

UNIVERSITY of the VIRGIN ISLANDS

UVI

magazine

2011, Vol. 12

Laying the Foundation

- **Progress on the Path to Greatness**
- **Giving to UVI:
Examining the Art of the Ask**
- **Community Outreach
Attracts 3,300 Young Men**

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UVMAGAZINE
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**VICE PRESIDENT FOR
INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT**
Dionne V. Jackson

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Patrice K. Johnson

COPY EDITORS
Gary Metz and Nanyamka Farrelly

WRITERS
Nanyamka Farrelly, Amber Knight,
Ayesha Morris, Judi Shimel,
Leslyn Vern Tonge

PHOTOGRAPHERS
Quiana Duncan
Nanyamka Farrelly
Tina Henle
Eric Johnson
Gary Metz
Dale Morton

GRAPHIC DESIGN
MagsEpps.com

COVER CONCEPT
Padilla Design

PRINTING
Island Business Graphics

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Public Relations Office
University of the Virgin Islands
#2 John Brewers Bay
St. Thomas, VI 00802
T: (340) 693-1057
F: (340) 693-1055
e-mail: pr@uvi.edu

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World Wide Web address:
<http://www.uvi.edu>

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T: (215) 662-5606

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“The foundation on UVI’s Path to Greatness has been laid.”

Creativity. Innovation. Passion. These are the driving forces contained within this volume of UVI Magazine, the theme of which is, “Laying the Foundation.” Whether it is the creativity that a National Science Foundation grant and a UVI professor’s research indicate are critical for effective problem solving, or innovation evidenced by a new academic center on St. John, the University of the Virgin Islands is infused with energy.

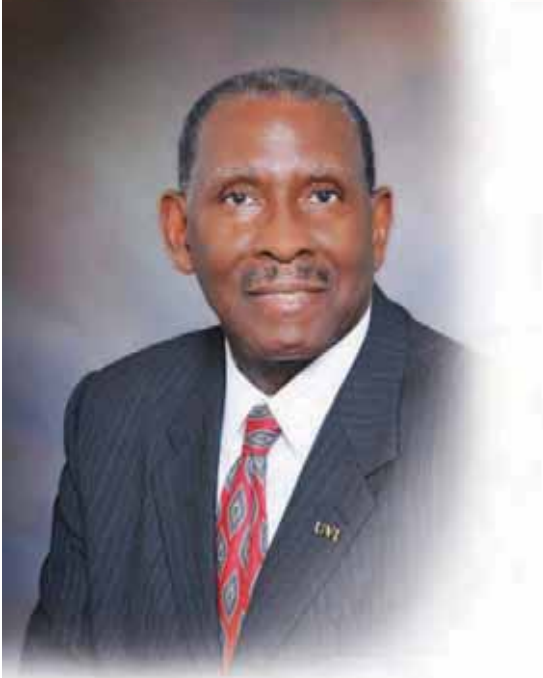
UVI is a wellspring of ideas and discoveries conceived in an environment where intellectual passions are celebrated. Consider, if you will, 2011 graduating senior Leonardo Jose Bardomero, who likens pure mathematics to poetry. At UVI, Bardomero’s research into triunitary perfect numbers was supported by a National Science Foundation grant. Bardomero took what he learned to an international conference where, as a substitute for his faculty mentor, he successfully exhibited his findings.

Those who witnessed the St. Thomas commencement address of Derron Ambrose of the Class of 2011 have no doubt about the passion with which he spoke. On St. Thomas and St. Croix, the more than 3,000 young men and adults who attended the MAN-UP male empowerment conferences could feel the passion on stage and in the audience. An athlete, a pastor, an entrepreneur and successful entertainers came together, in a momentous event, to tell their stories in order to make a difference in the lives of young men in the Territory. Their commitment to reaching and connecting with young people was palpable. The University’s Brothers With a Cause organization has proved its mettle.

Both campuses were treated to the wisdom of two iconic, pioneering women – former ESSENCE magazine editor Susan L. Taylor and educator and humanitarian Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole. Separately, Taylor and Cole (UVI’s first non-posthumous honorary degree recipient) touched students and non-students alike with their wit, intellectual vigor and homegrown sensibilities.

