



UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA  
**GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY**

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## *Annual Report 2018-2019*



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## *Introduction*

The University of Guyana Geographical Society was formed by a group of courageous and self-motivated students. The struggle was a long fought one; on all fronts. From their very first year with the help of amazing lecturers such as Claudette Foo, Ramona D. Johnson and Linda J. Bhola among others, they were able to create foundation on which we stand. These students namely Alana Norville and Muzzammil Mohabir among others from their year helped bring the Geographical Society to life. On August 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 the society was fully founded and was established on September the 10<sup>th</sup> of the same year.

Though it was a challenging year, the executive board worked to building the body of the society, a challenge we hope the future generations will continue. For the first semester; from September 2018 to January 2019 the society did very little or than building internal strengths. Thereafter in the coming months the society under the leadership of Muzzammil Mohabir started to build a repertoire with organizations, one such organization is Policy Forum Guyana.

We took part of Open Space Events, School Education Projects among others. At the end of the year the society had a total membership of 29 persons. Activities for the year closed at August 2019, during that time, we managed to engage our members and have built a body that our campus advisor is proud of. It is the belief that our future generations will take the UGGS to greater than greater heights

THANK YOU. .

## Activities

In keeping with two of the society's objectives:

- Making resource personnel available to offer guidance in particular geographical problems.
- Providing and promoting films, speeches, seminars and other activity of geographical interest.

UGGS has embarked on projects, summit and workshops during the year of 2019. Our main partnering organization is POLICY FORUM GUYANA. The Policy Forum Guyana (PFG) is a network of civic organizations which came into existence in 2015 with the general aim of strengthening electoral, environmental and financial accountability.

The following are reports of the activities conducted during the period of 2018-2019.

- ***Orientation Open Day 2018***

**Date: August 2018**

Society Members took part in the first even event of the society. We organized to be a part of the Open Day Orientation Event on Campus, where we had our banner on display. We also shared and talked to incoming students about geography, the geography programme and also about the society. An average of 200 students was met and a majority had a better understanding of geography after.

**Attending the event was:** Latoya Browne, Nasrudeen Ally, Jillyne Bell, Lakesha Cuffie, Shevanie Persaud, Gorden Nedd, Ariela Azzaire, Damnai Thomas, Angela Benn and Alana Norville.



- ***Elections 2018-2019***

**Date: September 2018**

An election was done electronically, by the founding members Muzzammil Mohabir and Alana Norville. Specific software was sure to ensure that no rigging took place. The results were posted and the following are the office holders.

President – Alana Norville

Vice President – Muzzammil Mohabir

Secretary – Gorden Nedd

Treasurer – Angela Benn

Assistant Secretary – Jennifer Smith

Assistant Treasurer – Nasrudeen Ally

Public Relations Officer – Ariel Yong

Assistant Public Relation Officer – Ariela Azaire

First Year Rep – Denise Simon

Second Year Rep – Jillyne Bell

Third Year Rep – Damani Thomas

Forth Year Rep – Junette Carmichael

- ***CYEN Coastal Cleanup 2018.***

**Date: September**

The CYEN Coastal Cleanup took place over 2 days. The project aimed at having clean beaches and seas. The UGGS attended and separated into three groups we cleaned for about 1 hour and 30 mins. Collectively as a society we collected about 70 pounds of trash.

**Attending this event was:** Muzzammil Mohabir, Alana Norville, Jennifer Smith, Shevanie Persaud, Gorden Nedd, Nasrudeen Ally, Lakesha Cuffie, Latoya Browne, Ariel Yong, Angela Benn, Damani Thomas and Jillyne Bell.

Members benefited from understanding the use of Beach Zone Pollution Assessment Checklist as by the UN.



- **Career Day 2018**

**Date: February 2018**

The society had a few models that students would have made on display, members spoke to high school students about geography, the geography programme from FEES, the society and also shared the society flyers. On display was the society banner, eco-tourism, geographic history, the Guianas Coastline etc.

**Members:** Muzzammil Mohabir, Jennifer Smith, Alana Norville, Angela Benn, Titana Lim, Denise Simon, Nasrudeen Ally, Ronika Lawrence, Tia Aaron.



