



Ministerial Statement

To The House of Assembly

By

The Hon. DIALLO V. RABAIN, MP, JP

Minister of Education and Workforce Development

2018-2019 Financial Support for Bermuda College Students

Friday, November 23rd 2018

Mr. Speaker,

This morning I rise before this Honourable House to provide an update on the Government Grant awarded to Bermuda College to offer financial support to students for the 2018/19 academic year.

Mr. Speaker,

Let me first remind my Honourable colleagues that since becoming the Government last year, one of our first priorities was to increase the accessibility to Bermuda College for students in financial need. As the Minister of Education, I ensured that the Bermuda College was granted an additional \$300,000 for this purpose, which is now given on an annual basis to provide financial support to its students.

Mr. Speaker,

Members of this House will recall that the \$300,000 was used to financially assist students enrolled in three categories of study:

- i) Non-programme and programme academic division courses;
- ii) Professional and Career Education (PACE) programmes. This is a new benefit for students as prior to this, Bermuda College did not provide funding for students enrolled in the Division of Professional and Career Education (PACE); and,
- iii) Bachelor Degree programmes offered through the Bermuda College.

Mr. Speaker,

To be eligible for financial support, students were required to complete an application form and a worksheet to demonstrate financial need. Current students, already enrolled at the Bermuda College, also needed to have a grade point average of 2.00 or higher. The financial awards ranged from 50% to 80% of a student's educational costs that were defined as the value of tuition plus fees.

Mr. Speaker,

During the Fall 2018 semester, one hundred and thirty-two (132) students received a total of \$223,431. Sixty-two (62) students were enrolled in the Academic Divisions and seventy (70) in the Division for Professional and Career Education (PACE). Of this total, thirty-three (33)

students enrolled in the Bachelor of Business Administration degree programme in partnership with Mount Saint Vincent University, and six (6) enrolled in the teacher certification programme offered in partnership with the University of West Indies. The awards ranged from \$233 to \$8,600 with the average award per student being \$1,693 for the semester.

Mr. Speaker,

This additional funding of \$300,000 provided to increase accessibility to the Bermuda College programmes has impacted students in several ways:

- Students who did not meet the criteria for receiving funding from the Bermuda College's Financial Aid programme but demonstrated a need for financial assistance to pursue their academic goals benefited. This was particular to students enrolled in the PACE Division.
- Also students enrolled in the Mount Saint Vincent University programme were afforded the opportunity to take additional courses; thus, decreasing the length of time it will take them to complete their bachelor's degrees.

Mr. Speaker,

Let me share that earlier this month, I along with my Ministerial colleagues visited the Bermuda College campus. In fact we had the pleasure of enjoying a most delicious lunch in the Prospect Room that was prepared by students in the culinary arts and hospitality management programme. While there, a mature student enrolled in the culinary arts programme shared with us how she had been made redundant from her job and was in the midst of ascertaining next steps in her life. She had a love for cooking and after finding out about the additional monies provided by the Government for students in financial need to attend the Bermuda College, she decided to apply. She shared how the funding received is now supporting her to pursue a passion that she always had for culinary arts; one that she loves.

Mr. Speaker,

This is an example of what this Government is about. Helping those in need to obtain the education and skills they require for success in what they enjoy doing.

Mr. Speaker,

The 2016 Census Report shows that 51% of the population has some sort of post-secondary education, which is 6% higher than the findings of the 2010 Census Report. Although all demographics experienced an increase when compared to the 2010 Census, there is still a significant gap between the number of Bermudians and non-Bermudians with a post-secondary qualification, with only 46% of Bermudians having a post-secondary qualification compared to 70% of non-Bermudians. The additional funding provided to the Bermuda College reflects the Government's commitment to increasing the number of Bermudians with post-secondary qualifications, while also leading the way in demonstrating the value of higher education - planting seeds to encourage a similar mind-set throughout Bermuda.

Mr. Speaker,

Let me close by saying that the Government continues its efforts to support Bermudians who desire to pursue post-secondary education and require financial support. This was re-iterated in

the recent 2018 Speech from the Throne. We will ensure that Bermuda College is accessible to everyone.

Thank you **Mr. Speaker**