

*Open Campus Principal Professor Luz Longsworth*

Chancellor, these days it is not unusual to hear of 60 year olds giving birth even to triplets. Yet as you yourself declared at our very first graduation in 2009, the Open Campus born in 2008 was the child of a mature institution. Clearly the birth was under the care of two very experienced medical practitioners, Vice Chancellor Harris, and yourself, but I have it on good authority that the urging of the final push at birth, in the delivery room, was enabled by an Economic Historian who could see not only the historic value of this new addition to The UWI family but could foresee the economic circumstances that would make this new campus, the Open Campus, so valuable to its parent institution.

Sir Hilary, over the past few years has been a godfather to the Open Campus, both encouraging and inspirational. I recall his address to a retreat of the staff of the Open Campus in 2010 when the economic downturn had led to the sobering realization that many of our dreams had to be deferred. His words that the only true poverty is a poverty of ideas, and that each person must bring their best thoughts to the table and the money will follow, inspired and kept the campus going with renewed vision.

We are therefore immensely pleased that, as Vice-Chancellor, he is furthering his vision of an integrated UWI ready to engage in wealth creation and the task of economic development for our countries while situating The UWI as a global force in higher education.

The Open Campus, with its technological heart and agile limbs all over the region, is ready to make this vision a reality and to become the portal through which we can take the wealth of research and explosive knowledge of The UWI to the furthest reaches of the region and the world – the barrier reef islands of Belize and Australia, the mountains of Montserrat and Morocco, the cities of San Fernando and San Francisco, the seas of the Caribbean and China.

Sir Hilary, today we in the Open Campus join our UWI colleagues and the region as we aptly celebrate your elevation to the post of Vice Chancellor in this Usain Bolt Sports Complex. We look forward with anticipation to the transformative leadership that you will bring to The UWI and we pledge our support as we welcome you with **Open** arms, **Open** minds and **Open** hearts as you take us "to the world".