

*"Partnering with Industry to produce work-ready graduates"*

University of Technology, Jamaica

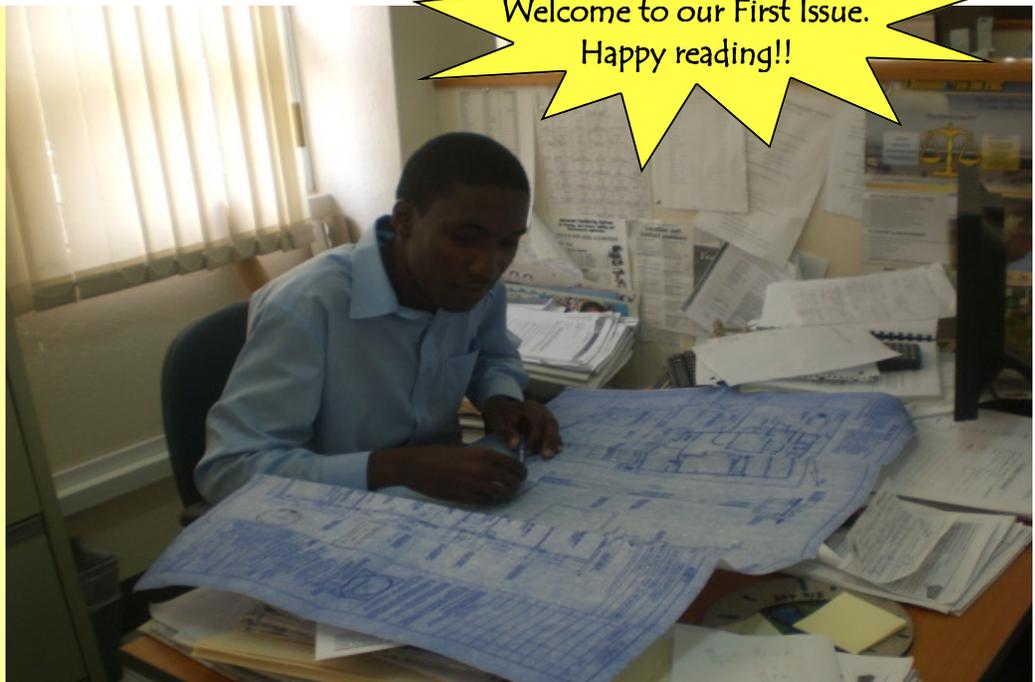
# Co-operative Education at UTech

Welcome to our First Issue.  
Happy reading!!

## The Mission

UTech is committed to exploring new avenues and approaches that will serve to enhance the skills graduates will need to be successful in the world of work. To this end, it recognizes Co-operative Education (Co-op Ed) as a valuable and essential tool. Consequently, the mission of UTech's Co-op Ed Programme is to:

- ◆ provide our students with practical and professional exposure that will allow them to develop work-related skills, realistic expectations, and high levels of professionalism and ethics, among other things.
- ◆ provide industry with student employees who are equipped with the necessary skills and competencies that will enhance their business' position in a globally competitive environment.



Co-op Ed Student (Industrial Technology major) at work

## A Co-op Ed Success Story

During the summer of the 2010-11 Academic Year, the Co-op Ed programme was introduced as a pilot to a small selection of 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> students enrolled in the Bachelor's in Business Administration programme with the following specializations:

- ◆ Human Resource Management
- ◆ Accounting
- ◆ Marketing

These are offered by the School of Business Administration in the College of Business and Management.

The Business Jamaica Limited (BJL)\*, one of UTech's longstanding Co-op Ed partners, responded to the University's

call for Co-op Ed partnership in these "new" areas. Accordingly, four students were requested from the piloted specializations.

