Foundation emphasizes indigenous work by indigenous people, and as such, its scientists have investigated and defined solutions for dengue fever, rheumatic fever, hypertension, and diabetes, among others. Their findings have gone a long way to solving long-standing public health problems.

As St. George's University moves towards celebrating its 40th anniversary, it has built a unique partnership that is reforming the social norms of international education as it lifts the aspirations of Caribbean citizens. With its new President, Dr. G. Richard Olds at the helm, the University looks forward to further bolstering an already unique and exceptional connection with the people of the Caribbean.

Information on St. George's University is available at www.sgu.edu, and through YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter at St. George's.

#### **REGIONAL ACTIVITIES**



# QUALITY ASSURANCE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT — THE ST. KITTS-NEVIS EXPERIENCE

## Dr. Robertine Chaderton - Former Chair, St. Christopher and Nevis Accreditation Board

This article traces the St. Kitts-Nevis experience with Accreditation



Today, there are seven offshore Medical schools in the Federation which the Board monitors.

Over the past two decades, we have witnessed the vast, positive contributions that the tertiary education sector, in particular the five offshore Medical Schools, has had on the indicators such as gross domestic product (GDP), employment rate, construction and cultural diversity

"One of the most powerful tools for empowering individuals and communities is making certain that any individual who wants to receive a quality education can do so."



Chairperson of the CANQATE
Conference 2015
REFLECTIONS
ON CANQATE
CONFERENCE 2015

Dr. Robertine Chaderton -

within our Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis.

It is therefore imperative that we ensure that Quality Assurance remains a priority and a driving force that fuels the development of strategies for the indication and assessments of our current higher education needs. This, in turn, should motivate proactive implementation of policies and procedures that would propel us to achieve our ultimate goal of socioeconomic sustainability and continuity over the long run.

Numerous studies the world over continue to show that educated individuals live longer, participate more actively in politics and in the community where they live, commit fewer crimes and rely less on social assistance. Yet, on average across the Organization for Economic Cooperative and Development (OECD) countries, 35% of women aged 25-64 attain a tertiary education compared with 31% men and the average percentages are even lower in the less developed countries of the world.

With this in mind, it is critically important, especially in our Caribbean Region that we continue to provide, promote and enhance our citizens' access to quality tertiary education.

The theme of the Conference —"Quality Assurance and Socioeconomic Development in a Global Environment-Regional and International Perspectives" was very relevant to us here in the Federation because of the growth of tertiary higher education institutions over the past sixteen years since the Accreditation Act was enacted.

We have the largest number of offshore tertiary education schools in the OECS.

The fact that over 150 participants attended the Conference, to discuss this topic is an indication that they are aware of the importance of maintaining quality in an industry which affects the lives of people across the globe, who come to our shores to study and contribute significantly to social and economic development of St Kitts and Nevis.

Some of the objectives of CANQATE as stated in the Constitution are to:

- Promote and assist in the implementation of best practices in quality assurance (QA) in tertiary education;
- Encourage and support research in the field of OA;
- Network regionally and internationally with similar organisations.

Every effort was made to focus on the



# QUALITY ASSURANCE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO EXPERIENCE

By Sherma O. Joseph – Accreditation Officer – The Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago

The participation in higher education in Trinidad and Tobago grew from 7% in 2001 to 40% seven

years later to the present calculation of 57%. With the projection of a 3% rise in 2015 from the last estimate, it can be understood that catering to the needs of the large volume of students engaging in higher education is an integral factor in maximizing on investment as well as assuring student success.

To propel this mandate to improve participation by undeserved groups within the nation, Trinidad and Tobago has engaged interventions that are designed to assist citizens desirous of engaging in continuous personal development. These financial aids have changed over time from the reduced student loans such as the Dollar for Dollar programme to the current Government Assistance Tuition Expenses (GATE).

This initiative ensures that full tuition for undergraduates in most approved programmes is funded by the state whilst post graduate students pay half of their tuition expenses. Thus, there has been significant financial input over time to ensure that potential students are provided with the financial assistance to support their study.

Accountability, therefore, is a focal issue in this context. The question remains: How have institutions responded to this inherent need to be accountable for its products to its chief funding agency - the Governmentand the people of Trinidad and Tobago?

Within Trinidad and Tobago, there are twelve (12) accredited institutions. These institutions display a level of internal system adaptability that surpasses that of institutions that access the mandatory registration process.

Indeed, quality assurance is making a significant impact.

#### **REGIONAL ACTIVITIES**

#### continued... Reflections on CANQATE Conference 2015

above mentioned objectives.

