

PROFILE of the Week

By Dr. DHANPAUL NARINE

Khalleel Mohamed's 'Learn to Read' Program

Khalleel Mohamed is one of the earliest Master's graduates from the famous History Department of the University of Guyana (UG). In the seventies, the Department led by Sister Noel Menezes, and others, produced a number of distinguished graduates. It focused on local research at the Master's level and was the flagship Department of the University.

Khalleel was born in Maryville, Leguan, in the Essequibo Islands. It is one of the most picturesque islands in Guyana. Khalleel completed his primary education in Leguan before proceeding to the University of Guyana. He also taught in the school system in Guyana. His tour of duty as a teacher lasted for sixteen years.

After his graduation from UG Khalleel was appointed as the Assistant Archivist at the National Archives in Guyana. He was stationed at the Church Street office. Khalleel's responsibilities included advising the Minister of Information on the border dispute between Guyana and Venezuela.

In addition to working in the Archives Khalleel also worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where he was a Second Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He later became a lecturer in history at UG and Sister Noel Menezes remembers him with great affection.

I first met Khalleel at the Archives while on a research assignment for Sister Noel Menezes. He was friendly and helpful. During our meeting two events stood out. A number of scholars would visit the Archives for research purposes. One day,

a bespectacled young man with a beard and a brown briefcase visited. We were fascinated as he spoke about his experiences in Africa and the Caribbean.

The young man was Dr. Walter Rodney and he became a frequent visitor at the Archives. It was the summer of 1975 and I had signed up to do his course at UG in September. I would remind him how much I looked forward to being in his class.

Dr. Rodney's appointment was rescinded by the University but that did not stop him from sharing his knowledge with students. The second event was Khalleel's passion to write books for children. He would discuss with Dr. Rodney, and others, his ideas of authoring books for the children in Guyana's schools.

Khalleel wanted to develop a reading program to benefit the children in the schools. He would spend hours outlining his ideas and the mechanisms for his 'learn to read' books. Khalleel had the opportunity to put his writing skills to work after he migrated to Canada. He put pen to paper and wrote two fine books 'Tapestry of Life' and 'Terror Island.' The book launching was held in New York at which Dr. Gary Girdharry, another distinguished luminary from Leguan, was present.

Khalleel's most outstanding effort came in 2016 when he published

his 'Learn to Read' series. The book has been described as a unique

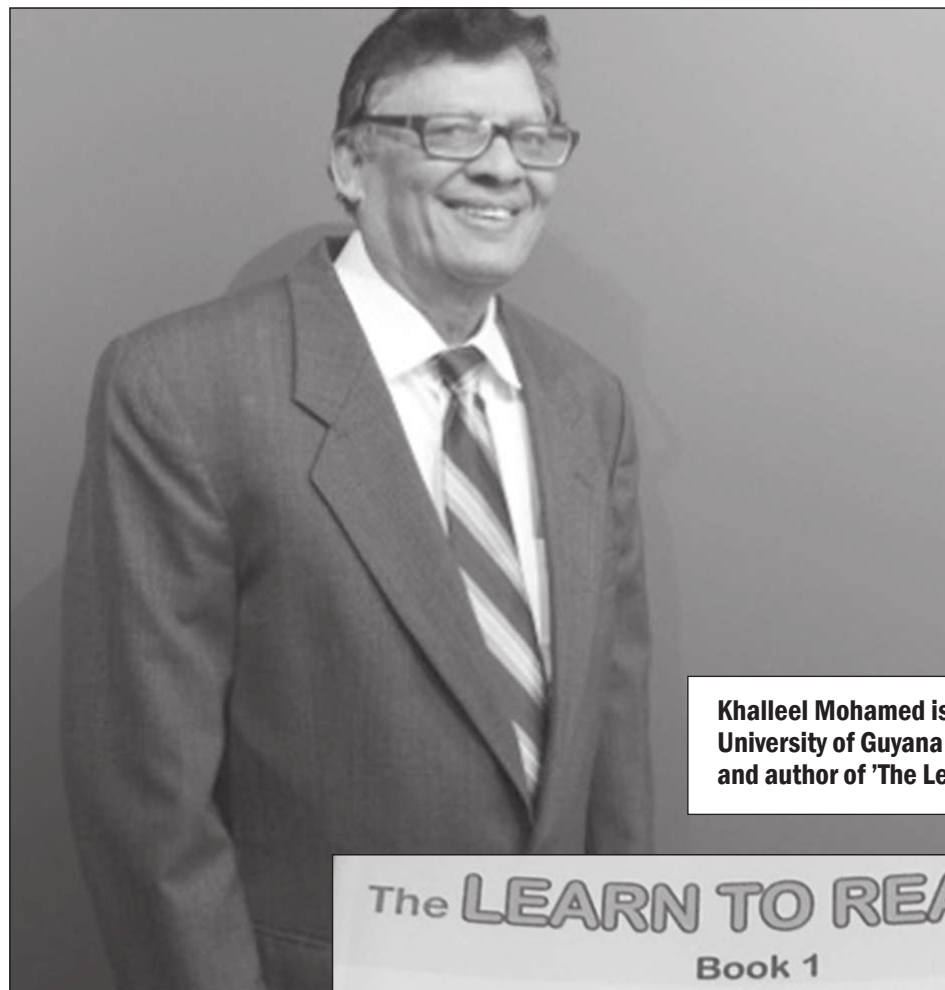
method of teaching reading to pre-schoolers. It engages their senses of sight and hearing. There is repetition of select letters of the alphabet, while emphasizing the short 'a' vowel sound.

Khalleel credits a number of persons with

the success of his reading program. They include Chaofeng Bai for

the beautiful illustrations, his editor Sallahuddin who was a former principal and Pauline Hussain for her secretarial work. Khalleel's wife, Lila, is a teacher with more than twenty years of experience and she gave him unparalleled support. Their children Tony and Shakeel, and their families, were also most supportive.

Khalleel plans to advertise his program on social media, including Youtube. He can be reached at khalleelmohamed1@gmail.com. We wish him and his family all the best in the future.



Khalleel Mohamed is a graduate of the University of Guyana with a Master's Degree and author of 'The Learn to Read' series.



The 'Learn to Read' series is an acclaimed program for early learners.