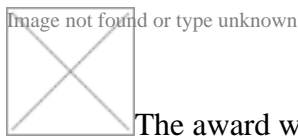


The LUCELEC 2021 SPISE Scholar Is A Budding Engineer

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Castries, August 18, 2021 – Remember the name Jynene Alfay. The 17-year-old is the 2021 St. Lucia Electricity Services Limited (LUCELEC) Student Programme for Innovation in Science and Engineering (SPISE) scholar. She completed the programme in early August with two awards - Most Improved Student in Calculus II and the Top Performer in Physics I.



The award winning performance continued the academic excellence Jynene has demonstrated throughout her young life. She received a 2019 National Excellence Award for CSEC Mathematics. Her trophy case also includes awards from the St. Joseph's Convent for outstanding performances in Physical Science, Mathematics and Geography. Her recipe for success is "prayer, hard work and practice".

Since the advent of COVID-19, LUCELEC focussed much of its sponsorship and donation budget on interventions for the country's response to the pandemic. SPISE is a noted exception. LUCELEC continued its partnership with the Caribbean Science Foundation, which organizes the programme, because of its commitment not only to education and young people but also because of the impact SPISE has on the development of regional innovation and science.

To date, one hundred and sixty nine (169) students from fourteen (14) Caribbean countries have benefited from SPISE since it began in 2012. In addition to MIT, SPISE students have attended Princeton, Harvard, Cornell, Howard and the University of the West Indies with one Rhodes Scholar who will pursue a Ph.D. in neuroscience at Oxford. The Saint Lucian SPISE success stories tell their own tale.

- Kesan Samuel (SPISE 2012 LUCELEC Scholar) completed her undergraduate degree in Biological Sciences at the University of Connecticut, and is starting graduate school (master's programme) in public health at Emory University.
- Gaius St Marie (SPISE 2014 LUCELEC Scholar) completed his undergraduate degree in Biochemistry from St Mary's University in Halifax.
- Quilee Simeon, (SPISE 2015 LUCELEC Scholar) completed his undergraduate degree in Computation and Cognition at MIT 2 months ago, and is starting graduate school (PhD programme) next month in Brain and Cognitive Science at MIT.
- Dion Recai, (SPISE 2016 LUCELEC Scholar) completed his undergraduate degree in Computer Science at UWI - St Augustine, and is currently an intern at Healthpointe Solutions in Texas.

- Aidan Bousquet, (SPISE 2019 LUCELEC Scholar) and Hailey Boriel, (SPISE 2020 LUCELEC Scholar), are both starting their undergraduate degrees next month at MIT.

SPISE is a 5-week course for Caribbean students gifted in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Traditionally held at the UWI Cave Hill campus in Barbados, its curriculum includes university-level courses in calculus, physics, biochemistry, entrepreneurship, and Caribbean unity, as well as hands-on projects in topics ranging from computer programming and robotics to electronics and renewable energy.

Jynene was part of the 10th annual SPISE class. She was one of 24 students from eight countries who attended the summer programme, held virtually for the second year due to COVID-19.

Jynene was enthusiastic about what she learnt at SPISE. “At the end of SPISE, I could understand how a basic feedback control system works and optimize a controller for a levitating magnet system, pitch a new product idea to investors and venture capitalists, create a business plan, code a game in python, and understand the key concepts in Biochemistry as well as how to perform an indirect ELISA. I also acquired additional knowledge in Physics and Calculus and got a better understanding of some foundational concepts in these subjects. I also learned how to manage my time more efficiently and some useful tips for when applying to university.”

Jynene wants to make the planet better. She is interested in the field of Material Science and Engineering because it combines all the subjects she is passionate about - Mathematics, Physics, Biology and Geology.

“With Material Science, I will be able to enhance or develop new materials to find solutions to some of the issues confronting the present reality, particularly those disturbing the climate. Some of my goals include creating a more efficient and affordable semi-conductor to be used in solar panels, and finding a way to solve the very prominent plastic problem,” she adds.

The budding scientist is currently enrolled at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College.

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