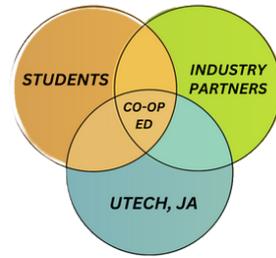




# CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION AT UTECH, JA.



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## Content

Bridging the Gap between Classroom Learning and the Workforce: UTech, Ja.'s Co-operative Education Programme 1

Here's What You Missed at the 2023 Co-op Ed Award Ceremony! 3

Awarding Some Future Career Leaders 4

From The Current Leaders to the Future Generation 7

Co-op Ed Word Search Puzzle 10

Become An Ambassador Today! 11

Meet the Editors 14

## Partnering with Industry to Produce Work-Ready Leaders

Semester two of the 2023-24 academic year has commenced and persons, especially final year students are seriously beginning to consider their next steps after graduation. This newsletter addresses workplace anxieties, as well as the importance of gaining prior experience in the workplace in order to successfully navigate and evolve in the work world.

Also, inside this Issue, is a step-by-step guide on how you can become a confident Co-operative Education (Co-op Ed) Student Ambassador with the Co-op Ed Unit, nurturing leadership skills and encouraging positive impact.



# BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN CLASSROOM LEARNING AND THE WORKFORCE: UTECH, JA.'S CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Empowering students with real-world experience is at the heart of the University of Technology, Jamaica's mission. For over forty years, UTech, Ja. has been pioneering the concept of Co-operative Education, fostering a dynamic synergy between classroom education and on-the-job training. The Co-operative Education programme is a testament to the university's commitment to producing work-ready leaders.

## **A Rich History of Collaboration**

In the 1970s and 1980s respectively, the Science and Engineering departments at UTech, Ja. ventured into a groundbreaking initiative by partnering with industry to provide students with practical, on-the-job experience.

The initiative, conceptualized by Dr. Herman Schneider has evolved into the university's flagship Co-operative Education Programme. It is aimed at offering students the best of both worlds – a solid academic foundation coupled with relevant and related hands-on training. The programme consists of over thirty courses of study, making it a vital component of the UTech, Ja. brand.

## **The Role and Function of the Co-operative Education Unit**

The Co-operative Education Unit is responsible for overseeing the implementation of Co-operative Education modules across the university's academic units. Through close collaboration with the faculties/colleges/schools, it identifies and creates mutually beneficial placement opportunities for students within public and private sector agencies, both locally and internationally.



*UTech, Ja. Co-operative Education Unit at the Papine Campus*

# BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN CLASSROOM LEARNING AND THE WORKFORCE: UTECH, JA.'S CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

As a key part of its quality assurance process, the Co-operative Education Unit carries out periodic evaluation of its modules to weigh their effectiveness and to devise strategies to keep them at the forefront of work readiness programmes. The Unit's work is essential in ensuring that UTech, Ja.'s students are well-prepared for the job market.



*Past Co-op Ed Student Ambassadors in a Team Meeting Discussing Plan of Action*



*Co-op Ed Ambassadors greeting stakeholders at the 2023 Co-op Ed (Internship) Fair*



*Guest speaker, Mrs. Venice Irving interacts with a 2019-20 Student Ambassador, Kittanya Anderson, during a Co-op Ed Student Ambassadors' Professional Development Session*

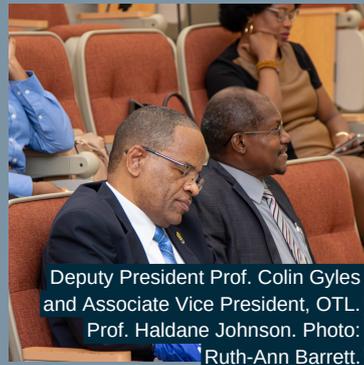
# HERE'S WHAT YOU MISSED AT THE 2023 CO-OP ED AWARD CEREMONY!



Student awardees, recognised Industry Partners and past Co-operative Education Coordinators, gathered together. Photo: Ruth-Ann Barrett.



Donae Simms, Pharmacy student, serenading the audience. Photo: Ruth-Ann Barrett.



Deputy President Prof. Colin Gyles and Associate Vice President, OTL, Prof. Haldane Johnson. Photo: Ruth-Ann Barrett.



