Caymanian



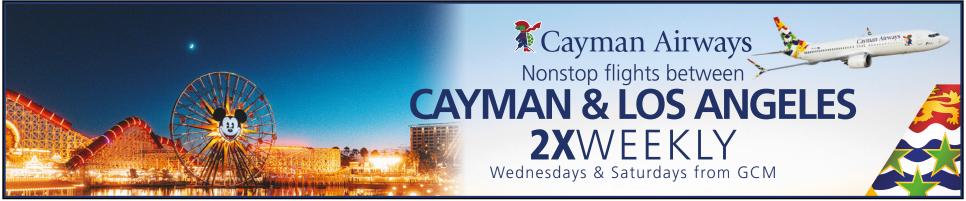
Monday Edition

Issue No 972

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April 8, 2024 **Complimentary** =





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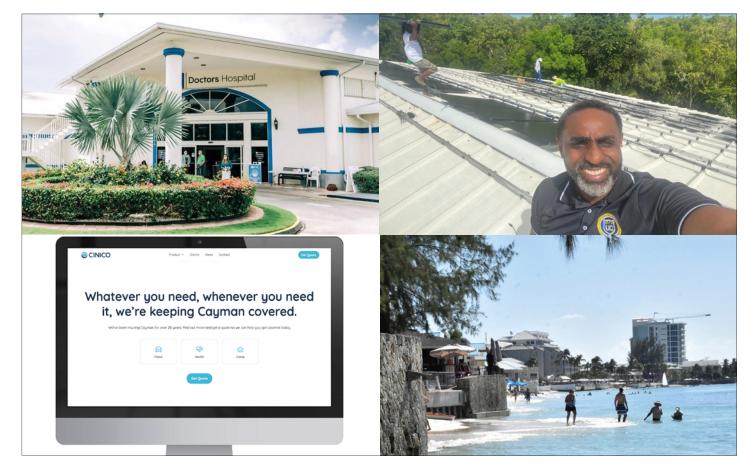


EIA not holding up new road

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Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Facility launches Ivan+20 in the Cayman Islands



Monday Spotlight: Healthcare, Environment, Sustainability and Insurance

The Monday edition of Caymanian Times newspaper returns to the newsstands from Monday April 8th marking another significant step in the paper's post-COVID revitalisation.

This Monday edition will follow a new themed content series which the paper will be rolling out across the Monday, Wednesday and Friday editions.

Mondays newspaper will shine the

spotlight on Healthcare. Environment. Sustainability and Insurance with specially prepared content from the major indus-

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Focus on Healthcare, Environment, Sustainability and Insurance



CONTINUED FROM Page 1

try providers. The latter is a response to the recent industry-shifting developments in the insurance sector driven by the policy decision to expand the offerings of the government-owned Cayman Islands National Insurance Company (CINICO) from healthcare into other areas. Other editions across the week will address employment, Tourism and Finance.

The latest step in this media journey,

also reflects another phase in the continuing evolution of the local newspaper which publisher Ralph Lewis describes as "at the end of the day, we want to be part of the community. This new Monday edition will demonstrate this commitment as we grow."

With Caymanian Times now offering readers the only multiple days (three-days-a-week) newspaper in Cayman, it brings it a few steps closer to its peak output of a daily paper four years ago in 2020.



That was abruptly halted when the COV-ID-19 pandemic hit and forced the jurisdiction into lockdown.

Announcing the return to three-daysa-week publishing, publisher and editor Lewis said this also coincides with an expansion of the paper's distribution network and maintaining the business model of being complimentary in the hands of readers, especially those in the job market.

The paper currently has over 60 distribution points including all the major supermarkets, pharmacies and other high-traffic areas with other outlets under consideration.

In an interview on Radio Cayman's Business Buzz programme with Anita Khan coincidentally her final programme - Lewis said the rationale for the relaunched Monday edition of Caymanian Times ties

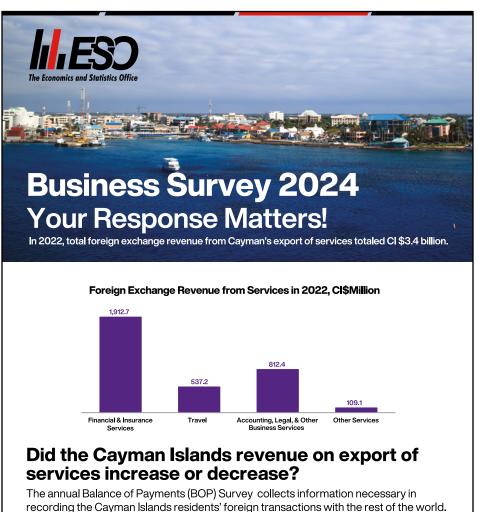
in with the industry standard of having a fresh paper delivered on a Monday morning to start the week.

"The idea is to have the paper available on a Monday morning first thing with the online edition complementing the popular printed edition," he explained.

"The goal is to provide independent balanced news to the community that they can really afford without us having any agenda," Lewis added.

The relaunch of the Monday edition of Caymanian Times also coincides with the business shifting more of its back office processes online to further streamline its operations.

However, Mr Lewis has given an assurance that there are no plans to change from the main output of a printed paper supported by an online presence.



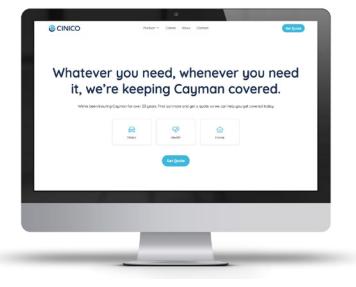
Data collected for the BOP survey is CONFIDENTIAL under the Statistics Act (2016

The survey runs from April 8th to June 14th, 2024.

Revision) and is **EXEMPT** from the Freedom of Information Act.

Better Data...Better Decisions...Better Business

For assistance or enquiries, please check www.eso.ky or call 244-4600.





Caymanian Times

Issue # 972

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Colorectal cancer and how to prevent it

Welcome to our new Health & Wellness series in our Monday edition where we aim to bring you all the latest information and advice to help you keep in your best health. We begin with a discussion on colorectal cancer and how to prevent it.

