



**2017 - 2018**

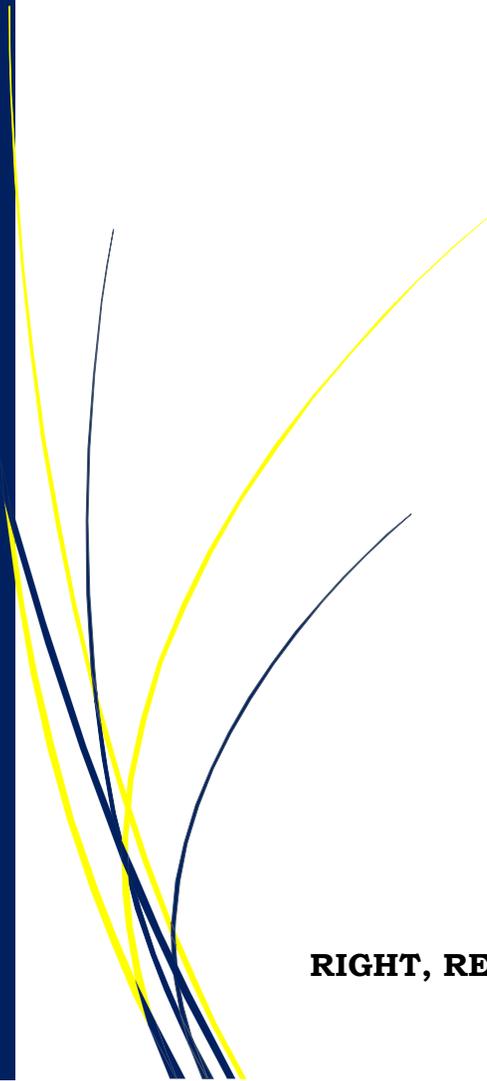
# **Manifesto**

For the Office of President  
The United Student Movement

**DESMOND CLARKE**

**U.S.M.2017 - 2018  
PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE**

**RIGHT, READY, RESPONSIBLE... INTEGRITY, INNOVATION,  
CREATIVITY!**



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# Who am I?

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“Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.” – Warren Bennis

I've always prided myself on being a person of vision. Being a person of vision for me, simply means that in all practicality the sky is only the beginning and not the limit. It means that there is no ceiling on my aspirations and, it means that ultimately, I will deliver excellent service in any area of responsibility that is or will be entrusted to me. Come March 29, 2017; when the mandate is given for me to serve as President of the United Student Movement (U.S.M.) here at Northern Caribbean University it will be no different as vision and excellence collaborate to ensure unparalleled and unforgettable service and success.

There are four things that I could use to define who I am and what qualifies me to stand in solidarity with and in representational leadership of the students of this noble institution which are in fact the core of the U.S.M. My *Service Qualities, Experience in Leadership, Passion for People*, and my *Drive for Excellence*.

## Service Qualities

- As a past student of the Excelsior Community College, I was trained in Computer Programming and Systems Analysis. With this training I have garnered the requisite skill to enter any organization and not only analyze the foundational policies and systems under which it currently operates, but to also

design superior systems and develop procedures which ensure better where there was only good, and best where there was only better.

- Upon my entry into the Adventist church, I was trained as a Master Guide, Advanced Master Guide (PLA), Senior Youth Leader, Drill Instructor, Counsellor and Curriculum Instructor. All these training and the over ten years putting them into practice has not only ensured that I can lead but also relate to the vast diversity of students present in the NCU student population.
- I currently serve as President of the East Jamaica Conference Club and Technical Advisor for two community youth groups. I have also served the students of the East Jamaica Conference Club as President for the academic year 2013 – 2014. NCU male student ambassador 2014 – 2015, and United Student Movement Treasurer 2015 – 2016.

## **Leadership Experience**

- Leadership came natural from as early as High School. Throughout my years in high school I served as Student Monitor for all five years, Class Treasurer in my last two years; Track Team Treasurer; CIS Club Treasurer, Peer Counselor, and Senior Prefect. All this while still advancing academically.
- In college I served as chaplain and lead programmer for my batch.

