

true blue

Newsletter of the Friends of St George's

Editorial

The loss of qualified professional young men and women from developing countries to the industrialised world has always been, and still remains, a major concern. This is why I give my wholehearted support to the new St George's University Commonwealth scholarship programme announced by the Chancellor to mark the University's 30th anniversary celebrations.

The seventy five scholarships cover five different academic disciplines and are to be targeted at developing countries and small states within the Commonwealth, where successful applicants, on graduation, will return to their home country in order

to serve their people and communities.

St George's University justifiably boasts that, since its inception, it has trained young men and women from over 86 countries. The Commonwealth scholarship programme follows this great and proud international tradition and will further add to the University's strength, diversity and global profile.

This exciting new initiative also has the full support of the UK Clinical Faculty and the distinguished Friends of St George's University in the United Kingdom, all of whom wish it every success.

Rodney Croft,
Dean of Clinical Studies, UK

Grenada's Prime Minister visits campus



Dr Keith Mitchell,
Prime Minister of Grenada
(right), at the True Blue
campus with Chancellor
Modica

Grenada's Prime Minister, Dr Keith Mitchell, described St George's as "a major plus for the country" on a visit to the True Blue campus in September.

Prime Minister Mitchell, along with the Minister of Education, Claris Charles, and the Minister of Works, Clarice Modeste Curwen, met with Chancellor Modica to consider ways to expand collaboration between the University and the Government of Grenada.

Areas discussed included an increase in scholarship funding for needy students in Grenada.

University representatives took the delegation on a tour of the campus, where they saw the two new construction sites for lecture halls, as well as existing resources.

Scholarships timed with 30th anniversary celebrations

Students from Commonwealth countries will be able to apply for 75 full tuition scholarships at St George's University from January - the 30th anniversary of the University's founding.

The Commonwealth Grenada St George's University Scholarship Programme will cover graduate and undergraduate degree programmes. Scholarships are offered to 25 students seeking a Master of Business Administration (MBA); 25 for Masters of Public Health; 10 for arts and sciences degrees; 10 studying veterinary medicine; and five in the School of Medicine.

Applicants will have until 15 April to be accepted for the August 2007 class and until 15 September 2007 for the January 2008 class. The programme is expected to run until the end of 2008.

The scholarships were announced at a function at Marlborough House, the headquarters of the Commonwealth, on 29 June by the then Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Winston Cox. Grenada's Prime Minister, Dr Keith Mitchell, sent a special message, saying he was "glad that deserving Commonwealth students will now benefit from this centre of international excellence on our island".

"As we celebrate 30 years of growth and success," comments the Chancellor of St George's University, Dr Charles R Modica, "we want to reach out to talented and ambitious students who might otherwise be unable to attend university. However, it is a condition that recipients return to their home countries and put their acquired education and skills to good use."

The scholarships will be available for all Commonwealth countries but preference will be given to students from developing countries and small states, particularly for the MBAs,

MPHs and arts and sciences awards. The University has established a Commonwealth-Grenada Scholarship Committee to award the scholarships, which will be judged on academic excellence, financial need and the student's commitment to the chosen discipline. While the US\$ 4 million scholarship programme will fully fund tuition, students will require separate support for living and travelling expenses.



From left:
Joseph Charter,
Grenada's High
Commissioner to the
UK, Margaret A
Lambert, Dean of
Enrolment Planning,
St George's, Winston
Cox, then Deputy
Secretary-General of
the Commonwealth,
and Rodney Croft,
UK Dean of Clinical
Studies, St George's

The University, working with business associations within the Commonwealth, will seek direct partnerships with private sector companies and foundations to help defray these costs.

"These partnerships will have a two-way benefit," says Margaret Lambert, Dean of Enrolment Planning at St George's. "Sponsoring companies will take advantage of the high level skills, in areas such as tourism and public health, that the scholarship programme will seek to develop. In return, sponsoring companies will have first call on scholars when they return home."

Application forms are on the website - www.sgu.edu - and must be accompanied by a 500-word statement - looking back on the impact of the scholarship on the scholar's life, at 70 years of age, and the difference that this has made to his or her community and country.

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Friends of St George's

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- Mr David Jessop OBE • Baroness Hanham CBE • Baroness Howells of St Davids OBE •
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Student profile: Bharan Kumar



Bharan Kumar

After taking his A-Levels in Slough in 2004, Bharan Kumar was apprehensive about moving thousands of miles to begin his medicine course at St George's. He needn't have worried. He now describes his time on Grenada as "the best year and a half of my life".

