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**University of the West Indies Lecturer Honored for Research on
Effects of Immigration on Student Academic Performance**

BLOOMINGTON, IND. — Barbados native Dr. Orlena P. Broomes, lecturer in the School of Education at University of the West Indies—St. Augustine in Trinidad and Tobago, has received Recognition of Merit in the 2011–2012 PDK International Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award program. Her dissertation, “More Than a New Country: Effects of Immigration, Home Language, and School Mobility on Elementary Students’ Academic Development,” investigates the challenges of immigrant children and how these challenges impact their academic performance.

“This year, PDK received more than 40 exceptional entries for its dissertation award, and Dr. Broomes’ research stood out to the review panel,” said Dr. William Bushaw, PDK International’s executive director. “Research is central to PDK’s mission, and we are thrilled to honor Dr. Broomes’ work. She has made an important contribution toward advancing the field of education.”

In her dissertation, Broomes explored individual student performance on two of Ontario’s provincial assessments related to three factors: a student’s immigration status, whether the student changed schools since starting 1st grade, and whether the student spoke English at home.

“This study shows that Canadian immigrant students appear to perform similar or better than nonimmigrant students and speaking a language other than English does not inhibit academic proficiency,” said Broomes, who earned her doctoral degree at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto. “These results indicate that strategies in Ontario supporting positive achievement for immigrant students appear to be working, but policy makers should be cautioned that the aggregation of all immigrants can mask crucial differences between immigrant groups.”

The PDK Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award is sponsored by the PDK Educational Foundation, which provides support for the projects of PDK International, a global association for educators. This award, which is designed to further research in education, is given to the PDK member whose dissertation best meets the criteria of sound scholarship and shows the most promise for improving education. In addition to the Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award, four members received Recognition of Merit for their dissertations. PDK received more than 40 submissions for the award, which was selected by a panel of education researchers.

An announcement of Broomes’ award will be published in the May 2012 issue of *Phi Delta Kappan*, the nation’s leading journal on education policy and practice.

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About PDK International

Founded in 1906, PDK International is a global association for professional educators. The organization's mission is to support education, particularly public education, as the cornerstone of democracy. More information is online at www.pdkintl.org.

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