Doctors Hospital and the Cayman Islands Cancer Society recognised March as Gastrointestinal and Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month in the Cayman Islands. Gastrointestinal cancer develops around the GI tract, which is known as the digestive tract. Colorectal Cancer, more specifically, is a cancer that begins in the large

Colorectal Cancer is statistically proven to affect 1 in 23 men and 1 in 25 women

Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths worldwide. In 2020, more than 1.9 million new cases of colorectal cancer and more than 930,000 deaths due to colorectal cancer were estimated to have occurred worldwide.

Dr Darley Solomon, Chief of Surgery and General Surgeon at Doctors Hospital, answers some of our questions on the topic.

The American Cancer Society's estimates for the number of colorectal cancers in the United States for 2024 are:

- About 106,590 new cases of colon cancer (54,210 in men and 52,380 in women)
- About 46,220 new cases of rectal cancer (27,330 in men and 18,890 in women)

The rate of people being diagnosed with colon or rectal cancer each year has dropped overall since the mid-1980s, mainly because more people are getting screened and changing their lifestyle-related risk factors. From 2011 to 2019, incidence rates dropped by about 1% each year. But this downward trend is mostly in older adults. In people younger than 55 years of age, rates have been increasing by 1% to 2% a year since the mid-1990s, which led to the recommendation to lower initial screening age.

A colonoscopy is considered the 'gold standard' for colorectal cancer screening. Precancerous polyps can be removed at



► Dr Darley Solomon

the time of colonoscopy. Early detection of colorectal cancer can improve treatment outcomes and increase the chance of successful treatment and survival.

Dr Solomon said that in 2018 screening recommendations for individuals with average risk for developing colorectal cancer was lowered from age 50 to 45 years old.

"If there are risk factors such as family history or inflammatory bowel disease or certain genetic conditions screening may start earlier or be more frequent. Usually, individuals are screened from age 45 to 75. Frequency of screening usually ranges from 5 to 10 years, depending on risk factors and findings on prior colonoscopies,"

During a colonoscopy, doctors examine the lining of the colon and rectum using a small flexible, lighted tube with a camera (called a colonoscope). They look for abnormalities such as polyps, tumours, inflammation, and/or signs of bleeding. Polyps can be removed that can prevent the development of colorectal cancer.

"The challenging part of a colonoscopy is the bowel preparation or colon cleanse that is needed prior to the actual colonoscopy procedure," Dr Solomon explained. "During the procedure, the patient re-

ceives sedation to ensure they do not feel anything and do not recall anything about the procedure. The colonoscope is then inserted into the rectum and advances through the entire colon while the lining is inspected. If polyps or abnormal findings are found, they can be removed or biopsied for evaluation under a micro-

While routine screening is essential for detecting colorectal cancer early, certain symptoms may indicate a need for a colonoscopy at any age. These symptoms include:

-Persistent changes in bowel habits (diarrhoea, constipation, or narrowing of

- Rectal bleeding or blood in the stool
- Abdominal pain/cramping
- Unexplained weight loss
- Weakness or fatigue
- Iron deficiency anaemia

If abnormalities such as polyps or tumours are discovered during the colonoscopy, the doctor may perform various interventions during the procedure, Dr Solomon explained. This could entail: removal of polyps with the use of special tools such as snares and biopsy forceps; a biopsy whereby tissue samples may be taken from suspicious areas for further examination and treatment planning; and/ or, depending on the findings, the doctor will develop a treatment plan, which may include surveillance colonoscopies, additional testing, or referral for an operation.

What can you do to lower your risk?

Making changes in everyday life can reduce the risk of colorectal cancer.

To lower the risk of colorectal cancer:

- Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Fruits, vegetables, and whole grains have vitamins, minerals, fibre, and antioxidants, which may help prevent cancer. Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables so that you get a range of vitamins and nutrients.
- Drink alcohol in moderation, if at all. If you choose to drink alcohol, limit the amount you drink to no more than one drink a day for women and two for men.
- Stop smoking. Talk to your health care team about ways to quit.
- Exercise most days of the week. Try to get at least 30 minutes of exercise on most days. If you have been inactive, start slowly and build up gradually to 30 minutes. Also, talk with a health care professional before starting an exercise program.
- Maintain a healthy weight. If you are at a healthy weight, work to maintain your weight by combining a healthy diet with daily exercise. If you need to lose weight, ask your health care team about healthy ways to achieve your goal. Aim to lose weight slowly by eating fewer calories and moving more.

HSA elevates patient care with a new bone density scanner

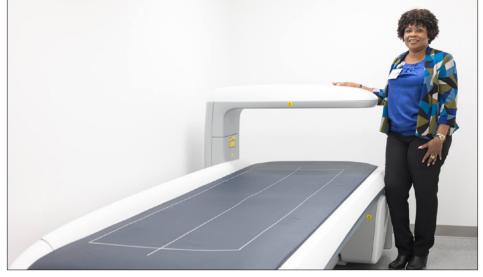
Patients grappling with osteoporosis and other bone-related conditions can now benefit from the Health Services Authority's (HSA's) recent acquisition of an iDXA bone density scanner, a noninvasive device that will advance diagnostic capabilities and patient care.

"We are proud to unveil the latest addition to the Radiology Department - our bone density scanner. This technology represents a significant investment in our approach to diagnostic imaging. The precision and efficiency of this scanner will profoundly impact our bone health assessments, allowing us to identify early signs of bone degeneration issues and enabling our healthcare professionals to initiate timely interventions and personalised treatment plans," stated Radiology Manager Pamela Vaughn-Duncan.

iDXA bone density scanning is a simple and quick method that uses a very small dose of ionizing radiation to produce images of the hips, lumbar spine, and extremities to measure bone loss and aid in the comprehensive evaluation of bone health. This is particularly important in the diagnosis and management of diseases such as osteoporosis, osteopenia, and other disorders affecting bone density that are becoming more common.

iDXA bone density scanning is also used for other purposes, such as the monitoring of bone health on patients diagnosed with cancer and Rheumatoid arthritis. Ms. Vaughn-Duncan said, "What sets this bone density scanner apart from what was previously offered, is its ability to provide sensitive and accurate images of changes in the bone density over time, or in response to drug therapy while using far less radiation than Quantitative Computed tomography (QCT) scans."