The response to the placement opportunities with the BJL was overwhelming. However, this interest dwindled significantly when students were made aware of the stipend being offered. Miss Mickella Johnson, a final year student, was one of seven students who remained very optimistic about the internship opportunity and who was eventually placed at the BJL for six weeks. She worked assiduously and

## A Co-op Ed Success Story continued



**Mickella Johnson**  
BBA. Accounting  
graduate

### DO YOU KNOW ?

*Co-op Ed in an umbrella term used by the UTech to described its various work-integrated learning programmes e.g. Internships, (Industrial) Work Experience, Industrial attachment .....*



**Student enrolled in BEd. Food Service Production programme on Co-op Ed assignment**

displayed a positive attitude toward all tasks assigned. Johnson's supervisors were impressed by her general work attitude and pleasant disposition, so much so that when a permanent job vacancy arose while Johnson was on placement, she was immediately considered.

The Co-op Ed Unit, having learnt of Johnson's job offer, sought to interview her regarding her personal reflections on the Co-op Ed experience at the company and the (perceived) factors that led to her latest accomplishment.

The brief interview is as follows:

**LGB:** What motivated you to participate in the Co-op Ed programme knowing that, for you, the programme was optional ?

**MJ:** I did this programme to gain additional experience in order to enhance my career despite the programme being optional and the minimal stipend received

**LGB:** How were you prepared by the School (SOBA) for the Co-op Ed programme?

**MJ:** I was coached on how to conduct myself in a work environment and to be productive in all that I do. I was prepared to work with other people in order to meet any objective that was given

**LGB:** What were your expectations of the Co-op Ed programme and to what extent was each met?

**MJ:** I expected this Programme to be a learning experience and this

expectation was met as I became knowledgeable in using several software applications

**LGB:** Outline briefly the main tasks to which you were assigned.

**MJ:** I was given a number of tasks such as filing, preparing payment vouchers, writing cheques and generating journals in their applications

**LGB:** How did you react when you were made a permanent job offer?

**MJ:** I was extremely overwhelmed...

**LGB:** Is this permanent position aligned with your career goal?

**MJ:** Yes it is, as my academic major was accounting and I am currently a payroll clerk

**LGB:** What would you say to change the mindset of your fellow peers to think positively about work experience?

**MJ:** The work experience landed me a permanent job and it proved to be very instrumental in helping to build my confidence level and making me well- rounded

**LGB:** Your closing thoughts...

**MJ:** The programme has proven to be a valuable experience and I would encourage other students to grasp such opportunities.

Mickella Johnson is one of the several success stories of the last placement period. Stay tuned for another story in the next issue...

\* Name of company was changed upon request and as such a fictitious name has been assigned.

## Co-op Ed: A Global Perspective

In June of last year, a team of three Co-op Ed Co-ordinators from UTech attended and presented at the *World Association on Co-operative Education (WACE)* Conference held at Drexel University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. There were over 300 member institutions representing 23 countries in attendance.

From the outset it was evident that there were serious partnerships existing among employers, academia and governments in WACE member countries. The plenary sessions and keynote addresses supported this and included stimulating presentations from:

- ♦ Jane Oates, Secretary for Employment and Training in the United States Department of Labour, who spoke passionately on “The 3R’s of Federal Workforce Development Policy: Rigour, Relevance and Return” and the successes achieved through its implementation.
- ♦ A panel comprising corporate executives of General Motors, Hilton Worldwide, Merck and Research in Motion/Blackberry whose discussions centred on “The Talent pipeline: The strategic value of Cooperative and Work Integrated Education ” to their respective companies.

Another highlight of the Conference that stimulated much dialogue among Conference participants was that of using international Co-op Ed exchange programmes to prepare students for diverse jobs in the global market place. Presentations on this area included “*Cultural Intelligence: Developing Students who can Act Local and Think Global*” and “*Becoming Globally Engaged Citizens through Cooperative Education*”

Coming out of this Conference, the resolve of the University’s Co-op Ed Unit has been to intensify its search for international Co-op Ed exchange partnerships with a view to increasing the employment competitiveness of our graduates. **We invite dialogue from our stakeholders in this regard.**



