



UCC TODAY!

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

University of the Commonwealth Caribbean

Volume 3 – Issue 1

April – June



IN THIS ISSUE

- Executive leadership and strategic development
- Student, innovation and alumni achievements
- Institutional milestones
- Dynamic campus life, events and celebrations
- Student leadership

... and much more!



Q2 at a Glance

From student innovation and industry engagement to community service, global partnerships and thought-provoking conversations, Q2 was packed with activity across UCC. The quarter saw students shine in competitions and showcases, new students welcomed into the UCC community, staff and faculty making an impact beyond the classroom, and the University strengthening connections with healthcare, government and international partners. It was a quarter of ideas in action, meaningful connections and plenty of reasons to celebrate UCC's growing impact. Take a look at what's inside.

Tourism Students Host M.I.C.E. Professional Networking Session



The University of the Commonwealth Caribbean's Tourism and Hospitality Management students hosted an engaging seminar titled "The Future of Tourism: Network. Learn. Grow." Staged as part of their Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Events (M.I.C.E.) capstone project, the initiative is designed to connect aspiring professionals with industry practitioners while exploring emerging trends, career pathways, and opportunities within the tourism and hospitality sector.

Bringing together students, industry experts, and members of the academic community, the seminar underscores UCC's commitment to experiential learning and industry readiness.

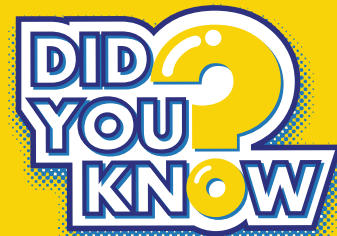
UCC Business Model Competition Crowns Calvero MC Top Winner Among Five AI-Driven Ventures



Taj McDurmoth, a third-year Information Technology student and team lead of Calvero MC, emerged as the overall winner with the fashion and merchandise venture. Nyone Pearson, a Business Administration student, secured second place with Ego, a social media software solution that was also named Most Innovative Business Idea. Kyle Grant, group lead of Caridra, secured third place with a digital platform offering products, services and business solutions for entrepreneurs.

The competition gave students an opportunity to transform their ideas into viable business concepts while building confidence and gaining valuable exposure. The winning teams will also participate in UCC BDCI programmes designed to support the growth and expansion of their ventures.

Through initiatives such as the Business Model Competition, UCC continues to foster innovation, entrepreneurship and real-world business readiness among its students.



UCC HAS A RECRUITMENT HUB?

The Recruitment Hub is your one-stop space for everything you need to join UCC. From programme details and application guidance to tuition information, it is all right here. You'll also get direct access to our recruiters, who are ready to answer your questions and guide you every step of the way.

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UCC Welcomes U.S. Embassy in Courtesy Visit Focused on Collaboration and Innovation

The University of the Commonwealth Caribbean (UCC) recently welcomed a high-level delegation from the United States Embassy, led by Chargé d’Affaires Scott Renner, in a visit that blended diplomacy, dialogue and discovery.

From the moment the delegation arrived on April 23, the atmosphere reflected a shared purpose, focused on strengthening education, expanding innovation and exploring new pathways for collaboration in student development, research and international exchange.



A Campus Alive with Ideas and Ambition

As the delegation toured the campus, members were welcomed into the heart of UCC’s student experience. Students shared personal stories of growth, resilience and transformation, showing how classroom learning can translate into real-world application through entrepreneurial ventures and hands-on projects. Students also showcased their business ideas, offering a glimpse into a generation that is not just learning about innovation, but actively building it.

Strengthening Global Connections

The visit also reinforced the importance of international partnerships in shaping the future of higher education. Discussions centred on how collaboration can further enhance UCC’s mission of developing a future-ready workforce equipped with practical skills and global perspectives. Chargé d’Affaires Scott Renner concluded the engagement by sharing practical business insights and advice with students, adding a valuable real-world perspective to the exchange.

Honouring Beloved “Sir T”: UCC Remembers Sean Thelwell



The UCC Cafeteria Unit within the Operations Department hosted a heartfelt memorial ceremony to mark the first anniversary of the passing of beloved colleague Sean “Sir T” Thelwell. Staff from across the University, along with his sisters, Mrs Geraldine Adams and Ms Jackie Thelwell, and his niece, Ms Shannon Adams, gathered to honour his life, service and lasting impact.

In a touching tribute, Mr Thelwell’s famous “special coffee” was served to staff, while photographs of him with family, colleagues and friends were displayed on the lobby’s electronic notice board, bringing cherished memories to life.

Tributes from UCC’s President and Deputy President highlighted his professionalism, leadership and commitment to excellence as former Senior Director of Logistics and Administration.