Masters of Ceremonies, Mrs. Sandy Lawrence and Valdimir Wallace. Photo: Joshua Gordon.



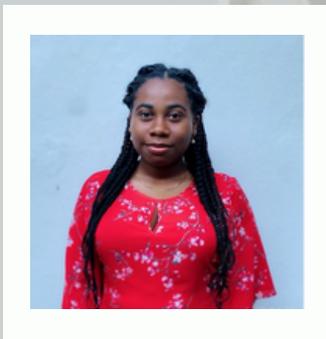
Guest speaker, Ms. Grace-Ann Miller, KPMG Carico, addressing the audience. Photo: Ruth-Ann Barrett.



Photo of plaque received on behalf of Mr Junior Bennett, past Co-op Ed Coordinator for the School of Engineering. Photo: Joshua Gordon.

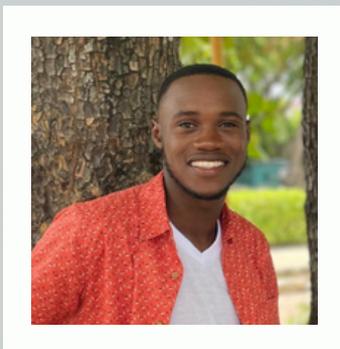
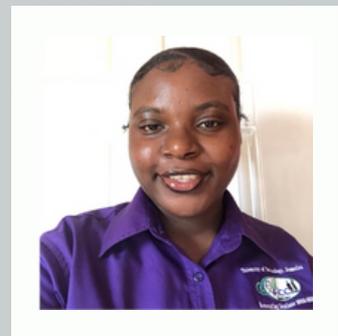
# AWARDING SOME FUTURE CAREER LEADERS

In celebration of outstanding achievements and dedication, we proudly present individuals who have distinguished themselves through exemplary performance in their respective Co-operative Education placements. These remarkable individuals have not only embraced the challenges presented in their professional spheres but have also demonstrated an unwavering commitment to excellence. They stand as shining examples of the positive impact that can be achieved through dedication and a strong work ethic. As such, they have been awarded the Co-op Ed Student Award.



Najwa Edwards from the Caribbean School of Sport Sciences (CSOSS) has now completed a BSc. in Sport Management. She was placed with the Jamaica Olympic Association which equipped her with the knowledge in gear safety, distribution, and logistics of apparel, all unexpected, but well received.

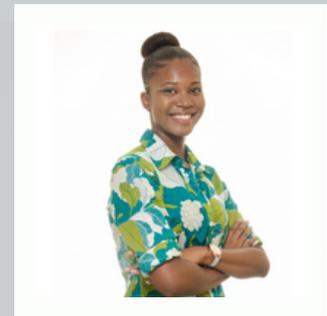
Tyshay Hylton majored in Business Administration in the School of Business Administration (SOBA) and her Co-operative Education engagement experience at KPMG allowed her to hone her skills, expanding her knowledge and working towards becoming a more confident speaker.



Yaswah Ranger, having earned a BEng. in Civil Engineering from the School of Engineering (SOE), stated that his Co-operative Education experience at Southern Contracting Company Limited gave him the opportunity to participate in diverse engineering projects, collaborate with other professionals in the field, bridging the gap between theory and practice.

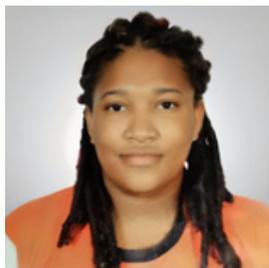
# AWARDING SOME FUTURE CAREER LEADERS

Iyaana Billings, majored in Entrepreneurship at the Joan Duncan School of Entrepreneurship (JDSEEL), honed her skills and expanded her knowledge at Fruit Blossoms Arrangements during her Co-operative Education experience. Surpassing expectations, she gained a comprehensive understanding of business operations, enhancing her hard and soft professional skills.



Erica Dunkley has earned a Bachelor's degree in Apparel Design Production and Management from the School of Technical and Vocational Education (SOTAVE) and was placed at Lee's Fifth Avenue Department store. There she learned patience and punctuality, improved her work ethic and advanced her interpersonal skills.

2023 graduate, Shantrese Brown, with a Bachelor's degree in Communications Arts and Technology, from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS), worked with The Jamaica Tourist Board which gave her valuable insights into the inner workings of a professional environment, developing a deep understanding of workplace dynamics.



