



THE CARIBBEAN EXAMINER

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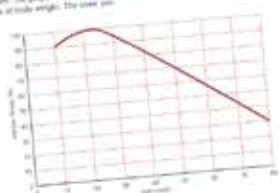
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We have already learned about the Glaciers (pages 4-5), but they are not the only water-spending events that take place. There are other cool types and stages upon comparisons that take place around the globe. Take a look at some of them.

The Commonwealth Games

Also called the British Games, the Commonwealth Games were first held in Hamilton, Canada, in 1930. The idea was first put forward in 1920, when it was suggested that the Games should be a good step in bringing the British Empire together. The British Empire was at the peak of its power in 1920, when it included 450 million people and 22 million square miles of territory. The British Empire was at its greatest in 1920, when it included 450 million people and 22 million square miles of territory. The British Empire was at its greatest in 1920, when it included 450 million people and 22 million square miles of territory.

Los Pan American Games

The Pan American Games have been held every four years since 1951, on land on the Americas. The first was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and was the first to be held in the Americas. The second was held in Mexico City, Mexico, in 1955. The third was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1963. The fourth was held in San Paulo, Brazil, in 1967. The fifth was held in Winnipeg, Canada, in 1975. The sixth was held in San Carlos de Barileja, Chile, in 1983. The seventh was held in Havana, Cuba, in 1991. The eighth was held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 1995. The ninth was held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, in 2003. The tenth was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2007. The eleventh was held in Guadalajara, Mexico, in 2011. The twelfth was held in Lima, Peru, in 2015. The thirteenth was held in Santiago, Chile, in 2023.

In 1977 in Washington, D.C., the *CONTRA* attorneys first met. Carter was so grateful back and had offered to help them. From 1980-1981, the law firm had been working on the case. The standard of evidence is extremely high and the case is very difficult. The *CONTRA* attorneys are now working on the case. The *CONTRA* attorneys are now working on the case.

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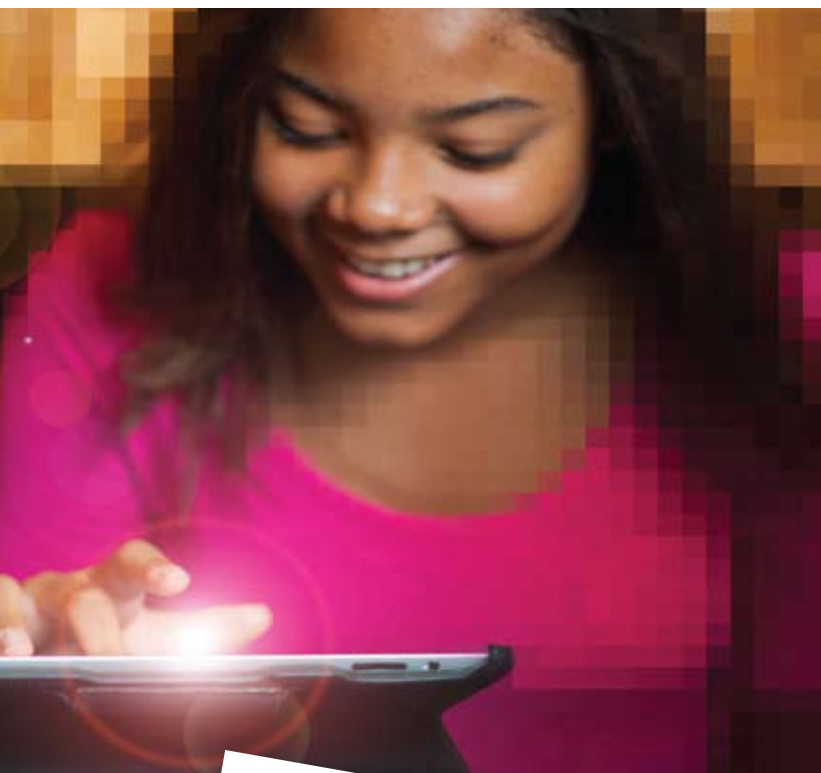
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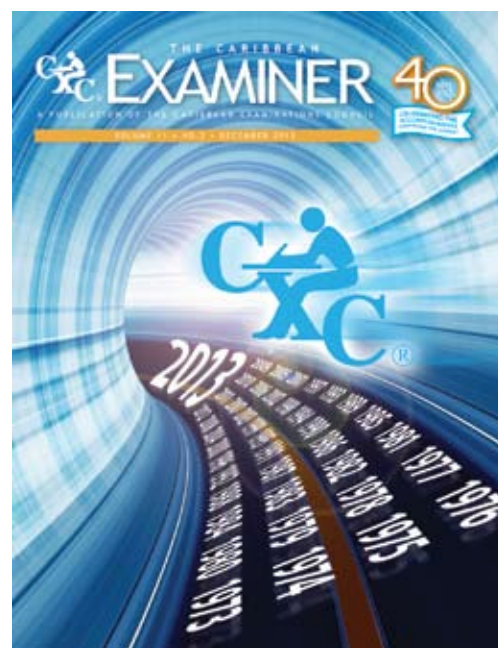


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ABOUT THE COVER This issue attempts to capture some of the historical milestones of the first 40 years of the Caribbean Examinations Council with the voices of some pioneers and personalities who have defined CXC; it is also a catalogue of events that have placed CXC on the map as an examination board of international repute.

CXC Leaders and Pioneers

Speech Delivered by **Mrs Irene Walter** at CXC 40th Anniversary Evening of Elegance held at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel on 25 October 2013

I am honoured to have been asked to give the address at this function which is part of the year-long celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the establishment of CXC. In celebrating this signal event, we have the opportunity to reflect not only on the vision of empowerment of the Caribbean population articulated by the political leaders of the era preceding and immediately following political independence, but also, on the contributions of citizens of the region who played important roles in the establishment of the Council and in bringing to fruition the dream of a regional examining body as an integrating force in the Caribbean. The vehicle identified by governments to play a central role in developing the potential of the region was a reformed and expanded educational system. There was strong anticipation that this would affect positively the social, economic and cultural landscape. Such a view is clearly implied in the Preamble of the Treaty of Chaguaramas signed by governments of the Caribbean also in 1973 viz:

"The governments of the Contracting States... Sharing a common determination to fulfill the hopes and aspirations of their peoples for full employment and improved standards of work and living;

Conscious that these objectives can most readily be attained... by the efficient operation of common services and functional cooperation in the social cultural, educational and technological fields."

It was envisioned that the Caribbean Examinations Council, one of the "common services" referred to in the Treaty, would play a pivotal role in the reform of education in the region and it ought to be a source of satisfaction to the Council that William Demas in his essay "Towards West Indian Survival" (1990) could state that Caricom's greatest success has been in Common Services and other areas of Functional Cooperation".

The Council has, most appropriately, commemorated this anniversary in special ways. Of particular significance is the preparation for the publication of "A History of the Caribbean Examinations Council, 1973-2013" by Dr Patrick Bryan. In addition, the issue of the May 2013 CXC publication, the *Caribbean Examiner*, in



"The high quality of leadership provided by all CXC chairmen has been the outstanding feature of the organization."

paying tribute to persons who played crucial roles in establishing the Council, highlighted the tenure of first Chairman, Professor Roy Marshall and the first Registrar, Major Rudolph Daniel. While the contributions of these eminent persons need to be recognized for the substantial foundation which was laid for the work of the Council in future years, I wish to state with some conviction that without the exceptional leadership roles played by others during the first five years of the Council's life, during the period 1974 when work on creating the examinations began and 1979, when the first examinations were held, the Council would not have achieved the success it has been able to claim.

It should be recognized that the Participating Countries named to the membership of the Council and its major committees were officers who had major responsibilities for the management of their education systems – usually Permanent Secretaries and Chief Education Officers. Each territory also sent for representation to Council, its committees and panels, representatives from the teaching profession. Many of the best minds in the region including members of the two universities (The University of the West Indies and University of Guyana) that were established at the time were called to serve in the worthy cause of building the new institution.

I am also pleased that I was given free hand in selecting the topic to be addressed this evening. I have chosen to speak on "Leaders and Pioneers" as my own contribution to recording the outstanding leadership offered by the second Chairman, Dr Dennis Irvine, during those critical first years, and the pioneering work undertaken by the members of the first five panels appointed by SUBSEC (Sub-committee of the School Examinations Committee) during the period of his chairmanship. The high quality of leadership provided by all CXC chairmen has been the outstanding feature of the organization. The work of all subsequently appointed panelists also must be lauded. However, I believe Dr Irvine's tenure needs to be highlighted especially as he had the task of leading the Council to deliver successfully the first examinations within the short time frame – four years – set by the first Council, bearing

CXC Leaders and Pioneers

in mind that established examination boards prescribe a time frame of seven years to develop a syllabus for a new examination.

Dr Irvine assumed the Chair of Council and the Schools Examination Committee after the first Chairman, Professor Roy Marshall, demitted office in January 1974. In assuming the Chairmanship Dr Irvine, the then Vice Chancellor of the University of Guyana, readily accepted the responsibility of leading the Council through the most critical period of its life, ensuring that the Council, through its organs, the School Examinations Committee and its sub-committee, put in place the machinery which would deliver the mandate given to the Council. That mandate, outlined in the Agreement Establishing the Council, was as succinct as it was demanding;

"...to conduct such examinations as it may think appropriate and to award certificates and diplomas on the results of the examinations so conducted"

Much was expected of the newly formed organization. In the inaugural address at the first Council meeting, the late Prime Minister of Barbados, the Right Excellent Errol Barrow, articulated the views held by many when he stated:

"I consider the Caribbean Examinations Council to be an instrument of change. It must eventually take over the External Examinations conducted by Overseas Examination Bodies and it has to do this at a time when the concept of the

examinations is changing and the educational systems throughout the world are being overhauled to meet the needs of changing social structures."

A major decision taken by the Council in 1974, on the recommendation of Dr Irvine as Chairman, was that the Western Zone Office in Jamaica under the management of the recently appointed Pro Registrar should assume responsibility for the development of syllabuses in preparation for the first examinations slated to be held in 1979. That assignment brought that office and myself into close contact with Dr Irvine as he chaired the meetings of the School Examinations Committee and its subcommittee, SUBSEC. It was from the vantage point of working with him closely on matters related to the development of syllabuses that I had the opportunity to observe and learn more about this remarkable man.

Leadership has been described as the capacity to translate vision into reality and his was the task to lead the Council to accomplish successfully the mounting of the first examinations. He brought to the Council qualities ascribed to good leaders- integrity, empathy, and the ability to direct the Council's energy in the right places at the right time. He came to the Council with a distinguished record in academia having served as a Professor of Chemistry at Ibadan University in Nigeria prior to taking up the post of Vice Chancellor of the University of Guyana. As the Council's Chairman, he generously shared his intellectual gifts with the panels and his



Dr Dennis Irvine (right) has the attention of Professor George Maxwell Richards, a former UWI Representative on Council (left) and Honourable Erskine Sandiford, then Minister of Education in Barbados



1973

The Agreement Establishing the Council

presented at the inaugural Council meeting is signed in Barbados by the governments of 15 English-speaking Caribbean territories in 1973 thus creating an institution with two Administrative and Operational Centres (AOC) in Barbados and Jamaica, respectively.

Members of committees include

Chairman, Council -
Dr (later Sir) Roy Marshall, Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies
Registrar - Major H. Rudolph Daniel
Management Sub-Committee - Dr E Miller

National Committees – Dr Ivor Heath (Antg), Mr E Rawlins (Bdos), Mr William Fonseca (Belz), Mr G H Cough (BVI), Mr Belgrave Robinson (Dca), Mrs Islay Conolly (Cayl), Mr N Brathwaite (Gren), Dr Laurie H E Reid (Jca), Mr Howard A Fergus (Mont), Mr C E Mills (StKn), Mr George Delmede (StLu), Sir Fred Phillips (StVn), Dr P Dyer (Trinidad & Tobago), Rev Hon C S Jones (Turks)

1974

The Second Council meeting is held in Guyana where discussions are held to consider areas of research, formulation of syllabuses and the development of relationships between the Council and extra-regional examining bodies.

The AOC in Jamaica, named the Western Zone Office (WZO), becomes operational under the acting leadership of Mrs Irene Walter. Secretaries – Mrs G C Williams (Bdos), Mrs D Pyne (Jca), Miss Elma Licorish is recruited as Senior Clerk (Retired in 2007 after 32 years of service).



Dr Irvine in meeting with Wilfred Beckles, former Registrar and John Campbell, former Financial Comptroller

managerial expertise with the Council's executive management. He excelled at motivating people and did so by enjoining the staff as well as the Caribbean educators to put all their knowledge and skills into realizing the dream of establishing a first-class examination board, one worthy of taking its place among the recognized and world-class examining bodies. In this respect, he demonstrated another of his several enviable characteristics — that of strong leadership while recognizing and rewarding the worth of those persons whom he had the privilege to lead.

Working with Dr Irvine so closely because of the demanding time table, I had the opportunity to appreciate his style and approach in dealing with the Council's business. He had the ability to make one feel that the job at hand was the most important one and when consulted on matters pertaining to the Council's work, he would devote all his attention to it. There always was visible in him, at one and the same time, an attention to the concerns of the organization—staff or institutional— and those of the public served by the Council.

His calm demeanor coupled with his clear thinking would quiet anyone immersed in the most excitable of activities. And I might add that, in the process of developing the syllabuses, there were many excitable ones. It was truly instructive how he handled crises. Without raising his voice a single notch, he would, with great patience, elicit the nature of the problem, analyze the information, removing the emotional components, and then propose a solution. Amazingly, many so-called "crises" fizzled under his calm and expert leadership. "Think nothing of it", he was wont to say, as one attempted to thank him for pulling yet another chestnut out of the fire.

His skills in diplomacy and sense of fair play were not just well honed, they were the essence of the man, and he demonstrated these, whether he was interacting with ministers of government

on policy, or negotiating with members of staff on organizational matters. Perhaps it was because of the respect he had for properly constituted authority that he would, without yielding the right to put the organization's case forward as forcefully as was necessary, and accept the reality of a government's right to determine what was best for its country. He also respected the rights of staff leadership to represent the views of its membership to the Council's committees. His exhibited fairness in his judgments and his conduct in these circumstances had the distinguishing mark of maintaining excellent relationships with all parties. As Chairman, he recognized his responsibility to ensure the health of the organization and in circumstances when it mattered, showed great courage in the discussions held with management beforehand on the expediency of the measures to be taken in respect of staff issues.

He had a sense of propriety, which enabled him to do the right thing at all times. He was respectful of the panels' efforts and therefore had an excellent relationship with the syllabus panels which from time to time had to appear before SUBSEC to defend the proposals for the syllabuses.

In December 1979, at the last Council meeting he chaired, he had the satisfaction of reporting to Council the successful mounting of the first examinations. As succeeding Chairmen and in particular, Sir Roy Augier would confirm, Dr Irvine continued to serve the Council with distinction retaining membership on important committees and making himself available for consultations until his death in 2005.

TEACHERS

In this celebratory season, I believe accolades should also be given and a record made in CXC's documentation, of the substantial contribution made by Caribbean teachers who offered themselves or were named by their territories to

undertake the several professional tasks which are required of an examination board. As early as 1983, the then Registrar of the Council, Mr Wilfred Beckles in his message on the occasion of the launch of *Caribbean Dialogue*, the Journal of the Caribbean Association for the Teaching of English, recognized the important contribution of teachers to all aspects of CXC examining process—the formulation of syllabuses, the setting, marking and grading of the examinations—as workshop participants and the mobilizing of teachers both within their own territories and across the region.

I single out for special mention the pioneering work of the first five panels, which created syllabuses for English, Mathematics, Caribbean History, Geography, and Integrated Science, the subjects named for the first examinations in 1979. The ground-breaking work performed by this group of educators in developing the syllabuses and involving themselves in training teachers to implement the syllabuses, transformed the teaching and learning activities in our secondary schools. The persons named as Convenors were all distinguished educators—the late Clive Borely, then Chief Education Officer in the Ministry of Education in Trinidad and Tobago for English; Ian Isaacs of UWI Mona for Mathematics; Professor Roy Augier, UWI Mona for Caribbean History; Donovan Palmer and Betty-Ann Rohlehr of Trinidad and Tobago for Geography; and Alec Farley of Guyana and Flo Commissiong of UWI Mona for Integrated Science.

Let's consider the task given to the panels each comprising six educators. The Council required that the panels should develop syllabuses which should be,

- In keeping with the educational goals and objectives of the various territories
- Provide examinations to test a "wider range of abilities" than provided in the UK-based examinations
- Introduce alternative modes of testing in the new examinations.

The syllabus development programme set by the Council, identified five subjects to be examined initially in June 1979. The five panels began the syllabus preparation exercise in 1975, accepting the challenge that within the next 24 months, syllabuses had to be developed, reviewed by teachers, approved by Council and circulated to Participating Countries by the beginning of the school year in September 1977. The model of producing syllabuses that provided a rationale for the teaching of the subject, General and Specific Objectives and the content to be covered by teachers and tested in the examinations set, was a new approach which had not been available to Caribbean schools offering the British external

CXC Leaders and Pioneers

examinations. The panels creatively designed syllabuses which provided a template for all other syllabuses. In addition, the syllabuses provided the foundation for the development of curricula for subjects offered in the secondary schools in the region.

Every effort was made by all panels to visit individual territories during the formulation exercise to meet with teachers and discuss the panels' proposals. It was during these visits to territories that the panels found that the excitement exhibited by teachers at the prospect of their involvement in the creation of a West Indian examination was often countered with a real fear of whether the task could be successfully accomplished. Images of the failure of the East African Examination Body, which examined their school population in the 1950s, were always present in the minds of all involved in this new undertaking.

Those long hours spent by the panels hammering out the syllabuses were filled with a remarkable fraternal spirit, a spirit which would continue to be the hallmark of the collaborative effort of all involved. The panel members, all teachers or curriculum specialists, whether on the staff of the regional universities, community colleges, ministries of education or from the classroom, developed bonds which have lasted over the 33 years since they first served as members. Many helped to establish subject associations in their respective territories. Others wrote or collaborated in publishing texts to support the teaching of the syllabuses. In the public relations campaigns mounted throughout the region, panelists supported the Council's officers in explaining to the teachers and the public the aim of the Council, its structure and work.

