

University of Technology, Jamaica

Co-operative Education at UTech, Ja
NEWSLETTER

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"Partnering with Industry to produce work-ready graduates"

RISE AGAINST THE ODDS!

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From the Desk of the Acting Co-operative Education Coordinator



**Sandy Lawrence | Acting Co-operative
Education Coordinator**

We are half-way through 2021 and the Co-operative Education programme is still soaring to the heights of excellence, despite the many challenges brought by the pandemic. In March we collaborated with the Career and Job Placement Unit to launch the first virtual Co-operative Education Fair as part of the Career and Job Placement Fair 2021. We were very pleased with the performance of our students as they engaged in interviews with several organisations. Needless to say, several of them were selected for internship opportunities!

The summer session is upon us and the

Schools are busy preparing students for physical, virtual and blended placement opportunities across the island-as far as Hanover, Montego Bay and Ocho Rios. Others are being prepared to complete alternative assessments in order to satisfy the requirements of their courses of study. I wish to commend our Co-op Ed School Coordinators for their hard work in this regard. I am grateful to our valued industry partners for continuing to support the work of the Co-op Ed Unit by engaging our students in virtual and blended modalities. Our students are to be commended for their resilience in the face of the pandemic. I say, continue to make UTech, Jamaica proud as you approach your internship opportunities with the utmost professionalism!

The Co-op Ed Unit is delighted to support the efforts of all involved to produce world and work-ready graduates.

1 ROSE, SO CAN YOU!!!



Annesha Buchanan | 4th Year student

According to Annesha Buchanan, a fourth year student of the University of Technology, Jamaica, “Rising against the odds’ denotes staring your fears in the eyes, setting no limits, a comeback from a setback and breaking mental barriers.” She has faced numerous encounters in which she has had no choice but to rise against the odds . “I recall in February 2021 in the midst of my very last semester I finally felt like quitting . I had no motivation, no care whatsoever and zero regard for anyone’s opinion. I had been going to school since I was two years old and I felt like I had done enough. It felt as if it was just a means to an

end and the end was nowhere near.” In an attempt to address this issue , Annesha decided to talk with others about it. “I shared my misery with persons that believed in me, genuinely care for my wellbeing and my future. Upon sharing, I realized that I could not quit, I had to persevere. As a matter of fact, these same persons have more faith in me than I have in myself and they would be greatly disappointed if I threw in the towel,” she stated.

Miss Buchanan recommends the following strategies:

- * ***Pray for mental and physical strength to overcome your hurdles.***
- * ***Share your struggles and be open to encouragement from others especially those who are more experienced or less fortunate than you.***
- * ***Imagine how your life might turn out if you allow the odds to rise against you.***
- * ***Tell yourself that failure is not within you!***

1 ROSE, SO CAN YOU!!!



Alain Tyndale| 4th Year student of FELS

“Life is a stage and the red carpet we walk to stardom represents the challenges and obstacles we overcome. I believe that the odds life throw at us is what makes it so meaningful because it allows us to rise above them. Rising against the odds is expressed nicely by an unknown author who said, ‘Life is like a camera. Just focus on what’s important, capture the good times, develop from the negatives, and if things don’t work out, just take another shot’,” said Alain Tyndale. His journey has been plagued with personal challenges that have resulted in many sleepless nights and thoughts of wanting to be invisible to his classmates, friends and lecturers, just to avoid the questions and reliving the odds life threw his way.