His legacy also lives on through the Sean Thelwell Memorial Scholarship, launched earlier in March to support students pursuing studies in logistics, supply chain and operations management. Through this initiative, “Sir T’s” commitment to excellence continues to inspire future professionals.

Caribbean Strength Takes Centre Stage at 6th Annual Rickert Allen Memorial Lecture



What does it take for the Caribbean to withstand the challenges of an increasingly unpredictable climate? This question was the focal point at UCC's 6th Annual Rickert Allen Memorial Lecture on Wednesday, April 29, as experts explored the region's readiness, recovery and resilience.

Hosted by the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean (UCC), with support from National Commercial Bank Jamaica Limited (NCB), the lecture was held under the theme "Strength of the Caribbean: Readiness, Recovery and Resilience (3Rs)."

The event 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 discussion brought together leading voices in environmental management, urban planning and disaster risk, including Mr Robert H.P. Hill, JP, CEO of the Kingston and St. Andrew Municipal Corporation; Professor Carol Archer of the University of Technology, Jamaica; and Mrs Eleanor Jones, Chairman and CEO of Environmental Solutions Limited. The panel was moderated by Dr Leleith Tomlinson, Dean of UCC's College of Occupational and Applied Studies.

One of the evening's most personal moments came from Cybersecurity student Toni Shantae Bruce, recipient of the Rickert Allen Memorial Scholarship. Sharing how the scholarship eased her financial burden and strengthened her commitment to service and advocacy, Bruce described it as more than financial assistance. It was an opportunity to see herself as part of the solution for a stronger Caribbean.

Through thought-provoking dialogue and stories of impact, the annual lecture continues to honour Dr Allen's legacy while inspiring conversations on leadership, resilience and the future of Jamaica and the wider Caribbean.

Future Entrepreneurs Shine at I.T. Capstone Symposium and AI/Robotics Showcase

On 1 May 2026, the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean (UCC), through its School of Mathematics, Science and Technology, hosted its IT Capstone Symposium and AI/Robotics Showcase, bringing together student innovators, faculty and industry professionals for a full day of technology-driven presentations and exhibitions. The event featured a dynamic line-up of capstone projects and AI demonstrations designed to address real-world challenges through innovation and digital transformation.



UCC Welcomes New Students at Summer 2026 Orientation



The University of the Commonwealth Caribbean (UCC) welcomed its newest students during the Summer 2026 New Students Orientation, held across all UCC campuses on Sunday, May 3, and Monday, May 4, 2026.

The two-day orientation provided incoming students with opportunities to become familiar with the University community, access important institutional information and connect with resources available to support their academic journey.

The first day, held in person on Sunday, May 3, featured a main information session from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Students received key institutional updates and participated in the Sponsors, Clubs & Societies Expo, along with a range of engagement activities designed to help them connect with the wider UCC community.

The orientation continued virtually on Monday, May 4, with live breakout sessions hosted via Zoom and YouTube. From 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., students received further guidance, engaged with members of the University community and gained additional insight into their transition to university life.

Through a combination of in-person and virtual activities, the Summer 2026 Orientation created a welcoming and informative start for UCC's newest students, helping them begin their university journey with greater confidence, stronger connections and a clear understanding of the opportunities available to them.

UCC Honours Mr Aubryn Smith for 11 Years of Stellar Service as Lecturer in the School of Mathematics, Science and Technology



After 11 years of dedicated service, Mr Aubryn Smith, Lecturer in the School of Mathematics, Science and Technology, left the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean (UCC) having made a lasting contribution to academic development, student success and institutional advancement.

On Friday, May 8, the Human Resource Management and Development Department hosted a retirement farewell for Mr Aubryn Smith in Room 201.

Throughout his tenure, Mr Smith distinguished himself through his passion for teaching, commitment to student development and drive for continuous improvement. His influence, however, extended well beyond the classroom. As a member of UCC's I.T. Advisory Committee, he contributed to discussions that helped strengthen the University's academic and technological direction, while his service as a Justice of the Peace reflected the integrity and commitment to service that characterised his interactions with the UCC community.

Perhaps one of Mr Smith's most notable contributions was his approach to mathematics education. At a time when concerns about student outcomes had left many discouraged, he focused not only on teaching mathematical concepts, but also on cultivating the right mindset for students to succeed. Through innovative and engaging teaching strategies, he helped improve mathematics pass rates and made the subject more accessible to students.



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UCC Honours Mr Aubryn Smith for 11 Years of Stellar Service as Lecturer in the School of Mathematics, Science and Technology...continued

His classroom methods were anything but conventional. Among his best-known approaches was the use of music, particularly reggae, to reinforce mathematical concepts. The technique resonated with students, helping to improve comprehension and retention while demonstrating his willingness to see possibilities where others may have been sceptical.

