

MIT-styled programme comes to the C'bean

TEN bright young scholars from across the Caribbean will now get a jump start on their careers in the field of science and engineering.

This is thanks to the Caribbean Science Foundation (CSF)'s Student Programme for Innovation in Science and Engineering (SPISE).

The two-year-old organisation was launched in Trinidad and is currently headquartered in the CARICOM Research Building on the UWI Cave Hill campus. Yesterday, it hosted the inaugural

SPISE programme with a welcome breakfast at the 3Ws Oval, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill campus.

Heading the programme is Barbadian-born Professor Cardinal Warde of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), with his wife and biochemist Dr. Dinah Sah, also of MIT.

The students, aged 15-16, will take part in a four-week science and technology immersion programme with live-in teaching assistants and academic instructors from the region as well as the United

States and China. Students will also be exposed to the Chinese language with Mandarin lessons as well as humanities and ethics training facilitated by Senator Orlando Marville, CBE.

Prof. Warde explained that the programme was modelled after an existing MIT programme which had been very successful over the years. He noted that some of the outcomes of the programme in the United States included students pursuing further academic interests in the science and technology field, as well as starting companies in new technology areas.

In an interview with the *Barbados Advocate*, Dr. Sah noted that the major goal of the programme was to open up Caribbean stu-



Students Sorayah Jitta of Trinidad, Isaure Milian of Belize, Zackary Gurdon-Cobham of Barbados and Kesan Samuel of St. Lucia attending the SPISE programme welcome breakfast yesterday.

dents to possibilities of careers in diverse areas of the science and engineering disciplines.

She said, "We ultimately would like to see more young people from the Caribbean engaged in the science, engineering and mathematical field for

their careers. The students will be exposed to broader career choices than they might have been originally; they will also make connections here which will be very important. Many of the persons involved with the SPISE programme will help the stu-

dents further their aspirations and help them establish the necessary connections."

Prof. Warde expressed his disappointment over the lack of diversification of the engineering discipline in the region, and was hopeful that the SPISE initiative would help to correct that imbalance.

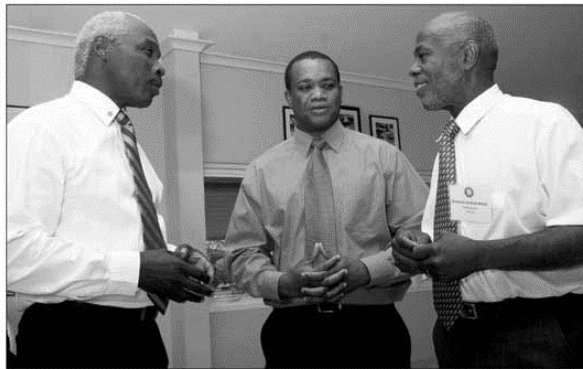
"The islands in the Caribbean have been so reliant on tourism that the type of engineering which I want to see develop is not here. [In Barbados, an engineer is a civil engineer," he said.

"I am talking into this electronic device [smartphone] right now. Our graduates can design all of the circuits in it. Those people are called engineers."

"A [smartphone] will also need optical engineers; we do not do these kinds of things and our people can do it. We do not necessarily have to manufacture them; they are manufactured in China, the United States doesn't manufacture them," he added. (JM)



Dr. Dinah Sah of MIT speaking with the Barbados Advocate at the inaugural SPISE programme.



Market Head of Personal Banking at RBC Royal Bank, Horace Cobham, with sponsor representative for Caribbean Development Bank, O'Reilly Lewis chatting with co-ordinator of the Student Programme for Innovation in Science and Engineering (SPISE), Professor Cardinal Warde at yesterday's welcome breakfast.