Welcome
to the new Academic Year

What's Inside

- **University Coordinator's Welcome**

- **One on One**
  with Mr. Cranston Ewan, IMCA Ja. Ltd

- **From Co-op Ed to Employment**

- **Week of Welcome 2016**

- **Student Testimonials**

- **Summer 2016 Pictorial Highlights**

- **Career Corner**

- **Producing Globally Competitive Engineering Graduates**

Leon Malcolm
3rd year Student, Faculty of Law and
Academic Advisor, UTech, Ja. Students' Union

One on One
with
Mr. Cranston Ewan, IMCA Ja. Ltd

IMCA Jamaica Limited has partnered with UTech, Ja. through the Co-operative Education (Co-op Ed) Unit in creating Co-op Ed and career opportunities for our under-graduate students. We conducted an interview with Mr. Cranston Ewan, an Administrative Manager at IMCA Jamaica Ltd, (IMCA) to highlight this successful relationship.

Q1: How long has your company been partnering with UTech, Ja. and what prompted this decision to partner with the Institution?

A: IMCA has been partnering with the Institution since 2013.
The decision to partner with UTech, Ja. was based on my previous experience as a mentor to business students, the need to contribute to the development of young graduates for workforce readiness, as well as, the need to enhance the quality of the Institution's graduates from a technical perspective.

Q2: What has your experience been like, having partnered with UTech, Ja. Co-op Ed Programme?

A: The experience has been worthwhile especially since we have had students who have gone on to gain meaningful employment at IMCA and other organizations. Through the Programme, those students have become better prepared for employment.

Q3: What value has the students added to your organization and what are some noteworthy projects they've undertaken?

A: Students have been involved in various aspects of the organization, allowing them to gain broad experience. Their contribution to the annual audit exercise and stock count has been exceptional.

Q4: Over the years what strengths have you identified in UTech, Ja.'s students?

A: The students we have engaged tend to be focused, have a strong desire for learning and development and are very dedicated individuals. They are able to match theory with practical application.

As the interview was concluded, Mr. Ewan pointed out key elements that students who wish to be a part of the programme should have. He stated that students should, *"Have a good attitude, be open to learning, ask lots of relevant questions, present and package themselves as young professionals who are ready to aspire to the next level."*

File photo: Chanise Morris, BBA, Finance (major); International Business (minor). Ms. Morris is a graduate of UTech, Ja. and former Co-op Ed student who completed her experience at IMCA in Summer 2014. She was retained for employment and has just celebrated her second anniversary with the company.

University Coordinator's Welcome

Mrs. La-Cresha Gordon-Brydson
University's Co-op Ed Coordinator

A warm welcome to the 2016-17 academic year!

We thank our many partners who have continued to collaborate with the University to provide for our students authentic learning experiences in professional work settings and which have undoubtedly enhanced their employability skill sets.

Our students continue to celebrate the programme as being greatly beneficial to their career management and professional maturity and so as an Institution we are pleased that our goals are being met in this regard.

As we look toward the future, we wish to focus on developing our students' global and cultural awareness, problem-solving, critical thinking and leadership skills. As such, we trust that as partners we can continue to provide the best experience for our students.

We encourage our students to continue to embrace every available opportunity to gain relevant work experience, mentorship and to build professional networks. Be reminded that above all, positive works ethics and attitude are essential keys to building a successful career path.

On behalf of the Co-op Ed Unit, UTech, Ja., I wish for our stakeholders, a most fulfilling academic year as *we partner with industry to produce work-ready graduates*.

From Co-op Ed to Employment

Kevin Dalling has recently completed a B.Sc in Computing with an Information Technology Major and an Enterprise Systems Minor. He participated in the Co-op Ed programme during the Summer Session of this year at Sagicor Life Jamaica Limited. Mr. Dalling was asked to share his experience during an interview .

Kevin Dalling , graduand of UTech,Ja. with a B.Sc in Computing (major) Information Technology (minor) Enterprise Systems.

Was the department in which you were placed related to your area of specialization?

KD: Yes, I was placed in the Business Intelligence Department which essentially uses information technology to analyze data and present actionable information to help businesses make more informed decisions.

Which modules were most helpful in preparing you for this experience?

KD: Database Design, Advanced Databases, Database Administration, Enterprise Computing, Data Warehousing & Mining.

