

INNOVATE FOR UCC ALUMNI

September 2026 Volume 1: Issue 3



INNOVATE At A Glance

The University of the Commonwealth Caribbean (UCC) is pleased to present INNOVATE: The Alumni Newsletter. Designed to reconnect our alumni and inspire our current students, this publication highlights the people, projects, and opportunities shaping the UCC experience. As we continue to strengthen academic excellence and industry relevance, we celebrate the achievements of our learners and graduates whose impact continues to elevate the UCC brand.

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MESSAGES FROM UCCAA LEADERS



At UCC, we recognise that the relationship between the University and our graduates extends well beyond graduation. Our alumni are an important part of the UCC community and continue to demonstrate the value of a UCC education through their leadership, service and achievements across Jamaica, the region and internationally. This publication allows us to celebrate those accomplishments while keeping our alumni connected to the continued growth and development of the University. I encourage you to remain engaged with UCC, share your experiences and continue contributing to the legacy we are building together.

Professor Bernadette Warner
Acting President,
University of the Commonwealth Caribbean

The College of Graduate Studies and Research is committed to supporting students at every stage of their academic and professional journey. Our programmes are carefully developed to align with emerging industry trends, applied research priorities, and the leadership competencies required in today's competitive landscape. I invite our graduates, current students, and corporate collaborators to leverage our resources, contribute to our growing research community, and participate in shaping the next era of graduate education at UCC.



Andrea Sutherland
Dean, College of
Graduate Studies &
Research



At the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean, we remain committed to advancing lives through practical, industry-aligned learning and globally relevant expertise. As we broaden our postgraduate portfolio and strengthen partnerships across key sectors, our focus is on equipping professionals with the strategic insight, leadership capability, and adaptive skills required to thrive in an evolving global landscape.

David Tulloch
Director, Department of
Student Services



President, UCCAA
Jadian Ellis



Vice President, UCCAA
Denver Haughton

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



The latest edition of INNOVATE is here, and it is packed with inspiring stories of alumni excellence. Across Jamaica and beyond, our graduates are challenging conventions, reaching new heights, and leaving lasting marks in their professions. Join us as we celebrate a few of the outstanding alumni who continue to embody the spirit of achievement and innovation.

Rushelle Anderson holds a BSc Social Work, graduating in the Class of 2026. She serves as a Detective with the Jamaica Constabulary Force's Major Investigation Division while balancing the demands of motherhood and university life. Her commitment to academic excellence has earned her a place on the Honour Roll twice, while her studies have strengthened her analytical thinking, ethical reasoning, resilience and confidence. Rushelle credits UCC's flexibility, supportive lecturers and practical learning environment with helping her advance professionally while continuing to grow as a leader, public servant and role model for her child.



Devon O'Connor's UCC journey reflects a strong connection between education, discipline and service. A 2025 graduate with a BSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice, graduating magna cum laude, Devon now serves as a Police Sergeant with the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service. His studies helped strengthen the critical thinking, ethical judgement and discipline required to lead in the demanding field of law enforcement. Today, he continues to build on that foundation through public service and leadership, demonstrating how academic achievement can translate into meaningful impact within the wider community.

Crystal Cunningham is a 2025 graduate of UCC who earned her BSc in Human Resources Management. She currently serves as a Legal Secretary at the Jamaica Customs Agency. Crystal's UCC journey has helped take her from the classroom to an international academic opportunity. A standout milestone came when Crystal was selected as the sole recipient of a World Customs Organization scholarship to pursue her MBA in Tokyo, Japan. Crystal speaks highly of the lecturers and support network that shaped her experience, describing UCC as a community that continues to open doors and encourage graduates to grow beyond their original career paths.