The topic for the Pre-conference "Assessing and Improving the Financial Health of Educational Institutions" proved useful as it was facilitated by an expert who gave guidance to improve the financial health of educational institutions.

Financial Health is often difficult to achieve with the rising costs of all the components of tertiary level education, but in the Federation, the direct and indirect contribution of the tertiary education sector to the economy is significant.

The deliberations at the conference were critical to sustainable development.

The Plenary and concurrent sessions covered a wide cross section of topics and provided an opportunity for the participants to become the gatekeepers of this important industry, and to take Quality Assurance to another level.

If we reflect on the changes that have taken place in the landscape of tertiary level education since the first CANQATE Conference, we will note that, at that time tertiary level education was delivered mainly face to face to those who could afford to enter universities and colleges. Since then, there has been an exponential growth in the different types of tertiary level providers.

The use of ICT and social media has broken all barriers and borders for the delivery of tertiary level education. Owing to the high demand for tertiary level education, many nontraditional providers in the form of private, cross border, on-line and competency based institutions have come on the scene.

These types of institutions are in business across the Caribbean and St. Kitts and Nevis is no exception. It is their presence which makes it necessary for Quality Assurance

Agencies such as those under the umbrella of CANQATE to function, and functionally effectively and efficiently.

The attendees to the Conference were encouraged to engage in consultations to shape the future of tertiary education in our region. The school principals and Ministry officials from St. Kitts and Nevis were afforded an excellent opportunity to rub shoulders with their colleagues from across the region who are also passionate about Quality Assurance.

It is to be hoped that by their presence, they will create that awareness that the entire Caribbean region will become knowledgeable about the significant role of accreditation.

In all of the activities, the Youth were not forgotten. The CANQATE Board interacted with our school and youth population on both islands in a session entitled "Why Accreditation Matters". This activity will certainly benefit the students when they are making decisions on further education as they pursue lifelong learning.

The Ministry of Education was very appreciative of this interaction with the students.

In addition, the Minister of Education challenged the Conference to do two things in their deliberations:

- (i) Find ways of ensuring that quality does not become a casualty because of the significant impact the tertiary level institutions make to our economies and in our quest to keep education affordable for all.
- (ii) Encourage tertiary level institutions to produce graduates who can find solutions for the problems of the 21st century.

Indeed, CANQATE Conference 2015 was a success.

#### **INTERNATIONAL**

 Quality Assurance and HE Issues Discussed at International Conference

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) annual conference, and International Quality Group (CIQG) meeting took place in Washington DC, from January 25 – 28, 2016 at the Capital Hilton Hotel, under the theme: "The Future is Now: Where Is Accreditation?"

#### QUALITY ASSURANCE AND HE ISSUES DISCUSSED AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

by Dr. Yvonnette Marshall, Executive Director, The University Council of Jamaica (UCJ)

Dr. Yvonnette Marshall, Executive Director, and Mr Richard Rose, Director, Communications and Public Education from the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ), attended both events.

Theplenaryandconcurrent sessions included discussions on managing student aid; consumer protection from roque institutions; graduation and completion rates; programme and student learning outcomes; establishing benchmarks; and the growth of nontraditional providers and on-line education.

The CIQG meeting under the theme "Quality Assurance and Accreditation: Multiple Demands; Multiple Challenges" opened with a presentation from Dr Dirk Van Damme, Head of the Innovation and Measuring Progress Division, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Dr. Van Damme said that there is an "explosion of demand" taking place in parts of the world where quality assurance systems are much younger and their capacity is being challenged. He indicated that in 2013, there were 140 million students and by 2030, there is likely to be between 300-400 million based on current trends.

Dr. Van Damme noted that there was greater student mobility, with over 50 per cent of the students coming from Asia; an increase in the cost of education; and the need for institutions to demonstrate more than in previous years, that a degree from their institution was worth the investment.

The CIQG annual meeting closed with Dr Judith Eaton, President of CHEA, inviting delegates to work more closely with CHEA through the signing of a new Memorandum of Affiliation (MoA).



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

**BOARD** 

Dr Yvonnette Marshall, Executive Director, the UCJ (right), with Dr Varda Ben-Shaul, Deputy Director-General for Quality Assurance at the Council for Higher Education (CHE), Israel (left); Ms Michal Neumann, Deputy Director-General for Academic Affairs and Secretary of the CHE; and Dr Steven Parscale, Chief Accreditation Officer, Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs, Kansas, USA.