It was an exciting and professionally fulfilling time, but there were hiccups along the way to the completion of the syllabuses. I remember how daunting the task of designing a new Integrated Science syllabus appeared to the highly qualified panel working under the leadership of the Flo Commissioning of The University of the West Indies and Alec Farley of Guyana. The panel worked assiduously, often late into the night, and produced a comprehensive syllabus in which the subject matter of Biology, Physics and Chemistry were skillfully incorporated. The panel presented the document to the July 1975 meeting of SUBSEC, the committee charged with approving syllabuses, held in St Lucia. The panel had just barely met the deadline date for submission and was confident that it had done a good job worthy of the approval of SUBSEC. To the great distress of the Convenor who presented the syllabus, it was rejected and returned to the Panel for further work on the grounds that it was far too heavy for a single subject award. The panel

reconvened and within days reviewed and revised the syllabus, returning it to SUBSEC with the recommendation that it should be given a Double Award. This recommendation was accepted, but there was so much doubt whether teachers were able to manage the programme that the syllabus was initially offered as a pilot examination for the first few years. It is noteworthy that Guyana continued to offer this programme for many years when other territories opted for the single award syllabus which was later developed.

The innovations seen in the new examinations are now well documented:

- The design of syllabuses to facilitate offerings of Basic and General Proficiencies
- The inclusion of several testing techniques: multiple-choice items, essay type, a school-based component and practical examinations
- Certification reported using criterion-referencing, a six-point grading scheme, and a report on profiles tested.

It must be considered remarkable that all these features were present in the first examinations and continue to be included with minor modifications in current syllabuses and examinations.

What was significant about the work of the panels was that these novel syllabuses were generally accepted by teachers of the subjects in the Participating Countries. These syllabuses also formed a substantial part of the material sent to the British boards to support the Council's request for the recognition of the CXC examinations as equivalent to the O' levels. The syllabuses also played an important part in the recognition given to the examinations by the National Council for the Evaluation of Students' Credentials in the USA. The work of the Council in developing the new syllabuses cannot be recorded without mentioning the strong professional support given to the fledgling Syllabus Unit at the Western Zone Office and the panels by Dr Thomas (Tom) Christie of Manchester University who served as a consultant.

The nature of the work of subject panels does not normally bring members into contact with the school population or even the organs of the Council. However, it should never be forgotten that it is the work of these dedicated professionals which provide the platform on which the examinations are constructed. We need to recognize and applaud members for their sterling contribution.

Mrs Irene Walter, CD, was the first Pro Registrar and first female Registrar of CXC.



1975

Council decides to conduct the first examinations in 1979 in Mathematics, English (later to be termed English A), Caribbean History, Integrated Science (Double Award) and Geography.

Membership of Subject Panels include

Mathematics: Mr Ian Isaacs (Jca), Mr James J Halliday (StKN); English A: Mr Clive Borely (Trinidad & Tobago), Mrs Belle Tyndall (Guy); Caribbean History: Dr F R Augier (Jca); Dr Edrick Gift (Trinidad & Tobago); Integrated Science (DA): Mr Norman Lambert (Trinidad & Tobago); Geography: Mrs Betty-Ann Rohlehr (Trinidad & Tobago)

1976

Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) becomes the approved brand for the Council's first certificate

The School Examinations Committee (SEC)

approves syllabuses for Geography, History, Mathematics, English and Integrated Science.

Representatives serving multiple committees

include: Mrs Faye Saunders (Council, SEC and SubSEC); Dr F Roy Augier (Council, AFC, SEC and SubSEC) On Staff - Mr Baldwin D Hercules (served for a total of 33 years.)

1977

Syllabuses for the five subjects are distributed to Ministries of Education and schools.

First Local Registrars are appointed

Mr Tom Christie, a Consultant from the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC) is appointed to provide assistance to the Council in Measurement and Evaluation.



CXC

The Early Days

By Dr Tom Christie

My introduction to CXC came through the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, who phoned one day to ask if I had a promising post-graduate student who could relocate to Guyana for two years to help set up a new examination board and lecture on educational measurement at the university. I happened to have the very person, a PhD student who was a lifelong member of the cooperative movement and a research officer in the Joint Matriculation Board, the largest GCE Board in the UK. It took another two months to discover that my candidate was not quite ideal – she was a woman. Would I do the job instead? It took an evening to persuade my wife who has an irrational fear of spiders that we would decamp to Guyana with our three young children.

In my first couple of days in Guyana, I met Dr Dennis Irvine, one of the visionaries who made CXC possible. He was Vice Chancellor of the University of Guyana (UG) and an ex-officio member of the Council. Indeed chairmanship of the Council alternated between The University of the West Indies and UG. He was at that stage more exercised by his UG responsibility and I found myself with a UG teaching load and vague promise of CXC involvement at some future date.

At the time the value of bauxite was dropping, presenting problems for the Jamaican and Guyanese economies; Trinidad was just beginning to emerge as the major economy in CARICOM; and Barbados was still a high-end tourist destination. The scene was set for what Sir Roy Augier, notable UWI academic and champion of the Antilles, described as a turf war. I knew quite a bit about public examinations, but nothing about turf. Looking back on it, the emergence of CXC was very much driven by powerful personalities with a shared vision of Caribbean unity when the CARICOM group was anything but unified. CXC had two things on its side. The Council was so constituted that the two universities, both jealous of university autonomy,



CXC Headquarters, Barbados

were in the driving seat and the finance committee was blessed with a membership of education secretaries who were genuinely interested in education.

None of this was known to me when I attended my first Council meeting at CXC's headquarters in Barbados. There were no examinations and it was still a matter of debate which subject syllabuses should be developed. The debate was high level and fascinating. Sir Roy was a passionate advocate of the need for a history syllabus that reflected indigenous Caribbean experience, not the British colonialism which informed Cambridge's O' and A' level offerings. I had grown up believing Wilberforce freed the slaves as an act of altruism. Sir Roy had the evidence that the plantation owners were facing financial ruin because the slaves had developed

some very effective contraceptive methods that meant their numbers could only be sustained by continual expensive purchases. CXC was indeed on a mission, to raise Caribbean consciousness and incidentally to see off the Cambridge International Examination Board, potentially a socially divisive force in Caribbean education.

What astonished me were the forces to be deployed in the forthcoming battle. The first Registrar, Major Daniel was indeed a military man. He was also a career civil servant; that and the deep division within Bajan education between O' level and government schools and within UWI, between Cave Hill and Mona helped to avoid too great an influence of Barbados. Major Daniel had a job on his hands and it seemed just one foot soldier, Baldwin Hercules, then barely out of his teens. He is one of my favourite examples of the formative influence of names. As his shoulders developed he came to carry CXC forward in true Herculean fashion. It still seemed like a very shaky foundation on which to build a regional institution until I met the Pro Registrar, Mrs Irene Walter. Irene was a mover and a shaker!

She more than anyone established ownership of CXC in territory after territory, distributing syllabus development to a whole phalanx of national players and making sure that syllabus development panels met in a different territory every time.

She decided I could be useful and took me along. That was the end of family life in Guyana. My regular routine began at 5:00 am when I would catch an ALM flight to Curacao, where I changed to get to Kingston, Jamaica. The rest of the day was in the office. On Wednesday, I would catch a Cubana flight to Bridgetown, Barbados and then at 10:45 pm on Thursday catch the BA back to Georgetown, lecture on Friday and Saturday morning then set off again on Sunday. That was the theory of the thing. In practice the schedule of curriculum development meetings could keep me out of Guyana for two or even three weeks at a time. My students developed a

CXC – The Early Days

jungle telegraph. They knew which flight I would be on, if any, and acted accordingly. In fact, it was only because we developed some subjects under Guyanese leadership that I saw them at all.

Agricultural Science is one Guyanese product that springs to mind largely because it extended my vocabulary. The concept of praedial larceny was unknown to me, the practice common in Barbados of lifting someone else's carrot crop by night, cutting off the crowns and replacing them in the soil where, thanks to the favorable climate they sat, apparently unchanged, but lacking any carrot. Even more memorable was the peculiarly apposite rural Guyanese pronunciation 'craps and soils'. At the other end of the scale was the refinement of Food and Nutrition, which was led by the august figure of the principal of Georgetown's Domestic Science College. Her panel was a force to behold. Finally, Guyana produced the champion of the commerce subjects, Miss Patricia King, who became one of CXC's growing list of subject officers.

Meanwhile back at headquarters, Dr Desmond Broomes from [UWI] Cave Hill was taking the subject officers in hand and work began on the development of the first examinations, but not without a further communication problem. There was a genuine desire in the Council to recognize a much wider range of achievement than the then O' level did. Basic and General were born in the expectation that a mixed certificate would be the norm - Basic marking the completion of the study of a subject, while General providing a platform for further in-depth study. The distinction was not well understood then, and was still challenging two decades later when CXC was attempting to square another circle, between colleges looking to a North America model and prestigious schools wedded to GCE A' level.

Wherever we met, the text book publishers would be camped in a corridor outside to get a line on the next topic or chapter or section. Longman in particular had a couple of textbooks ready before the relevant syllabuses were even approved.

Yet another innovation from the same period, perhaps even at the same Council meeting, was profile reporting of results, which led to great debates within the subject panels about profile names and profile weights. The panels were beginning to face up to the challenges of examining rather than devising subject syllabuses, which often started off as little more than wish lists. The Council too had to address these issues and in a long and tense meeting decided, in the interest of public confidence, to outsource the production of results to Educational Testing Service of Princeton, USA at significant cost. The Council also chose to buy-in assistance in the marking of scripts, this time from the Cambridge

GCE Board. CXC was becoming operational as an examining body and extending beyond the available experience base in the Caribbean.

These ventures were not an unqualified success. Senior Cambridge examiners in each of the first core subjects flew into Kingston, Jamaica ten days in advance of the first marking session. They would introduce a question, talk their trainees through the mark scheme, and give them each half a dozen question responses to mark. When completed there would be a full-scale discussion of each mark awarded.

In addition, Cambridge put up a spirited defense of its Caribbean hegemony and for six years it held its fees constant. For the first marking session, CXC rented two floors of the Jamaican Pegasus. We had to rid ourselves of many of our expensively untrained assistant examiners and Irene pulled out all the stops to find a new crop whom we taught to follow a given mark scheme with reasonable speed. Nevertheless morale remained high. Markers were recruited from all the islands and from Belize and Guyana. The meals, the shopping opportunities and the exchange of professional insights were intoxicating. A custom was initiated of end-of-marking social evenings of song, verse and bonhomie.

Another group having a ball was the grid-ders who transferred the markers' decisions to optical mark reader (OMR) sheets for transfer to ETS. They were recruited mainly from UWI and were far too intelligent for such a mind-numbing task. Keeping gridders on track was still an endemic problem five years later.

In that first year, they were the first link in a chain of problems. Telex was still state-of-the-art electronic communication and getting the ABCDs undistorted along a couple of thousand miles of copper wire to ETS proved extremely challenging. We ended up with part of the story in the Barbados marking centre, part in Kingston and far from the complete picture at ETS. The picture looked dire till one Dr David Beckles from UWI's St Augustine Campus turned up in Barbados. Things began to gel and we got the first year's results out by hand more than a month before ETS could confirm them. The following year, the new Registrar, Wilfred Beckles, locked David and me in an underground dungeon somewhere in Barbados for three weeks and when we were allowed to emerge, CXC not only had its results, it had the core software of its examination processing system. Basic, General and Profiles were wired in for many years to come.

Dr Thomas Christie is currently the Director of Aga Khan University Examination Board in Pakistan.



1978

The first draft of examination papers for 1979 examinations are completed.

Examining Committees include:

Caribbean History

Miss M Daly, Mr O Kendall, Mr L Atherley

English

Mr Hollis Knight, Dr Pauline Christie, Mr R Boyce

Geography

Mr Neville Badenock, Miss A Akai, Mr J Naipaul

Mathematics

Mr S Quan-Soon, Mr I Isaacs, Dr P Morris

Integrated Science

Mrs F Commissiong, Miss J Reay, Dr D Narinesingh, Dr J Dellimore

Agricultural Science

Dr E Timothy, Mr C George, Mr R Sorhaindo

Principles of Business

and Principles of Accounts
Mrs E O Webber, Mr L Henry,
Mrs G E Hamilton, Mr R Gibbons

Office Procedures and Typewriting

Mrs E L Hall, Mrs L V Haynes,
Mrs Emrice Browne, Mrs J Pauson-Felix

Spanish

Dr H E Lewis, Dr C Hollingsworth,
Miss J Thomas

On Staff: 1979 to present

Miss Deborah Chase, Mrs Edwina Griffith,
Mr Hensley Hinkson and Mr Anthony Alleyne,
each contributing 35 years of unbroken service to CXC



"Above and Beyond" Elma Licorish

By Neville Clarke

The first members of staff of CXC worked above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that the regional organization did not crash.

That's how the first member of the office staff, Elma Licorish, described her experience over the 33 years she worked at the regional organization.

"In the early life of the organization, I was the only member of the office staff for a brief period of two weeks. I responded to an advertisement which was carried in the media and I was given the job as clerk in the office. I really wanted the job of secretary, but the then Registrar, Major Rudolph Daniel, who interviewed me thought I had experience in the clerical field. A maid and a messenger were the only other workers, but two weeks later we were joined by a secretary," Licorish said.

In response to a query on what it was like at this stage of the life of the organization she said: "We were in uncharted waters. Initially, the Registrar was the sole employee at the organization. There was no point of reference, there was no one to ask anything. We were like stepping off into the dark. It was a new experience for me because this job was totally different. This job was totally different because all of my other jobs I knew what I was supposed to do."

Pointing out that when the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate (CSEC) was introduced for the first time in 1979 no technology was used, Licorish said:

"In the early days there was no technology. We used the data processing equipment from the Data Processing Department. When we started in 1973, we had to begin everything from scratch. The only technology we had in 1974, was a typewriter and a stenciling machine. Technology came after the institution began to process data for the first examination. We had to find a means to register the students."

The retiree explained that initially CXC had a strong link with the Ministry of Education [in Barbados] because the chair of the Finance and Administrative Committee (AFC) was the then Permanent Secretary in the ministry Mr Algeron Symmonds.

"Major Daniel had also come from the Ministry of Education. Our point of reference was personnel from the Ministry of Education. They were very supportive and helpful," Licorish said.

Commenting further on the initial stage of CXC, Licorish said, "The first thing we had to establish was the syllabus and curriculum [division] and this was done out of the Jamaica office. We did some pre-testing in Jamaica with the assistance of consultants from Canada."

Stressing that CXC began in humble surroundings, she explained, "The CXC office was located in one room on the bottom floor of the building in the Garrison, St Michael. Now the offices occupy the entire building. At that time there was the Registrar's Office, then there was the outer office, and the kitchen which was occupied by the messenger and the maid. We had a conference table. The office space was all very basic and small. I bought the rest of the furniture when an accounts clerk joined the staff"

Pointing out that CXC was an exercise in regional co-operation, Licorish said that while the Jamaica office looked after the curriculum and syllabus, Barbados office looked after the recruitment of examiners.

"We had an exercise in 1978, where we trained personnel in Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Guyana who would become examiners in the five subject areas that were to be examined in 1979. Prior to the training of examiners, we had some dry runs which were supervised by personnel associated with Cambridge University," Licorish explained.

She pointed out that she performed the role of a "glorified messenger" when she was sent to Educational Testing Services (ETS) in New Jersey to return the scripts which were processed by that organization.

"The Educational Testing Services in New Jersey processed the results, but personnel in the Caribbean marked the scripts. The Educational Testing Services processed and graded the scripts. There was a very close link with ETS and CXC. ETS personnel were the backbone of CXC," Licorish explained.

She explained that in the "dark days" of CXC many members of staff worked as many as 20 hours a day under bad conditions to ensure that the organization survived and succeeded.

"CXC currently uses a lot of modern technology. In fact, you cannot survive in these times without technology. CXC has grown from offering examinations in five subjects in 1979 to the status of offering examinations in the Caribbean Advance Proficiency Examinations (CAPE). It was horrible in the early days of CXC, but CXC staffers worked above and beyond the call of duty.

Sometimes we got it wrong, but we were determined to ensure that it ended up right. Major Daniel told staff members that he worked with the Federal experiment of the 1960s and he did not want to be part of another regional disaster. Some members of staff lost their families because of the long hours they worked. They were really dark days," Licorish explained.

The article was first published in the CXC 40th Anniversary special feature in Barbados Today newspaper on 20 August 2013.

"The only technology we had in 1974, was a typewriter and a stenciling machine. Technology came after the institution began to process data for the first examination."



Walter Burke

From Reluctance to Acceptance

By Neville Clarke

Forty years ago, there was a natural reluctance on the part of the region to accept the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC).

Former Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education and former Chairman of the Administrative and Finance Committee (AFC) of the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC), Walter Burke, made this observation during an interview with *Barbados TODAY*.

"The whole region was in the habit of doing primarily Oxford and Cambridge and London University Examinations. These examinations had a certain prestige attached to them. All of the officials including myself had cut our teeth on these examinations. There was a natural reluctance to accept CXC examinations. The entire region had to adjust to something that was local and did not have any status. There was some concern about the acceptability of the examinations even among regional educators. It was so because policy makers had to ensure that the examinations were accepted outside of the region.

We had to get some sense of direction initially. That explains why the CXC entered into a contract with the Educational Testing Services at Princeton University in New Jersey, USA in the initial stages of its existence. Before you got to the stage of setting examinations you had to develop a syllabus which had to be taught in the schools leading to the examinations. These were developed in collaboration with personnel associated with Cambridge University and the Educational Testing Services. These were introduced into the school system and had to be taught in the schools prior to the examinations. To its credit over the past 40 years it acquired that acceptance," Burke added.

He acknowledged that in more recent times there have been some leaks, but he accepted that generally the examinations have been fully accepted now and maintained its integrity.

