

WINSTON SILL/

FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHER



From left: Professor Nigel Harris, vice chancellor of the University of the West Indies (UWI); Denise Eldemire-Shearer, widow of the late Prime Minister Hugh Shearer; Pearnel Charles (partially hidden), vice-president of the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU); Prime Minister P.J. Patterson; Governor-General Kenneth Hall; Ruddy Spencer (partially hidden), president of the BITU; Prime Minister-designate Portia Simpson Miller and Rheima Holding, wife of the Governor-General. All were gathered in front of the newly renamed Hugh Lawson Shearer Trade Union Education Institute, at the UWI, Mona campus, after the unveiling on Tuesday.

Hugh Shearer lauded

Trade union institute renamed in his honour

Rege Andrew
Gleaner Writer

THE TRADE Union Education Institute (TUEI), at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona campus, was on Tuesday renamed in honour of the late Hugh Shearer's contribution to the development of the trade union movement in Jamaica.

The TUEI was renamed the Hugh Lawson Shearer Trade Union Education Institute during a ceremony Tuesday, which was attended by several Government dignitaries, including Governor-General Kenneth Hall, Prime Minister-designate Portia Simpson Miller, UWI professors and scholars, trade union leaders and others.

Prime Minister P.J. Patterson struck a high note during his feature presentation and held the audience captive as he delivered a colourful, descriptive narrative about the works of Mr. Shearer in his capacity as a trade union activist.

Mr. Patterson rendered a glowing tribute to Mr. Shearer, Jamaica's third prime minister, whom he likened to a visionary in the development of trade union education in Jamaica and the wider region.

He said Mr. Shearer best understood the value of educating and training trade union officers, delegates and industrial relations practitioners to serve competently in that field and in the wider context of the region's socio-economic and political development.

"His remarkable contribution to the development of trade unionism is evident in the skills and creativity he brought to the

negotiating table," Mr. Patterson said. "But perhaps above all was his unspeakable belief in the values of trust, fairness, equity and integrity which epitomised his long and distinguished career as a negotiator par excellence."

The TUEI was established to better equip union workers with the tools for handling the mundane task of negotiators in a hostile labour and industrial relations environment.

In the 1950s, labour education was conducted at the Extra-Mural Department of the then University College of the West Indies and catered to industrial relations practitioners from among the three social partners, governments, employers and trade unions. Subsequent surveys were employed in the process of formulating a conclusive labour and adult education policy.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

In 1962, Mr. Shearer held discussions with a United States representative to Jamaica, during the post-Independence period, concerning the development of labour education programmes. Consequently, Mr. Shearer, in collaboration with the National Worker's Union's Michael Manley, and Hopeton Caven of the Trade Union Congress of Jamaica, laid the foundation for the TUEI's functions.

Professor Nigel Harris, UWI Vice Chancellor, provided background information on the TUEI which, he said, had trained thousands of labour union leaders and officers across the Caribbean.

"The institution is an exemplary signal of UWI's outreach programme and a proud product of Caribbean trade unionism," he said.