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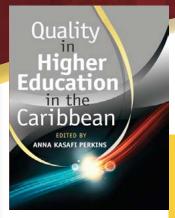
## SPECIAL FEATURE

Quality
 in Higher
 Education in
 the Caribbean'

Edited by Anna Kasaki Perkins-Observations from Eustace Hill

"Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all"

Aristotle



'Quality in Higher Education in the Caribbean' – edited by Anna Kasaki Perkins is a welcome addition to our small collection here at the Antigua and Barbuda National Accreditation Board (ABNAB).

On a personal note, it is good to look through the list of contributors and see familiar names such as Ruby. S. Alleyne, Pamela Dottin and E. Nigel Harris. In addition, "In memory of Peter Whiteley" brings back fond memories of meeting and interacting with Peter at CXC marking and grading exercises. At that time, he functioned as Chief Examiner for Physics, while I functioned as Assistant Chief Examiner in Chemistry. May his commitment to education be long remembered and cherished.

Having only been Accreditation Officer for less than two years, it is good to find a book that looked at the sometimes esoteric discipline of "Quality Assurance", especially in the context of the Caribbean. Previous to this position, I had been an educator for nearly 37 years, and never knew or even appreciated the discipline of "Quality Assurance".

It was good to follow the "coming of age" of the quality assurance in the region and to appreciate the internal and external factors that are responsible for the growth of the movement.

I must admit a bit of disappointment when I observed that the problem of "Quality Assurance" in the OECS in particular, and the need for stronger institutional structures were not specifically addressed.

## OBSERVATIONS FROM EUSTACE HILL

Accreditation Officer - ABNAB

Nonetheless, critical issues such as financing higher education, cross-border and on line education and the impact of science and technology and quality management systems which were carefully addressed.

Massive(ly) Open Online Courses (MOOC) - Opportunity or Threat to Caribbean Higher Education engaged my attention as I reflected on the increasing number of students who are attempting degrees on line. However, I must agree with the author when he says, "that while MOOCs will have a profound impact on higher education, especially the distance mode,

it will not supplant the traditional brick and mortar" university but will provide useful and effective supplementation to offerings to students."

Indeed, there are many issues facing quality education in the region, and it is good to learn from the expertise and experiences of our own Caribbean people as they provide practical solutions through checklists, frameworks, models and the like.

A welcome addition, I recommend "Quality in the Higher Education in the Caribbean" highly, especially for quality assurance practitioners in the region.

Congratulations to the editor and the many contributors.



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## DISCUSSION POINT

Mandatory IT
Training for Senior
Managers
in Government To Be Or Not To Be?

Why is the uptake so small after so much hype, after so much cost, after so much work to develop the addresses? The answer is simple. There is NO policy to discourage the use of personal email addresses for government business. The practice persists because the use of designated government email addresses is not mandatory. Neither is there an incentive to ensure compliance.

But if you thought that observation was interesting, you should discover the number of ministries who do not utilize the modern technologies of websites and electronic newsletters for increased productivity and information sharing. Our survey showed that of 17 departments of government, only 9 (53%) have functional websites and only 1 (6%) has a newsletter. How much information could be shared with the general public through these media? Tell me.

Be kind to the permanent secretaries as you contrast the IT optimization among

"Quality is the result of a carefully constructed cultural environment. It has to be the fabric of the organization, not part of the fabric."

## MANDATORY IT TRAINING FOR SENIOR MANAGERS IN GOVERNMENT TO BE OR NOT TO BE?

Do you know this email address? abnab@ab.gov.ag. No.

Well, let me tell you. It is the email address of the Antigua and Barbuda National Accreditation Board. In stark contrast, if you checked the email addresses of the permanent secretaries in Antigua and Barbuda, you would discover that only about 35% use the designated "name of p.s. @ab.gov.ag'. Yes, only 35%, after so many years.

school teachers. Consider for example, the number of teachers in both the primary and secondary schools who still use calculators instead of Microsoft Excel to add up midterm and end of year grades. Consequently, they are unable to quickly provide simple statistics like range, mean, median and mode, and so provide a more holistic analysis of the grades. Consider the number of schools with no functional Internet service, no website, no electronic newsletter, no electronic directory. Imagine teaching without integration of the awesome power of the Internet.

Yes, these deficiencies persist unabated, in spite of the investment by the government to provide teachers with laptops, and training, and the like. Regrettably, there is No IT Culture; no clearly articulated and publicized policy to ensure IT optimization, no monitoring of the policy, no accountability, no.......

Would you like to consider the money spent on meetings overseas which could be done through the IT tools such as "Go to Meetings". In fact, on average, airfare, accommodation and per diem represent on average 90% cost of meetings. Consider the savings!