Burke further acknowledged that some governments in the region on gaining independence had plans to establish their own examination boards, but when it came to the cost of the operations there was a natural reluctance to proceed due to the unavailability of the funding.

Commenting on the funding of CXC, Burke said, "One of the problems faced was the scarcity of funds. Every year the Ministers of Education met prior to the meeting of the Heads of Caricom Governments to draw up a budget. We had to forward a budget to the Ministry of Education to access funds to operate for the next year. This

created severe problems. In 1980, I got the Caribbean Examinations Council to agree internally to introduce a triennial budget. We estimated expenses over a three-year period bearing in mind that the whole concept was growing and an escalation in the cost of operations.

We got the heads of government to agree in principle to the estimated cost over a three-year period to be divided in three equal installments so that it gave the CXC some working capital in the first two years. You were already taking in more money in the first year than you would actually expect so that gave officials the capacity to carry out expansions more rapidly to areas that they needed to cover."

Burke explained that there was some reluctance on the part of the smaller territories to commit themselves beyond a year, even though it gave CXC more latitude to recruit more staff rapidly and the impetus to expand operations.

Addressing some of the issues that confronted the CXC, Burke said: "One of the principal issues was the recruitment of staff to the correct posts. You had to get specialists in the areas we were discussing. We had to be looking beyond the five subjects we had introduced in 1979 and recruit the appropriate staff for the new areas we intended to offer students. We were trying to involve local teachers in the whole process. It was a tremendous logistical problem to get personnel in one country to score the papers after the examinations. This decision was taken to protect the integrity of the programme because you could not have the papers "knocking all about". For example, you had to take all of the English papers to one country. CXC has come on by "leaps and bounds" and it is a tribute to the ability of Caribbean people over the past 40 years."

He anticipated that the CXC will go from strength to strength because "it has a very strong foundation and still has an excellent staff and can only improve over the years to come."

"CXC is accepted now by the general population of the region. There are no more reservations about the quality of the examinations. It has also been accepted internationally. At one time we were accused of setting a very high standard and that we were being harsher than the overseas markers. In the initial stages and even today the staff work with a sense of commitment and a sense of dedication," Burke proudly boasted.

The article was first published in the CXC 40th Anniversary special feature in Barbados Today newspaper on 20 August 2013.



1979

The Council's focus is towards the provision of appropriate and relevant examinations based on producing syllabuses which test knowledge, skills and attitudes specified as curriculum goals.

May/June, the Council conducts its inaugural examinations for **CSEC** in English, Geography, History and Mathematics at General and Basic Proficiencies and Integrated Science as a pilot subject. Thirteen of the 14 Participating Territories present a total of 30,276 candidates to write the first examinations.

On July 16, first marking exercise begins in Barbados and Jamaica with 337 markers selected to assess the 58,708 subject entries received.

A School Based Assessment (SBA) concept is introduced into the examination process whereby a portion of the final examination mark is derived from samples of candidates' work completed at school.

First Markers included:

Mrs Merle Baker
Mrs Sheila Garcia-Bisnott
Ms Shereen Khan
Mrs Patricia Pereira
Mrs Arlene Toney
Mr Laloo Hart
Mr Martin Jones
Miss Margaret Leacock
Mr Praim Singh
Ms Linnette Gibbons-Lovell
Mr Radcliffe Clement

An interview with **Dr Anna Mahase**

Ms Anna Mahase (now Dr Mahase), former principal of St Augustine Girls' School in Trinidad and Tobago, was one of the early pioneers in CXC, having attended the preliminary meeting in Guyana in 1968, which took several important decisions regarding the establishment of the Council. The Caribbean Examiner chatted with Dr Mahase recently about her involvement with CXC.

CE How did you first get involved with CXC?

AM I become principal of St Augustine Girl's High School in 1961. Seven years later, and during that period Dr Eric Williams [then prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago] seems to have taken a very special interest in the direction I was moving the school – moving the school from the point of view of holistic development of the students. In 1968, he invited me through the then Minister of Education, Dr Cuthbert Joseph, to go to Guyana to attend a preliminary meeting about CXC.

From 1968-1987, those were the years I was involved with CXC; a member of the Council.

CE From my review of the documents it was an important meeting preceding the signing of the agreement in 1972. What happened at that meeting in 1968?

AM At that meeting in 1968, we took some very important decisions. We decided that since the countries had become independent and Trinidad and Tobago had become a republic, they wanted to get away from the Cambridge and become independent in their own right. Thankfully we were able to bring in CARICOM. The Secretary General of CARICOM was William Demas at the time and he was the one who assisted us with the development of all CARICOM countries that were directly involved and were supposed to be coming under CARICOM and involved in the CXC. It wasn't going to be Trinidad and Tobago alone looking to change, that couldn't happen. It had to be under CARICOM.



CE From Trinidad in 1968, did you go to that meeting as the school's representative?

AM Yes. I was the secondary schools' representative from Trinidad in 1968.

CE When you arrived in Guyana, would you have met other representatives from schools throughout the region?

AM Yes, I would have, because that was a preliminary meeting. Mr William Demas obviously, Sir Roy [Augier], Dr Dennis Irvine, Irene Walters, Rudi Goodridge, Patrick Dyer, Sir Keith Hunte and some others that I can't remember because it was so long ago.

CE From the perspective of the schools' representative, what were some of the major issues or concerns the schools had at the time?

AM Some of the concerns were: From the point of view of CARICOM, it was about time we started to organise our own secondary examinations because we were still with Cambridge School Certificate and Higher School Certificate out of Cambridge University. It was about time we started moving in our own Caribbean direction and that was the main thrust.

CE Was there any opposition to a new examination?

AM No, on the contrary, we got full support from all of the CARICOM countries.

An interview with Dr Anna Mahase

CE After 1968 what do you recall as the next step?

AM We continued to meet. I was a member of Council, School Examinations Committee (SEC), SUBSEC, Final Awards Committee (FAC), CXC National Committee [Trinidad and Tobago], and the Publicity Committee of CXC. I went to several CARICOM countries, as far as Belize to tell them about what we were proposing to do with the changeover to the CXC.

I would like to mention that the syllabus formation was extremely important and in this case the relevance of the examination and the syllabus committee and those who were working on it were representatives from the different countries. Each country had their own committee and the concentration at the time was on English and Mathematics. During that time we had agreed that we were going to involve Mr Tom Christie, an evaluation and measurement specialist from the Joint Matriculation Board of the Cambridge University. He trained Assistant Registrars of some CARICOM countries.

In those early years, students in selected schools wrote both examinations, Cambridge and CSEC. CXC sent CEple copies of the pilot examinations after they were written and marked, for Tom Christie to compare and as I can recall he was very, very impressed with the standard of the syllabuses, teaching and marking.

Apart from Mr Christie, our short answer and multiple choice questions were sent to the Educational Testing Service (ETS) of Princeton, New Jersey. It was Princeton University that gave us our first CEples of what our short answer questions should look like and how they should be marked.

I also volunteered my own school as one of the first pilot schools to write both examinations in 1979. It was successful in the sense that both teachers and students accepted the challenge and did very well, and after that I ensured that every year my teachers went to the marking sessions. The marking sessions would not have been as effective as they were, if markers were allowed to mark their own students' papers. They had to mark the papers of other students and I insisted every year until I left in 1987 that my teachers experience the marking process and this

improved their standard of teaching. That was very important to me.

CE What exactly did the Publicity Committee do and where did you go?

AM I went to every country within CARICOM that was thinking in terms of introducing CSEC examinations, including little Tobago as well. I was one of the main speakers to tell them exactly why we were doing it and the benefits to be derived from going by ourselves in our own Caribbean examinations, and gradually phasing out the Cambridge examinations. In history and geography, relevance is taught and it was only when we started these examinations that we started to set questions that were relevant to the students of the Caribbean.

CE Can you recall any of the other persons who were on the committee with you?

AM Only one person who comes to mind was Mr Allan McKenzie in Tobago. In each country there were persons who worked alongside the committee members.

CE Who went with you from the CXC staff?

AM Yes, Irene Walter, this is one of the committees where she definitely had served. Sir Roy Augier and Dr Dennis Irvine were also involved in the publicity.

CE What role did you play in the Trinidad National Committee?

AM The Trinidad and Tobago National Committee ensured that we called principals meetings often and kept them abreast of exactly what was happening with the changeover of the examinations. The ministry of education was also involved and at these meetings the floor was open for questions from the principals and much discussion. This interaction allowed them to go back to their schools and tell the staff members with no doubts in their minds about various aspects of the initiative because there were a few who were a bit reluctant; those who didn't like change.



1980

CXC introduces regulations to accommodate re-sit candidates for subjects with SBAs. Grades I and II are recognised as equivalent to GCE O'Level A, B and C by University of the West Indies, University of Guyana, Joint Matriculation Board of the UK and admissions offices in the US and Canada.

The CXC/USAID Secondary Education Project begins. The main objective is to assist in secondary curriculum development in the region with special reference to the CXC syllabuses.

Staff on the CXC/USAID Management Committee include: Dr Neville Ying and Mr Leton Thomas.

Headquarters USAID Staff include: Mrs Joan Reid (Project Coordinator); Mr Stafford Griffith (Research Assistant)

On Staff: Mr Frankey Worrell (Printer) Miss Rose Sargeant (now Brathwaite); Ms Genoise Bowen, Miss Greta Best (now Forde) join CXC staff (Each contributing a total of 34 years of service.)

An interview with Dr Anna Mahase

CE Does the name Faye Saunders from Jamaica ring a bell?

AM Of course, Faye Saunders was my very, very dear friend.

CE Was Mrs Saunders also involved as a principal from these early years?

AM Yes, we had a good relationship working together.

CE Was she also an advocate?

AM Very much so!

CE Let us go back to Mrs Faye Saunders; my understanding was that, she, like you, was hand-picked by the then Prime Minister of Jamaica to support this venture. Would she have been on the same committees with you?

AM Yes, she would have been on almost every one.

CE In speaking to Mrs Saunders some time ago, she mentioned that the Guyanese played a very important role in the early days. She said they were some of the most supportive. Do you remember the Guyanese principals?

AM Yes, I can agree with her. I think that is why we had our first meeting there because they were the ones very anxious to get this venture going. I suppose that kind of thing would have been determined by Mr William Demas as Secretary General of CARICOM.

CE In 1979, St Augustine Girls' would have written the first CXC **CSEC** examination as well as the Cambridge examinations. Your teachers at St Augustine Girls along with the other schools in Trinidad and Tobago would have done both examinations, how did they manage the process of teaching for both examinations?

AM I think what they did was to try in their own unique ways to cover both, because there were quite a bit of duplication. Where there was no duplication and there was extra material in the CXC syllabus, it took time to cover those and sometimes they stayed in extra time.

CE Would you say these teachers were very dedicated?

AM Yes, they were extremely dedicated.

CE There was fear from teachers and principals with regards to moving from this very established examination called Cambridge or London to a new Caribbean examination. Do you recall those fears and what they were?

AM That was to be expected. I used to call them "Frighten Fridays," unwilling to launch out into something that was different and in this particular case something that was progressive and something where we eventually had to go so therefore we had to start somewhere. That was how I had to reason with those who were fearful. I used to say to them, 'You put people there in charge whom you trust, who are steeped in education, very experienced and you don't expect them to just pull out Cambridge and put in CXC, that is why we are taking our time.'

Oh yes, there were those who had their doubts, but my teachers were not because I had them convinced. They were not blind followers, but the advantage was that I would always give them feedback from my meetings. After each CXC meeting I would call a staff meeting within a day and tell them everything that was discussed at the meeting.

CE In your view, what are the major accomplishments of CXC after 40 years?

AM I would think that the major accomplishment would be that the students who have been fortunate enough to write those examinations would have become a lot more nationalistic in their general outlook. They would have been able to examine some of the failings of their countries and see how they could be corrected via their answers in examinations.

In all of these things they were assisting to build their countries by the knowledge that they would have acquired in certain specific areas of their country and of the Caribbean. Having graduated, then offering their services to assist with the dark areas of the development of their countries because of the information they would have had about what concern them.

CE Looking back now, what would you say are your fondest memories working with CXC?

AM My fondest memory would have been the result which the schools were able to obtain compared with the results of Cambridge. In other words, I found that the introduction of the CXC examination was to a large extent responsible for the holistic outlook and development of the students for their country and by extension the Caribbean and further afield.

CE In your own opinion, where would you like to see CXC go in another 40 years?

AM Spiritually I will be around. I would like to see the examinations continue and where there are flaws, I would like them to be corrected because you cannot just have a perfect examination or syllabuses. Continue to broaden and improve syllabuses and standards in each subject offered and that would help in the overall development of the students of the Caribbean.



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Ken Seepersad

"Father" of CSEC® Social Studies

Mr Ken Seepersad is a former teacher and Chief Education Officer in Trinidad and Tobago.

He served on the first Social Studies subject panel and was the first Chief Examiner for the subject.

Mr Seepersad recently gave the *Caribbean Examiner* an interview about his involvement with CXC.

CE You were in the school system from 1957, I am told. Give us a bit of history in terms of how you became a teacher in those early days.

KS In 1957, in the colonial times, teaching or the civil service was one of the options and I chose teaching. I started way down in the country and then went to teacher's college. Immediately after that, in 1963, the University of the West Indies opened and I was admitted. After UWI, I was invited to teach at the teacher's college which I had attended and that marked a special path in my programme in teacher education.

I taught at Naparima Teacher's College, Government Teachers' College and later on in 1973 I was invited to be the Vice Principal of the largest teacher's college at that time known as Corinth Teacher's College located in South Trinidad. After serving there for three years, I attended an interview with the public service and I was made a Curriculum Supervisor for Social Studies. I had done my Masters programme in Curriculum, specialising in Social Studies. I entered the ministry of education in 1976 and that was the same year I was invited by CXC together with a former colleague, Mr Innocent Basdeo Beddoe, who is now deceased. He was the Senior Lecturer in Social Studies at the School of Education and both of us attended a meeting in Jamaica and our remit was to consider whether Social Studies was desirable and feasible as an examination subject.



CE Did you first come in to contact with CXC in 1976?

KS Yes, I did and I remember Irene Walters, Dr Irvine, Sir Roy, Rudy Goodridge and Sir Keith Hunte of Barbados and Pansy Robinson of Jamaica.

CE Who were some of the other persons who served with you?

KS Dr Rudy Goodridge, Sir Keith Hunte, Pansy Robinson of Jamaica and Irene Walters was there as the Pro-Registrar.

CE Would they have sat on the committee with you?

KS Yes. We met for three days and we defined parameters and we went back to our separate countries to do our research and then we were re-invited again to make our submissions. In about a year and a half we had a draft syllabus which we presented to CXC. At the time Dr Irvine was the Chairman.

CE Did that become the Social Studies Subject Panel?

KS Yes. Dr Rudy Goodridge was the Convenor and then when the draft syllabus was accepted I was invited by CXC to be the first Chief Examiner in 1981.

CE As a Chief Examiner would you have served on the Examining Committee?

KS Yes, and looked after the preparation of the first examination to which we had 2 200 students from various parts of the Caribbean, the majority of which came from Trinidad, because in Trinidad we had a Social Studies programme going at the secondary level and that was very informative to the regional syllabus.

Two years after, it was accepted and it was no longer a draft syllabus, it became a full-fledge syllabus.

CE Was this in 1983?

KS Yes. What happened afterwards was that USAID gave its support to promote the subject in the various Caribbean territories. I was asked to go to Guyana, Belize and the Eastern Caribbean to spread the word about the Social Studies syllabus.

Ken Seepersad – “Father” of CSEC® Social Studies

During marking we ensured that we got teachers who were beginning to teach the subject in various places so we used the marking exercise for teacher development. We had training of teachers in their home territory where there was interest and then we used the marking to great advantage and people were seeing on the spot what responses were coming in, what were the problems and how we went about doing that.

CE Who served with you on the Examining Committee?

KS Pansy Robinson was one of them and Henry Hinds who is in St Lucia now but he was from a teachers' college in Guyana. Later on we had a gentleman who served as the Governor General in Grenada, Carlisle Glean and he was invited to be a member of the examining team as well. At the time he was invited, he was a member of the Faculty of Education at UWI in Barbados.

CE Did you continue as the Chief Examiner for Social Studies?

KS Yes, but there was one year I opted out because I had a daughter who was writing CSEC. I didn't take part in that year but immediately after that I was invited to come back and continue, which I did until 1990 when I was promoted as Director of Curriculum Development. I didn't have that much time to attend to CXC matters because my new responsibility was very demanding.

I had done enough for succession planning and they were very competent people, qualified and very deeply interested. By that time Social Studies was deeply embedded in Trinidad and Tobago and in many other parts of the Caribbean and we had moved from 2, 200 to 8, 000 candidates. May I point out to you that in 2013 there are 48,000 candidates doing Social Studies. I am kept up to date by many of the people involved. It is the third most popular subject among all the CSEC subjects. I am very happy to know that I did my little bit from 1976 onwards and some of my colleagues are still around (Sir Keith, Pansy, Irene).

Praise and thanks for both Dr Irvine and Sir Roy for their very enterprising leadership.

They took the risk in 1983 and said the subject has potential. They thanked me for my responsibility and said CXC will take on this subject as one of its own, no longer as a pilot. I have very pleasant memories of that. Side by side with many of the people who took part in the early days, initially we had no books, but soon there was a proliferation of text books that began to appear to lend support to the teachers in their teaching and learning.

CE In 1973 CXC was established, do you recall anything about that?

KS The CEO in Trinidad at the time was Dr Errol Solange and he attended meetings of the CXC in the early days. I was invited in 1976 because of my specialty in Social Studies and as a curriculum person. The team comprising myself and others recommended that Social Studies was indeed desirable and feasible and we were immediately asked to plan a syllabus.

CE Would you say that the advent of CXC and some of these subjects have propelled the publishing industry in the region?

