Simon Naitram

Undertaking an internship in the Research and Economic Analysis Department at the Central Bank of Barbados is a wonderful experience for any young economist. Not only do you get a front row view of the way in which the country's main financial regulatory body works, but you also gain the opportunity to interact with a wide range of people. The array of information garnered from that experience has provided me with an invaluable understanding for the future. Many things were learnt, including the intricate details of many Caribbean economies, the development of a research paper, data collection methods, expert use of statistical software and forecasting techniques.

What was even more enjoyable was the knowledge environment provided by the staff of that department, who were constantly willing to lend an ear or hand, or impart a piece of valuable advice. I enjoyed the opportunity to engage in frequent creative discourse with many of these excellent economic minds and even challenge their points of view. Their willingness to help and teach was extremely refreshing.

I was given the opportunity to work directly with the Governor of the Central Bank of Barbados, Dr. DeLisle Worrell, who not only provided me with excellent guidance, but each week delivered new food for thought with innovative and novel perspectives on every issue. Supervision by one of the most practiced and well-regarded economists in the region has provided me with wonderful enlightenment for the future. My departmental supervisor Shane Lowe was also an enormous help in guiding me towards my final goal of completing the research paper entitled 'Growth Forecasts for Foreign Exchange Constrained Economies'.

The activities which I was allowed to participate in included debates, workshops, department meetings and the Annual Review Seminar. In particular, the Annual Review Seminar provided me with the opportunity to present my work to a room full of learned economists and critical scholars who provided me with essential feedback. It also allowed me to interact with a number of knowledgeable minds from various organisations, institutions and countries.

What I found quite surprising was the fact that the experience quite closely aligned itself with the academic training I received at the University of the West Indies. I was even given motivation and feedback for my Master's thesis.

The experience has provoked the desire to extend my academic training with a view to becoming an expert in the field of economics. I am enormously grateful to CARTAC for the opportunity to be part of the internship programme at the Central Bank of Barbados.