Tourism and Hospitality student performing front desk duties



Students participating in a Co-op Ed Awareness Session

### Co-op Ed Survey AY 2010-11 - Employer Highlights of Programme

*“Students have displayed exceptional competency and high levels of professionalism in carrying out their respective tasks in assigned departments.”*

-Hotel Four Seasons

*“Students integrated well into our activities. They were all well-dressed, punctual and with excellent attendance”.*

- Jamaica Tourist Board

*“Very good value to both students and the company”.*

- Blitz Web Design

### Co-op Ed Survey AY 2010-11 - Student Highlights of Programme

*“The Co-op Ed experience was worthwhile and invaluable. Co-workers were cordial and treated me like a permanent staff member. My inputs and recommendations were taken into consideration... The environment was friendly and I am now more aware of the professional approach taken by engineers in my field.”*

- Engineering student

*“The Co-op Ed (Internship) programme has been somewhat a means of reinforcement of what has been taught in the classroom. It has also helped me to decide which aspect of the Hospitality industry best suits me and provided hands-on-experience in all departments. I am better able to make more informed decisions.*

- Tourism & Hospitality student

*“The opportunity to have a first-hand experience in the industry being that I am pursuing a BEd. in Industrial Technology”*

- Education student

## Some of our Participating Co-op Ed Employers for 2009 -2011

- ◆ AAMM Co-operative Credit Union Ltd
- ◆ Barnaby Engineering & Testing Services Limited
- ◆ Bureau of Standard Jamaica
- ◆ CAC 2000 Limited
- ◆ CardioVMeds and the Total Job Agency
- ◆ Davidson & Hanna
- ◆ Delano Reid & Associates Limited
- ◆ Doctors Cave Beach Hotel
- ◆ Grace Kennedy Limited
- ◆ Hotel Mocking Bird Hill
- ◆ Jamaica Broilers Group Limited
- ◆ Jamaica National Building Society
- ◆ Jamaica National Heritage Trust
- ◆ Liguanea Club Limited
- ◆ L Smith and Associates
- ◆ Main Event Entertainment Group Ltd.
- ◆ Manchester Co-operative Credit Union (1977) Ltd
- ◆ Mona Visitors' Lodge & Conference Centre
- ◆ National Water Commission
- ◆ Office of Utilities Regulation
- ◆ Raybert Food Limited
- ◆ Round Hill Hotel and Villas
- ◆ Sandals Resort International
- ◆ Starapples Restaurant
- ◆ St. Ann Parish Council
- ◆ Sunset Beach Resort, Spa & Waterpark
- ◆ The National Housing Trust
- ◆ Versair In-Flite Services (2006) Limited

# The Co-op Ed Calendar

## FOR STUDENTS

### Employment Empowerment Sessions

January 26—March 8, 2012

These sessions (not to be confused with the Co-op Ed /Internship Information Sessions hosted by the respective Schools) are held on Thursday afternoons between 3:00 and 5:00 p.m. and are designed to prepare students for the professional environment. The sessions are hosted by the Career and Placement Unit. For further information please contact [placement@utech.edu.jm](mailto:placement@utech.edu.jm)

## FOR EMPLOYERS

### UTech's Job Fair

March 16, 2012

Employers wishing to interview Co-op Ed students (Interns) at the Job Fair (for immediate or summer placement) are asked to immediately contact the Co-op Ed Unit at [ced@utech.edu.jm](mailto:ced@utech.edu.jm) and copy email to [placement@utech.edu.jm](mailto:placement@utech.edu.jm)

## About the Co-op Ed Unit

The Co-op Ed Unit, has responsibility for overseeing the operations of the Co-op Ed Schemes in the different Schools, and collaborating with them to identify and create mutually beneficial placement opportunities for students within public and private sector agencies, both locally and internationally. The Co-op Ed Unit also serves as a quality assurance agent, with responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of the various Co-op Ed schemes and devising strategies to keep these at the cutting edge.

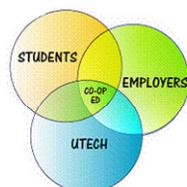
### Contact the Unit



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