KS Yes, certainly. Today if you look at any of the school's booklist. I can tell you from Trinidad almost in every subject area. Our independence is beginning to express itself in the ability of our people to produce materials for the classroom. We are not that far with CAPE yet since it is new but it is coming on. I would dare say, someone can look at books produced for the CSEC examination and they are all within our purview. I am proud of that. I must confess to you I have been this way because I was very fortunate in my university career during 1963 to 1966 to be educated by one of the foremost people in the Caribbean, Sir Alister McIntyre. He was my tutor from 1964–1966. During the vacation, on two occasions, I was his research assistant. The subjects I specialised in were Sociology and Economics, which provided a firm foundation for the Social Studies programme and therefore I had a vested interest to turn whatever we learnt at university into classroom activity and this was how the syllabus was greatly affected by that.



1981

Trinidad and Tobago becomes the third marking centre.

Consultants Dr David Beckles and Mr Tom Christie submit a report containing recommendations for improvements to registration, scoring and grading activities using a revamped computerized management information system.

SubSEC membership includes:

Mr A Z Preston (Chair),
Dr D Irvine (Immediate Past Chair),
Mrs M Skeete (Bdos),
Mr C. Wheatley (BVI),
Mrs Kay Polydore (Dca),
Miss E Burrowes (Guy),
Mrs F Saunders (Jca),
Miss A Mahase (Trinidad & Tobago),
Mrs Belle Tyndall (Univ of Guy),
Dr F Augier (UWI),
Mr R N Murray (Co-opted)

Local Registrars are: Mr Peter Parker (Antg),
Mr R Boyce (Bdos), Mr C Enriquez (Belz), Mr Charles Wheatley (BVI), Mrs Mary Fenton (Mont), Mr Peter J F Isarel (Dca), Mr Gladsford Henry (Gren), Mr Gregor Williams (StLu), Mr Shelly Elmes (StKt), Mr E Roper (Jca), Mr A Toney (StVn), Mrs Georgina Lightbourne (Turks), Mr C Phillips (Trinidad & Tobago), Mr Albert G Butters (Guy)

Mrs Susan Giles joins the USAID Project staff as Senior Administrative Assistant. She is now SAR Examinations Administration and Security Division (a total of 33 years of service)

Mrs Violet Dwyer joins the WZO staff. She retired in 2013 giving a total of 33 years of service

CE Did you retire as Chief Education Officer?

KS Yes. I retired as Chief Education Officer in 1998 in Trinidad.

CE In your role as Chief Education Officer, would you have sat on Council?

KS Yes I did, when I became Chief Education Officer in 1994 I sat on Council right down to time of retirement.

CE In what capacities did you serve CXC?

KS Yes, I was on SUBSEC, a Chief Examiner on the examining committee and in the early days a member of the Social Studies Panel and made sure that Social Studies was not only desirable but also feasible.

CE From 1994 to 1998 you would have been on Council, SUBSEC and SEC. What were some of the major issues around that time?

KS Apart from ensuring that we did the CSEC properly in various places and responding to any queries particularly in the science areas, we were able to make decisions to carry that forward and it was the CEe time that the CAPE was being thought about and we had to go and market the CAPE in the various territories. I accepted the responsibility for Trinidad and Tobago and Sir Roy (Dr Augier at the time) came down regularly and we had meetings with the various principals.

Remember this was another occasion in which we had to bring about change, where people were very much accustomed to the A' Level and now we are asking them to do the CAPE. That called for a lot of explanations and meetings with principals and teachers. During that period 1994-1998, I would dare say in Trinidad and Tobago we were selling the idea of CAPE and many people ventured on and took it on. The success of CSEC at that time, which was then the compulsory examination for most of Trinidad and Tobago except for Additional Mathematics, which was the last to come on stream, helped the people to put faith in CAPE.



Dr Rudy Goodridge was the first Convenor for Social Studies syllabus panel

That I would say was the major challenge we had in the last decade of the 20th Century, to bring about acceptance of the CAPE as a replacement to the Advance Level.

CE In Trinidad I know there was a lot of resistance to the introduction of CAPE...

KS Yes, and the resistance took place under my watch and this is why I told you Sir Roy Augier played a tremendous part in giving me support and organising meetings and so forth. Side by side with that I had the ears of the minister who was very facilitating.

CE What was the major issue with CAPE?

KS The major issue is that Trinidad and Tobago is a very competitive society when it comes to their A' Level and university entrance and because of scarcity of places at university apart from which cost of university education also. People were concerned about how the scholarship results would be determined when CAPE came into being?

Thank God today I have lived to see Trinidad and Tobago offering 428 scholarships to people based on CAPE qualification. Many of the fears that we had in the nineties have turned out to be great successes for CAPE and the society has accepted it and no longer are they making comparisons on what A' Level was and whether the replacement examination would have prepared people for university education as much as the A' Level can.

CE Now that you have some time to reflect on your involvement in the Council, what would you say is your fondest memory or memories?

KS Well as far as the Council was concerned, the fact that we were able to bring about the change in CAPE was very significant during the nineties and to get people to accept the challenge. They were good seeds sown at that time and full credit to the quality of leadership. I learnt a lot as a young man to have sat at the feet of two Gamaliels, Dr Irvine and Sir Roy. The Caribbean owes them a great amount of gratitude for the quality of their leadership.

CE In terms of CXC overall, what would you say has been CXC's most significant contribution to the region?

KS It has helped the region to identify with the prayers, hopes and the writings of the early leaders of the 40s, 50s and 60s. To my mind, it has made independence a reality and it has made Republicanism in Trinidad and Tobago a reality. CXC has contributed to that immensely, where people are beginning to become less dependent in educational terms and more reliant on their own well-being and appreciation of their own people. All of us who have come through similar historical background are now able to rise and do things for ourselves that are comparable with other parts of the world.

I must tell you that all along CXC did it wisely by ensuring that we were in touch with people in different parts of the world who were doing examinations. We never in the early days threw away all of the English people who came here in order to give us advice in Measurement and Evaluation and also there was a close association with the Education Testing Service of Princeton. Many of the people who worked at CXC were exposed to these two noble institutions, one in the USA and one in the UK. They were proficiently interacting to learn the ways so that we can truly say we became independent and fortunately there are other parts of the world that are coming to us now to learn how we did it. They are all in the rate of progress. We are making our contribution not as takers but as makers.

Ken Seepersad – “Father” of CSEC® Social Studies



Sir Roy Augier (L) and Dr Dennis Irvine (R) provided much needed guidance in the early years

Sir Roy (Dr Augier at the time) was part owner of a book entitled “The Making of the West Indies.” It first appeared in the 1960s when we were changing over and having history of the Caribbean done as opposed to European history to those people who went to secondary school in the 1940s and 1950s. The book became the standard text for all. CXC is helping to make the West Indies and the Caribbean and it is still our hope and dream that one of these days people in the Caribbean will be able to engage in a greater partnership and know that we are our brother’s keeper.

CE Your current Minister of Education, Dr Gopeesingh who spoke at the opening ceremony of our meeting in 2011 in Trinidad, he said ‘CXC is the institution that most brings the Caribbean together’.

KS I support that fully.

CE What role do you think CXC has played in regional integration?

KS It’s playing a role. It is dynamic. When our students have certification that is common

then they see they come from the same source and that will lead to greater understanding of people in different places. I, who have been fortunate to run workshops in Social Studies, be it Dominica, St Lucia, Guyana or Belize, I felt that people were beginning to understand and we felt that we all belong to the same area as it were and therefore we should be able to do more things in common and we did. Many times when I went and met with different education people, there was a commonality. Now how could that have been possible were it not for this exchange and people understanding one another and knowing one another. CXC did that; not only a common certification but thereafter other things. Today our students are going in different parts of the world. With the same background they understand each other more closely and they are able to start other courses on the background of CXC. The world is their oyster.

I used to say West Indian cricket was number one but these days with their changing fortunes, CXC is number one in terms of what has brought about and make us more understanding of one another. In my humble view, not only because I was involved in it but I have seen it come

through with my own children who have been through the CXC and have done quite well with it and they were fortunate to have been to universities in different parts of the world both sides of the Atlantic with the CXC background and they went and they excelled. One returned home and is Head of the legal department of POWERGEN and the other works in communications with RBC. Based on their background with CXC they have moved on.

The young man from Trinidad who died in Kenya quite recently was one of our excellent students in 2003, having won the President’s Medal based on the CXC results.

CE In the next forty years, what would you like to see CXC do or where would you like to see CXC go?

KS They must ensure that there is greater commonality. I will tell you one thing I attempted and did not achieve it. I would like to see a common examination for all children at 11-plus set by CXC. I have been able from the Trinidad end to let CXC do the English and Mathematics in what is known as the SEA examination but that is for Trinidad.

Just as CXC prepares a common examination at Form 5 for the Caribbean (CSEC), I would like to see a primary examination set for the CARICOM countries and others who would like and that become the standard for 11 plus children. We have some headway but it ought to become universal not quite in 40 years but I would like to see CXC give itself five years and work with their varied interests to have it done.

CE You know we actually started that two years ago but so far only three countries have come on board.

KS Yes, I would like to see some of the selfishness disappear so we could have a common standard there that move on to the CSEC and then to the CAPE and we make sure that the systems are well in place and we provide the necessary training for the individual territories to bring them up; all done in close collaboration with The University of The West Indies and other tertiary institutions. We will then achieve a seamless transition in our total education.

Sir Roy Augier

The Epitome of Longevity at CXC

The Governments of the English-speaking Caribbean, after eight years of negotiating, agreed to establish the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) in 1972. Seven years later, it offered its first examinations.

Fitzroy Augier, historian and professor emeritus in history at The University of The West Indies (UWI) was a member of a small group who worked on the details – from negotiations to agreement to the administration – necessary for the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations to be written in 1979.

Dr Augier is careful to insist that the task of setting up the CXC was a team effort. He cites the names of Eric Williams, Philip Sherlock, Edwin Allen, Errol Miller, William Demas, Lloyd Braithwaite, Reg Murray, Wesley Powell, Fay Saunders, and Dennis Irvine. Professor Marshall, vice-chancellor of UWI, served only one year as chair, so Augier says it was Professor Dennis Irvine, then vice-chancellor of the University of Guyana (UG), who had the task, over a six-year period, of directing the work of creating the administration, supervising the writing of five syllabuses, the



Sir Roy Augier

drafting of examination papers and the training of examiners so that the CSEC examinations could be offered in 1979.

Dr Augier explains that the protracted activity extending from 1964-1979 can be understood in the context of separate governments feeling their way after the collapse of the Federation to finding matters they could, nevertheless, cooperate on, to their collective advantage and the detailed work necessary to laying a sound foundation for the council.

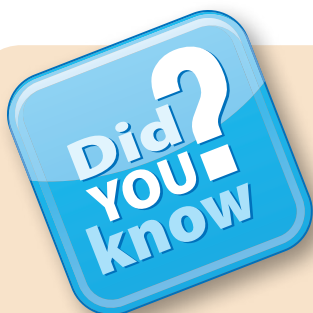
The initiative and support for the establishment of CXC came from two sources. One was our common Caribbean cultural identity. The other was the consideration of what was appropriate for children growing up in the Caribbean to be taught. The first reflected the emergent spirit of nationalism, the second reflected dissatisfaction with having the same examination papers as English children. He notes, too, that the first was the result of a long discussion in the region, with its roots in the 19th century. Of the second element, Augier claims, “It is very important to recognise that the teachers did not merely express dissatisfaction with Cambridge and

“What has made the CXC survive is its understanding from its beginning that it came from a collaboration of governments, teachers, schools, parents and students.”



Earlier times: Sir Roy (2nd from right) and first Registrar Major Rudolph Daniel and representatives from CXC Participating Countries at an early governance committee meeting

Sir Roy Augier – The Epitome of Longevity at CXC



Sir Roy Augier

Sir Roy Augier attended the Inaugural meeting of the Council in 1973. He also attended the first SUBSEC, AFC, SEC and Council meetings. He served as the UWI Mona representative on these major committees: SUBSEC, AFC, SEC and Council. Sir Roy is a former Chairman of CXC (1987-1996); the first Panel Convenor for Caribbean History (1979) and still serves on the Final Awards Committee and Council.

London syllabuses, they proposed alternatives for a number of subjects. Their work was the foundation for the choice of the five subjects offered for the CSEC examinations.

He also notes that members of the UWI and UG were also involved in writing syllabuses.

Dr Augier was appointed convenor of the history syllabus because of the work he had already been doing with Shirley Gordon and history teachers on an alternative Cambridge syllabus for West Indian history. He had been involved in workshops and conferences for teachers and also in meeting with principals, Government ministers and civil servants, to explain the merits of the new syllabus being prepared for Cambridge. In general, he says, the principals were sympathetic, but made it clear that a textbook on West Indian history was essential. That condition stimulated the writing of *The Making of the West Indies*, published in 1960.

Asked about the hurdles that the Council has had to deal with since 1973, Dr Augier says that one was finance. The governments and the Council underestimated the true costs of doing all the basic things necessary to make CXC an examining board, independent of the English boards, whose syllabuses met international standards and whose grades had integrity, and were reliable and accepted by the parents, teachers and universities.

“Luckily, CXC received grants from CIDA, from USAID, the UK’s Commonwealth Fund, and the European Union, which enabled training and a variety of technical assistance to be available just when we needed help.”

Another hurdle, there from the beginning, but made more difficult with the increase in the number of students sitting examinations, is the use of teachers to mark while schools have not yet closed for the holidays. Ministries and principals complain that CXC uses too many of their teachers. But, Augier explains, if results are to be provided early in August, the marking of the examinations cannot be started later; CXC needs every reliable marker available to

meet that deadline, and they are the teachers in schools.

Asked about CXC’s achievements; “We now have a regional examination,” he says with pride.

“Our remit was to examine the whole school cohort. We started with five subjects in CSEC in May; added examinations in January; then expanded to 35 subjects. Next, Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) was established to replace A’ Levels.

“For the large number of students who were not ready for CSEC, and were leaving school without certification, in conjunction with several governments, the Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence (CCSLC) is now available. Most important, despite occasional leaking of examination papers, the integrity of CSEC and CAPE is acknowledged and their results widely accepted in the Caribbean and by universities abroad.”

Dr Augier concludes, “What has made the CXC survive is its understanding from its beginning that it came from a collaboration of governments, teachers, schools, parents and students. It has been, and continues to be, more than an examining board. It teaches, by workshops for teachers, the content of syllabuses; it publishes the reports of the chief examiners every year, which are available to students and the public. It is not parochial; its senior staff are members of the executive bodies of international associations of examiners.”

As the Council celebrates 40 years, Augier is recognised as one of its early leaders and a symbol of its survival and relevance. He is confident that it will continue to be guided by the philosophy of its founders. As to his continued involvement, Sir Roy says that is unlikely to change; as long as he is needed and able to contribute, he firmly says, “I will.”

This article was first published in a CXC special feature in the Jamaica Gleaner newspaper on 11 August 2013.



1982

CXC accepts private candidates to write the examinations for the first time.

CXC receives grants from USAID and Overseas Development Agency (ODA) to assist in curriculum development and for use in building CXC’s library resources

General Electricity Examining Team

consists of: Mr D G Christie (Chief Examiner), Mr Hugh Gaskin and Mr Fitz Reid (Asst Chief Examiners), Mr Hugh Chamber (MED Staff), Mr V Daniel (Examiner – Basic Proficiency), Assistant Examiners: Mr John Cummins, Mr U Kalloo, Mr Fitzroy Marcus, Mr K Ramphal and Mr Stephen Rice-Burrows

Mr A Bovell (Examiner – General);

Assistant Examiners include:

Mr Phillip Bardovell, Mr John Edwin, Mr Haredo Copie, Mr Vincent Rhoden, Mr Daniel Shillingford.

Standardization of Examiners

in both proficiencies done on Paper 2 by Asst Chief Examiners: Mr Hugh Gaskin and Mr Fitz-Herbert Reid

INTRODUCTION

In 1979, CXC offered for the first time the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations to the 16-plus cohort and is the market leader in the English-speaking Caribbean for this level of examination. In 1998, CXC implemented its mandate for the 18-plus cohort by introducing the first examinations for the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) which is offered in two units to over 28,000 candidates.

Since 1977, CXC has developed over 60 syllabuses for CSEC examinations; 50 for CAPE Units 1 and 2; five syllabuses for the Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence (CCSLC) for which the first examinations were written in 2007. In 2012, CXC introduced the Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (CPEA) for candidates transitioning from primary to secondary school. The first examination was written in 86 primary schools by 2000 candidates. CXC has also introduced the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) to its suite of technical vocational offerings.

TERRITORIAL ASSISTANCE

At the territorial level, there is a Local Registrar in each ministry of education who acts as the CXC agent and is responsible for the administration of the examinations, registration of candidates, the local security of the question papers, appointment of invigilators, collection of fees and forwarding same to CXC. These Local Registrars, who are usually employees of the governments, receive no fee or stipend from CXC; nevertheless they are an integral part of the CXC structure.

CHALLENGES

In 1979, when the first CSEC examinations were written, the 13 regional governments which offered candidates directed that all eligible students in government-controlled secondary schools should write the examinations. This was 90 per cent of the regional school population. This directive provided CXC with a captive market and made its operations viable. However, while governments directed their schools to write the new examination, they also mandated CXC to prepare the examination timetable in such a way as to allow candidates to register and write the examinations offered by the overseas boards also.

RECOGNITION

Recognition of the CXC examinations also proved a considerable challenge. In several of the territories, concern was expressed about the acceptance of CXC qualifications internationally. It had been reported that students who had gone

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By Susan Giles



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to Canada after writing CXC examinations had found that the qualification was not accepted by certain Canadian high schools or universities. In response, CXC embarked on a high-profile public relations campaign, and negotiated agreements with North American institutions to ensure full acceptance of its qualifications.

There is now very little issue with respect to recognition of all of the CXC qualifications in the traditional markets for Caribbean students. In 1999, UK National Academic Records Information Centre (UK NARIC), a UK clearing house on qualifications, reported that they were impressed by the content and structure of the Advanced Proficiency examinations (CAPE) and in particular the flexibility they offered. In 2012, CXC received further endorsement from the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) which now accepts the CXC qualifications for entry into university.