With all of the year’s notable events, speakers and accomplishments, one truth has emerged. The University of the Virgin Islands is proceeding in accordance with a strategy that is working. In only two years, UVI has become a more fiscally responsible, high performance institution focused on quality. In keeping with the Seven Management Values presented by President Hall in the first days of his administration, the foundation on UVI’s “Path to Greatness” has been laid. 

Patrice K. Johnson
Editor-In-Chief



The Journey Toward Greatness Continues

When I became the 5th President of the University of the Virgin Islands in August 2009, I challenged members of the University community to join me on a journey towards “greatness.” That challenge was embraced and it has served as a guiding aspiration for UVI’s future. During the last two years we have been working collectively to “lay the foundation” for this quest for greatness. Before any great edifice can be constructed, there must be a strong foundation upon which the building stands. UVI already had a strong foundation which was laid by many presidents, faculty and staff who preceded me. Yet that foundation needed reinforcement in certain key areas. The foundation for greatness resides within, and emanates from, the people, programs, and spirit of an institution. We have attempted to attract more people, add new programs and reinvigorate the spirit of UVI in order to construct this “Great University.” The success of these efforts has inspired me to believe even more in the inevitability of this quest.

Contained within the pages of this magazine are some of the initiatives, programs, and people who are “laying the foundation” for this magnificent journey. One could argue that we are laying the foundation as we build because we already see significant levels of progress being added to the institution. An impressive group of new faculty, administrators, staff and cabinet members have joined our existing dynamic core and are assisting in the work of laying the foundation and building this edifice of academic excellence.

During the past academic year we collectively launched two new centers of excellence (the Caribbean Center for Green Technology and the Center for the Study of Spirituality and Professionalism); opened an Academic Center on St. John; opened the doors of the Wellness Center on the St. Thomas campus; designed and implemented an historic Man-Up Conference that attracted over 3,300 male students; launched a new female initiative – Sisters with Purpose – with the assistance of Susan L. Taylor, former editor of Essence Magazine; launched the UVI Goes Green Initiative; expanded and enhanced the library facilities on both campuses to optimize the electronic availability of academic resources to faculty and students; secured a \$5 million gift commitment for an endowed chair in entrepreneurship and a student competition; increased alumni contributions by 96 percent and overall contributions to the Annual Fund by 34 percent. We have simultaneously enhanced our facilities and remained true to our mission, relative to community engagement, through the completion of the Brewers Beach restroom facilities. We also launched the “Why UVI?” public relations campaign which is laying the foundation for more students, donors, and friends to better appreciate the University’s unique contribution to the Virgin Islands and the region.

Academically, we achieved record enrollment for the Fall 2010 semester; implemented the master’s degree program in Counseling Psychology; and developed and approved a new Bachelor of Business Administration degree with a focus on Hospitality and Tourism. We have also implemented a Center for Student Success, which will increase the possibility that all of our students can achieve their academic dreams. Working in conjunction with local educational leaders, we launched a P-16 Collaborative that is creating new programs to enhance the quality of secondary education throughout the Territory. We graduated an impressive group of new leaders and awarded our first non-posthumous honorary degree to Dr. Johnnetta Cole. Our nursing program received reaccreditation and our business program underwent its first accreditation site visit. We have achieved these goals, and many others, despite the fact that we have had to absorb numerous budget reductions. Laying a foundation does not occur without challenges and surprises, but the determined builder always continues to completion.

I hope you will enjoy reading UVI Magazine. It will provide you with a glimpse of some of the excitement, creativity and endless possibilities that exist within the University of the Virgin Islands. From wherever you stand, I encourage you to join us in this quest. The foundation has already been laid, and now the hard work and fun can begin. 🇧🇲

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Hall". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David Hall
President



Miss UVI Daniella Henry.

Miss UVI

The Queen and Her Court

Daniella Henry was crowned Miss UVI in April. Henry also won the Miss Intellect, Miss Popularity and her share of the Best Business Wear segments of the competition. She is a native of St. Croix.

Shamelle Farrington was named first runner-up and won the competition's Best Ambassadorial Presentation segment.

Danielle Christian was named second runner-up and won the Miss Photogenic, Best Performing Talent and Best Evening Wear segments of the competition. Briana Henley won the Miss Congeniality and a share of the Best Business Wear segments. 