Do you think implementing a Co-op Ed programme in your course of study was a good idea? Explain

KD: Yes it is a very good idea. Often times, employers complain about university graduates not being ready for the work force. I think the Co-op Ed programme provides a win-win opportunity for both employers and students. The students get that practical experience of working in an organization that they don't often receive in their degree programme, and employers get graduates who have on-the-job experience; ready to hit the ground running from day 1 of employment.

What valuable lessons have you learned from this experience?

KD: Knowing how to align business with IT is very critical in any project that I take on.

Prior to Co-op Ed, I was mainly concerned with IT with little regard to the role that business plays in the grand scheme of things.

Do you think you have emerged from Co-op Ed a stronger individual where your career is concerned?

KD: Yes I have, especially in the area of teamwork and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the people I work with.

Were your expectations fulfilled at the end of the programme?

KD: Yes they were. It positively impacted the final year of my degree and enhanced my employability.

Mr. Dalling has since completed his Co-op Ed experience. He continues to work at Sagicor Ja. on an extended contract. We wish him continued success.

Interviewed by: Tobian Brown

Week of Welcome 2016

First year students Tina-Sha Davis (left) pursuing a BSc in Accounting and Shakira Ferron (right) pursuing the BA in Communication Arts and Technology receiving gift baskets from Ms. Sandra Junor from the Co-op Ed Unit, courtesy of the National Housing Trust and Spectrum Management Authority respectively.

Special thanks to our industry partners, the **National Housing Trust** and **Spectrum Management Authority** for their kind donation of two gift baskets that were used as giveaways to students who correctly answered questions relating to the Co-op Ed programme. Each year, New and transfer students are sensitized about the programme; the aim is to connect with these students from early, resulting in them being better prepared for the Co-op Ed experience by the time they would have become eligible for participation in the programme. This year's Orientation activities were held during the period August 21-26.
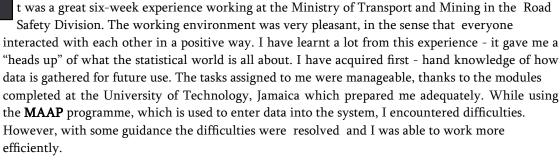
Student Testimonials

-**Summer 2016**

Kimesha Dixon, second year student pursuing her B.Sc in Applied Statistics

It was a great six-week experience working at the Ministry of Transport and Mining in the Road Safety Division. The working environment was very pleasant, in the sense that everyone interacted with each other in a positive way. I have learnt a lot from this experience - it gave me a "heads up" of what the statistical world is all about. I have acquired first - hand knowledge of how data is gathered for future use. The tasks assigned to me were manageable, thanks to the modules completed at the University of Technology, Jamaica which prepared me adequately. While using the **MAAP** programme, which is used to enter data into the system, I encountered difficulties. However, with some guidance the difficulties were resolved and I was able to work more efficiently.

Medine Banton, final year student pursuing her B.Eng in Chemical Engineering

When I decided to work at the Integrated Optics and Photonics Research Lab, I had mixed feelings. I was excited to finally gain some experience in my field, but was a little fearful of the unknown. When I met my supervisor, he described the experiments carried out in the lab, but I could hardly follow what he was saying. Most of this sounded foreign to me. On my first day on-the-job, my supervisor once again spent some time outlining all the projects and what the objective for each day would be. This approach made it easier for me to get things done in an efficient way while garnering practical knowledge. My experience was a rewarding and fulfilling one; I learnt a lot of practical skills that were applicable both in my specified area and in the general engineering field. I can confidently say I came in as "Johnny cake" and left as a "fruit cake".

SUMMER 2016 PICTORIAL HIGHLIGHTS

B.Sc in Hospitality and Tourism Management students engaged in front desk duties at the Grand Port Royal Hotel.

B.A in Apparel Design Production & Management student engaged in pattern making at Jamaica Business Development Corporation.

B.Ed in Industrial Technology student engaged in marine welding and other mechanical repairs to ships docked at the Kingston Harbour.

B.Sc in Urban and Regional Planning student (immediate right) along with his supervisors and the Co-op Ed Coordinator (his immediate left) at the National Housing Trust.