When CAPE syllabuses were introduced in 1998, the response from regional governments, the primary stakeholders, was lukewarm. In the first year of the examination only six of the 16 Participating Countries had agreed to pilot the examinations. More importantly, two of the major territories with significant A-level populations initially declined to participate. This sent confusing signals to CXC which believed that since the governments had mandated the examination they would participate when the examination became available.

Similarly, the introduction in 2007 of a new competency-based test, the Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence (CCSLC), has, up to now, not been fully endorsed by regional governments even though they were intimately involved in the development of the new examination. The Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (CPEA) has also not been fully endorsed.

SYLLABUS DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

At the time of the establishment of the CXC, there was no structured curriculum at the secondary level in several territories. To facilitate syllabus development process, National Committees were established in each of the 16 Participating Countries. Their responsibility was two-fold; first to feed information back to the Panels which would assist with the syllabus development process, and secondly to assist in "selling" the concept of a regional examination to the public who resided in islands which were all at different levels of educational development, and universal secondary education was not pervasive.

What the establishment of the CXC did for the region was to ensure the democratizing of the Caribbean education system. One of the major features of the examination system

has been the feedback mechanism which CXC established with regional schools. Teachers and principals may comment on the syllabuses, make recommendations about the content or provide information on the difficulties schools experienced in implementing any aspect of a particular syllabus. This facility is also in place for the examination papers, and teachers over the years have recognized that their comments are valued and are considered either at syllabus review or during the Grading activities.

CXC has also incorporated into its syllabuses sound international theories of learning as well as the important skills of critical thinking, problem solving and decision making. CXC benchmarks its syllabuses against international standards as the focus is not only about preparing candidates to live and work in the region, but also to assist them in functioning effectively in the international arena.

STRUCTURE OF THE EXAMINATIONS

Most of what CXC proposed over the years was new to the region. Administrators, teachers, students, parents and the Caribbean public had to grapple with new concepts such as: objective tests, School Based Assessment, profiles, criterion-referencing, multidisciplinary subjects, proficiencies and competency-based tests.

Objective tests (multiple choice) created early concerns as many territories believed that candidates could not be fairly assessed using this format even though multiple choice was only one mode of assessment in an examination that normally comprised MC, essay and coursework (SBA).

The School Based Assessment (SBA) was conceptualized as a way of helping candidates, especially those that did not perform well in the examination environment by allowing them to enter the test with scores obtained from class work and to develop their research skills. This was a new mode of assessment for regional teachers and despite initial challenges they were favourably disposed to its implementation (Miller 1983).

The five-point grading system was another innovation. CXC was proud to report that it was not a pass/fail norm-referenced system, but that each grade described a different level of competence. However, CXC's confidence in its grading was tempered by the need to secure external recognition and to satisfy its own regional university entrance requirements.

CXC also reported results using Profile grades to complement and elaborate on the overall grades. Profiles are descriptors of the skills to be tested in an examination, and in the CXC syllabuses are defined in terms of cognitive skills or in terms of content areas. Two



1983

Major innovations include the splitting of some subjects by proficiency as a major cost-cutting strategy

CXC offers markers at all three marking centres

the option of making their own accommodation arrangements

Markers from Anguilla are recruited for the first time.

Antigua and Barbuda offers candidates for the first time in subjects apart from Integrated Science.

CIDA/CXC Institutional Development Project headed by Mrs Fay Saunders begins

The Registrar formally acknowledges Mr Erskine Rawlins, former CEO, Barbados, for his service to the Council beginning in 1974 "as a member of Council and as mentor and friend during the Council's formative years."

At the Local Registrars' meeting of January 29 appreciation and accolades given to Mrs K Polydore Local Registrar of Dominica for her service to CXC

1984

CXC aims to incorporate into the secondary school system of traditional grammar school orientation a range of technical/vocational subjects. Support is given to the proposal for a major curriculum development project in Technical/Vocational and Science subjects.

The expansion of the Council's marking activities requires additional processing space and the Ministry of Education grants permission for the use of Block B.

Mr Michael Ratcliffe from the British Development Division assists CXC subject officers in a number of workshops

“CXC has also incorporated into its syllabuses sound international theories of learning as well as the important skills of critical thinking, problem solving and decision making.”

main difficulties emerged for the public with the Profile reporting system. Firstly, there were three profile letter grades A-C and five overall grades 1-5, which meant that candidates could obtain 3 A's and get a Grade I or II or 3 B's and get either a Grade II or III. Secondly, in the Caribbean context “C” was not usually regarded as below average and “B” as average. CXC made considerable effort to simplify the relationship between the profiles and grades. In 1998, when the six-point grading scheme was introduced the matter was resolved.

The criterion-referenced approach to grading was a departure from the norm-referenced approach which had been used by the examining boards operating in the region. This form of grading allows the examiners to measure candidates' performance against pre-defined standards. Criterion-referenced testing is regarded as more transparent, a fairer system of assessment, and one that allows the users of CXC's certificates to make sound inferences about candidates' mastery of the domains tested while also facilitating the equating of standards from year to year.

CXC introduced multidisciplinary offerings like Principles of Business and Social Studies – areas that were not previously available to candidates through the overseas boards. Candidates who wanted to write these subjects had to seek out the overseas boards that offered them. Integrated Science Double Award, (i.e. counted as two subjects) was an excellent multidisciplinary offering that could not be sustained as it proved too challenging for teachers who were familiar with one or two areas but who found three disciplines and the in-depth teaching required for a Double Award, too great a challenge. The examination was discontinued in 2000.

SCHEMES OF EXAMINATION

The introduction of two different schemes of examination (General and Basic Proficiency) was new to the school system and the message from CXC with respect to the Basic Proficiency was not always clear. On occasion, the public was informed that the Basic Proficiency was designed for persons entering the world of work as well as for the high achiever who wanted to write an examination in an area outside of his/her specialty. This message did not resonate with teachers, many of whom simply considered it a low level test and discouraged parents from registering their children for the examination. As a result,

the entries declined and the Basic Proficiency examination was discontinued after 2007.

TEACHER TRAINING AND ORIENTATION

In the early years, and as late as 1984, internal debate raged as to whether CXC should be involved in teacher training, since this was not the business of an examining body. However, when the first syllabuses were introduced to the region, CXC recognised the need to assist teachers by embarking on substantial teacher training and material development programmes. Some of the new syllabuses contained SBA, a concept that was unfamiliar to the regional teaching fraternity.

The issue of the volume of work required by candidates and teachers had to be addressed too. Miller (1983) posited, “The general impression given by teachers, students and principals is that the CXC syllabuses are all very ambitious but that there is need for some adjustments especially when the curriculum as a whole is taken into consideration.” Teacher-training and teacher orientation therefore became part of the business of the Council with CXC emphasizing that it was doing so in partnership with the ministries and tertiary institutions.

SCRIPT MARKING

CXC also had to make some decisions on the type of script marking to be employed. Residential marking saw teachers being brought from several territories to one location to engage in the process of first standardizing, before marking the scripts which were then sent to one central location for final processing. The script marking was different from that employed by Cambridge as CXC examiners marked by table and by question; thus no one person was responsible for an entire script. The marking process proved to be a major teacher training activity in itself and was critical to the development of the teaching fraternity at a time when there was no indigenous tradition of their involvement in public examinations.

This format for the script marking is no longer sustainable. CXC spends over BD\$18 million annually in providing transportation, accommodation, catering and living allowances for over 2000 teachers who are transported to the different marking centres. The increasing costs for air travel, hotels that meet the CXC minimum standards and catering services demanded that

CXC review its operations. Electronic marking (e-marking) will be a fact of life in 2014 as CXC will mark electronically for the first time, 11 CSEC papers.

CONCLUSION

There can be no doubt that CXC in its 34 years of offering examinations has restructured the public examination system in the region. The eventual development of curricula to support the new syllabuses has been a signal achievement. The establishment of subject panels to develop new syllabuses created a cadre of persons who were empowered and who through their innovations created syllabuses and systems which have maintained high quality examinations in the region.

Qualified resource persons recruited to the Examining Committees with responsibility for question paper development received training in psychometrics and measurement. For the first time in the region, personnel were exposed to the development of question papers based on objectives defined by the syllabuses. This training has been of significant benefit not only to CXC but also to the major tertiary institutions in the region, where these resource persons are employed.

The introduction of the SBA corrected many of the poor practices evident in the teaching in schools and ensured that candidates had a better opportunity for improved performance in the examinations. It is of concern to CXC that dishonest practices on the part of both teachers and candidates have invaded the administration of this mode of assessment, and more forensic auditing of SBAs is now routinely undertaken.

CXC has achieved significant success over the past 40 years. This success does not only relate to the examinations it has introduced, or its syllabuses and curriculum development activities, but also in the support and leadership it has provided to the development of education in the region. There is considerable work still to be done and “ultimately, the guarantee of CXC's future lies, not just in exemplary execution of its core functions, but in how far ahead of the curve it is, in adding value to education in the region” (Jules 2011).

Susan Giles is the Senior Assistant Registrar – Examinations Administration and Security at CXC and has been with the Council for 30 years.

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1985

Anguilla offers candidates for the examinations for the first time.

Mr Tom Christie and Dr David Beckles

complete study to identify a method for maintaining CXC's standards across subjects over time

1986

Netherlands Antilles offers students for the first time.

First Grading Subcommittee meeting is held on 13 June

Members of Grading Subcommittee

include: Dr Kofi Quansah (Ag Chair), Mrs Joyce Chase, Mrs Irene Walter, Mr Victor Moses, Mr B Hercules and Dr Cuthbert Joseph

1988

Regional Top Awards for outstanding performance in **CSEC** are introduced.

1989

A January sitting of the examination is introduced.

Technical Proficiency is piloted.

1995

The island of Saba presents candidates for the first time.

CXC: The Role of the Technical Advisory Committee in its Measurement and Evaluation Revolution

By Professor Neville Ying

In 1972, the governments of the CARICOM countries took the bold step of establishing the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) with the mandate of developing and administering examinations at the secondary level. CXC had the awesome task of challenging the well-established and accepted Cambridge and London-based examination bodies. CXC took on this challenge by setting itself the targets of *developing and conducting* reliable and valid examinations which would be recognized and accepted internationally. It relied on measurement and evaluation innovations to usher in this revolution of developing a distinctive scheme of Caribbean Examinations employing world class practices not then introduced in "O" level examinations.

What were the major strategic intentions of CXC?

These can be summed up as the intention to use an innovative, multimodal set of measurement and evaluation testing techniques.

First, was the intention for the examinations to employ a judicious mix of selected responses - Multiple Choice (MC) items - and structured responses, including short answer and essay type items. Second, was the plan to use a mix of external examinations and School Based Assessment. Third, was the strategy of adopting a dual system of reporting examinations results using an overall Grade(s) and Profile Grades. The intention was to provide both employers and tertiary level institutions with more comprehensive examinations results for making employment and matriculation decisions.

The use of profile grades was a bold step as the other competing examinations bodies had not tried this before. Neither was the integrated use of SBA in determining the overall and profile grades attempted in this way by competing Examination bodies. CXC was now venturing into uncharted examinations waters.

There were persons willing to embark on the Caribbean examinations journey but in the early 70's when this journey began there was strong resistance from the schools and the public. CXC was left with the daunting task of convincing the major Caribbean stakeholders- principals, teachers, students, parents, employers, and tertiary



institutions that the Caribbean examinations revolution would work.

Thus began the challenging but exciting journey of which measurement and evaluation would be the centrepiece and driving force towards success.

The journey, from its inception, required some key resources and chief among these were persons with specialized expertise in the area of psychometrics. This need led to the genesis and use of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) while CXC built its internal capability in this specialized area.

The Technical Advisory Committee therefore played a vital role over the 40 years in providing the technical expertise needed to assist CXC in achieving its strategic intentions for the development of indigenous, innovative and internationally acceptable Caribbean examinations.

Many persons played key roles in providing this combination of expertise and passion and have left us after 40 years with an internationally recognized and accepted set of examinations.

I was involved in the psychometric journey for nearly all the 40 years and can therefore share

with you glimpses of the human and technical story.

The CXC was fortunate to have at the inception the contributions of the first qualified person at the doctoral level in Psychometrics in the Caribbean, Professor Laurie Reid of the Institute of Education, The University of The West Indies, (UWI) Mona. He had an established track record in the setting of MC-type tests and was also the author and developer of the Common Entrance examinations in Jamaica. I became the second Caribbean person qualified at the doctoral level in Measurement and Evaluation and joined the journey in 1975. The then Pro Registrar, Irene Walter, called me in the summer of 1975 and asked me to conduct the first major CXC item writing workshop for Caribbean secondary level teachers at the Sam Lords Castle in Barbados. I worked with Andrew Elliott who was providing technical expertise in Measurement and Evaluation through a CIDA-funded project. He was originally assigned to the Institute of Education, UWI, to head a special Education Research Unit (ERU). The ERU and Andrew Elliott were transferred to CXC to assist it in the early examinations development work. We started with a blank slate because syllabuses for the initial set of CXC subjects were not completed until 1977. The workshops to develop essay type questions therefore began later, after CXC's first efforts to teach item writing techniques. Later, as a senior officer - Assistant Chief Education Officer for Research Evaluation and Counselling (REC) in the Ministry of Education in Jamaica - I also served as a member of Council as well as a technical advisor. In the latter capacity, I was able to transfer to the CXC examination process the positive components of the SBA techniques and items developed for Technical Vocational Subjects for the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) for New Secondary Schools in Jamaica, whose design and implementation I led. I was ably assisted by Measurement and Evaluation specialists, Dr Michael Mitchelmore, Dr Constance Hines, Dr Manley Thompson and Education Research and English specialist, Dr Keith Lowe from the REC Unit and Mr Hugh Moss Solomon, Mathematics specialist from the Planning and Development

Measurement and Evaluation Revolution

Unit. Technical and Vocational subjects were strong focal areas for the new secondary schools as programmes were expanded from Grades 7-9 to Grades 7-11. As a result of the work of stalwarts such as: Dr Thelma Stewart in Home Economics, George Thompson and Arlie Dyer in Industrial Arts, Elsie Webber in Business Education, Patrick Bennett in Agriculture, from the Ministry of Education in Jamaica, who all served as the first CXC panellists and examiners for those subjects and the instructors at the Vocational and Technical Development Institute (VTDI) in Jamaica – who were central to the development of examinations for the Technical Vocational subjects for the SSC in Jamaica - I was able to pass on a wealth of information such as examination questions and strategies for moderation of practical examinations to CXC. This information formed important building blocks for examinations for Technical Vocational subjects by CXC in the early years.

For the first set of examinations in 1979, CXC had to develop not only examinations but also descriptions for overall and profile grades and techniques for determining cutting scores for these grades. This marked the beginning of the central role of the TAC as it assisted CXC in these processes and this critical role of TAC continued over the years of CXC's development.

As the number of CXC examinations grew after the first set of Examinations in 1979, there was need to move from a two person technical team in Measurement and Evaluation to a more formalized committee. This led to the establishment of the Technical Advisory Committee for Measurement and Evaluation (TACME) which later became the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

The UWI (Mona), in particular the School of Education, in the early years provided resources that were crucial to the measurement and evaluation process. In addition to Professor Laurie Reid specialist in Psychometrics, there were other outstanding educators such as Professor Reginald Murray and Dr Aubrey

Phillips who, though not measurement specialists, provided the philosophy of education that could properly anchor Caribbean measurement and evaluation techniques. Later of course, the UWI provided Professor Elsa Leo Rhynie, Dr Desmond Broomes, Dr Carol Keller, Professor June George and Professor Stafford Griffith who were to play central roles in what is now the Technical Advisory Committee. Over the years the Ministry of Education in Jamaica also provided the TAC with expert personnel in measurement and evaluation, starting in the early years with Dr Neville Ying and Dr Doreen Faulknor in later years. In later years, the OECS provided the TAC with the expertise of Dr Henry Hinds.

But back to the beginning. Professor Reid and myself started as a two-person team to help the CXC develop its in-house measurement and evaluation capability and to work with the examining teams for each subject area. Our role was to work with these teams in an important quality assurance process to ensure that our examinations and the results were valid and reliable, and had the integrity to stand up to public scrutiny in the Caribbean and worldwide. We had the benefit of the support of the Educational Testing Service (ETS), Princeton University, USA, from whom CXC sought assistance especially for the development of an item bank of M-C items and the processing of the examination results. Another structure that supported this process was a special team established by the Council now known as the Final Awards Committee (FAC). Chief Examiners had to appear before this team to present and defend their examination results and how they arrived at them. In the early years, this was like an inquisition where incisive questions were posed by a triumvirate of Dr Dennis Irvine, Sir Roy Augier and Professor Laurie Reid. Chief examiners feared this process but on reflection it helped CXC to develop the high regard it receives for its examinations.

There were also passionate debates, and accommodation of contending viewpoints as the TAC worked with Chief Examiners and their



1997

Candidate entries pass the one hundred thousand (109,633) milestone.

1998

The CSEC Grading Scheme changes from a five-point scale to a six-point scale.

The Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) is offered for the first time.

2000

First offering of examinations in Information Technology and Integrated Science at the January Sitting

CXC offers examinations in Suriname for the first time.

Major modification to the EPS with the introduction of FAIM designed to meet the new data and information requirements of **CSEC** and **CAPE**. As a result on-line access to the system will enable quicker retrieval of registration, mark schemes and grading data

Expansion of Internet services at WZO

Barbados announces that **CAPE** syllabuses will be taught in secondary schools and that the performance on **CAPE** will be considered for scholarship awards



Members of the Final Awards Committee - L to R Professor Stafford Griffith, Mr Carol Keller and Dr Desmond Broomes

subject teams to resolve issues including: double awards for subjects such as Integrated Science and Agricultural Science; measurement approaches for individual science subjects, physics chemistry and biology, versus those for integrated science; common approaches for testing the languages French and Spanish; and the criterion referenced approach to testing and grading versus the normative approaches.

Some of the most passionate Chief Examiners that TAC worked with in the early years during these exciting and challenging dialogues were Flo Commissiong in the area of Integrated Science, Donovan Palmer in Geography, Clive Borely in English A, Dr Thelma Stewart in Home Economics and Dr Earl Newton in French.