Miss UVI contestants, from left: Daniella Henry, Daniella Christian, Briana Henley, Shari Alfred and Shamelle Farrington.

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Commencement Marshal Dr. Aletha Baumann leads the faculty procession on the Albert A. Sheen campus on St. Croix.

tossing them back into the ocean, knowing that if she did not, they would die from exposure to the sun. Although the girl was told that she could never get all of them back into the ocean, she knew that she made a difference in the life of each starfish she was able to touch. “I am asking you to model your life after that girl!” Dr. Cole said. “Be idealistic. Believe that you can save all the starfish.”

Angel Dawson, commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Finance, delivered remarks on behalf of Governor John P. deJongh, Jr. “It’s no secret that this is a difficult time to enter the workforce,” Dawson said. “You can look at it as bad luck or as opportunity. Now more than ever we need you. We need your minds, your ideas,” Dawson continued. “The world is changing and the young at heart lead change. It is your time.”

Graduate Derron Ambrose was a commencement speaker for the St. Thomas campus, while Sana Hamed was the commencement speaker on St. Croix. In his remarks, Ambrose used an analogy of boiling water to describe what it took to reach the milestone of graduation. “There are many meanings attached to the word *degree*,” said Ambrose, who earned the highest grade point average in the undergraduate class on the St. Thomas campus. “A degree can be used as a measurement of angles or temperature. People sometimes refer to a college degree as a piece of paper,” he said, “but to us it means more than that.” Ambrose described water in a kettle on the stove. Moving the water from 211 to 212 degrees Fahrenheit makes a big difference that creates steam, he said. “Steam can then be used to create power.”

“A degree for us makes a fundamental difference,” Ambrose said, noting the hours of sacrifice and hard work needed year after year to pass courses in order to graduate. “We have made

Make a difference was the collective message at UVI’s 47th Annual Commencement exercises on both St. Thomas and St. Croix in May—held May 14 and 15, respectively. Keynote speaker and honorary degree recipient Dr. Johnetta B. Cole gave the graduates a list of things to consider as they begin a new chapter in their lives. Dr. Cole is the director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, a position she assumed in 2009. She has had a distinguished career as an educator and humanitarian and is president emerita of Bennett College for Women and Spelman College.

“You need to get or remain passionate about learning,” she said. “You can’t stop learning now. At my age I’m having the time of my life, learning every day.” She told the graduates to be idealistic, go above and beyond in all they do, serve others and practice tolerance.

Dr. Cole told the story of a young girl who, upon seeing dozens of starfish washed up on the shore, began



Derron Ambrose, who was selected as commencement speaker by his St. Thomas campus class, delivers his address. Ambrose also earned the highest grade point average in the undergraduate class.

N C E M E N T



UVI Board of Trustees Chair Alexander Moorhead and UVI President Dr. David Hall present Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole with her honorary degree. Later, Dr. David Hall presents Chaselle McConnell with her degree on the Albert A. Sheen campus on St. Croix.

it,” he said. “We have achieved a state of change.”

UVI conferred 286 degrees: 102 on St. Croix and 184 on St. Thomas. Chaselle McConnell earned the highest grade point average in the undergraduate class on St. Croix. She was the only summa cum laude graduate in her class. McConnell hopes to make a difference by becoming a teacher and training the next generation of leaders. “I really cherish the education I received at UVI and all that I

learned from my classes, the professors that I had and the people that I met,” McConnell stated following commencement. “I really want this to be a motivation to any student,” she said of her accomplishment. Dedication to course work, sacrificing time and believing that she could accomplish her goals despite challenges helped her to be at the head of her class. “It’s a model that anyone could adopt,” she said. “I really want to see more summa cum laudes, magna cum laudes and

cum laudes.”

UVI President Dr. David Hall congratulated the graduates, declaring them destined to set the world on fire. “Many of you came through circumstances that may have crushed others,” Dr. Hall said. “This is your launch, not your landing. I, as president, charge you to go out into the world and make it a better place,” Dr. Hall said in closing. 📺



The anticipation and excitement of the graduating class was palpable at commencement on the Albert A. Sheen campus on St. Croix.



Students enrolled in Music 134 – Steel Band Ensemble – on UVI’s St. Thomas campus took time to share their island culture with cruise ship and megayacht visitors at the Yacht Haven Grande complex on Wednesday, April 13.





