

The Law Collection (formerly the Law Library) of the College of The Bahamas

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ABSTRACT

The Law Collection of the Harry C. Moore Library and Information Centre was first established in August 2000 at the time that the College of The Bahamas entered into a collaborative LL.B programme with the University of the West Indies. This paper profiles the law librarians, the Law Collection and the UWI/COB programme.

INTRODUCTION

In August 2000, the Law Library, now known as the Law Collection, was established when the College of The Bahamas implemented an LL.B program in collaboration with Barbados' Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI). The Law Library reported to the Libraries and Instructional Media Services department of the College of The Bahamas.

Early COB library reports suggest that the Law Library was small, with seating for 20 students and was located in the Bahamas Hotel Training College/School of Hospitality and Tourism Studies building. In April 2011 the library relocated to the 2nd floor of the Harry C. Moore Library and Information Center and now can accommodate 125 students (Ingraham, 2011). The Law Collection also has 10 computer stations with internet access, of which three stations have been reserved for law student use. In addition the collection has a photocopier, printer and

study rooms that include whiteboards that were donated. The staff currently consists of a law librarian, two library assistants and one part-time law librarian. Since early 2013 the Law Collection is also accessible via various social media outlets, such as Facebook and Twitter (see <https://www.facebook.com/lawlibraryhcm1> and https://twitter.com/hcm1_lawlibrary).

The Law Librarians

The Law Library/Law Collection has been led by a succession of law librarians:



Yemisi Dina, MLIS, LL.B, M.A., was the first Law Librarian, serving from July 2001 through August 2005. She was instrumental in establishing the Law Library at the College of

The Bahamas. She started her career in 1995 as Law Librarian at the Adeola Odutola Law Library, University of Ibadan, Nigeria and is now an Associate Librarian, Head of Public

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APA Reference: Adams, E. A. (2014). The Law Collection (formerly the Law Library) at the College of The Bahamas. *The International Journal of Bahamian Studies*, 20(2), III 48-50. <https://doi.org/10.15362/ijbs.v20i2.242>

Services at the Osgoode Hall Law School of York University in Toronto, Ontario, Canada (Osgoode Hall Law School, n.d.).



Evania A. Thompson, J.D., M.L.S. was the Law Librarian at COB for five years between January 2006 and December 2010. Evania was formerly the Chief Law Librarian at the New York City Law Department and Deputy Director of the Los Angeles County Law Library (Thompson, 2001). Evania is now in private practice in New York (Thompson, n.d.).

Barry Shanks J.D., M.L.S., was the Law Librarian for only a short period, between August and December 2011. Prior to joining COB, Barry was a Reference Librarian / Assistant Professor at University of New Hampshire's School of Law Library and is now retired (Shanks, n.d.).



Errol Adams, J.D., M.L.S., joined the College of The Bahamas in January 2013. Errol came to the Bahamas after working as a Law Librarian in New York City Riker's Island Law Libraries, New York City's Civil Court Law Library and a major law firm in New York City.

The Law Collection

The Law Collection at The College got started in 2000 with a small collection of fewer than 200 items and nearly 15 years later boasts a total of over 9000 items: this includes materials on reserve, in the reference section, and in the general circulating collection. The collection includes more than eight Caribbean-specific law journals in print and many other

law journals available in full text through online databases as well as many in print.

The Law Collection remains an arena "important to students' life as it allows them to interact with lecturers online, find study sheets, reserve items," and other materials including unreported Bahamian judgments and access to legal databases such as LexisNexis™, Westlaw™, JustCite™, Carilaw and Hein Online™ (Dina, 2002, p. 24). The Law Collection includes major law texts, the most recent Bahamas statute laws, some Hansards, up-to-date copies of the *Bahamas Gazette*, unreported judgments from the Bahamian Supreme Court and the Industrial Tribunal along with a collection of academic articles.

The Law Collection serves mainly COB/UWI law students and COB's law faculty, COB students, alumni who are either practicing lawyers or students at the Eugene Dupuch Law School and other members of the Bahamian Bar. The Law Collection remains interested in increasing its user membership and in expanding its collection.

For three consecutive years the Law Library hosted an annual fundraising and educational luncheon for the local legal community called Lunch and the Law (Lunch & the law, 2009). The event was the brainchild of former law library staff member Tameka Butler-Burton and involved all staff including Library Associate Reynold Cartwright.

The UWI/COB Law Programme

An LL.B is a first degree in law offered to students interested in pursuing law as a career and has been offered at COB since 2000 with an entering class of 32 students (Nassau Guardian, 2002). According to UWI's records office a total of 163 students have graduated since the programme's inception to 2014 (Berry, personal communication, 2014). COB signed an agreement paying UWI over \$100,000.00 annually to offer the UWI's,

LL.B programme in the Bahamas using COB facilities and using primarily Bahamian permanent and part-time faculty. However, in the fall of 2014 COB commenced an autonomous LL.B program, with a first year class of 10 students and offering the same courses taught in the UWI LL.B programme but taught by mostly Bahamian-trained lawyers. In June 2017 COB will graduate its first students from its autonomous LL.B

programme, phasing out the COB/UWI programme as students complete the jointly-offered programme.

In future, it is hoped that a law faculty or law school will be established at COB as it is presently a department in the School of Social Sciences.

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