For **Steven Perrin**, the UCC experience extended well beyond the classroom. A 2025 graduate with a BSc in Business Administration (Accounting), Steven immersed himself in university life through the Student Council and UCC Circle K International (CKI), experiences that helped sharpen his leadership and interpersonal skills. Today, he is applying his academic foundation within the public sector while also exploring entrepreneurship and providing bilingual support when needed. He credits UCC with strengthening his understanding of professional ethics, workplace culture and the practical demands of his field.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

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Stacey-Ann Bryden is turning her UCC experience into measurable career success. A 2025 graduate with a BSc in Business Administration, she now works as a Business Analyst and has earned the internationally recognised Certified Competent Business Analyst (CCBA) certification through the International Institute of Business Analysis. Her professional performance has also earned her two workplace honours, the Divisional Star Performer Award and the President's Award for Stellar Performance in Business Requirements Gathering and Documentation. With plans to pursue Project Management Professional (PMP) certification, a growing interest in tutoring and involvement in volunteer organisations, Stacey-Ann Bryden continues to build on the leadership, organisational insight and perseverance strengthened during her time at UCC.

Latoya-Gaye Brown has taken the foundation built at UCC and transformed it into a career centred on empowering others. A 2015 BSc Business Administration graduate, she is now an Employment Training Facilitator in Winnipeg, Manitoba, working with a non-profit organisation to help individuals strengthen their confidence, job-readiness and employment skills. Beyond her professional work, Latoya-Gaye is also a published children's author, with *Mommy You're My Favourite Place* and *Little Hands, Big Skills* among her accomplishments. Her journey reflects resilience, continued personal growth and a commitment to helping others build better futures.



Courtney Johnson's UCC story is grounded in decades of public service and a commitment to continuous learning. A Taxpayer Education Officer with Tax Administration Jamaica, Courtney has spent more than three decades with the organisation and approximately 40 years in government service. Earning his Bachelor's degree in Business Administration in 2010, Courtney gained practical insight into business operations, organisational structures and workplace dynamics that remained relevant throughout his career. He credits UCC's knowledgeable lecturers, affordability and accommodating learning environment with making higher education accessible while giving him the tools to strengthen an already established career.

Skeita Smith is a 2009 graduate of UCC, where she earned her BSc in Marketing. She currently operates within the automotive and entrepreneurial sectors as a Director of Couture Motors Limited and owner of Ideas to Business, a marketing business. Through her ventures, she continues to apply the strategic planning, marketing and business development skills gained during her time at UCC.



SCAN ME



MAXIMIZE YOUR CAREER POTENTIAL!

MASTER'S & DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES

- Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)
- Doctor of Professional Practice (DPP)
- Commonwealth Executive Master of Business Administration (CEMBA)
- Commonwealth Executive Master of Public Administration (CEMPA)
- UCC Master of Science in Cyber Security & Data Privacy Protection
- UCC Master of Business Administration

And Postgraduate Certificates & Professional Certificates
with specialisations in:

- Accounting
- Disaster Management
- Entrepreneurship
- Finance
- General Management
- Healthcare Management
- Human Resource Management
- Marketing



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**AVAILABLE
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& POSSIBLE STUDENT LOANS
*Conditions apply



*The University of the Commonwealth Caribbean
is institutionally accredited by both the regional
& international accreditation bodies, the UCJ &
ASIC (UK) respectively.*



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ON SITE!

Check out recent and upcoming events at UCC



UCC Foundation Supports The Good Samaritan Inn on Labour Day

Labour Day brought the UCC community together for a day of service and giving at The Good Samaritan Inn in Kingston. Led by the UCC Foundation (UCCF), 25 volunteers—including staff, scholarship students, alumni and community stakeholders—worked alongside the Department of Student Services and UCC Alumni Association to clean and restore the facility's clinic, while also providing hot meals, clothing, food and toiletries for residents and caregivers.

The outreach builds on UCC's nearly two-decade partnership with The Good Samaritan Inn, which the University adopted in 2007. Through donations, mentorship and community outreach, UCC and UCCF have continued to support the facility, reinforcing their commitment to volunteerism, community service and positive social impact.



6th Annual Rickert Allen Memorial Lecture



The University of the Commonwealth Caribbean (UCC), with the support of National Commercial Bank Jamaica Limited (NCB), hosted its 6th Annual Rickert Allen Memorial Lecture on Wednesday, April 29, 2026, under the theme "Strength of the Caribbean: Readiness, Recovery and Resilience (3Rs)."

Held online and at UCC's Main Campus at 17 Worthington Avenue, Kingston, the annual lecture honoured the legacy of the late Dr. Rickert Allen, former Chairman of the UCC Board and former Senior General Manager for Group Human Resources and Facilities at NCB.