Mr Smith's impact was also felt in the development and modernisation of UCC's academic programmes. His expertise contributed to strengthening the quality and structure of key offerings, including the quantitative courses within the BSc Business Administration programme, with majors in Accounting & Financial Management. Dr Ndajah, Dean of the School, commended his work in upgrading the curriculum, highlighting his role in supporting academically rigorous and industry-aligned programmes.

Beyond academics, Mr Smith demonstrated a strong commitment to community and social responsibility. His consistent participation in the Sagcor Sigma Corporate Run reflected his belief in the connection between discipline, wellness and service, while allowing him to contribute to initiatives supporting communities and national development.

As he closed this chapter of his UCC journey, Mr Smith left behind more than years of service. He left a legacy shaped by innovation, professionalism and an unwavering belief in the potential of students. His contribution enriched both the academic community and the student experience, and his influence will remain part of the University's continued pursuit of excellence.

UCC extends sincere appreciation to Mr Smith for his years of dedicated service and wishes him continued success and impact in the next chapter of his journey.

JTEC Delivers University Registration Certificate



On Thursday, May 7, Mr Orlando Prince of the Jamaica Tertiary Education Commission (JTEC) paid a courtesy visit to THE University to formally present its registration certificate. The certificate officially confirmed the UCC's status as a registered university in Jamaica, underscoring the institution's position within the country's higher education sector.

UCC's registration with the Jamaica Tertiary Education Commission (JTEC) marked an important milestone in the University's continued development within Jamaica's tertiary education sector. Established to regulate and monitor tertiary institutions, JTEC helps ensure that institutions meet established standards for governance, academic delivery and student support. UCC's registration as a Teaching University therefore affirmed its standing within Jamaica's regulated tertiary education system and reflected the University's commitment to maintaining the standards required to provide quality higher education.

A Day of Service: UCC Foundation Gives Back at The Good Samaritan Inn

For 25 volunteers from the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean (UCC) community, Labour Day was more than a day on the calendar. It was an opportunity to roll up their sleeves, lend a helping hand and make a meaningful difference at The Good Samaritan Inn in Kingston.

A Day of Service: UCC Foundation Gives Back at The Good Samaritan Inn...continued



Led by the UCC Foundation (UCCF), the Labour Day outreach brought together staff, scholarship students, alumni and community stakeholders, alongside the Department of Student Services (DSS) and the UCC Alumni Association, on Sunday, May 24, in a collective effort to improve the facility and support the well-being of its residents and caregivers.

The day's work was both practical and purposeful. Volunteers cleaned and restored the facility's clinic, helping to create a more comfortable and functional environment. They also shared hot meals and donated gently used clothing, non-perishable food items and toiletries, providing much-needed support for the daily needs of those at the facility.

For UCC and the UCC Foundation, the outreach also continued a relationship built over nearly two decades. The Good Samaritan Inn was adopted by UCC in 2007, coinciding with the formalisation of the Foundation's operations. Since then, UCC and UCCF have maintained their commitment to the facility through donations, mentorship, outreach activities and other community support initiatives.

A Yam-Packed Success: Tourism & Hospitality Management Students Shine in JCDC Culinary Competition

Our students from the Faculty of Tourism & Hospitality Management, accompanied by their lecturer, Candine Garriques Brown, participated in the Culinary Arts Competition and Showcase organised by the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC) on Friday, May 29.

Held at the Girl Guides Headquarters in Kingston, the event was designed to promote Jamaican cuisine, recognise traditional food practices and encourage creativity and innovation using locally grown ingredients. This year's theme, "The Year of the Yam", required participants across all categories to use yam as the main ingredient in their dishes, challenging them to demonstrate both culinary skill and cultural understanding.

The showcase served as a training ground for emerging culinary professionals, offering students and chefs the opportunity to engage with industry judges, gain feedback and experience real-world competition standards.

Shantelle Brown, a fourth-year tourism student, entered the Traditional Jamaican Dish category with her interpretation of yam pudding, while Karasi Rowe, a second-year tourism student, competed in the Recipe Writing category with her submission titled Yellow Yam Gratin; both entries won their categories.

Beyond the awards, the experience provided valuable exposure in areas such as professional presentation, creativity, technical skill development and confidence-building, helping to bridge the gap between classroom learning and the demands of the culinary industry.

Dr Paul Bourne Examines the Caribbean Trust Crisis on LOVE 101 FM



On Monday, June 1, Dr Paul Andrew Bourne, lecturer in the College of Graduate Studies and Research, joined veteran broadcaster Stokeley Marshall on LOVE 101 FM's The Morning Watch for an insightful discussion on what he described as the growing trust crisis across the Caribbean. Drawing on research findings and social data,

Dr Paul Bourne Examines the Caribbean Trust Crisis on LOVE 101 FM...continued

Dr Bourne examined the declining levels of confidence among various groups within society, highlighting the erosion of trust between interpersonal and social groups.