The iDXA bone density scanner will significantly reinforce preventative care at the HSA. "Preventive care is about empowering patients with knowledge and tools to safeguard their health. By identifying individuals at risk for osteoporosis or other related conditions early on, the HSA



► The iDXA bone density scanner

will be better able to implement proactive measures and lifestyle interventions to mitigate the progression of these conditions. This will make a substantial difference in our patients' lives," noted Medical Director Dr. Delroy Jefferson.

To schedule a bone density scan or to learn more about our diagnostic services, please contact our Radiology Department

DG's 5K Challenge Registration Now Open

Registration for the annual Deputy Governor's 5K Challenge Run/Walk is now open. This annual event, celebrating its ten-year anniversary this year, brings together the civil service, private sector and fitness community in the interest of physical wellness and community development.

The initiative, which is in its ninth staging, will be held in Grand Cayman and the Sister Islands on:

- Sunday, April 14 Cayman Brac
- Sunday, April 21 Little Cayman
- Sunday, April 28 Grand Cayman

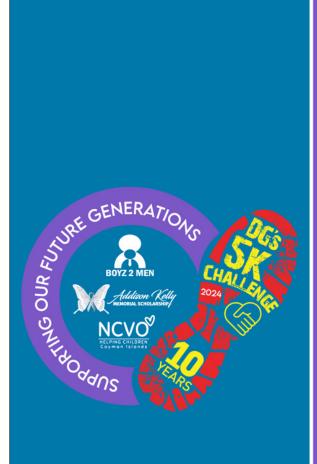
The 2024 Challenge will raise funds for three local charities – the Addison Kelly Memorial Scholarship Fund, Boyz 2 Men, and the NCVO. This year's Challenge is being hosted under the theme – "Supporting Our Future Generations".

Speaking on the vision behind the initiative, Deputy Governor, Honourable Franz Manderson stated that the main focus is to enhance the wellbeing of the community. "This challenge is for the benefit of our people. It's about coming together to make a difference in our community, while getting some exercise, enjoying the natural beauty of our islands, and having fun connecting with friends and family", Mr Manderson said. "The DG's 5K Challenge is for everyone. It's about inspiring fun, wellness, community support and camaraderie."

Over the past nine years, the DG's 5K Challenge has raised more than half

a million dollars (\$559,000) for various beneficiary charities through sponsorship and registration fees. Appleby, a leading offshore legal services provider, has returned as the platinum sponsor of the event, demonstrating their commitment to investing in the people of the Cayman Islands.

Managing Partner of Appleby, Norman Klein, explained that sponsoring the DG's 5K Challenge is more than an opportunity for brand visibility. "This event, like all the partnerships under our community investment programme, is focused on connecting with the values of our clients and the local community. It is about building strong bonds in the communities in which we operate and







supporting the initiatives that matter to them," he said.

Online registration for all three events is now open on www.racecaribbean.net. Registration fees are \$25 for adults (18 years and older), while the fee for children under 18 years is \$10. Persons may contact DG5K@gov.ky to learn more.

Online registration closing dates vary – Cayman Brac closes Friday 12 April, Little Cayman on Saturday April 20, and Grand Cayman on Wednesday, 24 April. After online registration closes, persons who wish to participate in the Grand Cayman event will still be able to register on 25 and 26 April at the Government Administration Building. Participants should note that it pays to register before the online registration closes, as the fees to register in person on 25 and 26 April increase to \$35 for adults and \$20 for children, and on race day, 28 April the registration fee will be \$45 per adult and \$30 for children.

For this year's staging, participants in all three islands will run and walk along the usual Challenge routes. In Cayman Brac, the start will be at the Cayman Brac Beach Resort, in Little Cayman the course begins and ends at the Southern Cross Club, and in Grand Cayman the event will start and finish at the Government Administration Building at 133 Elgin Avenue. In the interest of minimising waste from these events, participants are asked to bring their own reusable water bottles.

Through its donations, the Deputy Governor's 5k Challenge has supported various health, education and mentorship initiatives designed to help and support members of the community.

Last year for the 2023 staging of the charity event, the Challenge raised more than \$80 thousand that was shared between three beneficiaries – Loud Silent Voices, Cayman Islands Red Cross and the United Against Bullying Foundation.



Caymanian Student Represents in Thailand





▶ Julian Menko (right) and other representatives affiliated with Hungary at the UWC Congress in Phuket, Thailand.



▶ Intercultural Day at UWC Thailand

By CIG Public Relations

Caymanian graduate student, Julian Menko, recently represented the United World Colleges (UWC) Cayman Islands National Committee at the UWC International Congress held in Phuket, Thailand, from 29 February to 2 March.

A global movement, United World Colleges uses education as a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future. UWC, which has national committees in over 150 countries and territories, selects young people from different backgrounds, cultures and experiences, who are driven to make the world better. Most students are supported by full or partial financial assistance.

Julian, a scholarship recipient of the Ministry of Education and Maples Group Cayman Islands is currently pursuing a Master of Urban Planning degree at the National University of Singapore. He is a graduate of the University of Kent, UWC-USA and Cayman Islands Preparatory and High School. Julian previously served as an intern at the Cayman Islands Government in the Ministry of Investment, Innovation and Social Development, Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure as well as the Cabinet Office.

In addition, he has worked as a Policy Advisor in the Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure. Julian is also currently the lead student ambassador to Asia with Cayman Connection.

Inspired by the words 'Education as a Force', the three-day Congress featured discussions across five thematic tracks focused on curriculum, teaching and learning, admissions, wellbeing, financial sustainability, and educational leadership and partnerships. Some of the topics covered were on innovative strategies for equity in admissions, educating for peace and a sustainable future, unleashing the potential of UWC community-led projects and strengthening partnerships for expanded impact.

In describing the value of his involvement with the Congress, Julian stated, "Being afforded the opportunity of a UWC experience comes with both the privilege and responsibility of committing to the sustainability of the UWC mission. Attending the UWC Congress on behalf of UWC Cayman Islands was an inspiring experience and a renewed call to action for all attendees. A reminder to challenge ourselves on our why and through collaborative efforts,

work towards developing more innovative and inclusive ways to continue to drive positive change through education."

Premier and Minister of Education Hon. Juliana O'Connor-Connolly has congratulated Julian on his achievements while encouraging him to continue to excel in his field of endeavour. "I want your recognition to serve as a motivation, encouragement and inspiration to others to pursue excellence in their chosen areas. Continue to fly the Cayman Islands flag high, be a beacon of light and inspire your peers to embrace education and training as well as other opportunities that will come their

The International Congress held at the UWC Thailand campus was the culmination of the movement's 60th anniversary celebrations.