But, let us continue the debate. How many businesses allow their managers to use smart phones to improve efficiency, and also save on overseas calls by using tools like WhatsApp? How many offices reconstruct the same information over and over, when that information could be in a template, reproduced expeditiously and so save time, money and expertise?

Don't even begin to think of the frustration of the IT savvy graduate from the Antigua and Barbuda International Institute of Technology or the Antigua State College who enters a government employ and is



NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

faced with dated technology. The point is clear.

Quality education, quality government and quality business are impossible in this IT Centric age without the gatekeepers (managers) being adequately IT trained. The gatekeepers- the managers are the crafters, implementers, evaluators and catalysts for the policies. So where there is no "vision", the people perish.

I am confident that the point has been made, but for the benefit of the 2% who are still on the fence-unconvinced, let me share seven (7) specific reasons why "Special IT Training for senior managers should be mandatory".

- **1)** Most senior managers are between the ages 45 to 59 years old.
- 2) Senior managers belong to a group which many like to call techno-immigrants.

  Regrettably, IT does not come naturally; it is neither part of their DNA or their culture.
- **3)** Left on their own, the present pattern will be repeated, and only 35% or less will comply with a strategic plan for IT optimization.
- **f**) Senior managers are part of the leadership

Philip Crosby



continued.. **Mandatory IT Training for Senior** Managers in Government team, and it is impossible to lead what you do not understand or feel passionate about.

- Human beings gravitate to what is comfortable and easy, senior managers are no different.
- Even if senior managers had formal IT Training previously, the IT technology is so expansive and is expanding that updates and customized training are imperative.
- Too much is at stake for one

strategically placed group to impede the progress of "the most"the nation.

In the next edition of this newsletter, we look at the content, teaching methods, assessment and evaluation strategies for the mandatory training of senior managers in the government service.

As Michael Fullan says, "Good ideas with no ideas on how to implement them are wasted ideas"



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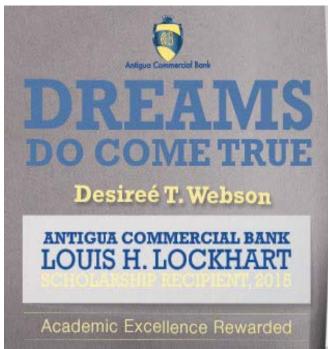
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## Why EDPM in form four and IT in form five for international competitiveness in schools in Antigua and Barbuda?

The dramatic increase in IT training started with Hon Lester Bryant Bird (former Prime Minister). Under his leadership, the Free Zone Institute and subsequently ABIIT (Antigua and Barbuda International Institute of Technology) were created. Undoubtedly, he envisioned how IT would envelop our world, and impact our daily activities, and therefore he was relentless in his pursuit.

Dr. Edmund Mansoor (former Minister responsible for IT) continued this vision with innovations such as ICT Fest, GATE and Tablets for students. These initiatives attempted to create an IT culture and perpetuate the vision of an IT Centric nation, which was started by Mr. Bird.

However, there appears to be a critical error, a colossal miscalculation which must be corrected immediately.

IT was not and is not pervasive in the schools, neither formally or informally.

Check out the facts carefully for yourself in the table below from the Ministry of Education showing the uptake of IT and EDPM compared to Mathematics.

Table 1 - IT and I	EDPM 2011-2015
--------------------	----------------

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
IT	311 or 32 %	439 or 26%	430 or 25%	439 or 26 %	394 or 26%
EDPM	377 or 39%	524 or 32%	506 or 30%	508 or 31%	396 or26%
Total IT/EDPM	688 or 70	963 or 58%	936 or 55%	947 or 57%	790 or 52%

As recent as 2015, only 32% and 39% of students took IT and EDPM respectively.

In fact, the confusion between EDPM and IT is pervasive. Students who graduate with EDPM every year attempt to do IT at A Levels. They are usually shocked to find out that the IT at A' Levels is not an extension of EDPM. There is no A'Level EDPM.

EDPM is basically typing with the Office Suite (Word, Excel, Access and Power Point) and the Internet. These are very important skills for ALL students. Today's high powered executive does not require a typist to type his hand written work. He "thinks" with his head and hands.

Admittedly, some of the skills in EDPM are included in IT. However, IT is so much more. IT is a Science. Students need this science for both business and science related areas.

Consequently, we need now to fast track and find a strategy to ensure significantly more students take EDPM, and also IT, and so help to enhance the IT culture in the schools.