Friends of the University of the Virgin Islands are often impressed to find that the breadth of its curriculum includes agricultural, environmental and biological research.



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Pastor Dexter Skepple (left) addresses the audience at the MAN-UP conference. Entrepreneur Farrah Gray (right) speaks with a MAN-UP audience member on the Albert A. Sheen campus on St. Croix.

Male Empowerment

Conference attracts 3,000 young men on two campuses

It was a rainbow of colors in the UVI Sports and Fitness Center as uniform-clad young men from junior high and high schools throughout St. Thomas and St. John gathered for the historic male empowerment MAN-UP conference in February. The young men left their differences behind and embraced their similarities as they were motivated by other successful

men like former NFL athlete Donovan Darius, entrepreneur Farrah Gray and Pastor Dexter Skepple. St. Thomas natives Timothy and Theron Thomas of Rock City entertainment completed the charismatic line up of speakers for the conference.

The message to over 3,000 young men who gathered for two days on St. Thomas and St. Croix was to find

their life's purpose, work hard and never give up.

"You are special. You were made to dominate. You were made to succeed," Darius told the young men. "Inside each of you is greatness. It's up to you if you tap into it or not."

Darius told his life story of growing up in Camden, New Jersey, with his mother and a father who was in and out of his life. Athletics was the opportunity that would make it possible for him to better his life.

Each of the speakers connected with the young men in some way, each coming from humble beginnings and overcoming adversity to succeed.

"Brothers don't fight each other," keynoter Gray told the young men. "Brothers don't kill each other. Brothers don't pick red or blue. Brothers pick each other to support each other," he said. He spoke about growing up poor in the inner city of Chicago, watching his mother suffer a heart attack from the stress of working three jobs to support the family. Although the world expected little from him, he knew he had to make life better for his mother.

"Never allow anyone's perception of you to become your reality," said Gray,



More than 1,500 young men attended the MAN-UP conference in the UVI Sports & Fitness Center on the St. Thomas campus.

who earned his first million dollars through his company, Farr-Out Foods. “Young people are not the leaders of tomorrow, they are the leaders of today,” Gray told them. “Find out what God put you here to do. Be the best you, because everybody else is taken,” he said. “People must ask themselves three questions in order to be successful,” Gray continued. “What comes easy to me, but is hard for other people? What would I do, and do it for free? How can I give back?”

As a child Darius asked his pastor to pray for him to be able to take care of his family. He also prayed throughout a ten year career in the NFL. “The more I played, the more I thanked God for the gifts he gave me,” Darius said. “The harder you work, the more grateful you become.”

During the question and answer segment, Gray fielded several questions, including how he became a millionaire, what he did with his first million dollars and if he really believed that each of the students could become a millionaire.

“I don’t believe you can be a millionaire,” Gray answered. “I believe you can be a billionaire,” he said. Gray promised a student from Addelita Cancryn Jr. High School a scholarship for his display of confidence. The student scored a chuckle when he asked if Gray could give him a dollar, since he was a millionaire.

The young men continued to sit in rapt attention as they listened to Rock City brothers Timothy and Theron Thomas who were born and reared in St. Thomas. They are now successful musicians and entertainers, writing hits for clients such as Jennifer Hudson, Usher, Justin Bieber, Drake, Chris Brown, the Pussycat Dolls and Keri Hilson. They have created a signature sound infusing hip hop and R&B with Caribbean flavor, but life has not always been harmonious for the brothers. They reminisced about their first bed coming from the dump, but how happy they were just to have a bed.

“My mother always worked two jobs; my father worked at the legislature, but we were always broke,” Theron said. Wanting to make life better for themselves and their parents, the brothers endured sleeping in train stations, working minimum wage jobs and performing for free as they climbed to the top.

“Even if you aren’t motivated for yourself, do it for your mother, father, grandmother, aunt, uncle, cousin...anybody who helped raise you,” Theron said.

Pastor Skepple brought the message of perseverance. “Your life can be a success if you never give up,” Skepple said. “As long as you are alive, don’t give up. When you give up you can’t win.”

Charlotte Amalie High School tenth grade student Malakai Fredericks said the conference allowed him to see the many options he has to succeed in life. He said he understands that in order for him to become a professional baseball player he has to take responsibility for his education. Fredericks plans to “work harder in classes and study more.”

