

PRESS RELEASE

Statistical Institute of Belize Holds Signing Ceremony for Scholarship Recipients

Belmopan, July 25, 2019

The Statistical Institute of Belize (SIB), in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the University of Belize (UB), held an official ceremony at the SIB's headquarters in Belmopan on Thursday, July 25, 2019 to mark the signing of contracts for three full tuition scholarships awarded to students pursuing further studies in two newly established academic programs at the University. These scholarships, two for a Bachelor's Degree in Statistics and one for a Certificate in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), are funded under the IDB's ongoing technical cooperation program with the SIB for strengthening and building capacity within the Belize National Statistical System.

Both the degree in Statistics and the certificate in GIS are new program offerings at the University of Belize. They were designed specifically to meet the capacity building needs of the NSS, through a collaborative effort between UB, the SIB and the IDB. In addition, the courses for these programs are offered mostly outside of work hours, in order to accommodate persons who are working full time. These programs will provide agencies within the National Statistical System a much needed opportunity to enhance their own statistical and cartographical capacities, two areas that were identified as critical gaps that needed to be addressed in a 2016 IDB-administered assessment of the SIB and the Belize NSS.

Recipients were selected through a competitive application process, based on past academic performance, financial need, submission of a personal statement, in-person interviews, and their prospects for long term contribution to the country's National Statistical System. The two scholarships for the Bachelor's degree in Statistics program were awarded to Mr. Armando Shal, presently employed with the Ministry of Health, and Mr. Ronald Orellana, a recent graduate of the University's Associate's degree in Mathematics program. The third scholarship, for the certificate in GIS, was awarded to Mr. Dorian Enriquez, an employee of the San Ignacio Town Council. The scholarships cover the full cost of tuition and fees for all three programs, an estimated combined value of approximately \$40,000 BZ.

