

**ALICIA**

**CATO**

**PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY FOR DCC 407-01**

I grew up on the lovely Island of Trinidad in a close family with my parents, sister, and brother. The Trinidadian culture is a very progressive and festive one and is known for its amazing dishes and the land of calypso and steelpan. The culture is a multi-racial one where we strive to live out our motto- “where every creed and race finds an equal place”. The southern Caribbean Island produces and exports oil, asphalt, steel, rice, and other commodities.

I attended Caribbean Union College and became actively involved in the diverse student body, where students attended from many Caribbean islands and other countries. It is here my interest in the natural sciences was peeked. My journey continued when l transferred to Oakwood College in Huntsville Alabama and enrolled in the occupational therapy preprofessional phase program. I completed the BSC in Occupational therapy at Howard University in May 2000.

As an occupational therapist, I worked in a variety of settings- School-based, acute care, subacute, and long-term care settings including home health.

In 2009, I completed an MBA with a concentration in Health Service Administration. In 2017 I completed the medication aide certificate program and opened my Assisted Living Residence - Berkley Springs Assisted Living, emphasizing a focus on functional independence.

Throughout the 5 years, we provided meaningful service to our community. I was able to use my expertise to manage operations, train staff, review/implement policies, care for diverse residents, support their families, and manage a pandemic successfully by following all the DOH and CDC guidelines so residents/staff were not impacted.  Towards the end of the COVID pandemic, we accepted only respite and hospice residents. After accomplishing our short-term goals, we chose not to expand and in 2023, temporally closed the facility with plans to reopen at a future date.

 In my quest to improve my clinical skills, I enrolled in an LPN accelerated program which concludes in October this year. I also took the opportunity to complete the OTD program at Howard University and l expect to graduate in June 2025. My goal is to gain a specialty in assistive technology and neurorehabilitation and relocate to Trinidad where I could serve in the position of Dean of Allied Health Professions at the University of Southern Caribbean.

 I am excited to contribute to the continued success and growth of the department. As an alumnus, I am looking forward to leveraging my knowledge to guide USC’s Allied Health Department to even greater achievements. I am deeply impressed with USC’s commitment to innovation, diversity, and the pursuit of excellence in healthcare education. I am enthusiastic at the prospect of collaborating with the talented faculty and staff to shape the future of the Allied Health Professions at such a respected institution.



