

**Remarks by Dr. Velma Brown - Interim Chairman, University of
the Commonwealth Caribbean, at the Library Naming
Ceremony and Unveiling of the Bust of Aaron Matalon -
October 30, 2023**

You would have all heard of the play “A man for all seasons” which depicted the life of Sir Thomas More, who supported King Henry the VIII when he rejected the Roman Catholic Church, based on their position on divorce.

The expression in today’s context means:

“A person prepared to deal with a variety of situations, who doesn’t get flustered easily, but keeps a calm, efficient demeanor even in a crisis. Over time the person has proven to be very reliable and trustworthy. Despite external pressures they follow their conscience and act correctly even when others may choose a less honorable path.”

That the Honorable Aaron Matalon, exemplifies these traits, there is no doubt.

For indeed at the tender age of 14 in the face of financial challenges chose to follow the path less trod, at the beckon of his father Joseph Matalon and walked away from formal education to engage in gainful employment to assist his family.

I ask the question, What does a hero and a businessman have in common?

Let me hasten to tell you the context....

- **Nanny of the Maroons is lauded for her indomitable spirit.**
- **Paul Bogle is recognized primarily for his tenacity in his efforts to uplift the poor in the face of injustice.**
- **Marcus Mosiah Garvey stood firm in his thrust to accomplish his vision of unity, a vision of a world where people are united.**
- **George William Gordon was among other things a businessman. He was self-educated, and a land owner and known as a Defender of the rights of the Poor.**
- **Norman Washington Manley A lawyer, who identified himself with the cause of workers and donated time and advocacy to the cause. He saw the mission of his generation as “restructuring the social and economic society and life of Jamaica.”**
- **Sam Sharpe- Intelligent with strong leadership qualities and was able to communicate his concern and encourage political thought.**
- **Sir Alexander Bustamante- A life of service, dedicated to advocating the cause of the masses.**

I posit today that the man we are here honoring Aaron Matalon demonstrated these qualities and more.

For indeed while he came not from the plantocracy, completing no formal education, dropping out of school to work to assist his family in a period of financial challenges, but yet rising up in the post-colonial Jamaica as a force to be

reckoned with in his sterling contribution to nation building and in enriching the lives of the Jamaica people.

Today we salute him as it is as a result of this bold step that the Matalon family is recorded throughout the echelons of the Jamaican society as a household name as a family whose contribution to Jamaica has left an indelible mark.

Today we recognize him at the UCC as the Founder of the Institute of Management and Production, IMP- an educational institution, which stood as a beacon for training in Business and leadership, being the Visionaire, he was fulfilling a need.

In 2002, he saw in UCC, The IMS (Institute of Management Sciences) as it then was an appropriate vessel to pass this mantle unto and with the acquisition of the IMP by the then IMS, his legacy has lived on, even with new innovations breaking new frontiers in education.

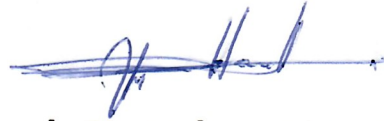
Today the UCC has chosen most appropriately to name its library in his honor as well as to unveil his bust which erstwhile sat at the entry to this premises.

“A library is a gateway for knowledge, opening windows to the world and providing inspiration.”

Shakespeare asked the question in Romeo and Juliet:

“What’s in a name, that which we call a rose by any other name would smell sweet.”

Indeed, the legacy of Aaron Matalon lives on here at the UCC, a name which continues to signify excellence resilience in the face of hardship, tenacity, hard work, dedication, a commitment to improve the lives of the working class through education, a visionary, an optimally rounded individual, all of which beckons students here at the UCC and those to come to walk in the footsteps of excellence.



Signed: Dr. Velma May Brown

October 30, 2023