

Press Release draft: UCCI collaborates with Top US Public Research University

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The University of the Cayman Islands (UCCI) has recently signed an agreement for collaboration with the University of South Florida (USF), one of the US's top 63 public research universities.

Born out the desire to develop mutually strengthening and enriching international educational and research experiences for both faculty and students, the agreement's primary purpose is to provide a general basis for specific cooperative activities of an academic and cultural nature.

Since the appointment of UCCI's President, Dr. Hassan Syed, the institution has been strategically aligning efforts with international partners in academia that can add value to programmes and expose students to their preferred fields of study.

Artistic Director of the Cayman National Cultural Foundation (CNCF), Mr. Henry Muttoo was involved in helping this collaboration materialize. He explained, "The Cayman Islands lacks what I would term 'serious' higher arts education. CNCF is hopeful that this agreement will allow students from both institutions to exchange knowledge through the sharing of premium facilities and tutors." He went on to say that the Cayman Islands needs to build a tradition of arts education and that UCCI, our highest centre of learning, is well placed to take up this challenge. He hopes that this collaboration will help to give Cayman a larger 'footprint' in the international arts community.

USF is also excited to see where the collaboration will take the Cayman Islands. Says Dr. Patrick Finelli, Professor at USF "This agreement for collaboration formalizes a long-standing relationship with the Cayman Islands and the University of Florida's College of Visual and Performing Arts." He added, "The Cayman Cultural Foundation and USF built a relationship some years ago now; however, we're now in a position to get one step closer to developing increased arts awareness at the tertiary level in the Cayman Islands and we're excited to be working with UCCI on this initiative."

UCCI's Provost, Mr. Robert Geofroy explained that "In the spirit of the agreement, USF has already committed to the first project through its College of Visual and Performing Arts division. An International Conference on Caribbean Culture and Performance, spearheaded by the CICF, will be hosted in the Cayman Islands in June of this year and will serve as an International Symposium." He added that he must also note that the symposium is as a result of many contributors and other collaborators are the Centre for Creative and Festival Arts (a division of the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine) and the School of Drama of the Edna Manley College of Arts.

The University College of the Cayman Islands (UCCI) UCCI is an institution of higher learning that contributes to Caymanian society by advancing knowledge and developing creative graduates through our cultural, social, economic and environmental activities. UCCI offers a number of certificate programmes, associate and degree courses as well as graduate programmes and professional trainings. Visit www.ucci.edu.ky to learn more.