

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*University of Guyana / Greater Georgetown / Guyana / Tuesday, January 10, 2026***University of Guyana Solidifies Global Academic Alliances at Landmark "Work Futures and Capacitation Conclave"**

University of Guyana's Vice-Chancellor Professor Paloma Mohamed Martin, with Dr Robert Robertson, Senior Research Fellow, Commonwealth Institute School of Advanced Studies, University of London and Dr. Bryan DePoy, Provost of Saint Leo University, along with other Conclave participants in the Education Lecturer Theater (ELT) University of Guyana's Turkeyen Campus.

In a move that signals a transformative shift in planning and foresight in the regional educational landscape, the University of Guyana (UG) has formally entered into strategic partnerships with premier North American institutions during the high-level **Work Futures and Capacitation Conclave**, which concluded last Friday.

Against the backdrop of Guyana's unprecedented economic trajectory—projected as the world's fastest-growing national economy in 2026—the university hosted a select group of global strategic thinkers to map the future of human development in Guyana and the Caribbean. The event culminated in the signing of two significant Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with **Saint Leo University** and the **New England Institute of Technology**, designed to bridge the gap between academic theory and industry demand.

Strategic Alignments for a High-Growth Era

The conclave, held on February 5 and 6 at the University of Guyana's Turkeyen Campus in Georgetown, served as a crucible for policy insight. It brought together approximately 30 specially selected local and international futurists to deep dive into the critical tensions between skills and

knowledge production, technology and humanity, endeavor and work and fixity and hyper disruption.

The primary objectives of the conclave were threefold:

1. **Shared Global Understanding:** Exploring deep perspectives on the issues impacting the work futures as against the future of work on global, regional, and local scales.
2. **Actionable Workforce Planning:** Framing guidelines which might meet and reconcile tensions arising at scale and speed.
3. **Cross-Sector Partnerships:** Building robust networks between government, industry, the community, and academic entities to ensure education remains relevant to the evolving realities of the country and region.

The Saint Leo-UG Partnership: A Global Brand Vision



UG's Vice-Chancellor Professor Paloma Mohamed Martin and Dr. Bryan DePoy, Provost of Saint Leo University who signed the agreement on behalf of President Dr. James Burkee. Also in photo are Dr Robert Robertson, Senior Research Fellow, Commonwealth Institute School of Advanced Studies, University of London [2nd from left]; Prof Leyland Lucas, Dean, School of Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation (SEBI) [extreme left]; and Dr Jacqueline Murray, Director of the Institute for Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE) both of the University of Guyana.

A cornerstone of the event was the formal signing of an MOU between Saint Leo University and the University of Guyana. Dr. Bryan DePoy, Provost of Saint Leo University, signed the agreement on behalf of President Dr. James Burkee.

The St Leo MOU is engineered to facilitate a multifaceted exchange of knowledge. Key initiatives include:

- **Academic Exchange:** Formalized programs for both student and faculty mobility, allowing for a cross-pollination of teaching methodologies and cultural perspectives.
- **Collaborative Research:** Joint opportunities for scholars to tackle regional challenges in sustainability, economics, and technology.

- **Innovative Credentials:** Serious consideration of a **Joint Leadership Graduate Certificate**, aimed at equipping Guyanese professionals with executive-level management skills.

"Guyana is identified as having the fastest national economic growth in the world in 2026, and the University of Guyana is a regional leader in higher education," stated Provost DePoy. "We are delighted to complete this MOU as it exemplifies the interest by Saint Leo University President Dr. James Burkee in building a global brand for Saint Leo University."

Technical Excellence and Engineering



UG's Vice-Chancellor Professor Paloma Mohamed Martin and Dr. Henry Young, Vice Provost, of the New England Institute of Technology (NEIT) signed another agreement. Also in photo are Dr Robert Robertson, Senior Research Fellow, Commonwealth Institute School of Advanced Studies, University of London [2nd from left]; Prof Leyland Lucas, Dean, School of Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation (SEBI) [extreme left]; and Dr Jacqueline Murray, Director of the Institute for Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE) both of the University of Guyana.