HSA highlights commitment of physicians on Doctors' Day

With March 30th celebrated as National Doctors' Day, the Health Services Authority (HSA) is recognising the crucial role our 140 doctors play in providing care to the Cayman Islands community.

The day which is observed annually honours the dedication, skill, and unwavering commitment of doctors.

Dr Delroy Jefferson, Medical Director at the HSA, highlighted that "doctors continue to be the backbone of health-care and as such we appreciate their dedication and contributions in safeguarding public health and wellbeing. Following the global pandemic, doctors have emerged as frontline heroes, underscoring their selfless commitment and willingness to be resilient and protect the community."

In 2023, HSA physicians provided treatment to 41,094 patients, and facilitated 268,782 outpatient clinic vis-



▶ Dr. Delroy Jefferson, Medical Director at the HSA

its. In addition, physicians catered to 36,180 at the hospital's Accident and Emergency Department.

In expanding its service capacity to address the complex and increased need of patients, the HSA has opened and improved several specialty clinics, including neurology and geriatrics, bringing patients together with skilled and competent doctors with advanced local and international experience.

"With a growing and diverse population, we rely on the expertise of our doctors in providing care that not only meets but exceeds the standard of international care, which has been reinforced with our Joint International Commission (JCI) accreditation," noted Dr Jefferson.

For more information about our physicians and full lines of services, visit www.hsa.ky or call 345-949-8600.

New HSA neurologist to advance care, emphasizes stroke awareness

The Health Services Authority (HSA) has recently added Consultant Neurologist Dr Tamas Cseh to the specialist team, advancing HSA's efforts in the treatment of stroke patients and continued sensitisation of the population through its new Neurology Clinic.

The clinic caters to patients suffering from stroke, epilepsy, brain tumors, muscle weakness, headaches, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, neurodevelopmental disorders, dementia, multiple sclerosis, and myasthenia.

"In the short period in which I have been here, I have seen many stroke patients and unfortunately most come in days or weeks after symptoms onset. There is a term we use - 'time is brain', which means the earlier you get to the hospital the more likely we can save your brain from irreversible damage," Dr Cseh stated.

Among other conditions he emphasised persons should seek neurological intervention for are double vision, dizziness, bad headaches, recurrent falls, problems with standing, balance, walking and coordination.

Dr Cseh, who earned his medical degree at the University of Pécs in Hungary, worked as a Consultant Neurologist at the Manchester Centre for Clinical Neurosciences, the largest neuroscience centre in the United Kingdom, where he treated patients suffering from many types of neurology diseases. His experience spans all fields of general neurology with a special interest in neuromuscular diseases and electromyography.

Neurology is a specialised medical field that focuses on the diagnosis, treatment, and management of disorders affecting the central nervous system, which includes the brain, spinal cord, and peripheral nerves.



▶ Dr Tamas Cseh, Consultant Neurologist at the HSA

Through technological advancements and studies some neurological conditions, although not irreversible, when treated early can foster better outcomes and quality of life for patients.

He further noted that his approach to treatment "is always patient-centred care and evidence- based care. My other goal is to set-up a neurophysiology service which includes nerve conduction study EMG (electromyography), EEG (electroencephalogram) – all the electro- diagnostic measures that help the clinicians work."

HSA's Medical Director Dr Delroy Jefferson noted that the addition of Dr. Cseh to the team will reduce the need for patient referrals outside the HSA.

"Dr Cseh's addition bolsters HSA's multidisciplinary approach in delivering

comprehensive care of our patients providing immense benefits to the patient," Dr Jefferson said.

In addition, patients undergoing chemotherapy will also benefit from Dr Cseh's expertise through the introduction of the NeuroHaematology Clinic, an added subspecialty/service under the HSA Haematology, Oncology, and Chemotherapy Centre

"There's an excellent chemotherapy service here at the HSA, but unfortunately with many chemotherapies, patients can develop several types of nerve disorders associated with either the therapy they get for the cancer or from the cancer itself. In the NeuroHeamotology Clinic, my job is to tease out what is causing the nerve damage for the patient who has cancer and is undergoing chemotherapy," Dr Cseh explained.

According to statistics from the Cayman Islands' 2021 Census Report, 384 persons were diagnosed with stroke, 247 with spinal cord injury and 182 from dementia. In the 2022 Compendium of Statistics 7.9% of deaths resulted from neuropsychiatric conditions

If you suspect someone may be having a stroke, follow FAST: Face drooping, Arm weakness, Speech difficulty, Time to call 911.

Referrals are required to book an appointment with the HSA Neurology Clinic located at Specialist Clinic, Smith Road Medical Centre. To book an appointment, call 949-8600.

For more information regarding the HSA's Neurology Clinic, visit https://www. hsa.ky/medical- services/neurology. Persons may also listen to the Healthcare Today with HSA podcast featuring Dr Cseh on Spotify at info.hsa.ky/HealthcareTodayPodcast-Neurology

Intern turned speech therapist encourages Caymanians to apply for HSA Summer Internship Programme

The Health Services Authority's (HSA) Summer Student Internship Programme is now open for online applications from students interested in exploring the field of healthcare. This annual programme offers local high school and college students invaluable on-the-job experience in the healthcare sector during the summer while allowing them to earn a stipend.

Janelle Syms, a junior speech and language therapist at HSA, is encouraging other Caymanians to take advantage of the internship programme, which has played a significant role in directing her career path.

It was the experience gained from the internship that inspired Janelle to pivot her career plans from teaching to speech and language therapy during her undergraduate degree.

As with all interns who completed the programme, Janelle was assigned to work alongside experienced healthcare professionals who provided mentorship and guidance in areas aligned with each intern's specific interest and course of study. This allowed the interns to gain a deeper appreciation of the healthcare industry and prepared them for future career opportunities. The areas they could be assigned to range from clinical departments such as pharmacy and maternity to non-clinical departments such as biomedical services and HR.

While observing a treatment session with HSA's speech and language thera-



▶ Janelle Syms, a junior speech and language therapist and former intern at HSA.

pists, Janelle had an epiphany and realized that this was her calling.