These structured conversations and accommodation of a diversity of ideas involving TAC and teams of Examiners for different subjects were an important part of laying the foundation for important measurement and evaluation mechanisms and processes which are now known in the CXC system as: Paper Setting, Standardization, Marking, Meetings of Grading and Final Awards Committees. The TAC over the years played a central role in the development of these important measurement, evaluation and quality assurance processes for CXC Examinations.

The efficacy of the work of TAC was enhanced by its collaboration with internal staff and departments over the years. The chief among these were the Measurement and Evaluation Department (MED) and Computer Systems. The TAC helped in the selection, training, coaching and guidance of MED staff.

The computer systems department was crucial in providing especially, the statistical information for making grading and grade awards decisions. In the early years CXC had the benefit of the contributions of Dr David Beckles in establishing computer systems. Dr Neville Ying provided advice on the selection of the first computer system. Assistance in this process was also provided by Tom Christie from the University of Manchester, UK, whose services to CXC in examinations development was sponsored by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation.

The MED heads such as Dr Bert Drakes, Dr. Kofi Quansah, James Halliday (now Dr Halliday) and Dr Yolande Wright, and MED staff members such as Pat King, Dennis Reid and Joyce Chase, have over the years worked with their in-house staff and TAC in the development of examinations as well as a variety of evaluation techniques, systems and processes.

So today, at this point in time, as a result of the inputs of TAC and its collaborative work with key departments some important milestones have been achieved chief of which are: examinations research data, item analysis and other statistical information which are important for the work and decision-making of grading committees who are making critical decisions such as cutting scores for overall grades and profile grades. The TAC uses this information as it works with grading committees for different subjects and advises the FAC each year to ensure that decisions are evidence based and the results of their deliberations have psychometric integrity.

Overall the work of the TAC has contributed to CXC having a strong and internationally reputable Examinations Quality Assurance system.

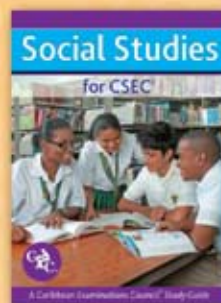
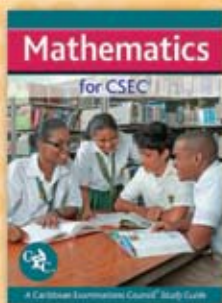
So here we are today, 40 years later with credible examinations based on sound measurement and evaluation principles, strategies and techniques. As the CXC continues to move into new dimensions in the future such as e-marking, the TAC will continue to be an integral part of the CXC Examinations revolution.

Professor Neville Ying is a long-time resource person with CXC. He has served on TAC for a number of years.

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Reflections on 40 Years of CXC

By Ralph Boyce



Happy markers waiting on transportation to their hotels

I welcome the opportunity to reflect on my years of involvement with CXC at various levels: As a member of the English A Panel in my own right and *hominem*, as Assistant Chief Examiner, Local Registrar and as government representative on the Council.

I wish to congratulate the Council on reaching this important milestone and extend best wishes for the future (50th, 75th, and 100th).

When I did the Maths, it turned out that in 1973, I was still in Jamaica (I was then Head of the English Department at Calabar High School.) where I had been invited to be on the English A panel in my own right. I think that this invitation was due to the fact that I had written a short paper entitled "My Quarrel with Cambridge." In the paper, I had criticized that traditional examination, mainly because it sampled too small a slice of English—in fact only composition, comprehension and *précis*/summary writing. Secondly, it did not test a candidate's ability to speak English; the oral element.

Since then the objective-type questions in the CXC examination have helped to ensure that

other aspects of English are tested. But I am not, however, aware that there is yet a test of the candidate's ability to speak the language. So effectively, a Grade 1 candidate may be totally unable to speak English. So I still have a quarrel, this time with CXC as well!

As I reflected on the early days, I recall the conviviality among the members of the panel and the wider CXC family. There was much open joy at our annual reunions and some sadness at departure time. At some meetings, held in Barbados, busloads converged on particular venues to enjoy the local fare, with the then Registrar Mr Wilfred Beckles, facilitating and participating fully.

Speaking of sadness, the then representatives of Barbados, Miss Gloria Cummins, and Mr Clive Borely of Trinidad and Tobago, have been called to higher duties. The then Miss Hazel Simmons (St Lucia) has since married and is now Professor Hazel Simmons-McDonald, Head of the Open Campus of the UWI. Dr Colville Young went on to become His Excellency Governor General of Belize, and is still in office.



2001

The University of the West Indies partners with CXC to offer scholarship for **CSEC** Regional Top Awardees.

First satellite link-up meeting for the 9th Meeting of Local Registrars via the UWIDITE Teleconferencing Network

2002

Training of the finance staff in the accounting software ACCPAC

CXC places more emphasis on health and safety with the installation of air purifiers and water tanks

2003

CSEC Visual Arts Exhibition is introduced and hosted in Barbados and Jamaica.

CSEC Syllabuses for Physical Education and Sports and Electronic Document Preparation and Management are introduced.

The first issue of the Caribbean Examiner Magazine is published

The first set self-study guides are developed and published

Introduction of CSEC Theatre Arts

I returned to Barbados as an education officer in October 1974, nine years later becoming Chief Education Officer. I was also promoted to be Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and later Prime Minister's Office, retiring 13 years ago. Since then I have been giving voluntary service to the Men's Educational Support Association (MESA), a clear and respected voice for men and their families in Barbados.

In terms of accomplishments by CXC, without having given it much thought before, we were able to break new ground, replacing an age-old examination set and marked by foreigners in a foreign country, without fanfare or great fall out. Our painstaking but gratifying approaches to the development, setting and evaluation of our own examinations were known to be professionally sound. It was a great pleasure to see others from far afield and of a different colour, visiting and anxious to see how it was done! I was even invited to co-author two books "Objective Type Questions for CXC English," with one of the examiners from the other camp.

My memory of the table marking is particularly vivid. Various members of the team –carefully selected from throughout the region, did their work with scrupulous care, with the



Markers arriving in Barbados

table leader and Chief Examiner ensuring that high standards and quality control were consistently upheld. The few members of the team who demonstrated that that they were not up to standard were quietly sent back home!

I recall one concern that "errors" of spelling, grammar etc. were not always highlighted

and marked except in response to particular questions. But we generally did not lose a night's sleep over it.

Talking about sleep, I seem to recall one – or perhaps two occasions – when, unable to resist the urge, I "turned in", requesting the other members of the panel to wake me if any thorny issues came up. The record is silent on the outcome.

Among the big issues was that which related to the place of the Basic Proficiency vis-a-vis the General Proficiency in terms of acceptance of the Basic for employment purposes. It was generally understood that the General Proficiency qualification was intended for further study, but in practice that level was generally preferred by the public. The Basic level was accordingly given a lower status in the minds of many. The decision to enter candidates for that level did not always go down well with some parents and there were cases in which students entered for Basic refused to take the examination. The requirement to refund examination fees paid on their behalf was an issue. The Basic/General Proficiency problem has since been resolved.

In terms of challenges at the Ministry of Education, these included initial difficulty in

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Securing Your World

Reflections on 40 Years of CXC



A Visual Arts marker reading a script

dealing with private candidates, given the School Based Assessment (SBA) requirement and the practical element in the sciences.

My own challenge as Chief Education Officer related to my wish to change a situation in which some senior administrators – including principals and deputy principals, were continuing to take part in the marking exercises annually, relinquishing important duties in their schools. I also wished to see professionals at a lower level – particularly heads of department and experienced class teachers being more meaningfully involved with CXC. This did not go down well with some secondary school principals, who argued that their involvement came as a result of their personal competence and experience and to change them might have meant that Barbados did not necessarily continue to have a place in the teams.

They appealed to the then Minister of Education, who sided with them. The wider issue of political involvement in essentially professional matters is an issue. I wonder if it is or was a problem in other countries.

In terms of things that could have been done better, I would say that these fall in the area of public information and public relations. On reflection, I consider that many opportunities were missed when panel meetings and other meetings of CXC were held in different territories.

It is true that meetings were held with small groups of teachers but these could and should have been expanded. Additionally, what are now popularly known as town hall meetings could have been organized with far greater involvement of the electronic media and the resulting newspaper and radio coverage.

Too often CXC tended to be reacting to issues, e.g. those related to the Basic/General Proficiency. There still is need to be proactive today. The involvement of the social media, like Facebook and Twitter is suggested.

In terms of the future, CXC needs to become more greatly involved with the selection for secondary schools examinations, however designated in the various territories.

Current one-shot examinations, sample too limited amounts in competences dealt with at the primary school level and required at the secondary level. Yet their results are used almost exclusively for allocation to government secondary schools. The result is that children at a young age are firmly placed in different categories. This often does serious and lasting damage. The SBA component with which CXC has 40 years of experience must be developed as part of these selection examinations. Of course, it will be a much more difficult task, dealing with particular schools in small societies where confidentiality and favoritism are often issues. Innovative ways will clearly have to be found to move forward. The involvement of external moderators from other schools and even other territories may be part of the answer.

I am aware from hearing the present Registrar Dr Didacus Jules at a UWI Open Campus lunch time lecture, that much good work is in progress, but this information must reach a much wider audience, particularly policy makers and the media, sooner than later.

I wish to again congratulate the Council in reaching this important milestone and to commend all the Registrars, CXC staff and the whole CXC family on a job well done!



Ralph Boyce is a former Chief Education Officer in Barbados. He served as a panel member for English and also represented Barbados on Council.

CXC Historical Milestones

2004

Development of a syllabus for Human & Social Biology

SUBSEC approves the syllabus developed for **CSEC** Economics

Implementation of electronic registration application (SIRS) in 13 territories

Completion of the second phase of the EDMS project i.e. the storage of examination results for the period 1994-2003

A Certificate in Business Studies is introduced

2005

Approval of the development of syllabuses & examinations for **CCSLC** is given

Introduction of the new EPS

Implementation of the Electronic Registration Application in four territories - Guyana, Jamaica, Grenada & Saba

Registration of trademarks in Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago and the United Kingdom

Approval of the CXC Associate Degree

The completion of a video documentary on CXC entitled *CXC 30th Anniversary Special*

Days Bookstore in Barbados signs marketing distribution agreement for sale of CXC self-study guides.

CXC at

By Cleveland Sam



“This new institution forges another link in the chain of Commonwealth Caribbean integration, a chain whose links have been increasing in number and in strength over the past ten years. It is, therefore, fitting that so early in the year 1973, which augurs well to be a year of challenge to the Caribbean Commonwealth and to its institutions that the Caribbean Examinations Council should begin to function.”

The Right Honourable Errol Barrow, Prime Minister of Barbados

The quotation from the speech delivered by the Right Honourable Errol Barrow, at the inaugural meeting of the Caribbean Examinations Council in 1973 is very instructive or perhaps even prophetic reflecting 40 years later.

Indeed, not only has CXC emerged as a vital link in the regional integration movement; but it has also built a reputation as one of the most critical pillars in the region's education architecture.

The advent of CXC, an indigenous examinations board, complemented what was taking place in the political sphere at the time around the world. Former colonies were asserting their political self-determination; it was time for the Caribbean to assert its educational sovereignty.

The words of Prime Minister Barrow are again enlightening: “Our teachers will set examination papers for the testing of Caribbean pupils in what they themselves have taught. Our teachers will mark and assess the examination work done by Caribbean pupils and recommend pass or fail. The institution of this Council therefore gives the Caribbean teacher an opportunity to come of age – to take over fully the education of the young people of the Caribbean in the same way that the Caribbean Community is taking its economic destinies into its own hands.”

Forty years later, the framers of the CXC project must be proud of the achievements it has accomplished in a relatively short time and the impact it has had on the Caribbean education landscape. This impact has gone much further than what was originally intended by the framers: to prepare syllabuses and set examinations based on those syllabuses and issue certificates and diplomas.

Today CXC offers a comprehensive suite of qualifications which caters to learners of different

ages, interests and abilities. Training of teachers; technical services to ministries of education; statistical data processing services; Item Writing training, Psychometric training; provision of learning support materials are some of the value added services CXC offers.

From offering five subjects at the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) at its first sitting in 1979, CXC now offers 35 subjects at CSEC; 46 Units at the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE); over 100 standards in the Caribbean Vocational Qualification; the Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence (CCSLC); and the latest addition, the Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (CPEA).

During a given year, CXC provided training for hundreds of teachers across the 16 Participating Countries in a variety of areas. The Council conducts teacher orientation workshops, School Based Assessment training, Item-Writing workshops and learning support resources development training.

Additionally, the annual script marking exercise is facilitates training for thousands of the region's teachers.

“When we meet as markers and we discuss, you realise the kinds of problems you get from your students, it is not peculiar to your territory, but its common throughout the Caribbean,” remarks Penelope Williams-Peters, a Guyanese teacher who teaches in the Turks and Caicos Islands and marks in Trinidad and Tobago. “You get a greater understanding as to how to deal with these problem, because you gain a you have one way, one method, but when you interact with one



2006

CSEC subject entries

pass the half-million mark (528 289).

CAPE Regional Top Awards

are presented for the first time.

Production of Self-Study Guides
for two subjects

Approval of six syllabuses for **CCSLC**

Selection of Professor E Nigel Harris
as Chairman

2007

The first sitting for CCSLC

examinations is conducted

First Examination in CSEC Economics

Merger of CAPE Applied Mathematics
and Statistical Mathematics to form a
2-Unit syllabus - Applied Mathematics

Complete deployment
of e-Registration

Associate Degrees are offered
for the first time

Appointment of
Mr Glenroy Cumberbatch
as Pro-Registrar

other you tend to have more to put together and out of it cometh good.”

The training aspect of the marking exercise is also appreciated by Michelle Saunders-Clavery, a Vincentian who lives and teaches in Trinidad and Tobago.

“I have gained a quite a lot from it,” the English teacher said. “The marking and the standardising, it teaches you a lot about what you look for when you come to mark students’ work. When you come here, you get a better idea about what to look for, what the examination is looking for and I think every teacher should get this experience.”

REGIONAL INTEGRATION

One of CXC’s most important contributions to the Caribbean is its role in bringing the region closer together in more ways than one. From its inception, CXC has been a very inclusive organisation and much of its work is carried out by a multi-layered network of Caribbean resources, not just by the small staff at the Barbados and Jamaica offices.

The work of developing a syllabus for each subject CXC offers is carried out by a Subject Panel; the work of putting together an examination paper for each is carried out by an Examining Committee. The members comprising these committees come from different countries across the Caribbean and work together to produce work for the entire region.

But perhaps the single most significant contributor to regional integration in CXC’s cap is the annual marking exercise. This is the largest mobilisation and concentration of Caribbean people at any given time in the year. During three weeks in July, CXC mobilises almost 6,000 teachers from 17 countries. Over 2,500 of these teachers are moved from the 17 countries to Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. CXC recruits, transports, houses, feeds and pays these teachers.

The marking exercise is much more than marking examination scripts. It is a social, cultural and education mélange. And this is where the integration magic occurs!

Imagine spending two weeks around the same table with eight people who teach the

same subject in eight different schools in eight different countries. Then, think about eating lunch around a table with 10 people from five countries who teach at eight different schools and mark five different subjects. Add to this mix the social activities, tours and shopping trips markers take part in and the regional integration puzzle is complete. Lifelong friendships are formed, professional and social relationships are built and even a few marriages result.

Dr Merle Baker, a Trinidadian educator who marked CSEC from its inception in 1979, reflecting on her marking experiences at an event in Jamaica in 2009 spoke in glowingly terms of the fun times.

“We can now speak with authority about the beauty and natural wonders of those Caribbean destinations [marking centres]; the majestic elegance of the Kaiteur, Orinduke and Dunn’s River waterfalls, and the serenity of Harrison’s Cave, at CXC’s expense.”

Dr Baker, who was speaking on behalf of honourees for the 30th Anniversary of CSEC reminisced on the cultural potpourri that is marking.

“...We did not only learn about our countries, but we learned about each other, our similarities and differences. At the first [marking] tables there were examiners from Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Jamaica, Dominica, Grenada, Bahamas, Guyana and Belize...an original CARICOM setting,” she emphasised, “which made intimate connections as friends and comrades, as the Guyanese then called themselves. We were united for two concentrated weeks on a consuming pressurized task and whilst thus engaged we were able to discuss politics, family, social and cultural issues, educational needs and sports.”

Mrs Marguerite Bowie, former Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Jamaica noted in an interview for a CXC documentary, “I consider CXC one of the most enduring forces of integration in the Caribbean, because it brings together teachers from across the Caribbean to share.” The former Deputy Chair of CXC added, “It also exposes people to the different cultures.”

Very often, CXC along with The University

of The West Indies and West Indies Cricket are described as three forces of regional integration, however, the impact and reach of CXC is unmatched by any other regional institution.

One person who is clear about this is Dr the Honourable Tim Gopeesingh, current Minister of Education in Trinidad and Tobago. Speaking at the 2011 Opening Ceremony of Council and Presentation to Regional Top Awards at the Hyatt in Port of Spain, Minister Gopeesingh said that CXC creates the strongest bond among Caribbean people.

“...Our region and national societies have perhaps never viewed the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) as one very crucial, significant element of regional unity, and I say tonight that the time has come for us to change this,” the Minister stated. “Far beyond ensuring that our region’s top students know they are recognised and appreciated – you have subconsciously played a very major role in enhancing Caribbean unity...”

The Trinidadian Education Minister posited that the common CXC examinations that Caribbean students write annually: CSEC and CAPE, are perhaps strongest existing regional bond.

Sir Kenneth Hall, OJ, ON, former Chair of CXC and a former Governor General of Jamaica is strong on CXC’s role in the regional integration.

“There are few institutions in the Caribbean today that have had such a significant impact on the lives, the values, of the Caribbean people,” Sir Kenneth explained. “Every secondary school in the Caribbean is affected by and influenced by CXC.”