- Since coming to the church I have served Zone One Youth federation of the East Jamaica Conference as, Curriculum Instructor, Drill Major, Youth Elder, Pathfinder Director, Superintendent, Senior Youth Leader and Executive Committee Member. As a result of my input in leadership in this regard, the Zone one youth federation, which comprises 24 youth societies across the corporate area, continues a legacy of excellence though I am no longer in Kingston.
  
- As far as my leadership in the workplace goes, over 10 years has groomed me for such a time as this. I have worked in the Immigration and Citizenship Division of the Ministry of National Security, at New Era Finance I worked as an Expediting clerk for a short while until I was promoted to Accounting Officer, Field Officer, Credit Officer, and a member of the Internal Auditing Team. I have worked at the Statistical Institute of Jamaica, and the Office of the Prime Minister. I have worked in investments as well as I have worked on the projects team for two national projects. I was also an entrepreneur working as a computer technician. All this experience has prepared me to serve you.

## **Passion for People**

- Prior to coming to NCU, I was leader of the finance team for a national project that was geared towards raising funds for Early Childhood Institutions across Jamaica.
- I have volunteered as a tutor for CSEC Mathematics and Information Technology.
- I have volunteered on countless other projects which involve children's homes etc.
- Since being at NCU I have volunteered at the Prep School and you will always see me hanging with you, the students whether on the court, the student lounge, or anywhere else we happen to meet.

## **Drive for Excellence**

- By God's grace I have served and continue to serve and represent the students of Northern Caribbean University as an overall rounded student example.

As a prerequisite of sorts, these and other accomplishments and qualities have molded me into the leader that is needed to lead the U.S.M. at such a time as this. Our upward mobility as a movement hinges on someone that can bring the R.A.I.N. This Student population requires someone who is:

R – RIGHT, READY, RESPONSIBLE and will REPRESENT you

A – AVAILABLE, ACCOUNTABLE and ACCESSIBLE

I – A person of INNOVATION and INTEGRITY

N – A person who is a NATURAL leader

My campaign and subsequent leadership is built on four main words VISION, RESPONSIBILITY, INNOVATION, and EXCELLENCE. As such, the team that you will elect and place me as president will be exercising their responsibility to you by enacting a vision through innovation to ensure excellence. The agenda for the way forward rests on planning for all sectors of student life. With this vision outlined and enacted, we will see the U.S.M. using the little resources that we have in an innovative way to ensure that you whom we will serve will succeed. Truth of the matter remains, I ONLY SUCCEED IF YOU SUCCEED... WE ARE U.S.M.

# Charting the Way Forward

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Compared to the myriad of real issues faced by the students of N.C.U. there some that in my estimation needs to be taken off the back burner and brought to the forefront. The reality is that not all battles fought are won in the same way. The way of the universe has its foundations in RELATIONSHIPS. As our students are trained as future world leaders, the U.S.M. must be the catalyst which propels these quality and qualified world leaders out into society. As such the following proposals are made:

- Constitutionally strengthen the voice of the students of Northern Caribbean University through Representational Advocacy at the highest level of the university's organizational chart where we can directly affect the decision-making process. This involves a push for the U.S.M. President being the voice of the students not only university's administrative council level but also periodically getting access to the board of governors.
- Create relationships with the student governments of all other tertiary institutions across the island and even overseas to ensure partnerships for shared interests, emerging trends and best practices at the student level.
- Institute a per semester electronic student wide evaluation of the U.S.M. Council in an effort to assist in keeping the leadership of the movement working, accountable and relevant.

- Revamp and Reintroduce the monthly “Gazebo Talk.” This is a monthly forum or talkback session directly with the president where student concerns can be discussed and the way forward immediately considered. We would also educate students on our shared rights and responsibilities. “Gazebo Talk” will be alternated between East Campus and West Campus.
- Ensure greater monitoring capacity of the movement. This will see the U.S.M. council generating much more of a presence as it relates to member organizations thus ensuring optimal service to students.
- Regular audit and the requisite action taken as it relates to all member organizations and its quality of service to the students.
- The institution of social intervention initiatives developed and executed by us as students in an effort to bridge the gap between students and the community. Students would benefit in service learning and volunteer hours.

