



From L-R: Anne-Margaret Xavier, Stacey McVane, Donna Regis, Grace Michel, David Prospere the graduates of the Durham Caribbean MBA program.

St Lucia graduates praise Durham MBA program

Four more St. Lucian business professionals have advanced their career prospects by becoming graduates of the prestigious Durham Caribbean MBA programme.

Grace Michel, David Prospere, Dona Regis and Anne-Margaret Xavier were honoured recently at a glittering ceremony in the magnificent eleventh century Cathedral in Durham, England.

The quartet was part of the second intake of students on the programme and Stacey McVane, a fifth member of this intake, has just completed her assessments and is expected to graduate in January 2008. They follow in the footsteps of the three St. Lucians who graduated last year.

All the students enjoyed the live classroom teaching, conducted by Durham University lecturers, which took place in Barbados. Prospere, Information Systems Manager at the M&C Group, said: "The Durham programme was recommended to me by several people. It is of the highest quality and, crucially, it offers the opportunity for classroom style interaction here in the Caribbean."

Prospere's dissertation was entitled Examining the success or failure of the implementation of a new Information System at Imagine Insurance Company. He believes that his new qualification has given him an excellent platform from which to progress his career.

"I have worked in the Information Systems field for over 13 years but I had undertaken only very limited formal management training before embarking on

this programme. The Durham MBA qualification has increased my knowledge and has made me more marketable.

"It has opened the door to further advancement within my company and to other opportunities. The administrative staff in Barbados was extremely helpful and I would highly recommend the programme to other business professionals."

Xavier, Acting Director of Product Development at the Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation, chose the topic of Environmental Performance Of Small Hotels In St. Lucia: Exploring the reasons for variations in their environmental management performance for her dissertation.

She said: "I chose the Durham Caribbean MBA over other programmes because I wanted a degree from a UK-based institution. The mix of programme modules was excellent and I also liked the fact that the course proved to be adaptive to my work schedule, causing no major interruptions."

Michel, Director – Information Systems (Ag) of the St. Lucia Air & Seaports Authority, also liked the content and diversity in the modules: "Many of the modules focused on equipping the student with the tools required to manage in a global environment with an emphasis on how Caribbean countries could adapt to the challenges presented by globalization."

Michel, whose dissertation was entitled What are the implications of the Lack of an Information Systems Strategy: A Case Study, added: "Another major benefit of the Durham programme was the

general schedule for exam and assignment preparation."

Regis, Marketing & Research Manager of St. Lucia Air & Seaports Authority, embarked on the programme with three objectives: to increase her knowledge, to secure a better job and to increase her salary.

She said: "I achieved all three of these aims and believe that my graduation played a key part in my recent promotion from Tourism Officer to my new, more senior, role. The level of organisation of the Durham programme was superior to that of others. It has changed the way I think and the way I approach my work. Thank you Durham University – you are the best!"

Regis' dissertation title was St Lucia Cruise Sector: Critical Success Factors for Sustainable and Competitive Development while McVane chose the topic of Information technology: curse or cure. An investigation of the impact of information technology on the business performance of Cable & Wireless.

McVane, the Marketing Manager of Harry Edwards Jewellers, said: "Embarking on this programme enabled me to pursue my academic dream and to improve my professional excellence. The classroom teaching enhanced my learning experience and the administrative staff support was exceptional."