“You may not feel like wanting to let people into your businesses or that the ‘one man band’ is the way to go or even tell yourself that ‘I am smart enough I do not need help’. The truth is, you have earned your place to study here and really do not need to prove your wits. It’s the assistance from your support system, your determination, resilience and grit that will take you through.” Mr. Tyndale made the following recommendations:

- * ***Trust God***
- * ***Keep family in the loop***
- * ***Find a group of classmates/ friends and lecturers to work with and talk through challenges***
- * ***Post positive quotes in places you can see and say out loud***
- * ***Remember the reason you started***
- * ***Keep pushing and never quit despite the odds***
- * ***Just take another shot if you think the above did not work.***

Coordinating Co-op Ed in JDSEEL



**Erica Donaldson | Co-op Ed Coordinator|
Joan Duncan School of Entrepreneurship, Ethics
and Leadership**

The fourth year JDSEEL Co-op Ed Coordinator, Mrs. Erica Donaldson, sees it as her responsibility to expose students to the world of practicing entrepreneurs. She believes that Co-operative Education is important to students. “This gives them the opportunity to personally see and experience some of the challenges faced by small business owners and observe the strategies used to tackle said challenges. They also have the opportunity to make recommendations based upon theories taught in class,” she reasoned. Mrs. Donaldson was tasked with the responsibility of either developing a Co-op Ed module or incorporating a Co-op Ed component in an existing module. “Incorporating Co-op Ed into an existing module was doable for all the stakeholders

involved. This incorporation has been an excellent addition to our degree programme. Though some students continue to complain about the workload, others students are very appreciative of the experience. We have also used Co-op Ed to strengthen our strategic alliance with our industry partners,” Mrs. Donaldson expressed.

The Co-op Ed programme was adversely affected by the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic as some workplace closed, and others adhered to work from home orders. In response to this, the JDSEEL’s Coordinator decided to utilize a blended placement approach where students had the opportunity to work from home and/or on site. She indicated that the choice has been challenging as a few students have tried to cheat the system, however, in an effort to reduce misconduct and mischievous behavior she remains in constant communication with working partners. “Last academic year our students were placed right across the island instead of the usual Kingston and St. Andrew and St. Catherine. This was also a challenge as I was unable to conduct the necessary site visits and phone calls do not yield the same results,” she added. “My students were demotivated and I was overwhelmed because of not having any administrative assistance and business owners were extremely flustered. However, we did manage to get over the challenges by working together with the same goals on our agenda.”

COVID-19 and Job Opportunities for University Graduates



The COVID-19 Pandemic has unleashed devastating effects on economies worldwide; one is the increase of unemployment rate. Unemployment may be defined as a situation where someone of working age is not able to get a job but would like to be in full-time employment. This has been one of the biggest issues the world at large has been facing as many university graduates are unable to get jobs, many employees are being laid off or even made redundant for the past year due to the virus. Job vacancies and advertisements have also been on the decline.

According to the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), in April 2021, the number of persons employed was

1,206,000. Compared to April 2019, there were 30,600 fewer males and 9,900 fewer females employed. The size of the overall labour force decreased by 26,300 persons, or 1.9 per cent by April 2021. With the onset of the novel coronavirus pandemic, many tertiary students, such as those in western Jamaica have reported added pressure as they attempt to cope with the challenges associated with the pandemic, while remaining hopeful about life after graduation.

Notwithstanding, the University of Technology, Jamaica's Co-operative Education Unit remains committed to facilitating student engagement in quality internship opportunities, which can serve to enhance their resumes, thereby making them more employable. Meanwhile, the Career and Job Placement Unit actively seeks to direct graduates towards gainful, full-time employment opportunities.

Sources:

https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/observer-west/western-jamaica-tertiary-students-concern-over-job-prospects-after-graduation_221888

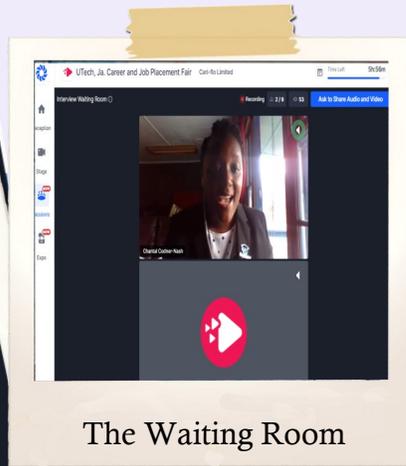
<https://jis.gov.jm/more-than-1-2-million-jamaicans-in-jobs/>