Bharan enrolled in the five year MD degree programme in January 2005. Although the course is pressurised, he has been impressed with the teaching and support network. "Having seen my sister graduate from a UK medical school, I feel the academic experience at St George's is more intense," says Bharan, "but the teaching staff are so passionate about what they do and are very approachable on a one-to-one basis."

Since arriving in Grenada, Bharan has relished the opportunity to explore the island and the surrounding region. The variety of people studying at St George's has also been a real bonus. "I've made so many new friends from so many different walks of life," says Bharan.

His academic advisor,

Dr Brian Curry, also from the UK, sees this variety as a huge benefit for British students. "They can study in the company of students of many nationalities, each bringing its own perspective of health care – from the US model to the strictly managed system in the UK, to the various versions in other European countries."

Bharan plans to move into general practice in the UK. He feels that, by exposing him to a different culture and environment, the St George's experience will have made him a more open-minded and confident clinician. "Spending time with doctors at the local general hospital has made me really appreciate the facilities and equipment that doctors work with in the UK."

Bharan is keen to share his experiences with other potential applicants. He spoke to UK students about life at SGU at the MedSim conference in Nottingham this summer.

Bharan's father, Dr M.L.H.Kumar MBE, is convinced that a qualification from St George's will stand its medical graduates in good stead. "The academic benefits at St George's are considerable. But it's their communication skills that make St George's students stand out. Learning about different cultures means that they are comfortable with people and can make their patients feel at ease. It's what being a doctor is all about."

Graduation celebrations

Radio City Music Hall, New York City, was the venue for the Annual Commencement Ceremony of the School of Medicine and School of Veterinary Medicine in June.

Chancellor Charles R. Modica presented 450 medical and 65 veterinary students with their diplomas. He looked forward to their achievements as medical professionals within the 6,400 strong SGU graduate community.

Richard Halliwell MA VetMB, PhD, MRCVS, former President of the American Association of Veterinary Immunologists, of both the American and European Colleges of Veterinary Dermatology, of the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education and of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, gave the commencement address. He underlined the need for medical and veterinary practitioners to cooperate,



Lord Soulsby of Swaffham Prior receiving a Distinguished Service Award from Chancellor Modica

saying "both professions are devoted primarily – either directly or indirectly, at the betterment of human health".

The ceremony concluded with recognition of a long-time Friend of SGU. Chancellor Modica presented Lord Soulsby of Swaffham Prior with a Distinguished Service Award for his work on behalf of the University. Lord Soulsby has previously taught at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine and was President of the RCVS. He currently serves as Chairman of the UK Board of the Windward Islands Research & Education Foundation (WINDREF).

UK veterinary graduates

School of Veterinary Medicine graduates Lydia Doyle and Rowena Barty have registered as members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and can now practise veterinary surgery in the UK. Both passed the RCVS Statutory Membership Examination – Rowena with the highest mark of the year.

Lydia, who enrolled in the veterinary school in 2000, says, "I feel very lucky to have studied at St George's. The course was intense but we always worked in a supportive environment. And being able to explore Grenada and the surrounding islands was a real bonus."

Rowena enrolled in the five year DVM programme in 2001 and graduated earlier this year. She comments: "St George's gave me the opportunity to tap into the international veterinary

network. The course is taught by a solid and devoted faculty, complimented by the visiting professors – some of the world's most prestigious vets."

Both have ambitious plans for the future. Rowena has just begun a PhD at the School of Tropical Medicine in Liverpool. She will study onchocerca, a parasite of cattle and human beings found in Africa – research into which aims to develop a vaccine for river-blindness. Lydia has recently started work in small animal practice.

Austin Kirwan, Assistant Dean for UK Affairs, School of Veterinary Medicine, says, "it is wonderful to see the St George's experience helping these promising young graduates fulfil their potential".

Michelle Cook, who became the first St George's graduate to pass the RCVS exam last summer, is now working in mixed practice in South Yorkshire. Her first child was born earlier this year.

With four new British veterinary graduates this year, we hope to have more registered UK veterinary surgeons next summer.

Professor Sheila Crispin, President of the RCVS, with Lydia Doyle



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