

Young couple set musical record

Playing for 11 steelbands in Panorama

Stories and photos by TREVOR BURNETT

YOUNG pannists Stefan Burgess, 21, and Jahira Harris, 19, together played for a mind-boggling 11 steelbands in Panorama competitions in the North, East and Tobago.

The talented duo is currently pursuing their bachelor of arts degree in music majoring in the steelpan with percussions as their minor at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine.

Burgess is from Calvary Hill and Harris is from Alenore Gardens.

They both completed their secondary education with full CXC certificates of which music is among the subjects listed. Burgess attended Baratana Secondary while Harris was a pupil of St George's College.

Burgess and Harris met two years ago while preparing their application forms for entry into UWI in pursuing their certificate in pan music and they just melted into each other.

The steelbands and songs that they played for in the East are Pan On The Move *This Melody Sweet*, Nostalgic *Dust In Yuh Face*, Marsicans *Dollar Wirie*, Cocorite Road Groovers *This Party Is It*, Melodians *My Band*, and Musical Gems *Pan In Danger*.

In Tobago they treated with Get Down On It *All Over*, T&TEC New East Side Dimension *Lorraine*, and Katzenjammers *Keshom Walcott*.

And in the North they were embraced by Defence Force *Iron Man*, and Renegades Youth Steelband playing Maestro's *Gold*, the steelbands that Burgess and Harris missed out on were Tipica, Super

Novas and LH Pan Groove.

Harris explained, "My musical career began at the age of four while attending Holy Cross Kindergarten singing the calypso *Crime In the Country* and continued at Arima Girls RC.

"In Standard Two I sang at NWAC and went on to place second at Eastern Credit Union in 2005 singing the song *We Are All Human Equations*.

"At St George's College in Form Three I was considered to be too professional and sang as a guest calypsonian as I was debarred from competing.

"I also had the opportunity of singing for my primary and secondary schools at Music Festival.

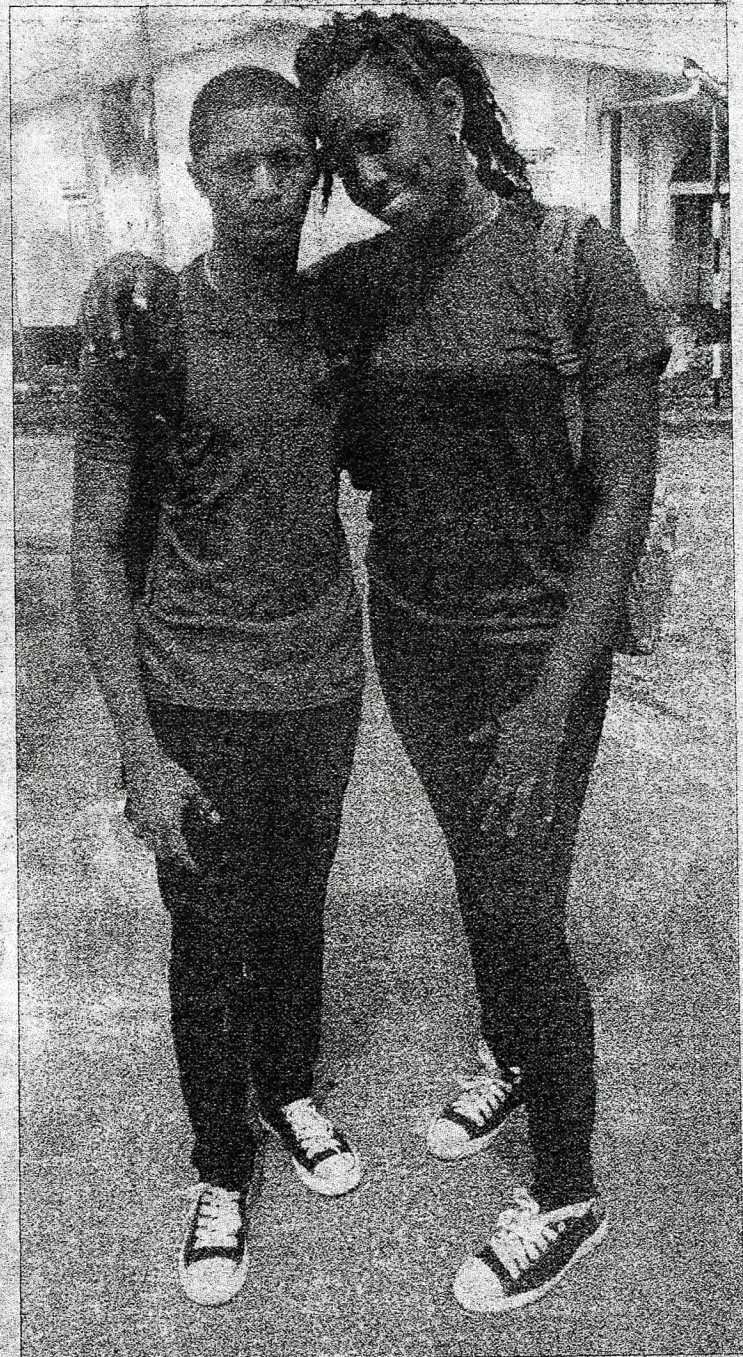
"My steelband career started with Pan On D Move at the age of seven playing the five-note bass and progressed through primary and secondary school successfully," Harris smiled.

Burgess recalled, "I began playing pan at the age of ten in Curepe with Michael 'Soca' Cumberbatch of Sforzata Steel Orchestra.

"My pan-playing talents continued at secondary level and I have played for many steelbands including Trinidad All Stars.

"In completing my musical degree I am looking forward to enrolling with the US Navy SEALs special Music School, unlike my girlfriend Harris, whose dream is to be enlisted into the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force.

"However, we both look forward to settling down in the future, opening our music school, teaching the steelpan and arranging for Panorama and Steelband Festivals some day and to quote Shakespeare in local parlance, if pan music be the food of love, we will play on," Burgess quipped.



Pan Lovers STEFAN BURGESS (left) and JAHIRA HARRIS.