More than any other institution, CXC has impacted every family in the Caribbean at one point in the last 40 years. To be more precise, “From the inception of the first examinations in 1979 to today, 6.2 million Caribbean persons from 19 territories have written CXC exams,” stated Dr Didacus Jules, Registrar of CXC in a recent article.

As CXC implements its vision to assure the human resource competitiveness of the Caribbean, the accomplishments of CXC over the last 40 years have given CXC and the region the ability to look to the future with confidence.

“During three weeks in July, CXC mobilises almost 6,000 teachers from 17 countries. Over 2,500 of these teachers are moved from the 17 countries to Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.”

40th Anniversary Celebrations photoGALLERY



2008

CXC introduces and awards **CVQs**

Approval of the IP Policy by AFC

Development & implementation of the SBA Data Entry module for the ORS

Rebrand and re-launch of CXC's website

Appointment of Dr Didacus Jules as Registrar

2009

30th anniversary of the first **CSEC** examinations

Contract with Ian Randal Publishers for the publication of all **CSEC®** & **CAPE®** syllabuses & past examination papers as well as the distribution of these resource materials across all CXC participating countries

Signing of five (5) articulation agreements with universities in the USA for **CAPE** & the CXC Associate Degree

Launch of Employee Assistance Programme provided by Network Services Centre Inc.



Thanksgiving and
Interfaith Services





Employee Awards



CXC Markers' Recognition



40th Anniversary Celebrations
photoGALLERY



2010

Online Registration System (ORS)
available for the first time

Moderation and grading activities
assigned to EAS and EDPD for the first
time

2011

Examination results available online
to stakeholders for the first time

Reviews and enquiries submitted
online for the first time

Applications for Transcripts
available online via the CXC website

Source: Archives of the Caribbean
Examinations Council



40th Anniversary Lectures





CXC NEWS

CAPE[®] Digital Media

promotes

Caribbean Digital Content Production

By Bevil Wooding

“...Today we open the door to the future by launching something that is more than a new subject, and that is far larger in its currency than a new certificate. **CAPE® Digital Media** is the first of the new generation **CAPE®** subjects that CXC is designing to meet head on the challenges of the 21st Century...”

– **DR DIDACUS JULES**

Registrar and CEO, Caribbean Examination Council (CXC)

Last July, technology veteran, Mark Headley packed his bags and returned home to Trinidad and Tobago after spending eight years in Washington, D.C. In his time abroad he compiled an impressive list of consulting, web design and project management jobs for organizations in the Caribbean, US, UK, Europe and Africa. The technology veteran had no idea what his future would hold; all he knew was that he wanted to give back.

Today, instead of building websites for corporations, Headley is now a secondary school teacher at Northgate College in St Augustine, taking the next generation of Caribbean content creators through the newly launched CAPE Digital Media syllabus.

Headley has joined a special, pioneering group of Caribbean secondary school teachers delivering the first **CAPE** Digital Media Syllabus.

"This is a dream come through. Not only am I doing what I truly love, but it's a great feeling to know I'm making a difference that will help the next generation of Caribbean youth to take their place in the global technology landscape," he shared.

Watershed Moment for CXC

The Caribbean Examination Council's dream of a formal course in Digital Media is also now a reality. The new syllabus marks a watershed moment for Caribbean education. At a special event in St John's, Antigua to mark the launch of the new syllabus, CXC Registrar and Chief Executive Officer, Dr Didacus Jules shared the rationale for the creation of the new subject.

"In Trinidad and Tobago tax concessions are being provided for film production and animation; in Jamaica there is a rapidly evolving animation industry; in Barbados, Government is providing support to mobile app development and here in Antigua and Barbuda, the thrust in ICT had made this entire country one of the first nations to be totally 4G LTE mobile broadband enabled," he stated.

Jules explained that the decision to create the new subject emerged from a sweeping analysis of "the likely drivers of competitive opportunity for Caribbean economies and societies in the 21st century. The Council has a responsibility to define and respond to the



Dr Didacus Jules, CXC Registrar presenting Honorable Baldwin Spencer, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda with a copy of the Digital Media syllabus

knowledge and skill requirements necessary to address major constraints and problems faced by the region at this time."

Based on the positive response from teachers, students and parents to the new subject so far, CXC's assessment of the need for formal digital media certification has been spot on.



Dr Didacus Jules, CXC Registrar presenting Mrs Jacintha Pringle, Director of Education in Antigua and Barbuda with a copy of the Digital Media syllabus

From Consumers to Producers

Having correctly identified the danger inherent in the Caribbean's current appetite for foreign digital media, the programme seeks to bring balance by building the available pool of regional digital media practitioners. The **CAPE** Digital Media course is all about providing students with both skillsets and mindsets to participate and prosper in today's technology-driven global economy.

A new generation of content creators is expected to emerge as a direct result of the programme, including, animators, web developers, graphic artists and mobile app developers to support the growing Caribbean digital economy.

"We are trying through this subject to make the move from knowledge assimilation to knowledge creation and from being digital consumers to becoming digital producers," Jules explained.

Disruptive Innovation

It took disruptive innovation by CXC to get the syllabus completed and out to teachers and

CAPE® Digital Media promotes Caribbean Digital Content Production

students in record time. No CXC syllabus has been produced as quickly or by leveraging as much technology as the **CAPE** Digital Media syllabus. At every stage of the process to its launch, the assumptions of syllabus creation, stakeholder engagement, subject delivery and assessment were challenged.

As Jules succinctly puts it, "The course walks its own talk: it is our first completely paper-less programme. It will be taught online, and examined online."

"Bringing the Digital Media course from conceptualization to launch within one year is a remarkable achievement for the Council. This course involved unprecedented use of technology to accelerate the development of the syllabus. It underscores the importance of relevant use of technology to the advance of the region's education system. It also marks the beginning of more differentiated learning to the Caribbean," he added.

When students and teachers of the new subject take up the course, they will for the first time at any CXC subject level, have access to video-based subject orientation resources. Expert-presenters explain on video the core

concepts of the syllabus and walk viewers through the subject structure and assessment processes.

The use of digital video to deliver the syllabus orientation is a first for the region. The orientation video is part of another first – a specially created Online Syllabus Resource Toolkit. As part of the toolkit, teachers and students across the region will also be able to access a curated online list of text, audio and video resources to help them grasp the core concepts and learn practical digital content creation techniques.

Regional Collaborations

The **CAPE** Digital Media programme would not have been possible without the seamless collaboration between academics from universities across the region, the private sector, civil society and industry practitioners.

The Syllabus Resource Toolkit highlights another dimension of the massive shifts taking place in the delivery of Caribbean education – CXC's embrace of new partnerships.

The idea for the Syllabus Resource Toolkit came from CXC's civil-society

collaborative partner, Congress WBN, as part of its contribution to the development of the syllabus. Responsibility for translating the idea into production reality was vested in BrightPath Foundation, another, Caribbean-based non-profit. The recording studio used for the historic recording was facilitated by a regional Internet and cable service-provider Columbus Communications. Columbus' Grenada Channel 7 studio contributed the technical crew for the recording. BrightPath student volunteers were used to collate the initial library of infographics and training videos.

Pathway to the Future

The Council well understands that convergent partnerships and collaboration are essential requirements if it is to successfully navigate the challenges of the present and craft the solutions of the future. Its signed memoranda of understanding with both Congress WBN and Columbus Communications are already bearing good fruit. The Council has publicly declared its intention to continue seeking out like-minded institutions to continue building out its long term development agenda. Very well done CXC.

We can all celebrate the launch of this development of a significant educational resource through truly region-wide collaboration. We can also remind ourselves that the Caribbean is still very capable of providing positive patterns for our youth, for the region and for the world. The onus is now on CXC's member countries, schools, teachers and students to take full advantage of the opportunity and prepare the digital generation for their digital future.

Bevil Wooding is the Chief Knowledge Officer of Congress WBN (www.congresswbn.org), a values-based international non-profit. He is also Executive Director of BrightPath Foundation, an education-technology non-profit (www.brightpathfoundation.org). Reach him on Twitter @bevilwooding or on facebook. com/bevilwooding or contact via e-mail at technologymatters@brightpathfoundation.org.

The article was first published in the Trinidad and Tobago Guardian newspaper on 26 September 2013.



Dr. the Honourable Edmond Mansoor, Minister of State for Information and Communications in Antigua and Barbuda speaking at the launch of Digital Media syllabus

Successful VISUAL



"Ravishingly inspiring"; "OMG!"
"Excellent"; "Magnificent"; "It was phenomenal!" "Very inspiring";
"Amazing".

The preceding comments are a very small sample of the hundreds contained in the visitors' book from the two visual arts exhibitions hosted by CXC as part of the 40th Anniversary celebrations. The exhibitions were held in Dominica (March) and Jamaica (October) and attracted thousands of visitors, mainly students.

Dominica

The exhibition in Dominica was held at the Old Mill Cultural Centre, the epicentre of all things cultural in the "Nature Isle".

It opened on the afternoon of Monday 18 March with a ceremony attended by students, teachers, CXC resource persons and ministry of education officials. The ceremony was punctuated with several cultural performances from schools in Dominica.

Acting Prime Minister, Honourable Reginald Austrie represented Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit at the ceremony. The Acting Prime Minister said that the government is pursuing



Mrs Marcella Powell, Permanent Secretary (R) and Honourable Petter Saint Jean, Minister of Education (2nd R) are among the visitors admiring the Fibre and Decorative Arts section of the exhibition in Dominica



A Visual Arts teacher guiding members of CXC's Western Zone staff through the exhibition



ARTS Exhibitions

By Cleveland Sam

the development and delivery of a holistic education and the visual arts programme fits well into it.

"Certainly, we want our children to learn basic maths, and languages and skills in our schools, but there is nothing that says that they cannot learn the visual and performing arts," he stated. "We want them to think outside the box and we can do that by stimulating and releasing their imagination through the visual arts."

Honourable Petter Saint Jean, Minister of Education echoed similar sentiments. "The Ministry of Education believes that the study of arts is essential if our students are to develop a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of the world in which they live," Minister Saint Jean said.

He said teaching visual arts is in keeping with the ministry's, "every child can learn" vision for education.

"We simply do not want our students to be pigeon-holed into the traditionally neat and



Ms Petrona Morrison of Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts explaining the art on display to Sir Roy Augier and Sir Kenneth Hall during the opening of the exhibition in Jamaica



Two Dominican students admiring the portrait on display



The welcome party performing at the entrance to the opening of the exhibition in Dominica

tidy view of education as reading, writing and arithmetic," Minister Saint Jean emphasised. "There is so much more that they can explore as they develop their intellectual capability and capacity to express thoughts and feelings."

Mr Stephenson Hyacinth, Chief Education Officer in the Ministry of Education in Dominica, urged the society to embrace the arts to encourage students who have interest in the arts. He stated that to do otherwise would be to deprive the students of an opportunity, and, possibly, their calling.

"CXC has recognized the importance the arts play in developing the Ideal Caribbean Person, the human spirit and ensuring the preservation of cultural heritage and practices," CEO Hyacinth noted. As a result, he said CXC offers subjects such as music, theatre arts and visual arts and art and design.

Leslassa Armour-Shillingford, Miss Dominica 2013, cut the ribbon to signal the official opening of the exhibition.

Jamaica

The exhibition in Jamaica was hosted by the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts from 14-18 October. The exhibition coincided with the college's Rex Nettleford Arts Conference, which ran from 16-18 October.

Dominica's artists of the future are captivated by the works on display



Students from Immaculate High School in Jamaica taking an interest in the Fibre and Decorative Arts section of the exhibition





The drummer entertaining guests at the opening of the exhibition in Jamaica



Leslassa Armour-Shillingford, Miss Dominica cutting the ribbon while Honourable Reginald Austrie, Acting Prime Minister, Ms Marcella Powell, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Honourable Petter Saint Jean look on



An education officer and a Visual Arts teacher discussing jewellery pieces in the Fibre and Decorative Arts section of the exhibition in Jamaica



"Wow nice!"



Students of the Convent School in Dominica admiring the 2012 regional top award winner of the 3-Dimensional award

A brief ceremony was held on the morning of 14 October. Mrs Grace McLean, Chief Education Officer in Jamaica, Mrs Nicholeen Degrasse-Johnson, Principal of Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, and Dr Carol Granston, Senior Assistant Registrar-Syllabus Development at CXC spoke at the ceremony.

Mrs McLean congratulated both CXC and Edna Manley College for hosting the exhibition and endorsed the exhibition as a worthwhile venture.

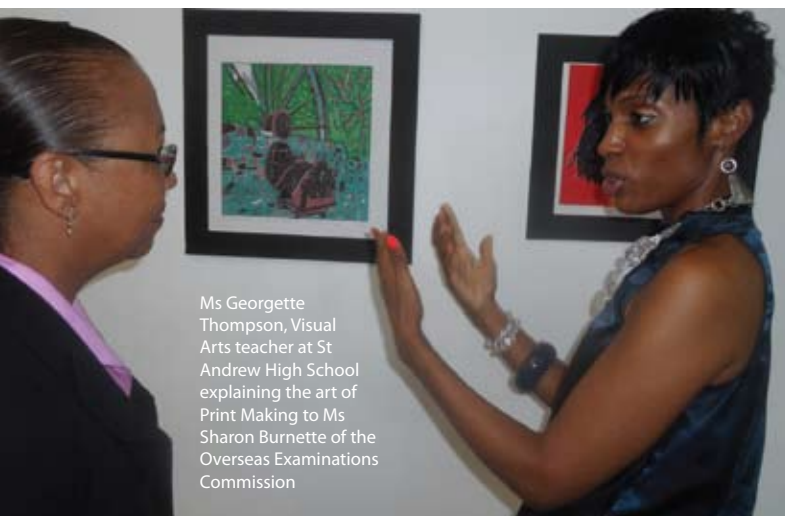
"Visual Arts is one of those areas within the Jamaican culture which continues to grow as our young and old people alike continue to express themselves," the CEO stated. She observed that when one looks at the pieces on display, one realises it is not just a piece of art, but also a story which could actually be built around the piece.

Noting that several Jamaican students have won regional top awards for Visual Arts, Mrs McLean said the **CSEC** Visual Arts programme "continues to provide the avenue through which

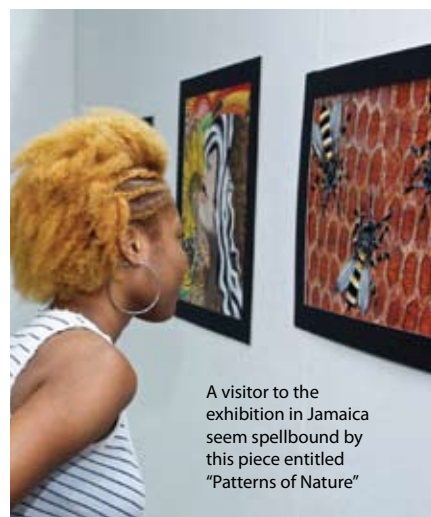
our students get the opportunity not only to learn the arts, but also to use this medium to demonstrate their talents."

According to the CEO, the Ministry of Education is working to ensure that the arts are infused within the curriculum.

"The Ministry of Education Jamaica is currently reviewing the curriculum from Grades one to nine," McLean said. She added, "an integral part of this review is to ensure that the visual and performing arts are infused from the lower primary level and this is to ensure that



Ms Georgette Thompson, Visual Arts teacher at St Andrew High School explaining the art of Print Making to Ms Sharon Burnette of the Overseas Examinations Commission



A visitor to the exhibition in Jamaica seem spellbound by this piece entitled "Patterns of Nature"



Cleveland Sam, Assistant Registrar-CXC explaining the work on display to Honourable Pette Saint Jean, Minister of Education, Dominica



Two Visual Arts teachers in Jamaica observing the finer points of the graphic piece on display



our students can develop the philosophical underpinnings and principles so that the pieces that they produce are of the world class standard so they can maximise their potentials in the different areas."

Sir Kenneth Hall, former Governor General of Jamaica and former Chair of CXC declared the exhibition officially opened.

"In Jamaica, and I suspect in the other Caribbean islands, this [exhibition] would not have been possible before the Edna Manley College," Sir Kenneth stated. "If you want to see the impact of the Edna Manley College you need to go no further than right here at this exhibition."

Mrs Nicholeen Degrasse-Johnson, Principal of Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, commended CXC on its 40th anniversary, noting that 40 is a significant biblical milestone. She further added that the college is honoured to have been selected by CXC to partner with it to celebrate its 40th Anniversary and to mount the annual visual arts exhibition.

She observed, "art is life-changing, nation-building, soul-nurturing, livelihood-impacting, and it is how we at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts approach our training in the visual and performing arts to enrich aesthetic sensibilities, promote cultural diversity, and contribute to national, social and economic development."

SLIGHT IMPROVEMENT IN **CAPE**® PERFORMANCE

Overall performance at the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (**CAPE**) reached the 90 per cent mark for the first time in five years. This year 90.15 per cent of the Unit entries achieved Grades I – V, which are the acceptable grades at **CAPE**.

In the last five years, the percentage of entries achieving acceptable grades remained steady at 89 per cent.

This year 13.77 per cent of Unit entries achieved Grade I; 19.03 per cent achieved Grade II; 22.20 per cent achieved Grade III; 19.49 per cent achieved Grade IV, and 15.67 per cent achieved Grade V.

Performance improved on 19 Units, remained steady on 10 Units and declined on 17 Units.

Art and Design Units 1 and 2 returned the best results overall with 100 per cent of entries achieving Grades I – V. The highest percentage of Grade I's – 58 per cent was also achieved in Art and Design Unit 2.

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCES

There were mixed performances in Mathematics and the Natural Sciences. Applied Mathematics Unit 1 saw a five per cent improvement in performance with 88 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades, compared with 83 per cent in 2012. There was a 10 per cent improvement in performance for Applied Mathematics Unit 2, with 91 per cent of entries achieving Grades I – V compared with 81 per cent in 2012.

Pure Mathematics Unit 1 saw a slight improvement over last year; 72 per cent achieved acceptable grades compared with 71 per cent last year; while for Unit 2, there was a two-per cent decline, from 83 per cent in 2012 to 81 per cent this year.