Further strengthening the conclave's outcomes, Dr. Henry Young, Vice Provost, signed another MOU on behalf of the **New England Institute of Technology (NEIT)**. This partnership underscores the technical and vocational requirements of Guyana's burgeoning infrastructure and energy sectors.

Vice Chancellor of the University of Guyana, Prof. Paloma Mohamed Martin, a futurist of global repute, whose office curated the conclave, emphasized that these focused conclaves are not merely symbolic but are of deep concern globally. The practical response of St. Leo and NEIT respond to some specific needs of the Guyanese economy which the University is seeking to address. "The University of Guyana appreciates the support from Saint Leo University in our two-day conclave, and we look forward to a productive, sustainable relationship," Dr. Martin noted. She confirmed a particular interest in fostering linkages in **business systems, and complex**

engineering, sectors that are set to be engines of the nation's GDP growth. Witnessing the signing were: Dr Robert Robertson, Senior Research Fellow, Commonwealth Institute School of Advanced Studies, University of London, Prof Leyland Lucas, Dean, School of Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation (SEBI) and Dr Jacqueline Murray, Director of the Institute for Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE) both of the University of Guyana.

Guyana as a Global Laboratory for Human Development

The presence of international futurists at the Turkeyen Campus highlights Guyana's new position as a global focal point for strategic development. With the economy expanding at a record pace, the challenge has shifted from attracting investment to sustaining prosperity through human capital.

The conclave participants focused on "capacitation" the process of rapidly increasing the country's ability to perform, manage, and sustain itself. By strengthening its flexible, industry-recognized, and nationally responsive and internationally accepted credentials, UG aims to support the success of resilient graduates with knowledge and skills that match the speed of the private sector and other shifts occurring.

Links to Photos.

Please see photos from the MOU SAINT LEO AND NEIT- FOR PERUSAL signing

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1C6Sj-YgfFpJfGLOl8qKNfCeL_0_mMS_W?usp=drive_link

UG in Brief

The University of Guyana, the accredited national University of Guyana, now in its 62nd year, was founded in October 1963, three years before Guyana became independent. "UG", as it is fondly referred to, offers over 180 distinct programmes in over 80 disciplines from Certificates, Diplomas, associate degrees, Bachelor's Degrees, Master's Degrees to Ph.D.'s. These programmes are offered in online, face-to-face or blended formats. UG delivers through a system of eight campuses. This includes its 37-year-old community-based Institute for Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE) and the second major campus at Tain in Berbice celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2025, as well as the path-breaking Maoka Taawa (Forest Campus, South Rupununi). The University of Guyana's student population is over 11,500.

Through its 9 faculties and 10 Research Institutes and Centers, including an accredited College of Medical Sciences, School of Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation and the Faculty of Earth and Environmental Sciences which has been ranked # 5 globally, "UG" has provided education, training and research for over 71,000 alumni over its 62-year history with significant national and global impact. Key faculties include the Faculty of Engineering and Technology, the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry, the Faculty of Natural Sciences, the College of Behavioural Sciences

and Research, the Faculty of Education and Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences. The University's 10 Research Institutes include the recently launched Institute for Marine and Riverine Ecologies and Economies (IMAREE), the internationally important Centre for Biodiversity, the Institute for Food and Nutrition Security, the Institute for Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, the Institute for Energy Diplomacy, the Green Institute, the Institute of Gender Studies, the Institute for Human Resiliency, Strategic Security and the Future, and the International Centre for Excellence in Early Childhood Education.

The mission of the University of Guyana is to discover, generate, disseminate and apply knowledge of the highest standard for the advancement of communities, the nation, and mankind within an atmosphere of academic freedom, transparent accountability, pragmatic innovation and universal respect.

UG's forward-thinking Blueprint 2040 is currently setting the course for the University's future design and institutional response to the changing needs of Guyana, the region and the world. It is entering the 2nd of its four phases. UG is currently celebrating its 62nd anniversary with a continued focus on becoming the leading teaching and research University in Guyana.

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