

# true blue



Newsletter of the Friends of St George's

## Investing in expansion and enhanced services for students

A substantial new equity investment in St George's University (SGU) has been described by Grenada's Prime Minister, Keith C Mitchell, as "a powerful vote of confidence in our country and our longstanding partnership with this school."

The Prime Minister continued that "for over 38 years, the Grenadian community has embraced St George's University and its students and, in turn, has been a vital contributor to the island, adding significantly to the local economy and providing employment and education opportunities to our citizens. Since 2005, SGU has granted more than \$90 million in scholarships to Caribbean students, many of them Grenadian. We are grateful that St George's world-class education is available to our citizens, and look forward to expanding our partnership as SGU grows. We are proud that St George's University calls Grenada its home."

The new investment, announced in August, comes from a group led by Canadian investor Atlas Partners and a fund advised by Baring Private Equity Asia. The investment is a partnership with SGU's current management team, led by Chancellor Charles R Modica, who co-founded the University in 1976. Dr Modica remains in his leadership position and, with the current owners of the University, will collectively remain the largest shareholder.

Comments Chancellor Modica, "Atlas and Baring Asia share our goals and passion for educating students and have track records working with businesses to grow over the longer term. With this investment, SGU enters a new chapter in its development with a focus on expanding student resources, supporting our research and undergraduate programmes, adding international capabilities, and enhancing our relationships with hospital and university partners."

Since it was founded, SGU has evolved into a leading centre of international education, drawing students and faculty from 140 countries to Grenada. Over this period, more than 14,000 students have graduated, including physicians, veterinarians, scientists and public health and business professionals. Today, more than 6,000 students are enrolled and studying in 52 academic degree programmes. SGU's School of Medicine's clinical training programme has affiliations with more than 70 teaching hospitals and clinical centres, principally located in the United States and United Kingdom.



Baroness Howells of St Davids, Friend of St George's and President of the Windward Islands Research and Education Foundation (WINDREF), who introduced the August White Coat Ceremony at Northumbria University, with David Holmes, Associate Dean for Basic and Allied Health Sciences, Keith B Taylor Global Scholars Programme.

## White coat tradition

The White Coat Ceremony at St George's University has become a tradition in which first term students in the Schools of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine don their white physician coats and pledge an oath of professionalism and service.

At Northumbria University, in August this year, students (below) enrol for the Keith B Taylor Global Scholar's Programme, which teaches first year sciences at Northumbria. Students then move on to St George's University, in Grenada, to complete their pre-clinical training.

Students taking this programme need to demonstrate a commitment to dedicating at least half their professional lives to practicing medicine in developing countries or underserved regions of a developed country.



## EDITORIAL

**T**he UK Clinical Programme is moving forward although, since our 'boom years' of 2011/2012, our student week numbers have settled towards our annual student week figures of 2010. This is no doubt due to the lifting of the B1 visa bar by the US immigration authorities which previously prevented non-US citizens entering the US for clinical training. On the instigation of the Chancellor, the student placement department in the US offices in Great River, New York, are developing links between a number of US and UK hospitals to arrange for students to undergo clinical studies in both countries.

Graduation in New York in June saw 917 students graduate from over 30 countries around the world. We have now trained over 12,000 doctors, a significant number working in Commonwealth countries and some in developing countries. We remain, as a single medical school, the largest source of medical graduates for the US healthcare system.

Our study day programme remains very active and is greatly appreciated by the students. Michael Clements, in recognition of his great contribution to medical education at St. George's University, has been appointed Associate Dean UK of Student Academic Affairs and Beryl d'Souza has been appointed to be in charge of the UK arm of the Medical Student Research Institute and the UK Student Mentoring programme which began on 6 October. This seeks to promote the development of self-confidence and professional achievement for students.

A monthly newsletter is now issued for St George's International School of Medicine informing students of news and events of interest.

Our offices were moved recently – from Kingdon's Yard to purpose built offices in Basepoint, Winchester (see over).

**Rodney J Croft MA MChir FRCS FACS**  
Dean of Clinical Studies UK

Issue  
17

December  
2014



## Sport for health on track

The Windward Islands Research and Education Foundation (WINDREF) celebrated its 20th anniversary with its fourth fundraising dinner at the House of Lords last May. Hosted by WINDREF's President, Baroness Howells of St Davids, this dinner – like the dinner in 2010 – had a sporting theme concentrating on “the role of sport, diet and exercise,” in preventing diabetes and obesity.

Two top specialists – professors Gareth Williams of Bristol University and Harry Rutter, Senior Clinical Research Fellow at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine – outlined the serious threat to public health posed by obesity and diabetes, which has reached epidemic proportions in the Caribbean, not least in Grenada.

