



The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION



Embassy
of the Federal Republic of Germany
Port-of-Spain



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

Deep Sea Wonders of the Caribbean – Ready to Dive Off!

Official Sponsors Sign with NIHERST

On Friday 3rd January, 2017, four (4) sponsors will sign sponsorship agreements with the National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST) for the Deep Sea Wonders of the Caribbean project – an educational video series and book. Diamond Sponsor, Shell Trinidad and Tobago Limited, Platinum Sponsor, the German Embassy Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, along with Green Sponsors the Massy Foundation and Sagicor Life Inc. have come on board for this unique regional project.

The project is being executed by NIHERST in collaboration with the University of the West Indies (St. Augustine) and the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST). It aims to foster a more profound understanding and appreciation of the deep sea environment in the region, through the introduction and distribution of an educational video series and captioned photo book detailing this previously unexplored natural feature.

Little about the deep-sea environment has been known until just over a century ago. In 2013 and 2014, Dr. Judith F. Gobin, Lecturer, Department of Life Sciences, UWI, St. Augustine, was invited on board the Exploration Vessel (EV) Nautilus, alongside an international team of scientists. Four new deep-sea cold seeps 130 kilometres off the east coast of Trinidad, surrounded by a multitude and variety of sea life were discovered at a depth of 1200 metres. The United States Geological Survey estimates that the total amount of carbon locked away inside of methane hydrates of the cold seeps could be twice as much as the amount that exists in all the world's known fossil fuels.

Prior to this, limited information on the deep sea environment for the Caribbean existed. For Trinidad and Tobago, this was the first high quality videography and photography of extensive areas at depths greater than 2500ft. Inspired by the wealth of new information, research potential

and a large quantity of never-before-seen footage and photos, Dr. Gobin decided to explore this collaborative public education opportunity to develop a five (5) part video documentary series and a captioned photo book on the Deep Sea Wonders of the Caribbean.

The five (5) part documentary series will comprise the following segments:

- 1) The Exploration Vessel (EV) Nautilus' expedition to Trinidad and Grenada
- 2) The Deep Sea Environment
- 3) Trinidad's Deep Sea Communities
- 4) Grenada's Deep Sea Communities
- 5) Careers of a Deep Sea Expedition

The captioned photo book, will contain captioned/annotated imagery of components within the deep sea environment. Both resources will be made available to the region's general public. These resources are scheduled for completion in December 2017 and will be revealed at an official media launch. See attached the project description.

The media is cordially invited to cover this eventful, official agreement signing, and to witness photos of the Caribbean deep sea as part of a presentation, never before seen by the mass public. The presentation and the signing will take place at 9:30 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. respectively on Friday 3rd February, 2017 at NIHERST's office at #8 Serpentine Rd, St Clair.

For further information, please contact:

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Marketing and Communications Dept. at marketing@niherst.gov.tt / 622-7505 or 758-3381

About NIHERST

NIHERST is a statutory body established in 1984 to promote science, technology and higher education in Trinidad and Tobago consistent with national development goals. Its current work focuses on the development of a more diversified, knowledge-driven economy, based on the ingenuity of our people and their ability to create, adapt and use science and technology for wealth generation and national development. Many of its programmes aim to strengthen the innovative, creative and entrepreneurial capabilities of the general population. NIHERST is also engaged in research, such as in foresight and innovation, to support economic diversification; promoting innovation and the commercialisation of technology in priority sectors; and building global partnerships.



Find NIHERST on Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram
niherst.gov.tt

View previous series on the NIHERST Trinidad and Tobago YouTube channel:

Natural Wonders of the Caribbean

<http://www.niherst.gov.tt/publications/video-documentaries/natural-wonders-of-the-caribbean.htm>

Natural Wonders of the Caribbean - 2012 season

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL064E4494009CB8DA>

Natural Wonders of the Caribbean - 2005 season

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL24206FFC2D1A35B3>