



Ronald Harford

Chancellor, the banking industry is a ship that sails stormy seas. Gale force winds blow constantly across its decks. There is liquidity risk eating away at its hull, interest rate risk at its bow and credit risk perpetually threatening its stern. It therefore matters much that the Captain has a steady hand, a brave heart and a sober mind. It also helps when he has a vision that perceives well beyond the horizon.

Ronald Harford has stood at the bridge of the nation's most stable bank for the last decade. The institution now called 'Republic Bank' has been part of the nation's history for 175 years and he has served through its ranks for 50 illustrious years.

A Fellow of the UK Chartered Institute of Bankers, the Institute of Banking of Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean Association of Banking and Finance, he has held Chairmanships of the Barbados National Bank Inc, Republic Bank Trinidad and Tobago and Republic Bank Grenada Limited.

Recent revelations about banks and bankers both here and elsewhere, could taint our image of those in the banking industry. Shylock, the exacting and mean Shakespearean character, would have added to this convenient stereotype. Despite what we may have learnt from literature, here stands an honourable, modest and exemplary man; a banker who has contributed much, not just to banking, locally and regionally, but much to our society as a whole. As Chairman of the UWI Development and Endowment Fund for 14 of its 20-year existence more than 1,700 scholarships

have been awarded and \$17 million in assets accumulated. This Fund provides an opportunity to those who would otherwise have been left behind. Besides his business acumen, he is also a man with aesthetic ideals. Central Port of Spain would have been an eyesore but for his intervention. He led the drive to fund the first phase of the salubrious Brian Lara Promenade – now a focal point for socialisation and respite in the middle of the commercial enclave of the city.

His contributions have not gone unnoticed. He was honoured by the American Foundation of The University of the West Indies and the Institute of Banking and Finance of Trinidad and Tobago. In 2010, he received from the Government of Trinidad and Tobago the Chaconia Medal in Gold for meritorious service to banking and business.

Chancellor, I present to you Ronald Harford and invite you, by the authority invested in you by the Council and Senate of The University of the West Indies, to confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.

St. Augustine Campus
Friday 26th October, 2012