He noted that trust remains a critical pillar of social cohesion and national development, influencing everything from personal relationships to public engagement and institutional effectiveness.

During the interview, Dr Bourne further explored how diminishing trust extends beyond interpersonal relationships to broader societal norms and institutions. He explained that increasing scepticism towards leadership, governance structures and long-established social values has contributed to a climate of uncertainty and disengagement.

The discussion underscored the implications of this trend for Caribbean societies, including reduced civic participation, weakened community bonds and challenges to collective progress.

UCC's Dr Andrea Sutherland Brings Leadership and Mental Wellness to the Fore at MAJ Symposium

Dr Andrea Sutherland, Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Research at the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean (UCC), was among the featured presenters at the Medical Association of Jamaica (MAJ) Symposium 2026, held at The Jamaica Pegasus Hotel on Sunday, June 7, 2026.

Dr Sutherland presented on "Health Administration and Clinical Burnout: The Mediating Role of Effective Leadership," exploring how strong leadership can help reduce clinical burnout and improve organisational performance.

She was joined by Dr Alex Tracey, an adjunct faculty member at UCC, and Dr Adrian Coore, a UCC MBA Healthcare Management student.



UCC was also invited to host an exhibition booth at the symposium, providing an opportunity to connect directly with members of Jamaica's healthcare community. Recruitment Supervisor Mrs Claudia Buchanan-Morris and Recruitment Advisor Ashley Hart represented the University, engaging health professionals and sharing information on UCC's academic and professional development opportunities.

Held under the theme "AI in Clinical Practice and Public Health," the six-day symposium brought together healthcare practitioners, researchers, educators and policymakers to explore developments in artificial intelligence, public health, clinical innovation and healthcare delivery.

UCC's participation reflected the University's continued commitment to research, leadership development and professional education, while strengthening its engagement with professionals across Jamaica's healthcare sector.

From Ideas to Impact: UCC Hosts 10th International TEN ICE

The University of the Commonwealth Caribbean (UCC) hosted the TEN 2026 Ecosystem Network Competition, bringing together emerging entrepreneurs, innovators and business leaders for several days of pitching, networking and collaboration. The event also brought together university students from the United States and Jamaica for an intense business pitch competition.

From Ideas to Impact: UCC Hosts 10th International TEN ICE...continued

Held at UCC's Main Campus in Kingston, the event marked the 10th international staging of The Ecosystem Network International Competition for Entrepreneurs and the eighth time the competition had been held in Jamaica. Guided by the theme "Innovate. Pitch. Connect. Grow.", participants were given opportunities to develop their ideas, strengthen their presentation skills and connect with members of the wider entrepreneurial ecosystem.



The programme began on June 22 with workshops and pitch preparation, followed by the semi-final competition and an AI Innovation Panel on June 23. The event culminated on June 24 with the Grand Finals and Business Village Showcase, while finalists participated in a networking excursion on June 25.

Taking the top prize in the International Business Plan and Pitch Competition were Adrian Tennant and Gary Bryan of Northern Caribbean University (NCU). Their business concept focused on the use of computer science and software applications to develop innovative solutions to regional challenges.

The winning team was coached by innovation specialist Dr Hazel O'Connor, whose guidance supported their preparation for the competition.

Beyond the pitches, TEN ICE also provided a platform for local businesses. Entrepreneurs, artisans, food vendors and small-business owners were invited to participate in the Pop-Up Business Village, creating opportunities to showcase products and services and connect with participants and visitors.

The event was supported by a strong network of partners working alongside UCC, including the UCC Business Development & Consulting Institute, The Ecosystem Network (TEN), Jamaica Business Development Corporation (JBDC), Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ), itel, Innovate10X, Global Entrepreneurship Network (GEN), The JMMB Group and CB Chicken.

Through events such as TEN ICE, UCC continues to provide spaces where education, entrepreneurship and industry can intersect, giving innovators opportunities to test ideas, build valuable connections and develop solutions with the potential to make an impact across Jamaica and the wider region.

HERE'S SOMETHING EXTRA: READ ALL ABOUT IT!

[UCC Commemorates Social Work Month with Symposium](#)

[UCC Business Model Competition Crowns Calvero MC Top Winner](#)

[UCC/NCB Rickert Allen Memorial Lecture to Spotlight Disaster Readiness, Recovery and Resilience](#)

[Strengthening Academic Diplomacy: U.S. Embassy Visit Places Spotlight on Student Innovation at UCC](#)

[Social Media Usage and Moderation Are Important](#)

[UCC Foundation Leads Restoration Effort at the Good Samaritan Inn for Labour Day](#)

[UCC's Dr Andrea Sutherland to Address MAJ Symposium 2026](#)



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