"I'm not sure what my life would have looked like if I hadn't applied for this internship. I'm so grateful that I did,

and I would encourage other young Caymanians to consider a career in the healthcare sector, where Caymanians are significantly underrepresented. The internship is such an important oppor-

tunity to gain the relevant experience and connections you need to begin that journey," she said.

The internship programme typically lasts several weeks and is a vital pipeline for more young Caymanians to explore and pursue healthcare careers on island.

HSA's Training and Development Manager, Marsha Eleweanya, explained, "The HSA Summer Student Internship Programme has proven instrumental in encouraging young talent to join the HSA upon completion of their studies, thus contributing to the growth, development, and sustainability of the healthcare sector in the Cayman Islands with a strong local workforce."

Application for the 2024 HSA Summer Student Internship is open April 1-30. To participate, students must meet the following requirements:

- Students must be Caymanian and/ or have the Right to be Caymanian
- The student must be at least sixteen (16) years old
- Students must have a genuine career interest in the Healthcare field

Internships typically take place from June through September. Individual internship placement periods may vary (estimated 4 – 8 weeks placement opportunities). To apply or find out more about the HSA Summer Student Internship, visit: https://www.hsa.ky/careers/internships/summer-student-internship-programme.



▶ A group of interns who participated in the 2023 HSA Summer Student Internship Programme.

National Trust for the Cayman Islands raises US\$250,000 for Land Reserve Fund



▶ Photo by Blue Dot Studio. Guests from the left, Janet Walker, Bill Innes, Anne Dohms and Patricia Bradley.

A private event has raised US\$250,000 for The National Trust for the Cayman Islands Land Reserve Fund, its largest contribution to date. The event raised more than half the amount needed to purchase a piece of primary forest identified by the Trust so that it will be protected in perpetuity for future generations.

The fundraising dinner, organized and hosted by Karen and Chris Luijten on Friday 2 February in their South Sound home, was an elegant, Amalfi Coast inspired evening with a four course din-

ner creating a memorable evening for the 110 guests. Chef Vincenzo and Chef Carmine flew in from Positano to prepare the food using produce from the Luijten's farm. Special thanks go to the Luijten family for not only hosting the event but also for covering all event expenses so 100% of the proceeds raised will go directly towards the land purchase.

The event was supported by Platinum Sponsors Wheaton Precious Metals and Kirk Freeport, Gold Sponsors MercedesBenz Cayman, Dart and KPMG along with other donors including Maples, Campbells and the Ministry of Sustainability and Climate Resiliency. Thanks go also to Patrick Bourque for his invaluable help in making this event a success.

The National Trust performs an important role protecting critically endangered ecosystems, plants and animals in the Cayman Islands by purchasing carefully selected parcels of land from private landowners to preserve the biodiversity of the three islands. The Land Reserve Fund was

set up in 2010 to acquire and protect environmentally sensitive land. Land, which can be donated or acquired, is protected under the National Trust for the Cayman Islands Law and preserves critical natural habitats in perpetuity.

"There is a global initiative called 30 by 30 that aims to designate 30% of the earth's land and ocean areas as protected areas by 2030" said Catherine Childs, Environmental Programme Manager, "We would like to see Cayman in the vanguard of countries meeting this target with the National Trust playing a key role in preserving our natural treasures for future generations."

"The Trust recognizes the need to appeal for philanthropic donations to ensure the correct balance of preserving our natural biodiversity. We currently protect 6% of Cayman's natural environment and we'd like to increase that amount to 11% across all three islands" said Melanie Carmichael, Chairman of the National Trust. "Together with the health and wellness benefits they provide to the community, these goals are vitally important as we strive to protect and sustain our environment for future generations. The success of this event is a clear indication that we are a community that cares and we are grateful to the Luijtens and to all our sponsors and supporters who have given so generously."

To make a donation to the Land Reserve Trust and help us reach the target amount for this piece of land, visit htps://nationaltrust.org.ky/our-work/environmental/land-reserve-fund/ or contact director@nationaltrust.org.ky.

EIA not holding up new road

By Staff Writer

At a sitting of the National Conservation Council meeting which took place on Wednesday, Department of Environment Director Gina Ebanks-Petrie said that, contrary to what was being said in some corners of the island, the Environmental Impact Assessment was not holding up the progress of the East/West Arterial project.

Ms Ebanks-Petrie said the Environmental Assessment Board was "moving along" with the Environmental Impact Assessment. The EAB had reviewed all but two of the technical chapters of the EIA for the road, she confirmed.

She pointed out that there had been a lot of commentary in the public domain about the EIA itself and the fact that this "will stop the road etc." and so she wanted to reiterate that the terms of reference were completed for the East/West arterial with an understanding that the Government had already taken a policy decision to build a road, so the EIA was never intended to compare a road as a solution to the traffic problems verses something else, such as a monorail or some other form of public transportation.

"That was never the intent of the EIA," she confirmed. "The EIA was always about trying to identify the most environmentally, socially responsible route for that road.



▶ Gina-Ebanks

That continues to be our focus," she said.

The DOE Director went on to say that the last chapter that the EAB reviewed and provided feedback on was the hydrogeology and hydraulics study that was being carried out by the NRA's own consultants, a report which was outside of the EIA process, but was informing the EIA.

"There is a large amount of misunder-

standing about the detail that is contained within the hydrogeology and hydraulics reports received from the consultants," Ms Ebanks-Petrie stated. "At this stage, the consultants have confirmed that the data, the information, the level of detail, that they have provided in those reports will be sufficient for comparative purposes for comparing the different routes in the

EIA, for example, so they are able to meet the requirements of the EIA."

What the studies did not do, however, was provide enough information or detailed data for the NRA to do any kind of design work or engineering work on the roads, she said.

"Our understanding is that the level of detail and design is only at about 10% of the design specifications for construction plans. That means there is a high level analysis of preliminary horizontal and vertical geometry and typical sections for the roadway and the bridges. The project is going through a shortlist evaluation to arrive at the preferred option for the roadway and, once this is selected, the engineering design can be further advanced to approximately 30%," she clarified.

Mrs Ebanks-Petrie wanted to make it clear that the idea that if there were no EIA there would still be enough information to design and construct the road was not born out by the facts.