B.Ed in Business & Computer Studies student (left) along with supervisor/mentor (UTech, Ja alumnus & past Co-op Ed student) in the Business Management & Special Projects Dept. at Port Authority of Jamaica.

B.Eng in Mechanical Engineering student engaged by Port Authority of Jamaica.

CAREER CORNER

The importance of setting professional goals and targets

- **It Gives Direction** - This allows you to have a clear vision of your destination with a roadmap of all of your checkpoints which will enable you to reach your finish point .

- **It Motivates** -Having clearly set goals and targets, direct your attention to the activities that need to be fulfilled. This will motivate you to have a clear vision of where you need to be.

- **You Measure Growth** - Having clear cut goals and targets are measurable. You are able to set short term goals and once those are achieved, you can then measure your growth in achieving the ultimate goal.

- **Accountability** - Having set targets and goals, you are better able to view your deadlines and meet them thus making you an accountable employee. Accountability is a measure of commitment to your goals and keeps you truly focused.

- **Helps to Prioritize** – Having a lot of work to do can be overwhelming. Setting goals and targets allow you to accomplish tasks in order of importance so they are completed efficiently in a set timeframe.

Source: Career Addict- http://www.careeraddict.com/importance-of-setting-professional-goals-and-targets

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CO-OP ED EXPERIENCE

1. Employers increasingly want to see experience in the new college/university graduates they hire.

2. Employers increasingly see the Co-op Ed programme as the best path for hiring entry-level candidates.

3. You will build your professional network.

4. Co-op Ed enables you to take your career plan for a test drive. The opportunities enable you to put theory into practice.

5. You will gain valuable understanding of your major field and be better able to make informed decisions regarding your career path.
   .

How Do You Think?

If you think you are beaten, you are;
If you think you dare not, you don't!
If you'd like to win, but you think you can't,
It's almost certain you won't.
If you think you'll lose, you're lost;
For out in the world we find
Success begins with a fellow's will;
It's all in the state of mind!
If you think you're outclassed, you are;
You've got to think high to rise.
You've got to be sure of yourself
Before you'll ever win the prize.
Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or faster man;
But sooner or later the man who wins
Is the person who thinks he can!

Source : http://www.inspirational-quotes-and-poems.net/success-poems.html

"The future belongs to those who prepare for it today".
-Malcolm X

Producing Globally Competitive Engineering Graduates

A preliminary study was conducted by the Co-op Ed Unit in collaboration with the School of Engineering between February to June of this year aimed at determining the work-readiness of Engineering graduates from this institution. The following represents a preview of the findings of this preliminary study.

INDUSTRY'S EXPECTATIONS OF ENGINEERING GRADUATES
(Ordered by importance)

⇒ **Strong Work Ethics & Attitude.** Graduates are expected to display commitment, integrity, honesty and Professionalism, etc.

⇒ **Learning.** Graduates must display an adequate balance between theory and practical, be able to apply scientific and engineering knowledge, and should possess the pertinent academic qualifications (Note: class of degree is an important consideration).

⇒ **Self-Management.** Graduates must have clearly articulated personal and professional growth objectives, be self-motivated, confident and have excellent deportment.

⇒ **Teamwork.** Graduates should demonstrate excellent team-playing skills, adaptability and flexibility

⇒ **Technology.** Graduates must demonstrate the ability to use multiple technologies.

Top five (5) strengths identified in UTech, Ja.'s Engineering Graduates

1. Practical Application
2. Positive Work Attitude
3. Adaptability/Flexibility
4. Theoretical Knowledge
5. Trainability

What's Happening

The Co-op Ed Unit is now accepting Student Placement requests for the months of October 2016 through to January 2017. Note however, Christmas placement is scheduled for the period December 12 through to January 6, 2017. During this period, our students are generally available for a full forty hour work week engagement. Contact us now; we need to hear from you.

Acknowledgement

This issue was complied by Terry-Ann Edwards, a second year student pursuing the B.A. in Communication Arts and Technology at UTech, Ja.

Notable mention must also be made of Tobian Brown who contributed to this issue of the newsletter.
Ms. Brown is a fourth year student, also pursuing a BA in Communication Arts and Technology,

https://www.facebook.com/utechcooped

https://twitter.com/utechcooped

http://utechco-opedu.blogspot.com/

ced@utech.edu.jm