

## Foreword

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### Context and History of the Journal

In 2011, Ru-Zelda Severin, senior lecturer, and Lynette Woods conceived the idea of developing a Bermuda College journal. By December 2011, Ms Woods, the special projects assistant to the president, formed a committee with Evelyn James Barnett, communications director, and Nikkita Scott, counselling and student services director, to investigate the possibilities of a publication. The seed was planted for a publication that would provide a scholarly platform for educators and a resource for students and researchers. The project mushroomed and expanded into this Bermuda College journal, *Voices in Education*.

From this point, the committee expanded to include individuals with varying expertise. They were Ru-Zelda Severin, senior lecturer in music and education; Barrington Brown, professor of computer information systems; Karmeta Hendrickson, assistant director, information technology services; and Annette Gilbert, cataloguing and user services librarian. Sandra Dill, a former employee, replaced Nikkita Scott, and Jennifer Williams, faculty tutor for reading, later replaced Sandra Dill.

Meetings occurred once a month except during July and August. The committee's initial discussions were very broad, but subsequently focused on identifying the target audience, initial authors, journal theme, title, guidelines, and timelines. The committee decided to issue an online publication with limited hard copies. Through 2013, the committee conducted research into journal publishing, reviewed educational journals, and contacted universities that were publishing journals to gather information.

Relying on whiteboard notes, electronic exchanges, and other processes, the committee worked to ensure the journal would have wide enough appeal to educators at home and abroad. The goal was a journal that would focus on Bermuda but have international appeal, and would provide an avenue for publication for Bermudian educators, who otherwise might have no opportunity to publish.

On 24 April 2014, Bermuda College launched the idea of the journal during a reception at ACE Group, Bermuda College's corporate partner. Invitees included prospective authors, the Editorial Board, the Bermuda College Publication Committee, the Bermuda College Board and the Bermuda College president, Duranda Greene, as well as the junior minister for education, Leah Scott, JP, MP. After the launch meeting, the committee invited article submissions by placing an advertisement on the Bermuda College website and portal, in the local newspaper, and by disseminating information to educational organisations. The submission deadline was 17 October 2014.

By the deadline, a total of 11 articles had been received. These were disseminated to the Editorial Board for review and feedback. The co-editors then reviewed the Editorial Board comments and made the final decision as to which articles to accept. They met over two months to edit articles, which were then sent to the authors for final revision.

The revised articles were then forwarded to Peter Colenbrander, managing editor, for a final edit. He had been recommended by an academic editor at a university elsewhere in the Caribbean region. After speaking to Mr Colenbrander by phone, the committee determined he would be the right choice for the journal. He has provided input and advice and talked generally about the journal and his role in the publication. In these conversations, we also confirmed timelines for submissions, reviews, and final publication.

## Overview of Voices in Education: Student success

This inaugural issue of *Voices in Education* comprises nine articles. While each addresses distinctive considerations and concepts, they collectively fuse around the notion of student success.

In the first article, Joseph Christopher provides a brief history of education in Bermuda from the perspective of a participant observer. He details student success in the Public School System from 1950 to 2003. He shows that, over time, the school system developed expectations for student success based on the provision of the right educational structures.

This article follows with a treatise by Mellisa Gibbons Tankard on the importance of understanding and using cultural considerations to inform pedagogy. Pedagogy will be more meaningful to students and more effective in practice if it is culturally sensitive. Dr Llewellyn Simmons looks to Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory to establish links between student success, culture, and education. He cautions that reliance on conflated concepts can lead to false narratives, which result in sociopolitical paradigms that limit the prospects of student success and student outcomes.

Traver Alexander examines the key role of the insurance industry in Bermuda by discussing the relationship between employment and capital. He examines the rapid employment of individuals in the industry from 1993 to 2009 and the cognitive disconnect that seemed to arise in the wake of the emergence of the international reinsurance centre. He stresses that capital is a necessary but insufficient condition for employment. If employment is considered a marker of student success, then Bermuda must analyse and understand employment patterns in order to close gaps and provide employment to eligible graduates.

The next two articles focus on improving educational outcomes for urban youth. The seven authors of "Conversation on the Literacy Development of Urban Poor Youth: Perspectives from the Classroom, Neighbourhood, and University" view student success from the perspective of translating positive intentions into positive outcomes. They use a method similar to Conversation Circles to dialogue about educators' understanding of literacy development in urban youth. John E. Duncan discusses the constraints on the academic and social success of Black males in middle school. He advocates educational reform that will focus on the particular needs of males to facilitate the development of marketable skills that will empower these males to be successful locally and globally.

Student-centered learning is the focus of Renee Faulcon's article on the use of simulation teaching strategies in nursing education. She shows that simulation increases students' critical thinking skills and improves patient outcomes. Lee-Ann Liles discusses the importance of information and library literacy and describes initiatives undertaken in this area at Bermuda College. The final article by Barrington Brown provides a definition and discussion of the skills graduates need in the 21st century to be marketable and successful.

In sum, all the authors stress the importance of understanding education and defining student success in the following five contexts:

- History: Understanding our history, making secular changes over time to remain relevant, and employing the best educational structures;
- Culture: Recognising the importance of linking culture and pedagogy to develop strategies that speak to the particular needs of urban youth and of Black males in particular;
- Political agenda: Resisting educational approaches overly defined by current political ideologies that limit options for success;
- Employment patterns: Analysing employment patterns to understand deficiencies and identify opportunities;
- Required Skills: Providing needed skills by offering student-centred learning opportunities that use state-of-

the-art equipment and best practises; promoting literacy in constantly changing technology-driven areas ; and remaining current by addressing the needs of employers.

Student success is broadly defined as any number of achievements and other markers associated with positive outcomes for individuals in an educational programme or setting. The path towards achievement must be intentionally developed by educators and other stakeholders to elicit desirable outcomes. As such, both contextual barriers and the unique strengths of constituents must be considered in the provision of educational opportunities.

## Acknowledgment and Thanks

Thanks are due to Bermuda College Publication Committee members for providing the stimulus and motivation to produce this inaugural journal. The editors also extend their gratitude to the authors who submitted articles to *Voices in Education*. Without those articles, there would be no journal. Your articles will be excellent resources for research both nationally and internationally. Additionally, we thank the Editorial Board, whose members gave of their time, knowledge, and expertise, thereby enhancing the excellence of this publication.