

Med School graduates twelve, honours Sexton and Wright



Young Christopher Simmons, on stage at the graduation ceremony, shows how he is learning to walk as a result of his surgery in Florida, last October.

ST. EUSTATIUS--The 27th graduating class of the University of St. Eustatius School of Medicine received basic science diplomas at ceremonies held Thursday evening at Fort Oranje. Although there were 43 students in the class, most had taken their final semester in the United States, so only a dozen attended the graduation ceremony.

Mistress of Ceremonies Alida Francis noted that this is the 10th anniversary

of the school's founding, and that this semester's graduation brings the total number of graduates so far to 639.

Speakers for the event included Statia's Commissioner of Education Roy Hooker, Campus Provost Ezzeldin Nasser, Member of the Board of Governors Murvin Gittens, and graduating students Laura Wright and Tyler Sexton.

Faculty Senate President George Odongo presented

the certificates, which went to, besides Wright and Sexton, Abdullahi Ali, Natalia Doni, Oksana Kostroski, Michael Marshall, Heidi Mehlman, Jua Pak, Matthew Price, Joyce Rankin, Mridula Sunkara, and Xasan Warsame. Dr. Nasser presented a special University Award for service to the school to Wright, and Provost Awards to faculty members Sachel Kumar, Achmed Nasser, and Anouk Kumar. Gittens presented the final faculty award to Ezzeldin Nasser.

Gerard Berkel, Chairman of the Department of Hyperbaric Medicine, presented advanced certificates in hyperbaric medicine to Mimi Sunkara and Joyce Rankin; diplomas in this specialty also went to Sexton and Wright. Acting Lieutenant Governor Gerald Berkel presented the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Community Involvement to Sexton.

The final event on the program was the appearance on stage of seven-year-old Christopher Simmons and his family. Through the auspices of Sexton and the rest of the Statia community, Christopher travelled to Tampa, Florida last October for surgery to improve his ability to walk. He is a victim of cerebral palsy, as is Sexton.

Christopher's mother, Christina Simmons, expressed her deep gratitude to Sexton, the medical school, and the community, while Christopher demonstrated his improving ability to stand and walk.