The evening featured a panel discussion with Mr. Robert H.P. Hill, JP, Chief Executive Officer of the Kingston and St. Andrew Municipal Corporation (KSAMC); Professor Carol Archer, Professor of Urban Planning and Public Policy at the University of Technology, Jamaica (UTECH); and Mrs. Eleanor Jones, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Environmental Solutions Limited. The discussion was moderated by Dr. Leleith Tomlinson, Dean of UCC's College of Occupational and Applied Studies.

A highlight of the evening was the testimony of Cybersecurity student Toni Shantae Bruce, recipient of the Rickert Allen Memorial Scholarship, who shared how the scholarship has eased her financial burden and strengthened her commitment to service and advocacy. "This scholarship is far more than financial support," Bruce said. "It has allowed me to see myself as part of the solution for a stronger Caribbean."

The Rickert Allen Memorial Lecture continues to serve as a platform for thought leadership, scholarship and public engagement in honour of Dr. Allen's enduring contribution to UCC, NCB, higher education, leadership and national development.



Aubryn Smith Retirement Farewell



After 11 years of dedicated service, Mr Aubryn Smith, Lecturer in the School of Mathematics, Science and Technology, retired from the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean (UCC). A Retirement Farewell was hosted by the Human Resource Management and Development Department on Friday, May 8, in recognition of his contributions to academic development, student success and the wider UCC community.

Mr Smith's impact extended beyond the classroom. Through innovative teaching methods, including the use of music to reinforce mathematical concepts, he helped make mathematics more engaging and contributed to improved student outcomes. He also supported the development of UCC's academic and technological direction through his service on the I.T. Advisory Committee and contributed to strengthening key academic programmes.

Beyond academia, Mr Smith demonstrated a strong commitment to service through his work as a Justice of the Peace and participation in community initiatives such as the Sagicor Sigma Corporate Run. UCC thanks him for his 11 years of dedicated service and wishes him continued success in the next chapter of his journey.