- ***Policy Forum Guyana River Mapping Project***

**Date Initiated: March 2018**

The project is outlined but not confirmed, it is currently waiting funding from Policy Forum Guyana. The project discussions started with the fact that our rivers are being degraded due to mining. Thus PFG would like to have a graphical representation of this damage.

After about 4 meetings with the heads of PFG the project was outlined as follow:

- Total of 14 maps (7 change maps of the Location: Marudi Mountains and Tumatumari)
- And 7 for Index maps (Pataro River)
- A basic methodology was also sent to them.

**The project will be running into the new academic year.**

- ***River guardian project report***

**Duration of project: May -June 2019**

Description of the project

The Vice President along with a few representatives of the Geographical Society attended a meeting which was conducted by Policy Forum Guyana. At the meeting, the members of the Geographical Society volunteered to carry out a River Guardian pilot project proposed by Policy Forum Guyana. This River Guardian pilot project was done in seven randomly selected schools in Georgetown, where by the grade 6 students were taught lessons on Freshwater. This project was started in June 2019 and ended in the first week of July 2019.

The Schools identified were:

Montrose, Lusignan, LBI, BV, Eccles, Plaisance, St Andrews

The lesson taught:

- Lesson 1- Types of water and fresh water regions
- Lesson 2- Freshwater animals/species and importance of freshwater
- Lesson3- Anthropogenic and natural impacts on freshwater



- Lesson 4- The importance of protecting the freshwater.

**The volunteers from the Geographical Society were:** Latoya Browne, Muzzamil Mohabir, Ulex Henry, Lakesha Cuffie, Shevanie Persaud, Jennifer Smith and Jillyne Bell. The pilot project was successfully completed.



- ***Cummings Lodge Secondary School Career Fair***

**Date of Event: 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2019**

Commencement of Event: 16:00 hrs.

Time of conclusion: 18:00hrs

**Procedure of event**

A group of three students from UG Geographical Society were invited to be representatives of the society to participate in Cummings Lodge Secondary School Career Fair. They encouraged students to choose Geography and to further study Geography at the University of Guyana. They expounded on the importance of Geography in today's society and the opportunities available in such field of study.

1. At 16:00hrs. the parents assembled in the school's auditorium. They were addressed by the head teacher and other heads of department on what to expect at that forum
2. Parents then proceeded to various booths where they were greeted and well informed by teachers, students and persons from institutions and organizations such as UGGS, GSA and GRBD
3. As parents and students entered the UGGS booth they were warmly greeted by the UGGS members who used the models to help parents and students understand the importance of

geography, careers in the field and also what activities are carried out by the society. All of this was presented with the aid of models and a power point presentation.

4. After visiting all booths both parents and students were treated to a snack

Both parents and students were very interested in learning what the field of Geography has to offer. Many were surprised to know the vast range of knowledge that can be gained by studying geography. Teachers expressed their gratitude for UGGS being a part of their career fair and hoped that there will continue to be future collaboration between Cummings Lodge Secondary and UGGS.



### • **Georgetown Open Space Report**

Date of event: Saturday, 8th June, 2019

**Members of the University of Guyana Geographical Society, namely;** Jillyne Bell, Lakesha Cuffie, Ron Sutherland, Nasrudeen Ally and Shevanie Persaud, participated in an Open Space Discussion “*Fathoming the Future: What to do about oil and gas?*” hosted by **Policy Forum Guyana**.

#### **Description of event**

Policy Forum Guyana has held Open Space Discussion in numerous parts of Guyana including Linden and New Amsterdam. The society members were given the privilege of participating at the event held in Georgetown at Marion Academy. Open Spaces are held as a technique for conducting meetings whereby participants create and manage the agenda themselves.

The University of Guyana Geographical Society members were responsible for recording the main recommendations made by attendees, based on what the revenue should be invested into and any other concerns they have about the impending oil industry.