## **An Academic Life to be Proud of**

This is an academic institution. Our main purpose here is academics. Critical thinking is the highlight of a person with a superior thought process. The N.C.U. student must have the best chance at academic development and cementing their place among the best critical thinkers in the world. With this in mind, the following are proposed:

- Thorough audit of all academic programs and undertakings of the U.S.M. to ascertain the effectiveness of each while doing the research to find the best practices going forward in collaboration with other student governments in other institutions.
- Thorough audit of the current U.S.M. scholarship program including the book voucher initiative to see how best we can make improvements that will motivate the academic effort of our students.
- Build collaboration between the VP of Academics and the VP of Spiritual Affairs which will see the launching of an annual spiritual clubs debate along with the academic clubs debate. This will ensure a debate season which will culminate with the winner of both competitions facing off for the title of “Ultimate Debate Champion” on a purely ethical issue.
- Build collaboration between the VP of Academics and the Projects Director to launch a tutoring and/or homework center in strategic locations around the

university environs to build student confidence in their academic abilities, while fostering a greater sense of volunteerism and also building various networking relationships.

- Continue to advocate for Academic Club Presidents to be the representatives of the students in their departments at faculty advisory meetings throughout all faculties.
- Personally meet with the President and VP of Academics from each academic club to put in place a proposal for a working student advisory system that we can take to administration. This will seek to eliminate concerns that students have with their program of study especially around graduation time.
- Collaborate with the VP of Student Services and Social Affairs and the VP of academics and the Director of Projects to launch the “iTutor” initiative. This will see the U.S.M. carrying out a survey of the most problematic courses on campus and forming tutoring groups headed by fellow students, whether by volunteerism or minimal charge, to address these academic shortfalls.
- Begin dialoging for the refurbishing of the Study Rooms on all Residence Halls including improved Wi-Fi access. With the understanding that all facilities should be optimally available to any student who has paid the extra to reside on the dorms.

- I do not subscribe to the notion that the best Nursing school in the island, The Hyacinth Chen Nursing School, should be without its own computer lab. I will lead this U.S.M. administration in the dialogue of coming up with suggestions on correcting this.

# **Prudent Financial Planning**

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It is a now known fact that at least 8% of our students leave each semester because of financial difficulty. A great percentage of those who happen to remain, struggle and at times endure great humiliation financially. Though there will be the obvious reality of financial constraints. The U.S.M. has the responsibility to be innovative its financial planning. We have to find innovative ways of doing more with even less:

- Continue the dialogue with the department of student services to see how best we can keep more of our students who leave because of financial constraints.
- Re-introduce and collaborate with the Student Workers Association and the VP of Student Services and Social Affairs to advocate for more attractive benefits to student workers. Student workers are hard workers and should be treated accordingly considering the cost of living.
- There are many companies/corporations who would sponsor U.S.M. led Initiatives. We would seek out these willing sponsors in order to bolster the financial position of the movement.
- Begin a thrust to have U.S.M. has in stock sports jerseys and other U.S.M. merchandise (caps, key rings, T-shirts etc.) at the beginning of the school year. This will create a steady stream of income for the movement.

- Collaborate the VP of Finance and Director of Projects to launch what will become an annual financial expo. This will see a wide range financial bodies (N.H.T., JMMB, JN etc.) converging on the campus of N.C.U. to do presentations geared towards not only planning our financial lives as students but also our lives when we would have graduated.
- Instead of spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to go to far away territories for the USM church and school impact; we will impact home. We will choose schools and churches in Manchester for two main reasons. To build relationships and to cut associated costs so that we can put those funds to more effective use on campus.