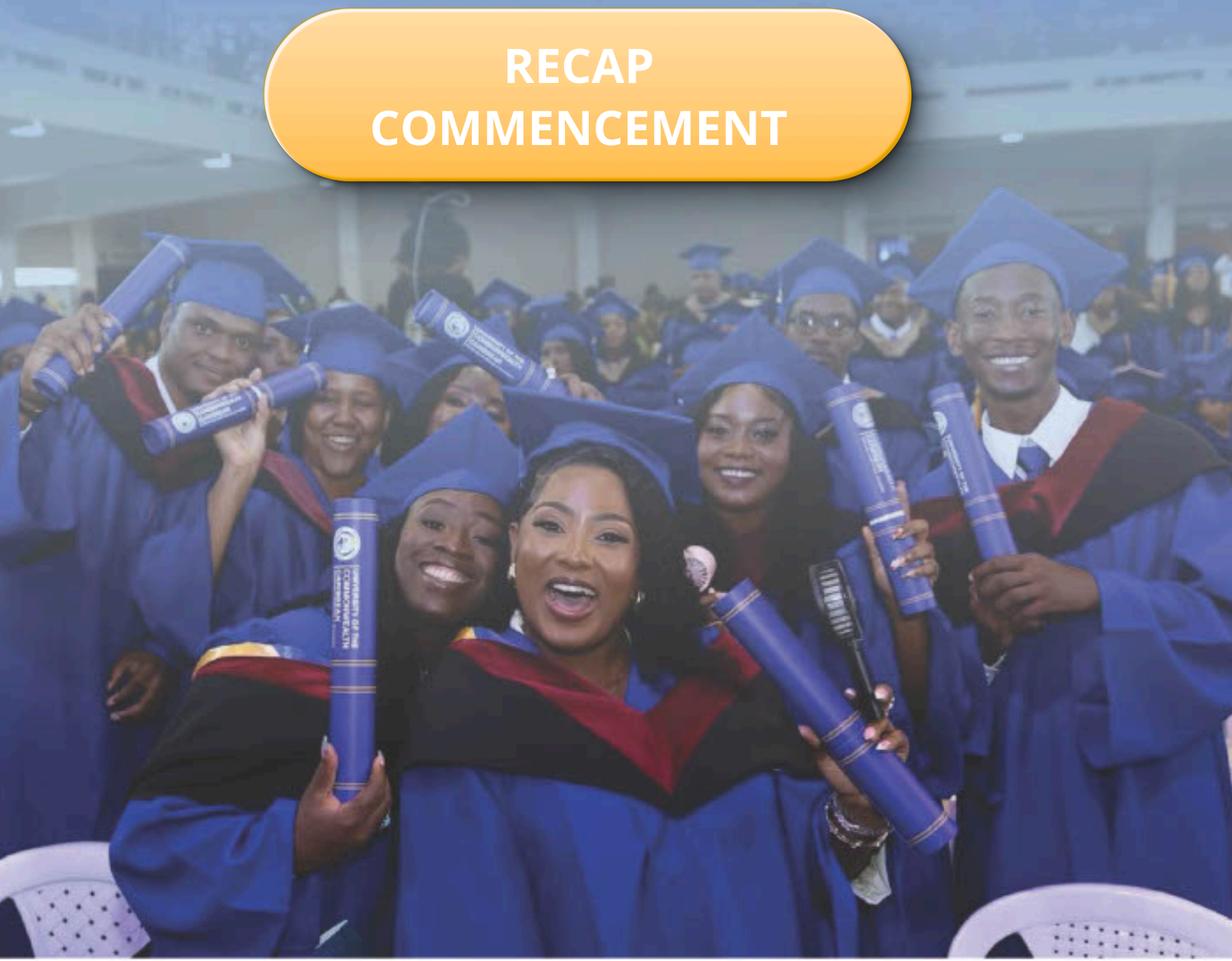


**UNIVERSITY OF THE
COMMONWEALTH
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Fostering Leadership & Innovation

2026 COMMENCEMENT

**Journey to the Finish:
Celebrating Success, Inspiring Futures**

**RECAP
COMMENCEMENT**



UCCF Scholarship Orientation



Sixty-five students were honoured during the UCC Foundation's 2026–2027 Scholarship Orientation on Sunday, August 23, marking an important milestone as they prepare for the new academic year. The orientation brought scholarship recipients together with University leaders, Foundation representatives, donors and families for an afternoon centred on academic success, personal development, leadership and service.

Chairman of the UCC Foundation, Professor Dennis J. Gayle remarked, "To our recipients, I challenge you to see these scholarships not simply as financial support, but as an investment in your future", as he urged students to honour that investment through their performance, character and willingness to give back.

Executive Director of the UCC Foundation and Alumni Development, Christina Williams, also assured students that the Foundation's support would extend beyond their scholarship awards, including through ongoing engagement and the Helping Hands Volunteers Programme.

Guest speaker Vashawn Burnett encouraged recipients to remain focused regardless of their circumstances, reminding them that their starting point does not have to determine their destination.

Foundation Administrator Shelly-Ann Sital coordinated the inaugural orientation, overseeing the arrangements and ensuring that scholarship recipients and stakeholders were appropriately accommodated and recognised throughout the event.

The scholarship orientation reinforced the UCC Foundation's commitment to expanding access to tertiary education while developing graduates who are prepared to make meaningful contributions to their communities and wider society.



UPCOMING EVENTS

10th Annual Academic Research Conference



The College of Graduate Studies and Research (CGSR) anticipates your participation at the 10th Annual Academic Research Conference. The Conference will be held at the UCC main campus, 17 Worthington Avenue, on September 23 - 24, 2026.

This year, the University will focus on the role of research in resilience and disaster management under the theme **"Moving into a Sustainable Future: Readiness, Recovery and Resilience"**. The conference will feature a student exposition for the display of major projects and workshops on the 23rd, followed by a plenary session and presentation of research papers on the 24th.

The Research Conference is designed to provide a multidisciplinary forum for researchers, academics, industry professionals and students to present original research. The conference promotes scholarly excellence, research dissemination, and meaningful dialogue that advances sustainable development through evidence-based inquiry and innovation.

Join us for two days of thought-provoking presentations, knowledge exchange and meaningful discussions that shape the future of research and innovation.





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