Sharika Banks studied Forensic Chemistry at the Faculty of Science and Sport (FOSS). She has two rules in life: one, never quit, and two, remember number 1. This motto contributed greatly to her successful Co-operative Education engagement with the Scientific Research Council.

# AWARDING SOME FUTURE CAREER LEADERS

Timoy Gordon is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management from the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management (SHTM). His belief that, "There is no force greater than a man on a mission," pushed him to excel in his Co-operative Education engagement with the AC Hotel Kingston.



Yaswah Ranger after receiving his award at the 2023 Co-op Ed Award Ceremony. Photo: Joshua Gordon.



Najwa Edwards receiving her award at the 2023 Co-op Ed Unit Award Ceremony. Photo: Ruth-Ann Barrett.



## Proud Sponsors of the 2023 Co-op Ed Award Ceremony



Moon Palace  
Foundation



# FROM THE CURRENT LEADERS TO THE FUTURE GENERATION



The Co-operative Education (Internship) Programme plays a pivotal role in bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world application for students. It also provides invaluable benefits for employers, contributing to talent acquisition, innovation, and social responsibility. In this article, we explore the perspectives of two industry partners, Moon Palace Resort and Fruit Blossoms JA, on student readiness and the internship experience.

## **Commitment to Community and Diversity**

Fruit Blossoms JA and Moon Palace's involvement in the Co-operative Education (Internship) Programme can be seen as a commitment to supporting the local community and education sector.

By collaborating with UTECH Ja, these businesses can foster a positive public image and contribute to the development of future professionals. The partnership also offers access to diverse talent, bringing fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and specialized skills to the business.

Moreover, these collaborations serve as an effective approach to recruitment, allowing businesses to identify and train potential future employees early in their academic careers. The engagement also provides students with practical work experience, showcasing a commitment to investing in the education and professional development of the next generation.

# FROM THE CURRENT LEADERS TO THE FUTURE GENERATION

## Ensuring Meaningful Experiences

Both organizations emphasize the importance of providing meaningful experiences for interns. Fruit Blossoms JA achieves this by assigning interns specific tasks based on their assignments, breaking down tasks weekly, and closely monitoring and supervising their progress. Real-life scenarios and networking opportunities are also integral components, encouraging interns to take initiative, suggest ideas, and actively engage in the work environment.

## Mentorship and Guidance for Growth

Mentorship and guidance are crucial for the growth and development of interns. Fruit Blossoms JA emphasizes feedback and critique, networking opportunities, personal development, and problem-solving support. This multifaceted approach helps interns not only in their professional tasks but also in developing crucial personal attributes like resilience, emotional intelligence, and leadership skills.

Moon Palace Resort takes mentorship seriously. The Moon Palace Foundation was established in part to provide dedicated support to interns facing challenges. This holistic approach ensures that interns not only excel in their work tasks but also feel supported and guided throughout their internship.



*Ms. Kadeen Harvey, owner of Fruit Blossoms JA at the 2023 Co-Op Ed Unit Award Ceremony.  
Photo: Ruth-Ann Barrett.*

## Insights for Other Organizations

Both organizations offer valuable insights for businesses considering participation in Co-op Ed (Internship) Programmes. Emphasizing the connection with the next generation of talent, fostering a dynamic exchange of perspectives, and contributing to the development of young professionals are highlighted as key benefits. The programmes not only serve as a training ground for interns but also create opportunities for innovation within the organizations.

# FROM THE CURRENT LEADERS TO THE FUTURE GENERATION



*Ms. Shernette Byrd, Senior Producer at Jamaica Information Service at the 2023 Co-op Ed Award Ceremony.*

*Photo: Ruth-Ann Barrett.*

## Recognition and Post-Internship Opportunities

Receiving an award for participation in the Co-op Ed (Internship) Programme also has a major impact on organizations. It enhances their reputation, reinforces the positive impact of their efforts, and encourages a continued commitment to providing valuable learning experiences for future interns. The awards encourage further innovation and improvement in internship programmes.

Both organizations also demonstrated a commitment to post-internship initiatives. Fruit Blossoms JA leverages its network to assist interns with job placement, showcasing the potential for ongoing support beyond the internship period. Moon Palace Resort offers part-time or freelance opportunities for former interns, recognizing the value of retaining individuals already familiar with the company's culture and operations.

