

Gouvernement Offers UWI Open Campus \$140,000 to Repair Hurricane Damage

By
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January 30, 2020

The government of St. Kitts and Nevis lent financial assistance in 2019 to the tune of EC \$140,000 to the University of the West Indies (UWI) Open Campus to repair areas of the institution damaged by the passages of Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017.

“The condition of the site here in St. Kitts came before the Council at a meeting in February of 2019 because two years have passed and the site had been unable to have any classes,” Dr. Robertine Chaderton, the Vice-chancellor’s representative on the University of the West Indies Council, who is responsible for the management of the University, and sits on the finance sub-committee said in an interview with SKNIS.

“This is because of the hurricanes that affected the building. The roof was severely damaged, so we had leakages in the corridor preventing students from having access to the bathrooms. The main classroom on this floor was also affected in that the windows leaked, and it was very difficult to conduct any sessions there,” she added.

Dr. Chaderton said financial assistance was necessary as insurance did not cover the cost of the repairs, and expressed the university’s gratitude for the assistance.

“We approached the government of St. Kitts and Nevis, since the University had no money to be able to do these repairs and the cost came in under the insurance,” she said. “So, we didn’t get any insurance to be able to make these renovations. For that the University is very grateful because although St. Kitts pays its contribution, which covers staffing and operations, we needed extra money to be able to deal with buildings.”

Renovations included completely refurbishing the roof, as well as replacing the windows and the electrical fittings, which had been waterlogged, and the air-conditioning unit.

“So, we have a brand new lecture room, which can accommodate about 35 students. So, we are very pleased about that,” said Dr. Chaderton, adding “the University is very thankful to the government and people of the Federation for responding to their plea for help.

“We want to thank in particular the Prime Minister who is one of our alumni, one of our outstanding graduates,” she added.

Gail Grey-Phillip, Head of Site for St. Kitts and Nevis, said after the renovations of the rooms, the university was now able to offer their short courses.

“We have our income from our programmes, the classes, the short courses, the workshops that we offer, and for the last two years we have been unable to do so. So, we are very excited now that this seminar room is completed, and we can now begin offering our short courses and facilitate our online students in support groups etc.”