"The facts are, the level of data that has been supplied thus far in the hydrogeology and the hydraulics component of this road is not sufficient to design or build the road," she advised. "I just wanted to make it really clear that it is not the EIA that is holding up the construction of the road and that seems to be the refrain we are all hearing."

National policy needed to save Seven Mile Beach

The national treasure that is Seven Mile Beach is diminishing before our eyes, with beach erosion at the southern end a quickly growing threat to its very existence. The Caymanian Times speaks with Lauren Dombowsky, the Manager at the Environmental Management Unit with the Department of Environment, about the steps needed to save this precious natural asset.

The erosion of Grand Cayman's Seven Mile Beach is evident for all to see, with a swathe of once walkable coastline now submerged under the ocean. Lauren Dombowsky confirms that there is little doubt that many sections of Seven Mile Beach and numerous other coastlines of the Cayman Islands are under increasing threat from a wide range changing environmental factors, sea level rise being one of the most obvious impacts

"Increases or decreases in storm events can also drastically impact sediment transport systems that are responsible for eroding or replenishing a beach," she said.

However, other, less obvious, or less well understood impacts also exist and include the changes in the offshore environment because of the loss of coral reef structure and habitat.

"Coral reefs and the creatures that inhabit them are a significant source of the sand that is found on Cayman's beaches, so as those systems are degraded so, too, are the sources of new sand diminished. Additionally, well-developed offshore reef habitats are important in buffering coastlines and beaches from large waves, so as reefs degrade, shores are more exposed," she explained.

A host of other issues also contribute to the problem, including Increases in nutrients entering the water from upland sources that also enable marine algae to thrive that quickly outcompete and replace the slower growing corals and coralline algae, which are important producers of sand. Loss of seagrass habitats and increases in Sargassum stranding are also a significant threat to coastlines and beach stability. Ocean acidification from increased dissolved CO2 has the potential to interrupt calcification processes employed by many marine organisms, corals included, that also contribute to the white sand beaches found around Cayman.

The human touch

Ms Dombowsky said, given the host of environmental processes that contribute to beach stability, there are also own, Ms Dombowsky believes. numerous human-led impacts that ex-



▶ Lauren Dombowsky, Manager, Environmental Management Unit at the Department of

acerbate the disruption of the already delicate balance of beach dynamics.

"Seawalls and structures built or inappropriately sited in or close to the water are all too often the cause of significant beach loss or prevent a beach from recovering after a storm event," she said. "The loss of the upland beach system to hard structures and buildings means that sand reserves that once were available to replenish a beach are now locked out of the system or have been replaced with other types of structural fill. The removal of natural beach vegetation that once helped slow down sand loss during erosional storm events can also mean wind and rain are now contributing the removal of sand."

National policy needed

Seven Mile Beach is a national asset. It is not possible for private individuals or businesses to resolve the erosion issues and rehabilitate the beach on their

"Seven Mile Beach is a dynamic sys-

tem which is constantly changing. What happens on one property can impact what happens on another property, negatively and positively. Aside from minor renourishment projects within a property boundary, there is not much else than can be done on an individual scale. There needs to be a National Policy adopted by the elected government and fed back to agencies including the National Conservation Council and the Central Planning Authority to guide decision-making with respect to approval of new structures on the active beach," she affirmed.

Government needed to decide on whether they would intervene or not along the southern part of Seven Mile Beach to repair the problems that have already occurred.

"If the government does not intervene, then we would have to accept that there would likely never be a consistent beach on the southern end of Seven Mile Beach," Ms Dombowsky said. "We, involves strategic planning around how as a country, would have to accept the we can adapt to coastal hazards."

impacts to our tourism product, any potential liability from anyone negatively affected, and permit properties without seawalls to build them (without impacting the Marine Protected Area) to protect their structures from storms."

If the government did intervene, then there were many ways that this could be a joint undertaking between the private sector, such as voluntary cost-sharing or a Special Assessment fee – to ensure that everyone paid their fair share.

Future-proofing

Beach erosion needs to be addressed for environmental, social, and economic

Turtles nest on our sandy beaches and beaches are also home to other animals like crabs. They are subjected to coastal squeeze, where because of sea level rise and coastal development, the amount of beach habitat shrinks," Ms Dombowsky explained.

In addition, with smaller beaches and a rising population, there would be more user conflict between beach vendors, watersports operators, tourists, hotels, and locals.

"Seven Mile Beach is the most wellknown and iconic visitor attraction in Cayman and we risk harming our image if no action is taken," she said.

Last year, the Ministry of Sustainability and Climate Resiliency was preparing a proposal for a Coastal Setback Reference Line last year, a fixed line based on long-term scientific data which would be the line where future setbacks for development would be measured from. This would prevent future development from further impacting the beach provided that reasonable coastal setbacks are also in place and there was a consistent policy applied by the planning officials of all proposed coastal development having to meet at least the minimum specified setbacks, she advised.

"It would be a more sensible way to plan coastal development as it is not proposed to change land ownership or access, just provide a realistic and pragmatic line rather than relying on a rapidly changing boundary like the Mean High Water Mark," Ms Dombowsky said.

Managed retreat is treated as contentious by those who do not understand what is involved, she worried.

"Attempting to 'hold the line' in many places is a losing battle, so if we do not have managed retreat, we will end up with unmanaged retreat due to damage from storms, changes in insurance costs, market, and economic losses. Managed retreat

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Latest Education Data Report Shows Positive Trends

By: Stacey-Ann Anderson

The Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Department of Education Services (DES) have released the 2022-23 Education Data Report, highlighting positive gains in achievement among secondary school students, particularly in core subjects

"We're encouraged by the data, especially the 13.3 and 12.6 percentage point increases in English and math passes, respectively, for Year 11 students," stated MoE Acting Chief Officer Ms. Lyneth Monteith

Year 11 students also demonstrated marked improvement in meeting the National Expected Standard of five or more Level 2 passes (including math and English), with an 11-percentage point increase over 2022. After excluding math and English, this figure rose to 13.3%, indicating overall academic growth.

DES Director Mark Ray acknowledged the importance of core subjects and outlined a multi-pronged approach to strengthen math education. "While we celebrate the progress in core subjects, we recognise the need for continued focus on math," Mr. Ray remarked. "To address this, we are continuing the implementation of the math strategy and have recruited 14 math specialists for primary schools. These initiatives aim to strengthen the foundation in this crucial subject and ultimately improve its passes at all levels."

