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## A boost to the sciences

8/8/2012

The Caribbean Science Foundation is looking to create a new wave of interests in the field of science and engineering within the region.

Barbadian-born Professor Cardinal Warde currently serves as Executive Director of the Foundation in addition to teaching at the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

Yesterday, he spoke with The Barbados Advocate at the inaugural Student Program for Innovation in Science and Engineering (SPISE), which kicked off with a breakfast at the 3Ws Oval at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill campus.

In the interview, Professor Warde explained that the Foundation was established to assist with the diversification of the economies of the Caribbean region by harnessing science and technology for economic development, whilst helping to raise the standard of living.

He expressed that the Foundation wanted more Caribbean companies based on science and technology that had the potential to compete globally, arguing that this would help to bring foreign exchange into the regional economies resulting in less dependence on the tourism sector.

He outlined, "To do this, we have a two-prong approach. Firstly, we have to reform our education system in STEM – science, technology, engineering and mathematics – from elementary right through to university so that we are producing graduates who are entrepreneurially-minded who go out there and start companies around the science and technology field."

"In addition, we want to boost entrepreneurs that already exist by helping them to locate seed capital to get their businesses off the ground," he added.

He explained that it was much easier to raise money for educational purposes within the region compared to funding entrepreneurship. "You are investing in young people and everyone understands that; to raise money to give away to start a company is much tougher," he said.

"So one of our goals is to go out and raise money outside of the region and selectively find small businesses to send in their proposals," he disclosed. (JM)

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