[University of Lincoln. \(2020\). The Impact of COVID-19 on student and graduate opportunities. Retrieved from: https://uolcareers.co.uk/students-graduates/jobs-employment-options/impact-covid-19-student-graduate-opportunities/](https://uolcareers.co.uk/students-graduates/jobs-employment-options/impact-covid-19-student-graduate-opportunities/)

Footage From Co-Op Ed Fair



The Waiting Room



The Waiting Room



Entertainment in the Waiting Room



There were over 15 booths on display!

OBJECTIVE OF EVENT

The main objective of the Fair was to give students an opportunity to find a place of work to complete their internship.

SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you to all partnering industries and students who came out to make this event a successful one. A big thank you to the Career and Placement Unit and the Co-op Ed Unit! **THANK YOU ALL!!**

Employers' Experiences

**PRICE WATERHOUSE
COOPERS COMPANY
(PWC)**



PWC reported that they heard about the Co-operative Education Fair via email. From their perspective, the fair was excellent. In preparing the fair, they had to dedicate their time to scheduling candidates and conducting virtual interviews. PWC especially liked the Hop-In Platform and the number of students that showed up. They reported that they are anticipating partnering with UTech, Jamaica for 2022.

**NATIONAL ROAD OPERATING AND
CONSTRUCTING COMPANY
(NROCC)**



NROCC reported that their overall experience with the fair was excellent. They heard about the Co-operative Education Unit Fair via email. The process leading up to the fair was good as they dedicated their time reviewing manpower needs, obtaining approval to participate, preparing JDs, scheduling and conducting interviews. The thing they liked most about the fair was the interaction with students; they have created a positive impression. They are

Students' Experiences



Delroy Mccrae

If this were the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic I would say the experience was not the norm. However, conducting virtual meetings these days has become the usual set up. The experience was nevertheless a delightful one; I thoroughly enjoyed

and appreciated it. I was interviewed by M&M Construction Co. Ltd. In my opinion this platform was highly efficient and it 100% helped me to ace my interview. It helped due to the ease of use, as it relates to the platforms user interface. Everything was easy to understand and easy to access and the functionality of the platform was immaculate. I liked the fact that there were many opportunities that were given to students from this event.”



Tanice Whyte

I must say that this was my first career job fair experience, and I was anxious to learn new information about

how I can better prepare myself to transition from university into the world of work. I learned a lot from just preparing my resume to how I can be properly dressed for an interview. As a result, this job fair was very eye-opening as to what employers are looking for in the workplace.”

Career Scoop!!

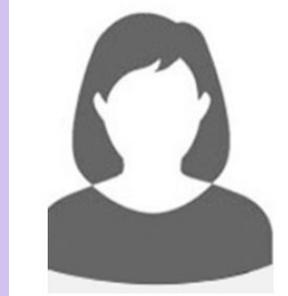
ACE YOUR INTERVIEW!

- * Be honest and think quickly.
- * Dress for success!
- * Be Early
- * Explain what you can do for the employer and why you want the job.
- * Remember to use good examples to illustrate your point and your skills

Tips for your Cover Letter!

- * Assert Yourself
- * Match it with your resume, they must be in unison.
- * Put Yourself FORWARD

A Co-op Ed Success Story



Laren Matthews, a 4th year student who is in the area of Business Administration

completed her 170 hours internship at the Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust during the period starting February 15 2021 and ending March 12, 2021. Her job description entailed facilitating data entry for bill payments, sales receipts, invoices and liaising with staff to prepare financial statements and writing cheques based on approved invoices. The nature of her Co-op Ed. Placement was physical engagement. Miss Matthews said that she faced challenges with managing time and she was given many seemingly trivial tasks during her Internship Experience. However, she rose against the odds by prioritizing tasks based on urgency. She came to realize that seemingly trivial tasks were in fact important and figured somewhere in the work cycle. She went on to become a star intern and was offered a full time position at the Business Entity. She improved her skills in Accounting and is now an expert in using an important Accounting Software.

