

# **ADDRESS**

**Teacher Education for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teachers**

**Ministry of Education Support for Teacher Educators**

## **CEREMONY FOR THE PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES**

**Hon. Esther Le Gendre, MP  
Minister of Education**

**Loinsworth House  
Conference Room 2**

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2009  
8:30a.m. – 9:30 a.m.**

**Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Angella Jack**

**Chief Education Officer, Mr. Peter O'Neil**

**Officials from the University of Trinidad and Tobago:**

- **Professor Jeanette Morris**
- **Dr. P. Mark**

**Officials from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education:**

**Permanent Secretary, Mrs.**

**Head of Int'l Affairs, Mrs. Nattoya Baptiste-Phillip**

**Deputy Permanent Secretaries**

**Senior Officers of the Ministry of Education**

**Graduates of the On-line Course for Teacher Educators**

**New Candidates for the Second Round of the On-line Course**

**Members of the Media**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**A Pleasant Good Morning to Each and Everyone**

Just recently someone shared with me an article about a Literature teacher who used Google Lit Trips, an online project that combines the satellite imagery of

Google Earth with the instructional goals of Literature study. The result was intense participation by students and an overflow of innovative ideas.

Our students use so much technology in their daily lives outside of the classroom that teachers need to tap into how they could bring that interest into the classroom. ICT integration into the fabric of teaching and learning has the potential to capture students' attention and motivate them to higher level thinking.

The story really put a face on the aim of the Ministry of Education as it works to provide technology-rich learning environments for all children and teachers. We continue to install computer labs in all our schools with broadband connectivity and supply laptops to every staffroom in our schools. We look forward to the day when ICT aided teaching is a common place in every school and every teacher can tell of their own success.

This is certainly not beyond our reach as UTT teacher educators will be able to ensure that their students, our future classroom teachers will be able to integrate ICTs into their teaching, thereby facilitating increased levels of student participation and achievements as they infuse their classrooms with innovative practices.

The "Teacher Education for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teachers" project addresses the pressing need in the region for quality teacher education to assure quality teachers competent to deliver relevant and effective 21st century education.

As the global economy changes and new technologies are introduced, we believe that students need to acquire the critical skills that will prepare them for the demands of the labour market and for further education.

Teachers need to be provided with appropriate training and support for developing and integrating these skills in the classroom. Therefore, it is incumbent on the teacher educators to engage in practices and projects for continuous updating of their skills for engaging classroom teachers.

Thus, this is a signal event for education in Trinidad and Tobago. Making this course available for teacher educators has demonstrated the Ministry of Education's commitment to the quality of education delivered at its schools. It marks the beginning of the MOE's plan to train all teachers to integrate ICTs into the fabric of teaching and learning.

And, in a special way, today's award ceremony also celebrates the Ministry of Education's efforts to foster successful collaboration with other Ministries as we respond to the VISION 2020 mandate to develop innovative people for a caring society.

In 2004, the Ministry of Education assumed official status as the executing agency for the four-year OAS FEMCIDI funded Teacher Education Project: "Responses to the Challenge of Improving the Quality of Recruitment and Selection, Initial Formation, Professional Development and Evaluation of Teachers in Countries of the Hemisphere." The project was submitted for funding by the Ministry of Education. It ended in April 2009.

The outcomes of that project have helped to focus the work of the Ministry of Education in the area of teacher education and teaching. Some of them are:

- A Draft Proposal for teacher professional development in Trinidad and Tobago with the associated policy framework has been developed.
- Draft Standards for Teaching and Teacher Education are being developed in collaboration with the CARICOM Task Force on Teacher Education.

This course for which awards are being presented today is a direct offspring of the 2004-2009 project and represents the continuing partnerships among:

- the Organization of American States Department of Education and Culture,
- the International Education and Research Network - USA,
- the UNESCO Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean;
- the Network of Latin American Portals and
- the Ministry of Education.

We are grateful to the Organization of American States and the International Education and Research Network. These two organizations are responsible for developing and implementing the course, and providing scholarships to participants who upheld the Ministry of Education's motto "Excellence in Education."

- One of our graduates, Dr. Rowena Kalloo registered 400 pre-service teachers from the Valsayn and Corinth campuses of the UTT to participate in international collaborative projects online.
- Two of the graduates, Rhonda Dookwah and Cheryl Bowrin are now co-facilitators for the second session of the course which has 48 participants throughout the Caribbean.

This first session featured a 30% attrition rate for Trinidad and Tobago with all graduates receiving high commendation.

The second session which begins on September 18 is expected to show 100% completion by the 20 registered participants from the UTT and the Ministry of Education Distance Education Unit.

The result of this first pilot is very encouraging. Indeed, it is especially encouraging for us at a Ministry of Education that is in reform mode, as we seek to elevate the status of the teacher. This we intend to do by utilising our comprehensive teacher professional development plan.

We recognize that the success of our reform, to a great extent, is highly dependent on the quality of our teachers.

The perspective is one of career pathing in the teaching service where the teachers, as education professionals are nurtured and supported from pre-service commitment to retirement and beyond. Career paths, when fully delineated, in the teaching service will facilitate the diversification of career options and meet the human resource demands that are engendered by the reforms.

We will be prepared to benefit from the movement of teachers throughout their careers in education and our training programmes will demonstrate this knowledge.

The proposed teacher performance management and appraisal system is expected to provide the system with the support for professional growth and quality control. The integrated teacher evaluation process will address the demand for quality assurance and system accountability.

We are also continuing to upgrade and retool our in-service teachers to make them competent 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers. The Ministry of Education just completed a second year of the Vacation Programme for teachers. 2009 showed a marked increase in the number of teachers accessing this programme.

We believe that the teachers are eager to learn new strategies to engage students in the classroom. It is this belief that allows us to continue to provide opportunities for teachers to do this.

I now take this opportunity to congratulate these seven teacher educators who have completed this course. I encourage them to continue to motivate prospective teachers encouraging them to be the best they can be for our students and by extension for the development of all persons in Trinidad and Tobago.

Thank you.