



Ms. Vilma McClenan was unanimously elected as the second president of the Jamaican Association for Distance and Open Learning (JADOL), succeeding the founding president, Mr. Wesley Barrett. She brings to the position a wealth of experience, having spent that past twenty years of her long and illustrious professional career as an educator working in the development and delivery of distance education. She is currently the academic programme coordinator at the University of the West Indies Distance Education Centre (UWIDEC), a post she has held since 1996, with responsibility for co-ordinating the delivery of distance education programmes across The University of the West Indies (UWI). Prior to this she was one of the early contributors to the establishment of distance education at the UWI in the 1980s. She holds a Masters in Distance Education from the University of London, and is fully conversant with all aspects of the instructional design process for the development and use of an integrated mix of media and has used them in delivering education and training both within and outside of UWI.

Not only is Ms. McClenan versed in the instructional process, but she also has worked with international agencies to develop proposals for the funding of distance delivered programmes and implemented same, and has been involved with all aspects of establishing and staffing distance learning sites including drafting job descriptions, training staff, preparing and procuring equipment and other resources and providing for a range of learner support services. She also has broad-based experience in strategy planning and managing the delivery and evaluation of distance education programmes for academic qualifications as well as for non-academic certification. All these skills combined with her strong leadership qualities make her well suited to the task of further developing JADOL from her post as president.

Her international experience includes a stint in 1998-1999 in the Distance Learning Unit of the World Bank Institute in Washington, D.C, where she worked as an instructional designer, responsible for the conversion of face-to-face courses (e.g. *“Strategic Communication in Bank Projects”*) for delivery to World Bank countries, using an integrated mix of video-conferencing, video tapes, print and guest presenters. She was also involved in the planning and delivery of training in distance education techniques to World Bank Task Team Leaders.

Vilma was a member of the steering committee that was responsible for the formation of JADOL in July 2000, and chaired the committee that drafted the constitution. She also drafted the constitution for the Caribbean Association for Distance and Open Learning (CARADOL) that had its inaugural meeting in March 2004.

The JADOL president has participated in a number of meetings and conferences on distance education and has given presentations relating to distance education, including “*Providing Student Support Services for Distance students of The University of the West Indies*” made at a conference on education in Hawaii in January 2004, and was an international guest speaker at the Australian Adult Learners Week Celebrations in 1999, speaking on “*Experiences in distance education at The University of the West Indies*” and “*Adult Education in Jamaica and the Caribbean*” and “*Literacy in the Caribbean*”.

Her other passions include adult education and science education. She is a member of the Jamaican Council for Adult Education of which she was First Vice President from 1996 to 2002, the Caribbean Regional Council for Adult Education, which she chaired from 1998 to 2002, and since 1998 is the Caribbean Vice President on the Executive Committee of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) representing the twenty two countries of the English, French and Dutch speaking Caribbean. With a Diploma in Education and a B.Sc. (Botany, Zoology) from UWI, her work in science education includes science teaching at the then College of Arts, Science and Technology (1970-1975), at The Mico Teachers’ College (1975-1978), Curriculum Development Officer at the UWI Science Education Centre (1978-1983), and Director of Science and Technology in the Science, Technology and Research Department (STRD), Ministry of Agriculture – (1987-1989).

Among the several science publications that she has authored and co-authored are numbered many text books, including the Carlong Publishers’ *First Steps in Science* series, the *Integrated Studies* series for Grade 1, and is currently completing the co-authoring texts for Grades 2 and 3 in that series.

In 2000, for her work in science education she has received the Silver Musgrave Medal for Science Education, and the Jamaica Teachers Association **Golden Torch Award** for “35 years of Dedicated Service to Education”, and the Henry I.C. Lowe Award for Excellence and Creativity in Science and Technology Education. In 1991, she copped the Science, Technology and Research (STAR) Award for Excellence in Science Education, at which ceremony she presented a paper on *UWIDITE* [UWI Distance Teaching Enterprise] *as a resource in science education*.