In conclusion, these insights underscore the importance of internship programmes as mutually beneficial endeavours, where students gain practical experience, and businesses acquire fresh perspectives and potential future talents. It's a collaborative effort that not only prepares students for the professional world but also contributes to the growth and innovation of organizations.

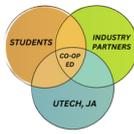
# CO-OP ED WORD SEARCH PUZZLE



R T E N N O C C F G V X U F V  
J S E C C A S O J K B I J S B  
N N I V H F U R P I K J S C Y  
O C O E X T Z E O N A H W J T  
I I E D A O G U P Y S N R K N  
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N A M B A S S A D O R F M D A  
D C L W G E O M A A X T V V S  
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## HIDDEN WORDS:

- EDUCATION
- UTECH
- CAREER
- INTERNSHIP
- AMBASSADOR
- CURRICULUM
- WORK-READY
- JAMAICA
- SCHNEIDER
- LEARNING



## Co-operative Education Unit

# BECOME AN AMBASSADOR TODAY!

Ready to level up your university experience and work-readiness? The Co-op Ed Unit is thrilled to unveil one of the best opportunities to assist you in becoming that 21st century work-ready leader through its Co-op Ed Student Ambassador Programme!

### BENEFITS OF JOINING:

- Development of work-readiness skills namely communication and interpersonal skills, leadership, confidence, creativity and innovation & strong work ethics.
- Improvement of the students' marketability.
- Provision of opportunities for professional networking.
- Development of lifelong learning skills that will enhance our student ambassadors' self-sustainability, social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development.

### RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Advise students of tips on how to improve work-readiness and enhance their employability skills.
- Assist in planning and hosting of Co-op Ed events.
- Advise peers on how to improve work-readiness and enhance their employability skills.

Students who successfully complete the programme will be awarded a *Certificate of Participation* at the end of the Academic Year.

REGISTER TODAY



<https://forms.gle/Er1tqQEgdfgu52T96>



**BECOME AN AMBASSADOR TODAY!**

## REQUIREMENTS

**01.**

Must be a full-time registered student at the University of Technology, Jamaica.

Must have a minimum GPA of 2.5.

**02.**

**03.**

Must have good communication and interpersonal skills or a willingness to learn.

Must be in, second, third or fourth year.

**04.**

**05.**

Must demonstrate the ability to exercise positive influence on peers.

Must be creative, innovative and willing to take initiative.

**06.**

# IGNITE YOUR UNIVERSITY JOURNEY!

*Missed the Ambassador Programme 2023-24 launch on November 15? No problem, here is a sneak peek!*

The first meeting was nothing short of a blast. We dived into the key benefits of being a part of this exclusive squad and the benefits of the Co-operative Education Programme offered by the university. We also played games and shared stories; laughter echoed through the room! Our ambassadors can't wait for the next meeting.



*Co-op Ed Student Ambassadors proudly display branded T-Shirts following the launch of the 2023-2024 programme.  
Photo: La-Cresha Gordon-Brydson*



*Co-op Ed Ambassadors try their quick fingers at winning a cellphone credit give-away during the launch of the 2023-2024 Programme. Photo: La-Cresha Gordon-Brydson*

The gates to this extraordinary journey are still wide open, and you can still be a part of the Student Co-op Ed Ambassador Programme. A Certificate of Participation awaits those who conquer the Co-op Ed Ambassador journey.

Whether you're a social butterfly, a creative genius, or a game-changer, the Co-op Ed Student Ambassador Programme is YOUR platform to shine!

Ready to apply? Scan the QR code above to register today.

# MEET THE EDITORS



**Joshua Gordon**  
4th Year  
BA Communication Arts

- Letter Writer for “Bridging the Gap”
- Puzzle Master
- Event Photographer



**Ruth-Ann Barrett**  
4th Year  
BA Communication Arts

- Letter Writer for “Awarding Future Leaders” and “From The Current Leaders”
- Letter Editor for “Here’s What You Missed!”
- Newsletter Editor
- Event Photographer



**Samantha Bradley**  
2nd Year  
BSc Computing

- Information Gatherer for “From The Current Leaders”
- Newsletter Editor for Ambassadors Programme