UDC and Aruba Collaborate to Promote Food and Water Security

The College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences (CAUSES) of the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) and the Island Nation of Aruba have signed a Memorandum of Understanding, entering an agreement to collaborate on capacity-building skills and knowledge in support of food and water security. The MOU, which was signed Friday, Oct. 3, marks the latest international collaboration for the University.

“This agreement signifies our joint commitment to a sustainable future; to a future of food security, of water security and of innovative ways to enhance economic productivity by utilizing the tremendous capacity of nature,” stated Dr. James E. Lyons, Sr., Interim President of UDC.

The Prime Minister of Aruba, The Honorable Michiel Godfried Eman, joined President Lyons and CAUSES Dean Dr. Sabine O’Hara for the MOU signing which took place at UDC’s Van Ness campus. Prime Minister Eman also holds the title of Minister of Science, Innovation and Sustainable Development.

“Science, Innovation, and Sustainable Development are precisely what we teach, research and offer through our five landgrant centers to the residents of the District of Columbia,” explained Dr. Sabine O’Hara, Dean of CAUSES and Director of Landgrant Programs at UDC. "We also seek to collaborate with likeminded partners around the world who share our vision of a sustainable future."

CAUSES embodies the landgrant tradition of the UDC. As such, the College is part of a rich history and national network of universities that focus on agriculture, applied technology, nutrition, and health. What sets CAUSES apart is that its programs focus on urban sustainability, and on innovative ways to produce food on small areas of land. Programs such as these allow CAUSES to take advantage of collaborations like the one with Aruba.

Aruba, an island nation in the Caribbean Sea located 15 miles north of Venezuela, is a diverse constituent country of the Netherlands. Only 11 percent of Aruba’s land is arable. The nation imports 90 percent of its food, and $3.162 billion of total goods annually. The island, has invested greatly in a sustainable future. Ten large windmills line the coast, and by 2020, the country will generate its energy from renewable sources, eliminating its dependency on fossil fuels. Other green initiatives are also underway to preserve the environment for future generations. The Prime Minister joined Dean O’Hara for an episode of CAUSES TV, to discuss the similarities and challenges between Aruba and Washington, D.C.
The College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences is playing a major role in helping Washington, D.C. to become more sustainable and its residents to be healthier and more food secure. Food security refers to having access to a steady, dependable supply of nutritious food that supports a healthy and active lifestyle. CAUSES has launched a number of community partnerships that connect the dots between locally grown food, nutritional health and economic empowerment. Its programs offer D.C. residents the skills to grow their own food, and the UDC research farm provides expertise to make urban farming a successful business venture. For more information on CAUSES, visit www.udc.edu/causes. For more information on Aruba, visit www.Aruba.com.

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An HBCU, urban land-grant, and the only public university in the nation’s capital, The University of the District of Columbia is committed to a broad mission of education, research and community service. Established by abolitionist Myrtilla Miner in 1851, the University of DC offers Associate's, Bachelor's and Master's Degrees and a host of workplace development services designed to create opportunities for student success. The University is comprised of the College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, School of Business and Public Administration, School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, a Community College and the David A. Clarke School of Law. To learn more, visit www.udc.edu. The University of the District of Columbia is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action institution. Minorities, women, veterans and persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply. For a full version of the University's EO Policy Statement, please visit: http://www.udc.edu/equal_opportunity. The University of the District of Columbia is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education - 3624 Market Street - Philadelphia, PA 19104 - 267.284.5000.