

Installation of Professor-Hazel Simmons-McDonald

Your Excellencies

Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Vice Chancellor, distinguished ladies and gentlemen.

Let me add my words of welcome to you for this evening's ceremony of the installation of Professor and Pro-Vice Chancellor Hazel Simmons-McDonald as the first Principal of the Open Campus of the University of the West Indies.

Everyone has commented on the fact that this is a historic occasion. I regard it as a unique opportunity to celebrate a new beginning in tertiary education in the Caribbean. All good institutions that aim for some permanence in the affairs of the communities they serve must constantly balance the search for stability with the need for waves of renovation, restoration and rejuvenation to wash over them. Any institution that is not open to these changes and innovations is headed for institutional dry rot. You are not a tyro in University matters as you have served in many administrative roles in the University. You have also been a major actress in the formulation of the modus operandi of this campus. Therefore it is not appropriate for me to dwell on the need for the observation of the ordinances and statutes that ensure order and discipline in our work. You are well aware of your role as Pro-Vice-Chancellor in loyal support to the Vice Chancellor. What is not written in the ordinances and statutes is the recipe for the heart and soul of the institution, and to large measure the health of that heart depends on the skill and assiduity with which you guide its affairs. It depends to a great extent on your leadership –a leadership that embraces the individual as well as celebrating and strengthening the whole.

I wish for you the strength and wisdom to guide this Open Campus correctly and have great pleasure in installing you as its Principal.

Good luck!