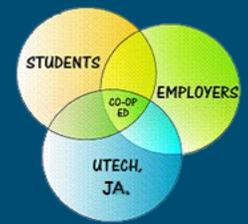




The University of Technology, Jamaica



## CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION AT UTECH, JA.

# NEWSLETTER

Volume 12 Issue 1 December 2022

*"Partnering with Industry to produce work-ready graduates"*



## Co-op Ed and the New Normal

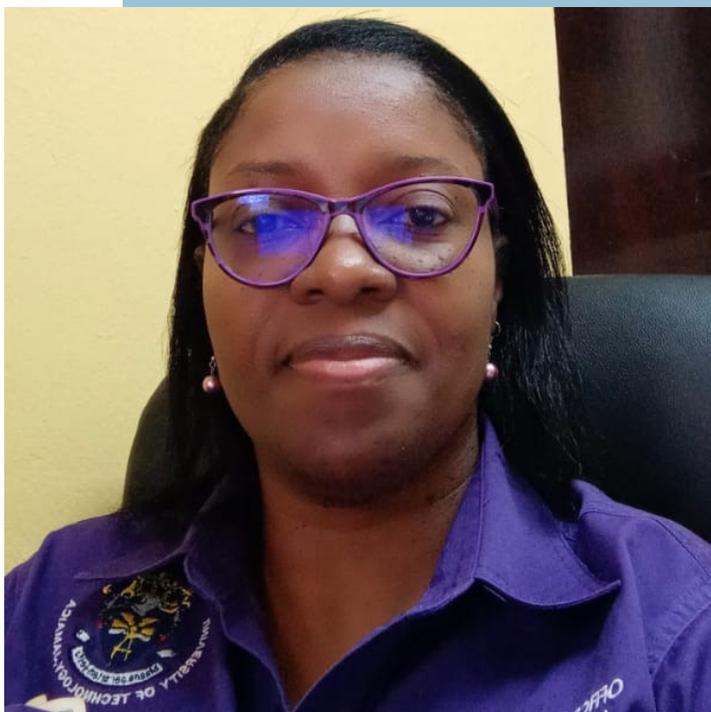
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# *From the Desk of the Co-op Ed Coordinator*

**AS** one academic year came to a close and another began, the Co-op Ed Unit continued to strengthen its position in ensuring that UTech, Jamaica produces work and world ready graduates. In April 2022, the Unit hosted the Co-operative Education Fair under the theme, “Optimizing the internship experience during a pandemic” . We were pleased with the turnout of organizations and students alike and now have sixteen (16) companies collaborating with us. Even so, we are busy courting several others for partnership in the academic year 2022/23 and beyond.

We understand that the employment landscape has changed and we are committed to preparing our students to successfully navigate it. As such, the Unit continues to assist our students to develop professionally through seminars such as the one entitled “Covid-19 and the Job Market”. The Co-op Ed School Coordinators must be commended for their hard work and commitment in aiding their students to achieve work-readiness. Our valued industry partners, new and old,



***Mrs. Sandy Lawrence,  
Acting Co-operative Education Coordinator***

must also be acknowledged for their continued support of the work of the Co-op Ed Unit by engaging our students through a variety of modalities.

Hats off to our students for riding the waves of the pandemic! I wish to encourage you to continue to soar to the heights of excellence as you engage in your internship exercises as true professionals. The Co-op Ed Unit stands ready to provide continued support for the efforts of all involved to produce world and work-ready graduates.”

# Round Table Talk: Opportunities for Professional Growth

In the 2021/2022 academic year the Co-op Ed Unit launched a series titled “**Round Table Talk**”. In this session students currently on internship and professional practice were invited to share their experiences on the job. Panelists included students from the School of Building and Land Management who were 3rd year Quantity Surveying students- Kingsley Mills, Rushawn Webb and Alex Smith.

In their discussion, they acknowledged that it is better to not rely solely on theory. Kingsley pointed out that while theory is crucial, many of the procedures and methods are frequently confronted from various angles in the field; therefore not everything he learned in school could be used immediately in the workplace. Rushawn also shared that he was able gain valuable experience in problem-solving techniques and task and time management skills, which proved useful in the workplace. Alex further mentioned that through this opportunity he has had the chance to network professionally and occasionally interact with the "movers and shakers" of his industry, which can lead to new opportunities for professional progress.

The students expressed gratitude for the chance the internship had given them to apply what they were taught, and shared that while “classroom instruction only simulates a tiny portion of the processes and techniques used on the job, internship experience gives them firsthand knowledge of how these are fully carried out”.

**University of  
Technology, Jamaica**  
CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION  
UNIT PRESENTS:  
**ROUND TABLE  
TALK**

**MON APRIL 25, 2022  
@ NOON**

**"Opportunities  
for professional  
growth"**

MEETING ID: 965 6272 1074  
PASSCODE: 412573

**PANELISTS:**  
**ALEX SMITH  
KINGSLEY MILLS  
RASHAWN WEBB**  
3RD YEAR SBLM INTERNS

## DID YOU KNOW?

You can access internship opportunities even if the Co-op Ed module is not a requirement of your course of study.

