

Bermudez: Ability to think is greatest asset

Chancellor of the University of the West Indies (UWI), Robert Bermudez

last Thursday encouraged more than 500 graduates not to allow anyone to deter them from their dreams.

Speaking at the St Augustine campus graduation held at the UWI Sport and Physical Education Centre (SPEC), Bermudez told the graduates they have strength

in knowing where they came from and must not allow themselves to be paralysed by circumstances.

"You have now completed this phase of your formal education, soon you will have that piece of paper for which you have toiled so hard. The education you have now obtained from attending university...the ability to think and learn is a far greater value than any material in

procession."

"It is an asset that you can never lose, nor can it be taken from you. It should be the foundation upon which you build your life. Do not allow anyone tell you that you cannot achieve your ambition or to discourage you from your dreams. Walk away from that advise, believe in yourself, go for your dreams. There will always be obstacles in life, but you will overcome them," he

said.

Bermudez urged the graduates to become more assured of themselves and not to be afraid of change because too often people's past follows them to their destiny.

Valedictorian Zia Barnard encouraged the graduates to continue conquering challenges.

"Weekly we were punched with exams, quizzes, projects, presentations, and lab reports. We never gave up, never took the easy route even when coffee and KFC became the real deal. We went to bed at dawn and woke up at sunrise. We viewed the gigantic workload as torment and even

an infringement of our human rights, but it was worth it," she said.

"These challenges instilled in us the essence and importance of hard work. Our degrees did not come from wishful thinking. We toiled industriously day by day. Hard work builds character, attains results and opens up new opportunities," she said.

Barnard, graduated with First Class Honours, Bachelor of Science in Biology with specialisation in Biotechnology and Microbiology.

Andrew Marciano (Lord Superior) was awarded a degree of Doctor of Letters for Calypso.