



Commonwealth Scholarship Commission
in the United Kingdom

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PRESS RELEASE

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Commonwealth Scholarships have development impact on the Caribbean

Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows from the Caribbean are having a profound impact on development issues and other areas of importance to the region, according to new evidence. The findings, from an evaluation survey of the scheme's alumni, have been published in a report to be launched at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in November.

The survey shows that UK Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowships provide relevant skills and expertise to Caribbean alumni, who then put them into good use in the region. 75% of those surveyed have returned to work in their home countries, with a further 12% working in other Caribbean countries. 99% gained knowledge and skills through their Scholarship or Fellowship, and 95% reported that they use these in their employment. Examples include micro-financing to encourage entrepreneurship across the Caribbean, education on climate change in Trinidad and Tobago, and establishing a DNA database in Jamaica.

Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows are involved in activities in areas of crucial importance to the Caribbean, such as promoting green economic growth, building and sustaining the region's future, and increasing stability, good governance and regional cooperation. 89% of survey respondents from the Caribbean reported an impact in key development and leadership areas – 51% reported having influence on government thinking, 47% reported having a socioeconomic impact, and 77% reported involvement in specific projects in areas ranging from environment protection to governance, education to health.

Prof Tim Unwin, Chair of the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK, said 'Higher education is vitally important to socioeconomic growth and development in the region, and our analysis shows that our alumni are making a significant impact where it counts – in areas that are of crucial significance to the Caribbean'.

The report, *Evaluating Commonwealth Scholarships in the United Kingdom: Assessing impact in the Caribbean*, will be launched at CHOGM in Trinidad and Tobago, 27-29 November 2009.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom (CSC) is responsible for managing UK Commonwealth Scholarships. Over 18,000 citizens from all over the

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Commonwealth have held UK awards since 1959, including almost 1,200 from the Caribbean. More information is available on the CSC's website at www.cscuk.org.uk

2. UK Commonwealth Scholarships are funded by the Department for International Development (for developing Commonwealth countries) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in partnership with UK universities (for developed Commonwealth countries).
3. The evaluation survey was conducted in June-July 2008. 2,226 alumni responded; this sample was broadly representative of the whole alumni group. 148 alumni from the Caribbean region responded. Around 100 additional alumni for whom up-to-date data was held were included in the analysis of employment data.
4. Respondents were asked to provide factual data (such as career history, public offices held, awards and honours received) plus their views on how their scholarship or fellowship had benefited them and their society. Specifically, respondents were asked about their involvement in 12 key development and leadership priority areas, and asked to give details of specific roles, projects and activities.
5. The report is available online at www.cscuk.org.uk/docs/Assessing_impact_Caribbean.pdf
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