After the discussions, attendees were asked to highlight the top priorities, which are as follows:

- Investment in Education
- Investment in diversification of Guyana's economy
- Strengthening transparency

- ***Anna Regina Open Space.***

Date of event: 26th July, 2019

**Members of the University of Guyana Geographical Society, namely;** Jillyne Bell, Lakesha Cuffie, Nasrudeen Ally, Muzzamil Mohabir and Shevanie Persaud,

An Open Space Discussion “*Fathoming the Future: What do about oil and gas?*” hosted by Policy Forum Guyana at the Essequibo Technical Institute, Anna Regina. The volunteers were once again required to record the main recommendations made by groups of attendees.

After the discussions, attendees were asked to highlight the top priorities, which are as follows:

- Development of technical and agricultural training
- Improved Healthcare Systems
- Creation of laws and policies specific to the oil and gas sector.

Participation in these events have secured relations with various organizations that may eventually become beneficial to the Geographical Society.



- ***Caribbean Youth Environmental Summit Report August, 2019***

**Date of Summit:** 9th-13th August 2019, was attended by Jillyne Bell a representative of the University of Guyana Geographical Society.

Theme of Summit “Building the resilience of the Caribbean through effective youth engagement and participation”

**Persons in attendance at the summit**

Youths from across the Caribbean assembled in Georgetown for the Youth Environmental Summit which was hosted by the Caribbean Youth Environment Network Guyana. The event was conducted at Guyana Forestry Commission Multiplex building for five days, which was inclusive of an educational tour.

At the opening ceremony (August 9, 2019), the Commissioner of Lands and Surveys Mr Trevor Benn delivered his opening remarks and the Minister of State; Dawn Hastings-Williams delivered the feature address. At the ceremony were representatives of the CYEN from the following Caribbean countries: Jamaica, Haiti, St. Lucia, Barbados, St. Kitts and Nevis, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname and Guyana; also attending were persons from UNICEF Guyana; Executive Director, Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management (PISLM)-Calvin James; David Barrio Lamarche, Environmental Affairs Officer, Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division, UN ECLAC; Danielle Andrade-Goffe, Main Elected Representative of the Public (Jamaica); Karetta Crooks Charles, Alternate Elected Representative of the Public (St. Lucia); Kevin Manning, Project Coordinator (Ambassadorial Corps & External Affairs); Donna Sue Spencer, Communications Specialist for our GEF IWeco project; Richard Jones, Officer in Charge, Caribbean Policy Development Centre and other representatives from non-governmental organizations in Guyana.

**Purpose of the summit**

The sole purpose of the summit was to create a dynamic, high energy space for young Caribbean citizens to have meaningful dialogue, cross-fertilization of ideas; share information on programming efforts, strategies and lessons learned and to provide an opportunity to build the capacity of young leaders by providing information and tools to assist participants in undertaking future work.

**Description of Summit**

During the summit, representatives of each country delivered a summary report of the activities CYEN has been conducting. All countries reported similar events such as coastal clean-up, recognition of Earth Hour, school presentations and Earth Day tree planting. However, these

countries also faced challenges which included: marketing strategy, internet challenges, lack of communication among members, inadequate participation of members, minimal membership growth. In response to the challenge of having inactive members, P'Della'P Stanley, National Coordinator CYEN in St. Kitts and Nevis and the Executive Coordinator of the Ripple Institute stated that a strategy was used in St Kitts to address this issue. She said that in a situation where a member is unable to participate in an activity physically, he/she is required to make monetary donations. She delivered a breakdown of the membership fees of CYEN in St. Kitts and Nevis. Active members-\$150, Semi-active members- \$200 and non-active members-\$250 and suggested that other countries implement that strategy since it is useful.

During the summit, presentations were delivered by guest speakers. In general, the summit was very educational and informative.

### **Attendees at the summit**



- ***Concluding Remarks***

Through these activities, UGGS was able to create a positive impression and recognition for themselves. The society continues to work with PFG by imparting their skills and knowledge to the organization in aiding them to carry out their own projects. Additionally, members enthusiastically continue to volunteer their time and service in attending meetings and workshops. In collaborating with other agencies the society aims to continue to promote the study and teaching of Geography in schools.