Rock City’s speech and performance was the most exciting

part of the conference for Fredericks. Taking a lesson from their experience, Fredericks said he will be more appreciative of his parents’ support. All Saints School ninth grader Frederick Larsen said he was most impressed by Gray’s ability to accomplish so much at a young age. Larsen said the points that the presenters made “about brotherhood, unity and being a man” are what will remain with him.

“The conference has had the ability to touch the lives of more male students in the territory, at one time, than has ever been done before – to touch their lives with a positive energy that could change and transform the lives of many of those young men,” observed University of the Virgin Islands President Dr. David Hall, who also attended the conference alongside the young men.

Both conferences ended with the students giving a pledge to “man up” and to live honorable lives.

Co-hosted by UVI and the Virgin Islands Department of Education, the conference was sponsored by the Youth Enrichment Initiative of the Virgin Islands Lottery, First Bank Virgin Islands, The Virgin Islands Department of Human Services Division of Family Assistance, the West Indian Company Limited and the College Access Challenge Grant Program.



Jubilant audience members join the songwriting duo “Rock City” onstage for an impromptu performance during the conference.



Susan L. Taylor shares her wisdom about overcoming life's challenges.

Susan L. Taylor On Women and Health

Loss. Pain. Grief. Everyone has experienced those things at some point in life. But they are not all bad, said Susan L. Taylor, renowned as the editor of *Essence* magazine for nearly four decades. "All the breakups, all the shakeups, all the things that happen in your life are heaven sent," she said. "They are sent for your awakening. Each person, however, must ask themselves, what is it that this pain, this shame, has come to teach you."

Taylor was the featured speaker at the Alfred O. Heath Distinguished Lecture Series of the University of the Virgin Islands. In a presentation titled "Women and Health: the Search for Balance," Taylor told the audience that they should begin each day with thoughtful reflection, exercise and a healthy breakfast. She explained that because women usually have so many things to do, they often begin and end their day in a rush, which has negative effect on their lives in the long run. "Wake up every morning and say 'I'm loving me,'" she said.

Most of Taylor's lecture focused on the emotional and spiritual health of women. She challenged women to find their purpose in life. "Are you answering your calling?" she challenged. 📖



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UVI Junior is Student Ambassador to Denmark



Martin Mariager, Christine Agertoft Svop , Haley E. Allick and Vandel Percival share a moment, during Percival's trip to Denmark, sponsored by the Friends of Denmark.

When the Friends of Denmark group wanted a hand to reach across the waters toward a new generation, they called on UVI's Vandel Percival to serve as student ambassador. Percival, a junior majoring in Computer Information Systems on UVI's St. Thomas campus, said he learned about the opportunity to serve as an exchange student through a community service project.

"It was my second trip to Europe. I went to Paris in 2008 and I found out about this trip through one of my mentors, Dr. Ida White. My first question was, 'Do I have to know Danish?' and she said, 'No. They speak English,' and I said, 'Okay. Sign me up.'"

Friends of Denmark liaison and retired UVI Nursing Professor Dr. Judy Grybowski, says Percival was the third Virgin Islands student to serve as student ambassador. The first was a UVI honor student and the second was a student from Charlotte Amalie High School who is attending Morehouse College.

"The third selection was Vandel Percival. He went through the application process, submitted an essay, then sat for an interview before a Friends committee panel," Dr. Grybowski says.

Participating students spend three weeks in their host country. Percival spent three weeks in Denmark while his Danish counterparts split their time between St. Thomas-St. John and St. Croix (1-1/2 weeks on each island). "Four years ago the Danes were really pushing the idea of a student

exchange," she says.

Friends of Denmark began during the 50th commemoration of Transfer Day in the Virgin Islands when a group of Danes came to observe the celebration of the shift in territorial governance from Denmark to the United States, but found there weren't enough hotel rooms. Dr. Grybowski said a group of Virgin Islanders opened their homes, offering hospitality, and the relationship began from there.

Upon arrival, Percival found many things familiar – English-speaking hosts, the free exchange of U.S. currency and many foods he also ate at home. But, he says, some customs were different. To stand at a bus stop and strike up a conversation with a stranger was frowned upon. There was also an unexpected level of cultural immersion. "I think Denmark has more museums per square mile than any other country," Percival says.

