



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF THE  
WEST INDIES

## Message to the 2024 Graduating Class from Chancellor Miller

As Trinidadian poet, playwright and author Earl Lovelace famously remarked, "We are the descendants of survivors, of fighters who refused to be defeated." Your achievement has surely been fashioned by your tenacity and fortitude. Having embarked on this journey during a time of profound global change and uncertainty brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, today is a historic day as we celebrate your accomplishments as our newest graduates. You have successfully navigated your academic path, demonstrating your abilities as scholars as well as your strength and character. Your commitment, tenacity, and intellectual curiosity have guaranteed you a place in The University of the West Indies' (The UWI) illustrious history. It is fitting, therefore, that this year's graduation theme is "Celebrating Caribbean Legacy: A Kaleidoscope of Resilience".

Founded as a branch of the University of London with 33 students pursuing studies in Medicine, The University of the West Indies (The UWI), now in its 76th year, has evolved into a globally recognised, activist university dedicated to promoting research, learning, and innovation for the betterment of the Caribbean and the global community. Today, it boasts approximately 50,000 students across five campuses, pursuing studies at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels in nine faculties, serving 17 English-speaking regional countries.

Our commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and advocacy has positioned us at the forefront of higher education. Since our debut in the Times Higher Education's rankings in 2018, The UWI has consistently risen through various global ranking schemes, including the World University Rankings, Golden Age University Rankings (for institutions between 50 and 80 years old), Latin America Rankings, and the Impact Rankings, which highlight our response to the world's most pressing concerns, as outlined in the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Good Health and Well-being, Gender Equality, and Climate Action. Currently, The UWI is counted among the top universities worldwide, in Latin America and the number one university in the Caribbean.

In a world confronted by sustainable development challenges, The UWI recognises the urgency of creating positive change. In line with this, UWI boldly demonstrated its commitment to transforming education, launching the International School for Development Justice (ISDJ) on August 21, 2024. Established in partnership with leading development and education institutions, the ISDJ is designed to address the complex challenges of the global sustainable development agenda. The ISDJ offers a cutting-edge curriculum that integrates disciplines such as sustainable development, justice, and human rights, all within the framework of the 17 United Nations SDGs.

Much like Nelson Mandela who said: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world," I believe in the power of education to not only transform lives, but also to create a more equitable society. Graduating from The UWI today is more than just earning a degree—it means becoming part of a global network of outstanding individuals, trained by world-class faculty, who have gone on to make meaningful and significant contributions to both the Caribbean region and the wider world. As a graduate of this globally ranked university, you possess the knowledge, skills, and global perspective developed here, which will serve you well as you embark on your professional and personal journeys in this ever-evolving world.

Best of luck to all of you!  
Congratulations once again to the Class of 2024.

Dr. the Most Hon. Dodridge Miller  
Chancellor, The University of the West Indies