



L to R: Nello Ramkissoon – MHTL Chief Financial Officer, Dennis Patrick – MHTL Chief Executive Officer, Professor Clement Sankat – UWI Principal, Professor Andrew Jupiter – MHTL Chair of the Petroleum Engineering Programme and Dr. Gail Baccus-Taylor – Head of UWI Department of Chemical Engineering

# MHTL SPONSORS UWI CHAIR IN PETROLEUM ENGINEERING

Demonstrating its continuing commitment to educational development in Trinidad and Tobago and more so, UWI's Department of Chemical Engineering, CEO of Methanol Holdings (Trinidad) Limited (MHTL), Mr. Dennis Patrick, on September 21st 2015 presented a cheque to UWI Principal Professor Clement Sankat to continue its funding of the Chair in Petroleum Engineering. This funding which has been in place since 1997 was extended for another five years from 2015 at an annual contribution of US\$150,000.

Also present at the small presentation ceremony were the incumbent MHTL Chair of the Petroleum Engineering Programme - Professor Andrew Jupiter, who is also the Co-ordinator of the Petroleum Studies Unit at UWI; MHTL Chief Financial Officer – Mr. Nello Ramkissoon; and Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering Dr. Gail Baccus-Taylor.

Professor Sankat referred to the initial funding for the establishment of what was previously the TTMC Chair in Engineering, as he explained that without such support from the business sector it would be very difficult to recruit and retain the very high calibre of staff in those programmes. In this regard, he noted that Professor Jupiter brought to the position of Chair, tremendous leadership, extensive technical knowledge and skills, and private sector experience.

Both the MHTL CEO and the UWI Principal officially congratulated Professor Jupiter on his recent appointments as Chairman of the Board of Petrotrin and Director on the Board of the National

Gas Company. Professor Sankat also commented that Professor Jupiter's sitting on those major Boards would augur well to assist the University in the achievement of one of its key goals of building bridges with industry.

He noted that the petroleum engineering programme has continued to grow under Jupiter's stewardship, and that the University was looking to expand the programme further, beyond T&T's borders. The next step is to expand the programme into Guyana and establish linkages with Guyana's still infant petroleum industry and then go into Suriname, he said. He also noted that with the cross border gas reserves with Venezuela there may be the potential for linkages with one of the universities in that country.

Professor Gail Baccus, speaking on behalf of Dean of the Faculty of Engineering Professor Stephan Gift, said Jupiter was in his third year as Chair and "has been doing marvellous work for the department". She mentioned that he has been building linkages and bridges with industry, and had secured funding to bring on board research assistants and new MPhil and Phd students, as well as securing the funding for the purchase of vital pieces of equipment to rebuild the research laboratory, and even to sponsor research and teaching in the chemical engineering department and the food unit. Most of these initiatives can be traced back to MHTL's sponsorship of the engineering Chair, Sankat noted.

Dennis Patrick responded that MHTL was very pleased to continue this contribution to UWI for a

further five years, as part of its corporate governance policy and CSR programme to assist with the development of relevant educational programmes in Trinidad and Tobago. The company, through its predecessor T&T Methanol Company, first funded the endowment for the establishment of the Chair in Petroleum Engineering in 1997. The MHTL CEO noted that even though the company operated in the downstream sector, it depended on the upstream sector for raw material. "MHTL has recognised the vital role UWI's petroleum engineering programme plays in the provision of training and imparting of the technical skills needed in the upstream sector, and assisting in solving industry problems through practical research," he said.

Professor Jupiter explained that two examples of the research being done in the programme were radio frequency heating to improve the recovery of heavy oil in tar sands, and reservoir characterisation.

He also noted that the petroleum engineering programme has trained people who today could be found not only in energy companies in Trinidad and Tobago, but working throughout the world.