## **The Welfare of the Students**

Mandeville isn't just a university town. I will say without apology that Mandeville is and N.C.U. town. The overarching welfare of our students depend on the number and caliber of relationships that we are able to forge. The welfare of our students will be paramount to an administration under my leadership:

- Re-ignite talks with the Manchester Chamber of Commerce and businesses in Mandeville to reconfirm and create additional discount arrangements for N.C.U. students upon presenting ID cards.
- Lobby companies to donate materials that can be used by students on practicum in an effort to reduce the costs associated. This will see nurses and other science disciplines as well as teacher education students for example receiving relevant material. The funds saved by students in this effort can go towards travelling and food costs.
- The security of our students is of great concern to me. I will continue to lobby the security forces for an intensified presence (especially at nights) in surrounding communities.
- Engage the relevant parties in developing initiatives that will be geared towards fostering such a relationship with communities of the university environs. This relationship will see residents of these communities owning the N.C.U. student

as their own. In so doing, the security forces will protect us, we will protect ourselves and the residents of Mandeville in general will protect the N.C.U. student.

- Institute a complaints system where less than acceptable living conditions (especially those that create a security threat) can be reported to the U.S.M. by renting students and the requisite actions taken.

## Cutting Edge Social Advancements

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The old Jamaican proverb states, “All work and no play, makes Jack a dull boy.”

This proverb advocates for the social life of all persons. Innovation and creativity will ensure a better social life for all students:

- Advocate for and lobby sponsors to renovate our sporting facilities. This will elevate student pride as we utilize the services of the courts etc.
- Gain sponsorship for our sporting teams to ensure that they are able to continue to represent us at their highest capability.
- Creatively strengthen socials by partnering with U.S.M. member organizations to ensure a rich diversification of social interaction. This will see the return of themed socials.
- Our international students pay considerably more to be here while not asking for a lot. A regime under my leadership will advocate for the return of the “International Diversity Week” and not just a weekend. This will allow for adequate time to showcase the diversity of cultures present on this campus while generating a greater sense of appreciation for each.
- Advocate for the addition of an annual school cookout or cook-off as a part of the social offerings of the university.

## **A Most Appealing and Powerful Religious Experience**

Though an academic institution, Northern Caribbean University advocates for Quality Christian Education. The religious life of the students as such cannot be overlooked. We will seek to foster the spiritual growth of each and every student regardless of denomination:

- Firstly, the improvement of the spiritual life of the greater student population must begin with the U.S.M. Council. As such I will lead out in the development of the spiritual life of the council by working with the VP of Spiritual affairs to hold regular prayer sessions with all council members.
- Hold monthly interfaith dialogues with representatives of denominations other than that of Adventism. As Paul declared that he was, “all things to all men that he might win some,” we must understand that creating and strengthening interfaith relationships on campus can only be a positive in addressing the reality of the religious and denominational diversity on this campus.
- Launch of the Religious Clubs Debate competition.
- Seek the assistance of the varying congregations across the university environs in renovating the prayer rooms on all three Residence Halls. This will be done by asking these congregations to donate books and other relevant material and also

by putting in place an atmosphere designed to foster solitude. After these renovations, the chaplains of these Halls will be mandated to oversee them.

## Conclusion

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Looking at these plans one may think it a tall order to achieve all these especially in one year. Additionally; one may ask the question of resources, however; a lack of resources should not and cannot mean that the ocean of creativity and innovation is dry. It is a fallacy to put before you, the backbone of the U.S.M. unrealistic goals and it is also a gross irresponsibility to lead you into the majoring of minor issues. The kind of student government we ask you to form, as only you have the power to, is one of responsibility, innovation, vision, and excellence. The kind of student government I ask you to form is one of paramount representation and service to you, with me, DESMOND CLARKE as your chief servant. By the grace of God there is no question in my mind as to whether or not we will succeed as I am fully confident that we will. So on March 29, 2017 VOTE DESSI4PRESSI because, I ONLY SUCCEED IF YOU SUCCEED... WE ARE U.S.M.