



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### UG Library Receives Highly Prestigious Albertina Perez De Rosa Award for Koha Open-Source Library Management Project

- *Guyana Accepts Invitation to Host Association of Caribbean Universities, Research and Institutional Libraries (ACURIL) Conference in 2024*

The University of Guyana Library was the recipient of the highly prestigious Albertina Pérez de Rosa Award at the just-concluded Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries (ACURIL) Conference held from June 5-9, 2023 in Kingston, Jamaica.

The award was presented by the ACURIL Puerto Rico Chapter in recognition of the excellent collaborative work between the libraries of the University of Guyana's Turkeyen and Berbice Campuses, for piloting, implementing, and documenting the success story of the Koha Open-Source Library Management System (<https://koha-community.org/>) which was used to automate the services and resources of the two (2) libraries.

The three (3) researchers who documented the Koha ILS implementation at the University of Guyana were Mrs. Gwyneth George, Dr. Simone Bernard and Ms. Somattie Sayrange. The award was received by Ms. Sayrange on behalf of the University of Guyana Library, Turkeyen and Tain Campuses.



*Ms. Somattie Sayrange displaying the plaque received on behalf of the University of Guyana Library*

The annual ACURIL Conference brings together some three hundred (300) librarians, information professionals and archivists each year from across the Caribbean and Latin America to examine and discuss the current challenges of libraries in the Caribbean, and to discover and debate new trends and ideas in the information world that would help to counteract some of the issues faced by libraries in order to help them to reposition themselves to remain relevant in the New Information age. It is also a forum for recognising excellence, creativity and innovation in libraries in an attempt to stimulate growth and development and sharing of ideas and experiences in libraries.



*The Guyana contingent in attendance at ACURIL 2023 in Jamaica; (from left to right) Ms. Simone LaRose, Ms. Donette Washington, Ms. Debra Lowe and Ms. Somattie Sayrange*

Each year, the Dr. Albertina Pérez de Rosa Award recognises and honours the excellent performance of collaboration in information institutions, communities of practice, or the unique efforts of local or regional information units. This recognition serves to record the quality of the efforts evidenced through the implementation of successful projects for the benefit of its clients in the Caribbean.





Koha is an open-source software (OSS) Library Management System (LMS). The University of Guyana Library embarked on the automation project in 2007 to automate its services and was the first to do so in the English-speaking Caribbean using the Koha Open-Source software. Choosing a Library Management System suitable for the needs of the University of Guyana Library was a challenging task but enabled the library to deal with some of its limitations related to space, dissemination and retrieval of information, budgetary limitations among others, to facilitate the general improvement in the services offered to its patrons. In this venture, the library was ably supported by the University's Department of Software Services under the leadership of Director, Mr. Sekhar Moses Mallampati.

The Koha Integrated Library System was launched at the Berbice Campus Library in 2011 as a pilot project and at the Turkeyen Campus Library in 2012. Students, Staff and General Public can search for all the collections in UG's Library using the 'Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC)' feature in Koha software - <https://library.uog.edu.gy>

During the closing ceremony of the 52nd Conference on June 8, 2023 in Kingston, Jamaica, Guyana also received the mantle to host the 53rd ACURIL Conference in 2024. This event will be held under the theme "From Metadata to Big Data: Trends and Hidden Treasures in Libraries, Museums, and Archives of the Caribbean".

It is to be noted that this is the first time the conference will be hosted in Guyana and it comes at a time when the country is experiencing rapid development in the field of information access through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs). The University of Guyana will take the lead role and will collaborate with its local and regional counterparts to plan and execute the event at the highest international standards.

Accepting the invitation to host the 2024 ACURIL Conference after receiving the unanimous endorsement from approximately three hundred and thirty (330) participants at the 2023 Conference, Mrs. Gwyneth George, University Librarian and member of the ACURIL Executive Council, remarked: ***"This is a wonderful opportunity for Guyana to host this Conference in this auspicious moment of the development of this country. It will offer an excellent platform and a unique opportunity for libraries across the spectrum of Guyana to meet with their colleagues to discuss the challenges and opportunities that confront libraries in the era of the evolving metadata and big data. It is also a wonderful opportunity for the libraries to have important and***



*significant discussions with the Government of Guyana about the continued importance of libraries in the strategic development thrusts of the country and in subscribing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).”*



*Mrs. Gwyneth George, University Librarian and member of ACURIL Executive Council*

Guyana’s acceptance of the mantle to host the Conference was also commended by the ACURIL incoming President, Mr. Erick Toussaint, who thanked the Local Organising Committee for Guyana for their participation at the Jamaica conference and their willingness and commitment to host ACURIL 2024.



*ACURIL President, Mr. Erick Toussaint*

The University of Guyana Library was established in 1963 with its parent institution at Turkeyen and is now a dual campus entity with the establishment of the Berbice Campus Library in 2000.

To learn more about the University of Guyana Library, please click here:

<https://uglibrary.uog.edu.gy/> .

To learn more about the exciting academic programmes and services being offered by the University, please visit here: <https://uog.edu.gy/>.



## UG in Brief

The University of Guyana, now in its 60th year, started its operations in October 1963. “UG” as it is fondly referred to offers 150 plus programmes in over 60 disciplines in online, face-to-face or blended formats. UG delivers in a Guyana-based system across eight campuses. It is the largest, oldest, most advanced and only state University in Guyana with a student population of over 10,000.

“UG” has provided education, training and research for over 50,000 alumni over its 60-year history. UG’s national and global impact and footprint are significant. Its graduates have risen to populate the commanding heights of national, regional and international organisations of repute in over 150 different disciplines. The mission of the University is to discover, generate, disseminate and apply knowledge of the highest standard for the service of the community, the nation, and all mankind within an atmosphere of academic freedom, innovation and universal respect.

UG’s forward-thinking Blueprint 2040 is currently setting the course for the University’s future design and institutional response to the changing needs of Guyana, the region and the world. UG is currently celebrating its 60th anniversary and is stepping up its focus on becoming one of the leading and most sought-after educational institutions in the world.

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