The Data Report further underscores the effectiveness of school intervention programmes. Value-added analysis revealed a significant improvement of 1.84 grade points in English and 1.2 grade points in science for Year 11 students with initially low Cognitive Abilities Test Fourth Edition (CAT4) scores, allowing them to achieve satisfactory results. This translates to students in that category improving on their

predicted exam results by almost 2 grade points in the case of English and 1 grade point for science.

With respect to the Year 12 cohort, the report depicted improvements, including a substantial 23.5 percentage point increase in math attainment and a notable 12.5 percentage point improvement in English.

Furthermore, the report reveals an increase in enrollment across all levels, with Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) experiencing a 2.5 percentage point rise compared to 2021-22. Overall attendance remains stable at 90.0% for primary and 90.2% for secondary schools.

"While we acknowledge that occasional illnesses can impact attendance," stated the DES Director, "consistent attendance is crucial for student success. We are committed to working with schools and families to ensure all students meet the national attendance expectations set by the Office of Education Standards (OES)."

At Key Stage 2 (Year 6), data reflects stable performance across subjects, although a gender gap persists, with girls outperforming boys by an average of 16 percentage points, particularly in writing. The report also highlights the need for further focus on greater overall intervention at this level.

The Hon. Juliana O'Connor-Connolly, Premier and Minister for Education summed up the report's findings. She said, ""A well-educated citizenry is the cornerstone of a thriving nation. These positive trends signify progress towards a more qualified and capable workforce, ultimately contributing to the social and economic development of the Cayman Islands."

For more information on Education Data Reports or to access the Education Data Report for the 2022-2023 academic year, visit the MOE website at https://www.gov.ky/publication-detail/data-report-2023.



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Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Facility launches Ivan+20 in the Cayman Islands



▶ The CCRIF Board and CEO with Premier Hon. Juliana O'Connor-Connolly at the launch of the Ivan+20 Initiative in Grand Cayman. Back row L-R: Mr. Timothy Antoine (Chairman), Mrs. Saundra Bailey (Deputy Chairperson), Ms. Deniece Yarde, Mr. Michael Gayle, and Mrs. Mariame McIntosh-Robinson (Board Members), Mr. Isaac Anthony (Chief Executive Officer). Front row L-R: Hon. Premier O'Connor-Connolly, Mr. Aidan Harrigan (Board Member)

CCRIF SPC (formerly the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility) announced its "Ivan+20" campaign observing the 20th anniversary of Hurricane Ivan with the official regional launch event at the Marriott Grand Cayman Resort on Wednesday, 13 March.

Attended by Premier and Minister for Finance & Economic Development Hon. Juliana O'Connor-Connolly, the launch event was streamed live throughout the region and included remarks by representatives of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), The University of the West Indies, the Cayman Islands Government and CCRIF.

This year marks 20 years since Hurricane Ivan devastated the Cayman Islands and Grenada, resulting in economic losses which totalled close to 200% of the annual GDP of these two countries. Another seven countries in the Caribbean were also severely impacted, with regional losses for the event totalling over US\$6 billion.

The Cayman Islands was chosen as the site for the Ivan+20 launch due to being one of countries most badly impacted by the storm with two deaths and \$3.4 billion in damages but also for its remarkable resilience and recovery over the past two decades.

CCRIF Chairman Timothy Antoine said, "I want to start by really acknowledging and commending the Cayman Islands, for your demonstrated resilience 20 years after Hurricane Ivan. Let us put our hands together for the Cayman Islands."

He continued, "I like to think of resilience as our capacity to withstand, absorb shocks and bounce forward, not back, for-

ward. When you look around the Cayman Islands, there is no doubt that you have done just that. And when you speak of resilience it is not just climate resilience, capacity, but also fiscal resilience. That is important especially in a region that is highly indebted and where fiscal space remains a challenge even when we try to close the financial protection gap with respect to our vulnerabilities to natural disasters."

Senior Assistant Financial Secretary Michael Nixon outlined the steps taken by the Cayman Islands over the past 20 years to both recover from Ivan and increase resilience to withstand future natural disasters.

He said, "The lessons learned from Hurricane Ivan were many and since 2004 the Government has made significant changes and investments to our governance and operational systems and invested in infrastructure to improve the country's overall resilience to natural disasters."

Mr. Nixon highlighted four main pillars of the Islands' improved resilience measures: improved disaster management with the formation of Hazard Management Cayman Islands (HMCI); improved national building standards through the implementation of stricter building codes and strengthened physical planning compliance and oversight; the provision of a more resilient public infrastructure from new road corridors to better designed public buildings and new hurricane shelters; and strengthened financial governance through prudent management of Government finances emphasising building financial resiliency by maintaining positive cashflows, minimising the debt burden and building cash reserves.

He also noted the vital importance of CCRIF to the Cayman Islands and the region. He said, "We have been a partner with CCRIF from its very creation and think that they have done an exemplary job at uniting the region to implement solutions for disaster risk financing by bringing to countries innovative products that fit the need and that support alleviating some of the financial risks associated with disasters. The Cayman Islands are honoured today to join CCRIF at the launch of the Ivan+20 initiative."

Ivan+20 will include activities around the campaign's theme of "Remembering the Past,

Reflecting on the Present, and Visioning for the Future: Resilience, Adaptation, and Sustainability in Caribbean SIDS."

CCRIF CEO Isaac Anthony said, "We are not here to celebrate Ivan, we are here to celebrate the collective action and the collective that came out of Ivan."

He continued, "This whole event is about focusing on remembering the past, reflecting on the present, and visioning for the future, a future Caribbean that is resilient, sustainable and a best practice example for other islands and coastal states globally. While Ivan+20 may be conceptualised by CCRIF, we welcome the partnership and engagement of several regional organizations in taking this initiative forward, during the course of the year. We would also like to recognise and thank CDEMA and the OECS Commission as well as the University of the West Indies. and the Caribbean Meteorological Organization among others for coming on board."

In the Cayman Islands and Grenada, CCRIF will provide two "Ivan" Scholarships at the undergraduate level and two scholarships at the postgraduate level. These grants are in addition to the scholarships that CCRIF provides annually to Caribbean nationals.

CCRIF-UWI Undergraduate Scholarships valued up to US\$8,000 are available to students entering their second of three years in fields of study related to disaster risk management at The University of the West Indies.

