

**Presentation by Cordel Green**  
**Executive Director of**  
**the Broadcasting Commission - Jamaica**  
**At**  
**The Launch of Partnership Agreement**  
**Between**  
**University College of the Caribbean**  
**And**  
**The Law College of the Americas**  
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***Insights on Legal Education for a New Society***

[THESE VIEWS DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THOSE OF THE BROADCASTING COMMISSION]

President of the UCC, President of the LCA, faculty members, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

When I was requested to be the guest speaker at this launch, I did not hesitate to accept. After all, the request was made by the inimitable and super-talented Dr. Velma Brown-Hamilton.

I am truly honoured and delighted to be attending and to have the opportunity to make a few remarks. [and my apologies if I disappoint you, but my remarks have nothing to do with the return of cable channels].

One of the great achievements of the twenty-first century is the transformation of education by Internet and digital technologies that have brought about mass availability of information on an unprecedented scale, eroding physical and spatial limitations.

But there has also been a less attractive development, which Professor Neville Duncan, former Director of the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, commented on in these terms:

*If we continue to implement a cosmopolitan (that is, globalized) modernizing mission in our universities, we may, unwittingly, contribute to Caribbean marginalization..... We have somewhere along the line, in our preparation as educators, got caught up in the ideology, especially now in this period of speeded-up globalization, that our principal task is to prepare students to make productive contributions to profit-making enterprises --*

*and immediately! We have to resist, with all our might, this view of formal education, which indeed has little to do with knowledge and learning.*

Professor Duncan's exhortation is against an instrumental attitude to education, where the primary concern is with the economic value or commercial opportunities that arise from a course of study, rather than any intrinsic or intuitive interest.

Unfortunately, many students are victims of this instrumental approach and experience shock when faced with the real prospect, from an employment perspective, that there are "more learned people than our society appears able to absorb" (Holcomb 1995).

Clearly, a theory of education predicated purely on economic utilitarianism, is unhealthy and unsustainable. A broader view is necessary, contoured by values such as quality citizenship and family life. Bynner (1998) puts it in these terms:

*Education does not only serve the labour market. It also underpins the functions of citizenship and everyday life, including active participation in the social and political structure, child-rearing and family life, and recreational activity in the broadest sense. ... Job prospects switch on and off in accordance with labour market demands. But the broader view of education must be both to equip people for work while providing the means of sustaining them in its absence.*

To that end, the negative aspect of the Jamaican social order, characterised by high youth unemployment; uncompassionate, brutish, boorish, self-absorption; and devoid of any moral compass - begs for an educated Jamaican who is simply decent, resourceful and thoughtful. Thoughtful, being the operative word and meaning persons who not only use their minds in analytical ways but are socialised to habitually think in a new civic sense.

For, if the prevailing disorder persists or worsens, the ethical underpinning of the Law will be challenged and Justice undermined.

As Lord Gifford said in delivering the Norman Manley Lecture 2010 *“The love of Justice which so many Jamaicans espouse should be measured by how we treat each other”*.

That statement is derived from the timeless axiom that a nation’s laws are a significant expression of how we treat each other.

It must therefore be a matter of concern and priority for this law college and its students that there is a “belly to prison” pipeline which is under rapid construction in Jamaica. The construction material for this “belly to prison” pipeline are trauma, stigma, exclusion, discrimination, low self-esteem, absentee parents, present but incapable parents, poisonous role models, sexual exploitation, sexual violence, failed institutions, normalisation of low standards, failed leadership, and a generally hostile environment.

These are the currencies and precipitators of negative tendencies in our children, which pave a path for adults with low empathy, negative self-representation and lack of hope for the future.

This is not just a matter for developmental economics but also one of justice. The vision for Jamaica, which is so eloquently articulated in our national development plan, VISION 2030 – is for “Jamaica to be the place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business.”

I distill from that vision the core value of maintaining and promoting human dignity. So, it follows, that everyone is to be treated fairly in the application of the law and the constitution must be the basis of an all-out assault on all forms of injustice.

These matters, I suggest, should be the clarion call and central mission for the renaissance law student; and the shaping of that student’s internal narrative, along those lines, should be paramount at this law college.

Thank You.