“DREAMS DON'T WORK, UNLESS YOU DO”

Coping with the COVID 19 Pandemic

University of Cincinnati

The Co-operative Education Unit at University of Cincinnati plans to follow the precautionary measures of the government, however, students Face-to-face experiential learning remains optional. For students in mandatory co-op programs, the COVID-19 EEP options are acceptable alternatives and will count toward the co-op requirement.

Source: <http://www.uc.edu/campus-life/careereducation/coronavirus/>

University of Regina

The Co-operative Education Unit at the University of Regina, gives the students a chance to have interviews and complete their internship experiences; however, this is done remotely. Phone and Web conference interviews are carried out.

Source: <https://www.uregina.ca/careercentre/coop/Covid-19-Resources/student->

University of Technology, Jamaica

The Co-operative Education Unit at UTech Jamaica has tried a different approach to realizing an old dream by ensuring that the students engage in physical, virtual and blended formats. This was underscored by the hosting of a Virtual Career Fair, where students (interns) and prospective employers interacted with each other using an online platform. Some students are also given the opportunity to satisfy the Co-op Ed requirements by completing alternative assessments.



Chill Corner

Resume Puzzle

F E M Q U E S T I O N N A I R E J V G V Y T T P
 U U S J F B G H N B W G T N W B S O U C Y L L W
 I V P O S I T I O N T K X N O H F T I M A A A D
 Y G B R E T T E L R E V O C R B H V D R J N N A
 C A S E R U K X H E Z A Q F J V L W E B Y O O P
 W K S N O I T A C I F I L A U Q N Z L O S I I P
 Z O J V D S E I T I V I T C A Y G S I Q T S T R
 O E X M A V A X T I H O V Z U P A Y N L N S C O
 R E T J J O B A P P L I C A T I O N E A E E N P
 A G J I A E P B K K U W O J K S P O S C M F U R
 R E F E R E N C E S Z P F A H K F Q V I U O F I
 X A J B O X M A L Z R E E R A C O W O G C R C A
 P X E C N E I R E P X E E T A V R J L O O P M T
 A C C O M P L I S H M E N T S V M A U L D I L E
 M G X J I P S R F R B R W E U X A C N O X U T A
 S Y E T S K P B T M L N L D Q T T Y T N E V I E
 E A V R S M I E D U C A T I O N M L E O M Y M M
 E L I E U B B K T J L S P B X F H D E R V N F U
 K L T Y T F V M R O H V Q T K M O Q R H V I C S
 I O C O I N T E R V I E W M M A N O U C G I A E
 N P E L Y T Z P P D H P T H B H E N R F H E V R
 G I J P D P H X E P U T W W T X S G N I D A E H
 L K B M I C P V N N I J D X A J T B H W N P H H
 K B O E O N E G O T I A T I N G N S P N T L J G

Accomplishments

Chronological

Employer

Guidelines

Job Application

Professional

Resume

Activities

Cover Letter

Experience

Heading

Negotiating

Qualifications

Seeking

Appropriate

Documents

Format

Honest

Objective

Questionnaire

Volunteer

Career

Education

Functional

Interview

Position

References

“Fall Seven Times, **STAND UP EIGHT!**”

Meet our Student Editor



Special thanks to Accacia Campbell for this issue of the Co-operative Education newsletter. Accacia is a third year student at the University of Technology, Jamaica, where she is pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Business Education.

"My aspiration is to be the best version of myself with the hope of being a beam of light for everyone I come in contact with."

Contact Information

For more information please feel free to contact us!



[Twitter](#)

@UTechCoopEd



[Instagram](#)

@coop_edutech



[Facebook](#)

@utechcoopedu



876-927-1680

Ex 2820