However, the funds raised in 2010 enabled WINDREF to launch a programme in Grenada entitled ‘Sport for health’, which is already beginning to deliver positive results. ‘Sport for health’ – a partnership between WINDREF, the Royal Grenada Police Force, Grenada’s Department of Public Health and Preventative Medicine, St George’s University, and all 23 secondary schools in the tri-island state of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique – includes a community-based and school-based intervention promoting physical activity while paying more attention to food consumed as well as the use of tobacco. Sporting Advocate for all Grenada’s sporting ambassadors is Grenada’s Olympic gold medallist, Kirani James, and its Patron is footballing legend and commentator, Garth Crooks OBE.

A recent study in Grenada, involving 427 participants, showed an encouraging decline in waist to hip ratio measurements as well as reduction in body mass index, during the programme’s evaluation period between 2011 and 2014.

“The programme is building public awareness of the importance and management of diabetes at community level,” comments WINDREF Director, Dr Calum Macpherson. “Our goal is to encourage a fitter and happier lifestyle.”

## Four awarded SGU's Commonwealth Jubilee Scholarship

Abidemi Idowu of Nigeria, Ramit Relan of India, Marina Nimrod of Trinidad and Tobago, and Juliet Enow of Cameroon are the newest recipients of St. George's University's Commonwealth Jubilee Scholarship, a scholarship which will cover the students' full tuition for the duration of their programmes at SGU.

These four students, who began studies at SGU in the autumn of 2014, were selected from a pool of hundreds of applications based on their academic excellence and strong commitment to their chosen disciplines. Abidemi Idowu and Ramit Relan will be doing the four-year Medical Doctor (MD) program, while Marina Nimrod will pursue a Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Juliet Enow a Master in Public Health (MPH).

The scholarship seeks to encourage students of superior academic calibre to impact the development of industry and healthcare in their home country. It recognizes students, from developing nations or small states, with a strong commitment to return to their countries as professionals in their areas of study.

“I would like to use the skills and competencies I acquire at SGU to support efforts in my home country to develop entrepreneurs, especially in disadvantaged communities,” stated Marina Nimrod.

SGU launched the scholarship programme in 2013. The four new awardees bring the number of Commonwealth Jubilee Scholarships already awarded to 19. SGU will grant a total of 60 Commonwealth Jubilee Scholarships in commemoration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee – celebrated in 2012. The occasion marked her 60th year as Head of the Commonwealth of Nations.



Professor Alan Fenwick receives the award from Chancellor Charles R Modica with Baroness Howells of St Davids, and Professor Calum Macpherson, Director of the Windward Island Research and Education Foundation (WINDREF).

Professor Alan Fenwick OBE, who received the Mike Fisher Memorial Award in May at the WINDREF House of Lords dinner, has agreed to become a Friend of St George's, joining a number of eminent individuals who help to advance the ideals of St George's University Grenada, as an international centre of learning and medical accomplishment.

Professor Fenwick directs the Schistosomiasis Control Initiative (SCI) in the Department of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at Imperial College, London. Earlier he worked on schistosomiasis research and control in Tanzania, Sudan and Egypt. He has pioneered the control of neglected tropical disease in Africa.

The annual WINDREF Mike Fisher Memorial Award is given in recognition of the work of Mike Fisher, whose work was instrumental in discovering the drug Ivermectin – sparing 35 million people in the developing countries from blindness and disfigurement and providing domestic animal and livestock with healthier lives. He died in Grenada in 2005.



Great Grenadians at the House of Lords dinner. From left, Alexandra Otway-Noel, formerly Minister of Tourism and Aviation and now Minister of Implementation in the Prime Minister's Office; Lance Corporal Johnson Gideon Beharry VC – who won Britain's highest award for gallantry in Iraq; Kirsten Rausing, of Lanwades, Newmarket where horses have been bred for more than 300 years; and Joslyn Whiteman, Grenada's High Commissioner to the UK.

## Research ethics capacity in Latin America and the Caribbean

will be enhanced by a \$1.1 million grant from the Fogarty International Center, part of the US Federal Government, which has the sole mission of supporting global health. The Caribbean Research Ethics Education Initiative, funded by the grant, is a five year programme to increase the limited number of professionals trained in research ethics and research ethics education in the Caribbean. As part of a network of centres of excellence, an English-speaking centre in research ethics will be established at St George's University, in collaboration with WINDREF, with related resources, technology and expertise for use by programme faculty, trainees and alumni and will recruit promising candidates from the Caribbean – as research ethicists, bioethics educators, and policy advocates.

### For further information please contact:

Patrick Orr, Executive Director, UK Trust  
Raitt Orr and Associates  
Ground Floor, CAN Mezzanine  
49-51 East Road, Old Street, London N1 6AH  
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7250 8288  
e-mail: patrick@raittorr.co.uk

St George's International  
School of Medicine  
Office 52, 1 Winnall Valley Road  
Winchester, Hampshire SO23 0LD  
Tel: 01962 850 650

Published by  
Raitt Orr and  
Associates  
on behalf of  
the Friends of  
St George's.