

Georgetown, Guyana

President David Granger and Opposition Leader Dr Bharrat Jagdeo invited to the first Diaspora Engagement Conference to be convened in Guyana.

The University of Guyana (UG) will host its inaugural Diaspora Engagement Conference from July 23 to 28, 2017, in Georgetown, Guyana, under the theme: **Dreaming Diaspora Engagement, Doing Diaspora Engagement**. The Conference is expected to attract several hundred participants.

Hosted by the University of Guyana with support from a team of leaders in the diaspora and other stakeholders, the Conference is organised around two overarching pillars: human, social and entrepreneurship development, and diaspora philanthropy and diplomacy.

The conference is expected to provide the platform for developing a diaspora engagement strategy that would inform the work of the first Caribbean Diaspora Engagement Center. The launch of the Center is expected to be a major highlight of the six-day conference. According to UG's Vice-Chancellor Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, "the conference will contribute to the development of diaspora policy and a framework to effectively attract direct diaspora investment and engage the diaspora in nation building."

His Excellency President David Granger has been invited to deliver the keynote address and to declare the conference open on Monday, July 24, 2017, while the Opposition Leader, Dr Bharrat Jagdeo was invited to deliver the luncheon address on Tuesday, July 25, 2017. Additionally, Hon. Carl Greenidge, Minister of Foreign Affairs, will make a presentation at the conference, along with other keynote speakers and presenters.

The conference has three components namely; an academic symposium, a business forum, and community engagement. The symposium will receive academic presentations on key issues such as international and regional migration policies, cultural identities and the Diasporas, financial transfers and remittances, social remittances, tourism, diaspora trade and investments, among other areas.

Members of the large Caribbean diaspora in New York, Canada, and the U.K. are expected to attend and provide input, match skills and create trans-national networks to build a robust diaspora engagement and productive partnerships.

The highpoints of the conference include a cultural night which would see conference registrants enjoying a night of cultural extravaganza free of cost; and a number of Guyana tour options will be available to registrants to enjoy on Thursday, July 27, 2017.

The period for submission of abstracts has ended and a number of submissions were received on a wide range of topic areas. Registration, however, is still open. Registration can be done online at <http://diasporaconference.uog.edu.gy/>. Conference participants in Guyana can pay for their registration at Citizen's Bank locations and at the Bursary on Turkeyen or Tain Campuses. Persons registering now will catch the 'Early Bird' fees.

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For more information contact:

Mr Wayne Forde
Wforde94@gmail.com

or

Dr Fitzgerald (Gerry) Yaw
Director, Office of Strategic Initiatives
Vice-Chancellery,
The University of Guyana
Tel: 592 222 8063
E-mail: ugdiaspora@uog.edu.gy
<http://diasporaconference.uog.edu.gy>

UG IN BRIEF

With a current enrollment of some 8,000 students, The University of Guyana (UG) has graduated more than 20,000 students who have gone on to successful careers locally, regionally and internationally. The University is also a major contributor to the national economy and to business and industry. Established in 1963 on a part-time basis with shared space at Queens College, UG moved to its own campus at Turkeyen in 1970 and expanded in 2000 with the addition of the Tain Campus. It now offers more than 60 Under-graduate and Post-graduate Programmes including Engineering, Environmental Studies, Forestry, Urban Planning and Management, Tourism Studies, Education, Creative Arts, Economics, Law, Medicine, Optometry and Nursing. Several online programmes are available and The UG also offers extra-mural classes at four locations through its Institute of Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE). The UG also offers the opportunity for student engagement in debating, sports, and cultural, religious and professional activities.

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