One option is for students to do CXC EDPM at form 4, and then IT at form 5. This is already being done is some schools.

#### Here, however, are seven (7) reasons why EDPM should be done in form four and IT in form five.

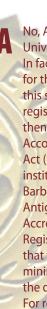
- EDPM at form 4 and IT at form 5 ensures more persons to be exposed to IT, and so, provide that critical mass of workers to meet the current IT needs and also those for export.
- 2. EDPM needs to be seen for what it is a tool a tool to be mastered for use in all other areas, e.g. IT.
- 3. IT has the type of academic rigor which is an excellent training for the young pliable minds.
- 4. More persons taking IT will result in a more marketable workplace. Consequently, more persons likely to enter expanding areas such as computer repair, software engineering, computer engineering and data management.
- The EDPM/IT combination means a more IT proficient nation, therefore an attraction for international investments because of a skilled workforce.
- The goal of Antigua and Barbuda to become the "economic powerhouse of the region" cannot be realized without a strong IT culture in the schools.
- 7. The EDPM/IT combination is equal in importance to Mathematics and English and therefore should be pursued by both science and business students.

We need to hear your views on this topic.



#### **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

Is ABNAB involved in the development of the University of Antigua and Barbuda?



No, ABNAB is not involved with the University of Antigua and Barbuda. In fact, it would not be proper for the agency to be involved at this stage. Our functions will be registration, in the first instance, and then accreditation, if sought. According to The Accreditation Act (No. 4 of 2008) all tertiary institutions in Antigua and Barbuda must register with the Antiqua and Barbuda National Accreditation Board (ABNAB). Registration is necessary to ensure that the institution meets the minimum standards required for the delivery of tertiary education. For registration, a number of areas are examined before the Certificate

of Registration can be issued. Areas that have be looked at include the physical plant, the governance structure, the programmes offered, the qualifications of the lecturers, its financial stability, teaching and learning resources, and student support systems in place.

While registration is mandated by law, accreditation is not. Tertiary institutions in Antiqua and Barbuda choose whether or not they want to seek accreditation. Accreditation requires an examination of the same areas as registration, but this time the bar is raised. Evaluators will not be looking for minimum standards, but will be looking for a degree of

quality in all the operations of the institution.

When called upon, ABNAB will be able to perform its functions with the assistance of local evaluators who successfully completed a training course some time ago, as well as other evaluators in the region who can be called upon if needed. Evaluators are critical and ABNAB will be conducting another training course in a few months in order to increase the number of qualified evaluators available. Persons who are interested in being part of this upcoming course can contact us at ABNAB for further information.

#### **VISION STATEMENT:**

To be the enabler of a quaranteed system of quality assurance in tertiary education in Antiqua and Barbuda.

#### **SERVICES OFFERED** BY ABNAB:

- Free Quarterly Newsletter
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- **Equivalence Assessment**
- **Institutional Strengthening** and Development Workshops
- Visits to Schools

#### **WHO WE ARE**

The Antiqua and Barbuda National Accreditation Board (ABNAB) was established in 2006 by an Act of Parliament (No 4 of 2006)

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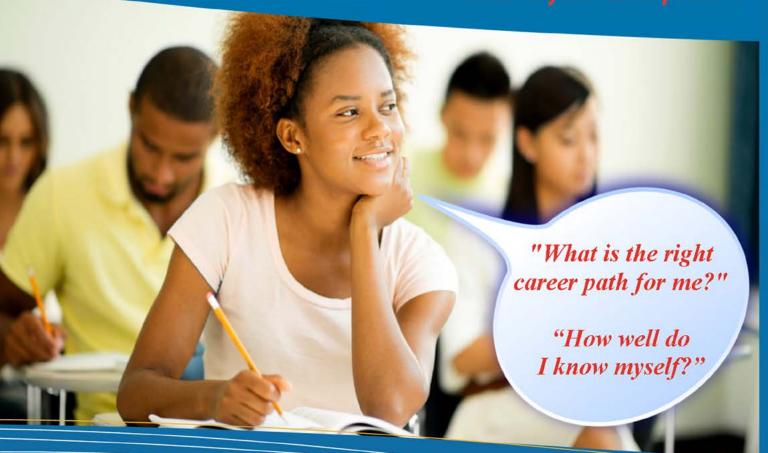
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# Compratulations

The services offered by ABNAB are unquestionably aligned to ensure quality education in Antigua & Barbuda. We at GIC are proud to endorse and encourage this promotion to education in Antigua & Barbuda to the Antigua & Barbuda National Accreditation Board on the launch of their website.





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