To learn more, visit the Co-op Ed Unit at the Academic Affairs Building (beside FENC) or call us at 987-9271680, Ext 3546/2820.

# Co-op Ed Fair - April 2022

The Co-op Ed Fair is an annual event at which students are given the opportunity to meet with industry representatives and potential employers in various fields. The Fair gives employers first hand exposure to high quality students who are eager and ready to make valuable contributions to their industries. The 2022 Fair partners included Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, Digicel Group, Couples Resort and KPMG, among others.

During the Fair, presentations focused on professional branding and creating a professional identity. The presentation on professional branding focused on the importance of creating

oneself as a brand option for potential employers before applying for jobs. This presentation stressed the importance of using social media and the internet to one's advantage, that is, to advertise oneself professionally. Additionally, the presentation on creating a professional identity, highlighted how as employees, students can advance themselves professionally and make themselves more valuable to their organization.

The presentation touched on creating an ethical compass, being flexible and adaptable, as well as the importance of displaying soft skills such as critical thinking, being tech savvy and having good communication skills.



The poster features a dark blue background with a yellow oval at the bottom containing registration details. On the right side of the oval is a photograph of a smiling woman with glasses, wearing a blue blazer and holding a tablet. In the top left corner, there is a Venn diagram with three overlapping circles labeled 'STUDENTS', 'EMPLOYERS', and 'UTECH, Ja.'. The text on the poster includes the university name, the event title, a quote about optimizing the internship experience, an invitation to all level 2, 3 & 4 students, a 'Register Here' link, and Zoom meeting information.

University of Technology, Jamaica  
Co-operative Education Unit  
presents

**CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION  
INTERNSHIP FAIR 2022**

"OPTIMIZING THE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE  
DURING A PANDEMIC"

**Open to all level 2, 3 & 4 students**

[Register Here](#)

Join us  
Wednesday, April 27, 2022  
from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM



<https://zoom.us/j/98859992845>  
Meeting ID: 988 5999 2845  
Passcode: 526978

***Co-operative Education  
Fair –April 2022***

# Co-op Ed Professional Development Seminar

**E**ach year the Co-op Ed Unit hosts Professional Development Seminars designed to aid the holistic development of students. At these sessions, students benefit from interaction with key industry players who help them to apply the theory that they have learned in class.

Given the challenges resulting from the global pandemic, a number of our partnering organizations began closing branches, resulting in unemployment or a shift in focus. It therefore became even more important that students learn how to navigate this ever-changing employment landscape.

The Seminar held in March 2022 was therefore aptly themed “Covid -19 and the Job Market”. The presenter, Ms. Venice Irving spoke about jobs for the future and the general direction of the job market and some of the challenges that have resulted from the Covid-19 pandemic. She posited that with technological and medical innovation, as well as increased automation, more developed countries have the ability to recover faster from the pandemic and other economic struggles caused as a result, as opposed to smaller countries that are more vulnerable. The pandemic brought about many of these innovations and new ways to make money, contributing to a widening of the wealth gap.

In closing she encouraged students to think of the job market as a global competition, to up-skill themselves and think innovatively and aim to be solution oriented, finding ways to anticipate what the problem will be and solve it.

***Mrs. Denise Irving, CEO - Hello Happy Teachers International***



# Co-op Ed School Coordinator Feature



**Mrs. Patricia Roberts-Brown— Co-operative Education Coordinator for School of Business Administration (SOBA)**

**A**s the Co-operative Education Coordinator for the School of Business Administration (SOBA), Mrs. Patricia Roberts-Brown plays a major role in ensuring that students and employers have a mutually beneficial Co-op Ed experience. With the assistance of administrative support staff, Mrs. Roberts-Brown has ensured that the students and the employers receive documentation before the commencement of Co-op Ed.

Having ensured that students are exposed to various aspects of professional development modules including the delivery of modules that focus on Co-operative Education, she takes pride in knowing that they will perform very well in the workplace. She explained that it has been such a rewarding experience as the feedback from

the employers convinces her that the students are being well prepared for the internship exercise.

When the pandemic hit in March 2020 and office doors closed, her team responded by allowing students, who had just started their work experience, to complete in time. Students were permitted to prepare a portfolio and answer related questions based on simulation exercises, to see how they would resolve issues that may arise on the job. Mrs. Roberts-Brown and her team also had to review their syllabi and the objectives stated therein to reflect the current realities. Students were further invited to attend seminars that focused on different aspects of career development to prepare them for the workplace. "Students should take career development classes that are practical in application so they will want to be part of the team. We cannot afford to not place emphasis on the importance of soft skills and people's attitude in the workplace," she said.

She however lamented that "sometimes it is difficult to find employers to work along with us to give the students the well needed experience." When asked about the benefits of Internship to the students in SOBA, she stated that, "When a student can apply what has been taught in a practical way and learn from others, that is priceless. We are truly grateful to those stakeholders who have jumped on board from very early and have remained with us, as a result of the relationships that SOBA and the Co-op Ed Unit have built over the years with so many companies and entrepreneurs."

