

# THE 2012 SPISE STUDENT PROJECT

## ARE YOU A YOUNG CARIBBEAN STUDENT INTERESTED IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY?

If so, then soon you will be given the chance to enter into a program, that will not only teach you about various sciences, mathematics and humanities subjects, but also allow you to have hands on training in the making of certain electronics and robotics. **YES! SAID ROBOTICS!**

For four weeks, ten young students ranging in ages from 15 to 17, from across the Caribbean: Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Nevis, Belize, Jamaica and St.Lucia, got to explore their love of the sciences, as well as learn many new techniques and subjects.

During the 2012 Student Program for Innovation in Science and Engineering (SPISE), held last Friday at the 3Ws Oval, these ten students presented the various projects that they would have participated in.

and also to basically encourage more science and technology based entrepreneurship. And it was in light of this mission that the SPISE program was created.

The program which is the organisation's first, is where a small group of dedicated individuals who are interested in science and technology are taken from around the islands and are then encouraged to 'pursue their dreams to become scientists and engineers and to stick with it'.

The students would have stayed at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill campus and learnt subjects such as Calculus, Physics, Bio-Chemistry, Humanities, 'One Caribbean Concept', as well as Mandarin. Yet, that's not all, as they also had two hands on projects, including robotics and electronics.

As noted by Wardle, the students were very busy as they worked hard over the four weeks and remained very dedicated. One of the goals of the CSF is to have more students take a very serious look at the idea of science, engineering and technology as career choices, as oftentimes they may opt to get into other fields.



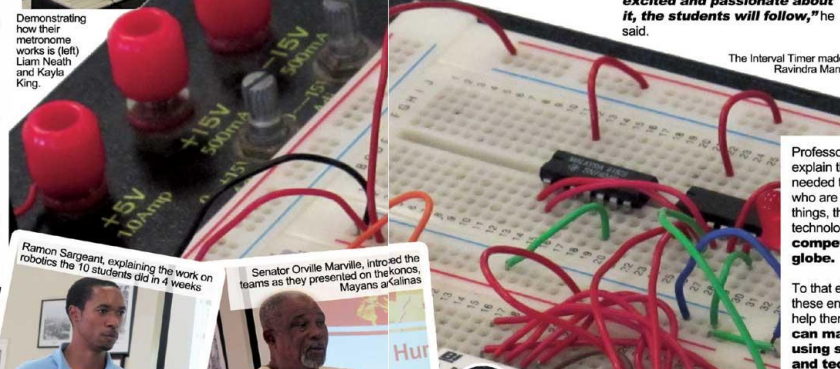
Demonstrating how their metronome works is (left) Liam Neath and Kayla King.

## So what plans does the CSF have to keep the students interested in both science and engineering?

"We believe that this program is only the beginning. These kids are already interested in science, so we are sort of preaching to the converted, but as you know, they can backslide, as we say in Barbados and some of them might go off into other disciplines," said Wardle, before continuing, "So our goal is to stay with these kids, try to keep them engaged, even after they leave here. Get them first to apply to some of the best universities in the world, including local universities and stay with them over the 4 years of

undergraduate school. Beyond that it might be a little bit difficult to stay with them into graduate school . . . we want them to take the fruits of science tech and engineering, all the way to the Masters."

When asked what type of educational reform he would like to see in the Caribbean, he immediately highlighted the fact that engineering was missing in the region. "It should be taught earlier in schools and taught better. Which means we need more competent teachers. Teachers should be trained better and so the first thing we would have to do, is start training teachers, so that they understand the material and teach it competently. If they are excited and passionate about it, the students will follow," he said.



The Interval Timer made by Ravindra Mangar.



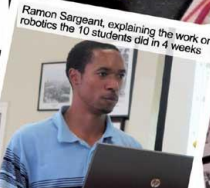
(left) Ravindra Mangar, shows how his Timer works, as Stephen Mendes looks on.

Professor Wardle then went on to explain that he believed the region needed to produce more graduates who are able to make and build things, then convert them into technology that can be sold competitively across the globe.

To that effect, it is important to grow these entrepreneurs from early, and help them to understand that they can make it in the world, using science, engineering and technology.



Professor Cardinal Wardle, Interim Executive Director, CSF, delivering the welcoming remarks.



Ramon Sargeant, explaining the work on robotics the 10 students did in 4 weeks



Senator Orville Marville, introduced the teams as they presented on the honours, Mayans a'Galinas



All ten of the students, came from around the Caribbean to learn more about Science, Technology and entrepreneurship. They even learnt some words in the Chinese Language Mandarin.

by Ashlee Cox