CCRIF Postgraduate Scholarships offer financial assistance valued up to US\$11,000 with postgraduate studies in fields related to disaster risk management at several Caribbean universities.

Time Capsule events are also planned for Grenada and the Cayman Islands, whereby stakeholders including government ministries and agencies, the private sector, civil society organizations, and academia are invited to place items/documents/papers that paint their picture of the period before or during Hurricane Ivan, the present, and their hope for the future.

The time capsules will be designed to be opened at Ivan + 40 when each of these stakeholders

would assemble once again to reflect on whether their visions have been advanced and achieved.

The year-long series of events is envisioned to allow the region to reflect on the impacts of Hurricane Ivan, share and discuss the lessons learned, undertake a diagnostic of the present, and develop a vision for a sustainable and resilient future by 2050.

CCRIF, domiciled in the Cayman Islands, was formed in 2007 as the world's first multi-country, multi-peril risk pool for natural disasters based on parametric insurance. It was created as a response to the challenges faced by Caribbean nations in accessing affordable catastrophe risk insurance.

Established with the support of the World Bank, the European Union, and other partners, CCRIF operates as a regional catastrophe fund for countries in the Caribbean and Central America.

CCRIF was formed as a result of Hurricane Ivan, and the experiences and lessons learned from Ivan and other natural disasters in the Caribbean played a significant role in its establishment.

Mr. Anthony said, "The impacts of Hurricane Ivan brought into sharp focus the importance of comprehensive disaster risk management, and at the political level the need for the establishment of a disaster risk financing mechanism that would pre-finance disaster risks and allow governments to access liquidity quickly following a natural disaster."

For more information about CCRIF SPC and the Ivan+20 campaign, visit www. ccrif.org

GAS PRICES

Gas Prices as at Tuesday 26 March 2024



Location	Gas Station	Regular	Premium	Diesel
East End	Eastern Star Rubis (Woody's)	5.71	n/a	5.69
NorthSide	Jack's Esso (Jack's II)	C L	O S	E D
Bodden Town	Lorna's Rubis	5.61	5.82	5.55
Bodden Town	Mostyns Esso	5.45	5.87	5.59
Savannah	Savannah Rubis	5.58	5.79	5.65
Red Bay	Barcam	5.32	5.72	5.75
Red Bay	On The Run (Brown's Red Bay)	5.43	5.81	5.75
Red Bay	AA Red Bay	5.4	5.76	5.46
George Town	Jose's Escape	5.31	5.57	5.35
George Town	Refuel	5.05	5.29	5.17
George Town	Esso Tigermart 4 Way Stop (JS)H&B 11	5.27	5.66	5.75
George Town	Eastern Avenue Rubis	NA	NA	NA
George Town	Walkers Rd. Rubis	5.58	5.79	5.6
George Town	On The Run (Mike's Walkers Rd.)	5.27	5.67	5.75
George Town	On The Run (Brown's Industrial Park)	5.27	5.67	5.75
George Town	On The Run (Mike's 7 Mile)	5.43	5.86	5.75
West Bay Rd.	H & B Esso (H&B 1 Seven Mile)	5.27	5.66	5.7
West Bay Rd.	7 Mile Rubis (AA 7 Mile)	5.58	5.79	5.65
West Bay	Hell Esso	5.43	5.86	5.61
West Bay	Esso 4 Way Stop (Four Winds)	5.32	5.86	5.75
West Bay	Oasis Batabano	5.42	5.8	5.46
George Town	Scotts Landing	n/a	6.35	5.47
Cayman Brac	West End	n/a	5.89	5.65
Cayman Brac	The Pit Stop	n/a	5.89	n/a
Little Cayman	Village Square		7.26	7.43

Lowest Prices	Grand Cayman	5.05	5.29	5.17
Highest Prices	Grand Cayman	5.71	6.35	5.75

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Additional Weight – Empty your car trunk of heavy items that can be located elsewhere. Your vehicle will use more fuel when carrying heavier loads.



Vehicle Replacement – Consider replacing your vehicle with a fuel efficient model.

R|A|T|

RABBI

NLAW

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

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5	7	3	1	2	6	8	9	4	
9	6	8	7	4	5	2	1	3	
2	4	1	9	8	3	7	6	5	
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Answer to previous puzzle

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Word Search

8/01

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Find the listed words in the diagram. They down and diagonally

CROSSWORD By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Opera stars

6 Traded

11 Foe

12 Skateboarding jump

13 Drama school offering

15 Letter after pi

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17 D.C. baseballer. for short

18 Labrador explorer **20** Perennial

flower 23 Quarrel

27 April weather

28 Leia's brother

29 Eyeballs

31 Had a feast

32 Crunch's cousin 34 German

article 37 Rifle or

revolver 38 Letter after

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45 Spinetingling

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36 Narrow cut

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39 Europe neighbor

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31 Knuckle-

43 Maui souvenir

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Difficulty Level ★★★

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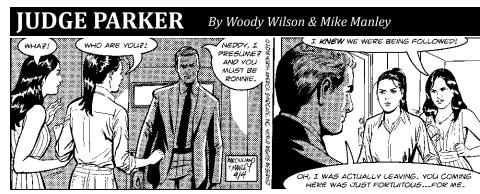




By Ray Billingsley







Caymanian Times Classifieds



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The University College of the Cayman Islands ("UCCI") invites applications for the position of:

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UCCI is a growing intellectual community of leaders and trailblazers including 1,200 students and 70 full-time faculty and staff members representing 30 nationalities and a kaleidoscope of expertise and experiences.

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- Assesses students' coursework.
- · Marks, assesses, records, and submits results.
- Maintains student records and monitors student progress.
- Conducts tutorials and workshops and facilitates other learning experiences including 'video link' courses to Cayman Brac students.
- Works collaboratively with the respective Dean to maintain and develop effective and efficient programme delivery.
- Ensures the quality of all department courses and programs in accordance with the guidelines of the UCCI Curriculum Committee
- Develops and implements new methods of teaching to reflect changes in research.

Additional Requirements

- Previous teaching experience at a tertiary level would be an asset.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Outlook, and Excel
- Proactively resolves problems and builds strong team relationships.
- High level of integrity in dealing with confidential and sensitive matters
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills and a commitment to collaborative and collegial processes

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