# International Perspective - Botho University, Botswana



**The** World Association of Co-operative Education (WACE) aims at forming and forging bonds between higher education institutions, employers and partners across various industries. These relationships aid in the transitioning of students into the work world, by providing them with a host of necessary skills in the classroom paired with internships and work experience. Students have the opportunity to test and refine these skills, as well as learn new ones before permanent placement. The Botho University in Botswana is a WACE member and to equip their students with a necessary skill, they have incorporated the use of

technology in their teaching and learning methods. Botho recognized that with the changing job market, their graduates would need to be tech savvy as it would provide them with an upper hand for greater employability. Since becoming a WACE member in 2021, Botho University has acknowledged that given the varying internet access challenges their students face, participation in virtual internships is significant.

Source: <https://botswana.bothouniversity.com/students/mandatory-and-voluntary-internships/>

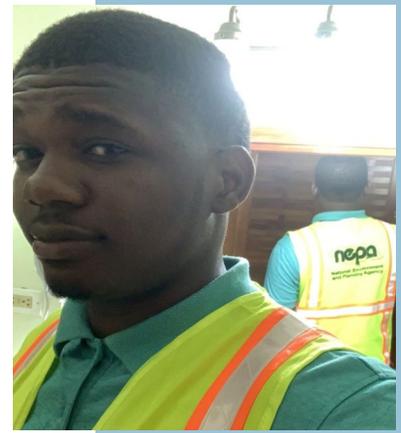
# I ROSE, SO CAN YOU

## Javian's Recommendations

- Have an open mind
- Do not be afraid to ask questions
- Network as much as you can
- Make the best of the experience

“I was able to use the knowledge gained in class to make informed decisions and brainstorm new ideas for the conceptual designs,” remarked Javian, who was placed at the National Environmental Planning Agency. During the current COVID-19 pandemic, Javian’s internship took a blended approach as some of his tasks required him to be in office while other tasks could be executed from home. This however, did not prevent him from learning directly from his colleagues.

By means of this internship, Javian was able to gain a new “perspective on the way in which development is done

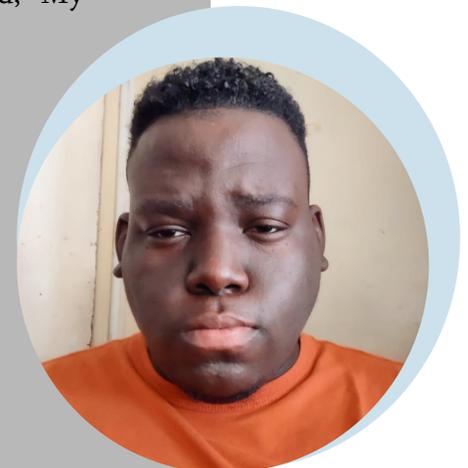


**Javian Brown - School of Building and Land Management, Faculty of the Built Environment**

in Jamaica and the process surrounding master planning.” Javian intends to use the skills honed to help him become a valuable member to his industry.

Nathaniel explained, “The whole point of internship is to experience the working world and gain as much knowledge as you can to prepare you for the time that you will enter the workforce. Internship allows students to engage with their industry from the inside, giving them the opportunity to apply what they have learned in the classroom.” He acknowledged that the skills and competences acquired from classroom sessions were crucial to the proper execution of his duties while on internship as they allowed him to understand what was expected of him as a Quantity Surveyor and to execute those duties to the best of his ability. He spoke highly of the opportunity afforded him to network with members of industry and sharpening his communication skills. He noted, “My employers have a great staff and a wide variety of clients ranging from private to governmental. Because of this, I have encountered many individuals, both locally and abroad and I was able to make useful connections with most of them.

**Nathaniel McLean - School of Building and Land Management, Faculty of the Built Environment**



## Nathaniel's Recommendations

- Be eager to learn
- Be willing to do assigned tasks
- Go in prepared to work.

# Chill Corner

## Co-Operative Education

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

Find the following words in the puzzle.  
Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘ .

CAREER  
CLASSROOM  
COOPERATIVE  
EDUCATION  
EMPLOYER  
EXPERIENCE  
INDUSTRY

INTEGRATED  
INTERN  
JAMAICA  
JOB  
LEARNING  
PARTNER  
PRACTICE

PROFESSIONAL  
STUDENT  
STUDY  
UTECH  
WORK  
WORKPLACE

# Meet the Student Editor



*Rachel Channer— 3rd Year BSc. Land Surveying and Geographic Information Science student*

Rachel Channer is a third year Geographic Information Science student at the University of Technology, Jamaica. Rachel aspires to work as a Land Surveyor and GIS Analyst and paints in her spare time. She has worked with the Co-op Ed Unit for two semesters as an Earn and Study student. She shares that working with the Unit has bolstered her ability to work in high functioning environments, churning out only the best possible quality efforts for the benefit of students. She hopes that she will be able to apply the methodologies learnt at the University of Technology, Ja. in her field of study. She believes that with the right mindset and dedication, anyone can achieve whatever they set out to do.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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