Performance on both Units of Biology remained constant with 90 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades in Unit 1 and 96 per cent achieving similar grades in Unit 2.

There was a seven-point decline in performance in Chemistry Unit 1, with 83 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades, while Chemistry Unit 2 remained steady with 92 per cent of entries gaining acceptable grades.

Both Physics Units I and II saw minimal decline in performance when compared with 2012. Ninety-three per cent of entries for Unit 1 achieved acceptable grades compared with 95 per cent in 2012. Ninety-two per cent of entries achieved similar grades for Unit 2, compared with 94 per cent last year.

HUMANITIES

Most of the Units in the Humanities cluster performed better than they did last year, with only a few exceptions. Seventy-five per cent of entries for History Unit 1 achieved acceptable grades compared with 68 per cent in 2012; for Law Unit 1 the figure is 84 per cent compared with 81 per cent last year; 95 per cent for Literatures in English Unit 1 compared with 93 per cent last year; 85 per cent for Sociology Unit 1 compared with 83 per cent last year; 92 per cent for Spanish Unit 1 compared with 87 per cent last year; Unit 2 of Literatures in English, 96 per cent compared with 87 per cent last year; Sociology Unit 2, ninety per cent compared with 92 per cent last year.

The Units which saw marginal decline are French Unit 1 with 94 per cent, compared with 96 per cent in 2012; History Unit 2 with 75 per cent compared with 82 per cent last year; and Spanish Unit 2, down from 96 per cent in 2012 to 93 per cent this year.

Performance on Law Unit 2 and French Unit 2 remained the same as in 2012 with 82 per cent and 100 per cent of entries respectively achieving Grades I – V.

BUSINESS

Of the six business units, Management of Business Unit 2 returned the best performance, 96 per cent, even though it was one percentage point below last year's performance. Economics Unit 2 showed the most improved performance when compared with last year; 87 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades compared with 79 per cent last year. Economics Unit 1 remained the same as last year with 82 per cent of acceptable grades.

The other business units were down when compared with performance in 2012: Ninety-three per cent for Accounting Unit 1; eighty per cent for Accounting Unit 2; and 67 per cent for Management of Business Unit 1.

TECHNICAL

The Units in the Technical and Vocation cluster performed better than they did last year with one exception. As noted above, both Units of Art and Design achieved 100 per cent acceptable grades. There was a 10 per cent improvement in performance for Electrical and Electronic Technology Unit 1, with 76 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades compared with 66 per cent in 2012. Notwithstanding, there was no Grade I's awarded in this Unit and there were only two Grade II's.

For Unit 2, there was an 11-per cent improvement in performance, with 85 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades compared with 74 per cent last year.

Performance on Food and Nutrition Unit 1 declined from 99 per cent in 2012 to 91 per cent this year, while in Unit 2 performance remained the same at 98 per cent.

Geometrical and Mechanical Engineering Drawing Unit 1 registered a major improvement; performance jumped to 86 per cent of acceptable grades, up from 61 per cent in 2012. Unit 2 also saw improved performance, although this was not as spectacular as in Unit 1. Seventy-seven per cent of entries achieved Grades I – V compared with 75 per cent in 2012.

CORE UNITS

The two single-Unit core courses, Caribbean Studies and Communication Studies continue to perform very well. Ninety-seven per cent of entries for Communication Studies achieved Grades I – V this year. This is an improvement on the 95 per cent which gained similar grades last year.

For Caribbean Studies, 93 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades, a decline when compared with 2012 when 97 per cent of entries achieved similar grades.

SLOWED GROWTH

The growth of **CAPE** slowed this year for both candidate entries and unit entries. The number of candidates entered for **CAPE** stood at 28, 228, an increase of 185 candidates compared with 2012. The number of unit entries submitted increased, but marginally; this year 109, 659 unit entries were submitted compared with 108, 379 last year, an increase of 1280 entries.

The two single-unit courses – Communication Studies and Caribbean Studies – continue to be the largest subscribed **CAPE** Units with 14, 924 entries and 11, 219 entries respectively. They are followed by Sociology Unit 1 with 5, 911 entries, Biology Unit 1 with 5, 236, Pure Mathematics Unit 1 with 5, 136 and Management of Business Unit 1 with 4, 990 entries.

Of the 28, 228 candidates taking **CAPE**, 62 per cent are female and 38 per cent male. The majority, 43 per cent are 18-years old, 33 per cent are 19-years and older and 21 per cent are 17-years old.

IMPROVED PERFORMANCE ON CSEC® 2013

Overall performance in the 2013 May/June Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (**CSEC**) examination improved when compared with that of 2012. Sixty-five per cent of subject entries achieved acceptable grades – Grades I – III, compared with 62 per cent in 2012.

This year, performance improved in 21 of the 35 subjects offered, including the two English and the two Mathematics subjects. English A saw a 10 per cent improvement in performance with 57 per cent of entries achieving Grades I – III compared with 47 per cent last year; while for English B there was a five per cent improvement with 73 per cent achieving acceptable grades compared with 68 per cent last year.

Additional Mathematics, which was offered for the first time last year saw improved performance at its second sitting this year—70 per cent of the entries achieved Grades I-III, compared with 58 per cent at the first sitting.

While there was a slight improvement in Mathematics over last year, performance remained below average with 35 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades, compared with 33 per cent last year. “The work produced by the majority of the candidates on Paper 02 was unsatisfactory,” the Subject Awards Committee reported. The Committee noted that more than 13,000 candidates were unable to measure and state the length of a given line and determine the measure of an angle on one question.

SCIENCES

Of the three natural science subjects, performance improved in Biology and Chemistry and declined in Physics. For Biology, there was a marginal improvement – 73 per cent of acceptable grades this year compared with 72 per cent last year. Sixty-two per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades on Chemistry compared with 58 per cent in 2012. For Physics there was a 10-per cent decline – 66 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades this year compared with 76 per cent last year.

There was a seven-per cent improvement in performance in Human and Social Biology with 63 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades compared with 56 per cent last year.

Performance in Agricultural Science

(Double Award) improved from 91 per cent last year to 96 per cent this year; while Agricultural Science (Single Award) remained fairly steady. This year 93 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades compared with 92 per cent last year.

BUSINESS

Principles of Accounts was the most outstanding performer in the business subjects cluster, showing the most significantly improved performance. Seventy-five per cent of the 23,000 entries who took Principles of Accounts achieved acceptable grades compared with 56 per cent last year.

Performance in Economics also improved significantly this year, with 81 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades compared with 65 per cent last year.

On the other hand, performance in Principles of Business, Office Administration and Electronic Document Preparation and Management (EDPM) declined. Performance in EDPM declined marginally, with 86 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades, compared with 89 per cent last year.

POB and Office Administration saw a three per cent, and one per cent decline respectively.

HUMANITIES

Performance in both foreign languages, French and Spanish improved by three per cent this year when compared with 2012. For French, 77 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades compared with 2012, and for Spanish, 70 per cent achieved similar grades this year compared with 67 per cent last year.

There was a marginal one per cent improvement in Caribbean History with 71 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades compared with 70 per cent in 2012. For Social Studies, there was a marginal decline in performance with 66 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades compared with 70 per cent last year.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS

The subjects in the expressive arts cluster performed very well overall. Ninety-three

per cent of entries for Theatre Arts achieved acceptable grades compared with 90 per cent in 2012. Visual Arts saw an eight-per cent improvement in performance with 76 per cent achieving acceptable grades compared with 68 per cent last year.

Performance in Music improved with 70 per cent of entries for Music achieving acceptable grades this year compared with 65 per cent last year.

Physical Education and Sport returned the highest percentage of acceptable grades – 96 per cent, even though performance was down slightly when compared with 2012 when 98 per cent of the entries achieved similar grades.

ENTRIES

Both candidate entries and subject entries declined this year when compared with 2012. This year 149,311 candidates registered for **CSEC** examinations, compared with 156,970 candidates in 2012, or just under a five per cent drop.

Subject entries fell by just over 19,000 when compared with last year. Six hundred and sixteen thousand, three hundred and forty-six subject entries were submitted this year, compared with 635,498 last year.

Mathematics continues to be the largest subject entry with 102,124 entries this year, this is down from 105,849 entries last year.

English A is the second largest subject with 98,063 entries, down from 101,022 entries last year; it is followed by Social Studies–52,772; Principles of Business– 35,430; and Human and Social Biology–32,280.

Additional Mathematics was the subject with the largest increase of entries; this year, 3,151 subject entries were submitted, up from 1,861 when the subject was first offered last year.

The 19-years-old-and-over age group constituted 33 per cent of the candidate population this year; the 18-years old age group constituted 15 per cent of the candidates; the 17-year age group made up 28 per cent; candidates 16-years old accounted for 19 per cent, and those 15-years old represented just over three per cent of the entries.

The Committee noted that more than 13,000 candidates were unable to measure and state the length of a given line and determine the measure of an angle on one question

Imagine studying authentic Trinidadian steel pan from the comfort of your living room in Jamaica or learning the history of reggae via a teleclass on your mobile in Japan. This is the world that the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) wants to offer in the not-too-distance future to students across the region with the help of Columbus International (Columbus).

On Thursday 5 September 2013, CXC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the telecommunications provider Columbus. This new partnership will see the Council benefiting from Columbus' extensive regional fibre optic and broadband capacity, and utilising its digital television platforms to bring cutting edge classes to students across the Caribbean.

This is the vision that Dr Didacus Jules, CXC Registrar has and which he says is now closer to being a reality because of Columbus. "It is going to push us big time into the digital realm. All of our syllabuses will now be online. CXC will be able to offer new generation subjects such as **CAPE** Music, and **CAPE** Performing Arts."

The educator sees the MOU as a symbol of not just a "material alliance but an alliance of ideas."

Rhea Yaw Ching, corporate vice president of sales and marketing for Columbus agrees, stating that "once our network is fully deployed, every single primary and secondary school that our footprint passes, in countries we serve, will receive free broadband, free educational cable television and discounted telephony services."

Javeen Tuitt, a 16-year-old recent graduate, who now attends the Antigua and Barbuda ICT CADET programme, welcomes the new offerings from CXC. Tuitt, who is currently studying new media with the focus on photography and editing said courses such as the new **CAPE** Digital Media, are a good idea for students who prefer to be more hands on. "It will give them the chance to learn in a way that is more beneficial. When it is more visual they can understand it better than with a teacher standing in the classroom," he explained.

Global changes and the need for Caribbean students to be more competitive and innovative is driving CXC's push to utilise digital media to deliver more current and value-based courses.

Students will not be the only ones benefiting from this new collaboration with Columbus, Jules shared.

One of the coming initiatives is for the 6 000 teachers who mark examination papers annually to be able to do it electronically from home rather than travel to testing centres or to other islands. "It is a logistical challenge each year to move more than 2000 teachers in the span of three weeks across the Caribbean to mark papers. Working with Columbus will allow

Caribbean Students to Benefit from new CXC/Columbus MOU



Corporate Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Columbus Communications Rhea Yaw Ching and CXC Registrar Dr Didacus Jules sign an MOU on Thursday, September 5, 2013. (PHOTO: LAUNE ISAAC)

us to capitalise on its bandwidth access to make this process more cost efficient and seamless," he explained.

CXC intends to reach out to more stakeholders beyond the various ministries of education. The plan is to utilise Columbus' capacity to power updated websites with integrated technologies, which will allow the deaf and visually impaired students to be able to access their sites.

"It is extremely rewarding to see how what we offer is translated in the various countries and how young people are transforming their world with our technology," Yaw Ching said. "We have seen a primary school set up an online radio station. Others have created Wi-Fi zones where lessons are shared on the Internet, and where teachers create their own teaching aids, using technology. We look forward to seeing what the new generation of courses will bring."

ANTIGUA'S TELECOMS MINISTER LAUDS MOU

Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of State for Information and Telecommunications, Dr Edmond Mansoor, lauded the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Columbus International Inc. (Columbus) and the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC).

Dr Mansoor called CXC Registrar, Dr Didacus Jules, and corporate vice president of sales and marketing for Columbus, Rhea Yaw Ching, change agents at the helm of revolutionising education for all ages across the Caribbean.

"The absolute epicenter of changing

Caribbean civilisation is through education," the minister stated. "To make this happen," he added, "We need broadband as an absolute minimum to every household, every student, and every government agency. It is the economic currency of the future. We are very interested as a government in Columbus' vision of piping fibre to the home."

The new MOU outlines three key areas in which Columbus will support the work of the CXC.

To enhance CXC's technological capacity to help bring needed innovation to the delivery of its education products and services in the Caribbean; To foster the development of indigenous educational content through the use of technology; and to enable broad dissemination of educational content relevant to the Caribbean.

Dr Jules acknowledged the importance of the occasion, which brings together two organisations with complementary goals. The collaboration, he noted, would allow for CXC to elevate and privilege Caribbean knowledge adding that Columbus was giving the regional examination body the infrastructure to disseminate indigenous content in a digital space.

Since starting operations in 2005, Columbus is one of the fastest growing companies in the region with US\$1.3 in assets and a capital investment of over US\$1.1. The Company operates one of the most advanced broadband networks in the region, spanning 42 nations with operations in eight Caribbean countries.

Caribbean Students to Benefit from new CXC/Columbus MOU

Rhea Yaw Ching said the MOU fits squarely in the company's vision for the region. "We are making sure that Columbus can create the capacity to enable the creativity."

The Columbus executive acknowledged the work of their strategic partner BrightPath Foundation, which is a key player in the regional push to mobilize young people to embrace technology, not as consumers but as creators of mobile apps, instructional games, movies, and other positive content which reflects the Caribbean experience.

BrightPath, Dr Jules noted, is providing the hands-on expertise to enable CXC to manifest its vision of providing more educational solutions, which solve real world challenges, and prepares students to operate in a changing and increasingly competitive world.

The CXC Registrar explained that the next step in actualising the MOU would be for an assessment of the capacity of Columbus and CXC. The new alliance will support their access to increased bandwidth, installation of fibre optic wiring in the new headquarters and the establishment of a new E-marking process.



Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of State for Information and Communications Dr, the Honourable Edmond Mansoor, Columbus Antigua General Manager Jamal James, Corporate Vice President Sales and Marketing for Columbus Communications Rhea Yaw Ching and CXC Registrar Dr Didacus Jules at the GATE ICT CADET Facility in Antigua



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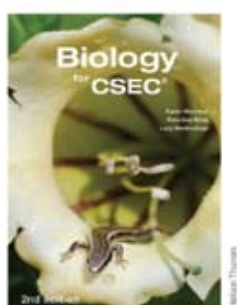
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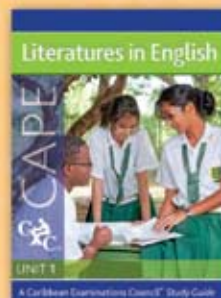
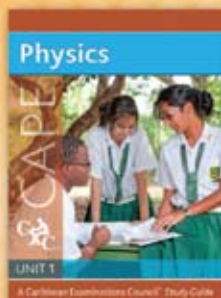
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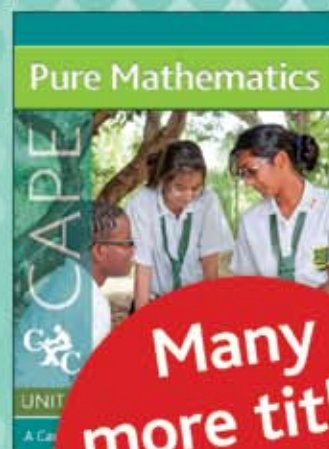
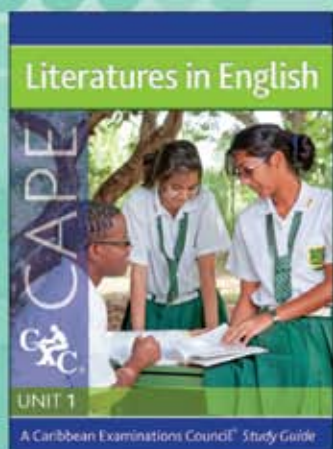
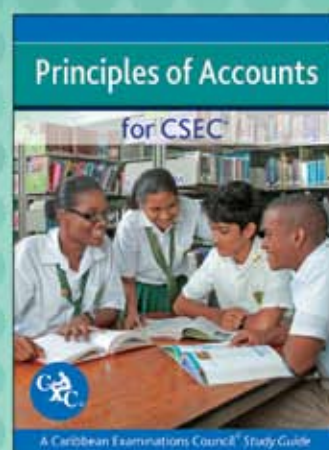
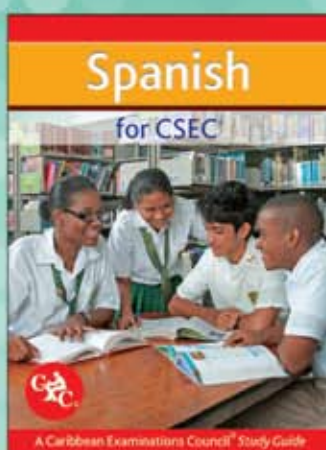
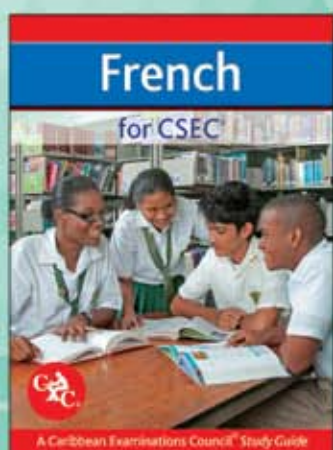
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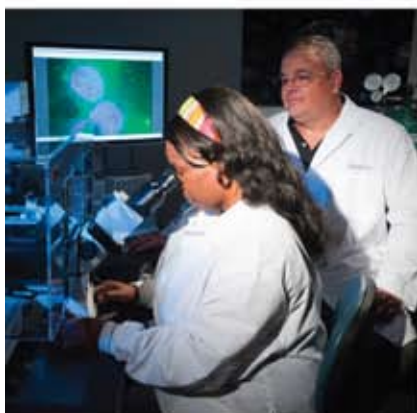
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