Overall, UVI's Friends of Denmark ambassador says he was impressed by the quality of life enjoyed by the average Dane he met. "Danes are happy and friendly and they really enjoy life. They take the afternoon off to go sailing. It's more stress-free there. A lot less tense."

Danes also enjoy "Friendship Festivals" every two years, which visitors are invited to join. Percival and his VI ambassador counterpart seem to be keeping up the goodwill their trips were designed to encourage. "They have been staying in touch through Facebook," Dr. Grybowski says. And when she has the time, she joins them both online. 📱



Photo by: Paradise Pictures



UVI Associate Professor Dr. Tonjia Coverdale brings entrepreneurial perspectives to her Computer Information Systems students.

Coverdale Enters Stage Right

Being a mother, a wife, an entrepreneur, and a professor is not easy. Nevertheless, Dr. Tonjia Coverdale makes it seem effortless. With dedication and a style of her own, she manages to be effective and efficient at it all, finding time to nurture her young family, while promoting her online business and motivating students to succeed. The Brooklyn native is one of the University of the Virgin Islands newest faculty members, lecturing in Computer Information Systems in the School of Business.

A two-time graduate of Morgan State University with a bachelor of science degree in information science and systems, she received her masters of business administration – Computer Information Systems from Georgia State University and later returned to Morgan State to earn a Ph.D.

“I am definitely not your traditional techie,” says Dr. Coverdale, “I love breaking stereotypes and showing people that you can be anything you want to be.”

The skills necessary to become strong leaders are what Dr. Coverdale passes on to her students. She says teaching and education are her passion and that she is encouraged by the way her students handle the many

challenges presented to them.

Leading by example is evident. Dr. Coverdale’s entrepreneurial prowess has materialized as Divas N Babes – online at www.divasnbabes.com – a specialty store for diva mothers and their children. On the site, Dr. Coverdale states, “Like many new moms, I struggled with being momme. I had to trade in my stilettos for sneakers, my skirts for sweats, and that was fine with me...I had a beautiful baby boy... that’s all that mattered to me, but it was just so difficult to find clothes that were comfy and not frumpy! Looking in the mirror was getting to be a scary experience.” So Dr. Coverdale built a business around a niche market, and it has met with great success and media coverage.


Online and in the classroom are not the only places where you will find Dr. Coverdale. She got right into the mix of things, assisting as the choreographer for the UVI musical, “South Pacific,” a production directed by UVI Playwright in Residence Dr. Doug Larche. An avid vocal and dance performer, Dr. Coverdale volunteered to choreograph the dance segments of the production.

“Choreographing is a natural extension of my teaching...I am equally



The Coverdale family was featured in the November 2009 issue of *Essence* magazine.

as passionate about teaching dance as I am about teaching technology and I am excited for the opportunity to provide an additional level of mentorship,” Dr. Coverdale says.

Being able to find the balance necessary to do it all is a goal that Coverdale has achieved and a way of life that she lives each day. 



VI Mesonet data is available directly through the Weatherflow web site, www.windalert.com where you can search for regional data.

UVI Supports MESONET Weather Observation Program

Island weather has become the keen interest of UVI's Dr. Nasseer Idrisi. At the MacLean Marine Science Center on the St. Thomas campus, Dr. Idrisi has been conducting a study of precise weather data collection for the purpose of more accurate weather forecasting.

With the help of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), funding from the Caribbean Integrated Coastal Ocean Observing System (CarICOOS) program, and with the help of Weatherflow, the Virgin Islands has joined the MESONET weather data collecting network. MESONET is an automated system of weather stations that collect observations of meteorological phenomena.

Over the past two years, a series of NOAA-funded weather data stations have been set up around the U.S. Virgin Islands, allowing scientists and other weather watchers to get a more accurate read on temperature, winds and air pressure in different island locales.


Dr. Idrisi has served as the regional coordinator for the Caribbean Regional Association (CaRA), which represents the U.S. Caribbean region in the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing Systems (IOOS) program. He says that with the help of MESONET, pilots and boat captains can more confidently conduct their operations in the USVI region. The hope is that MESONET will increase the accuracy of weather forecasting to allow emergency managers to better

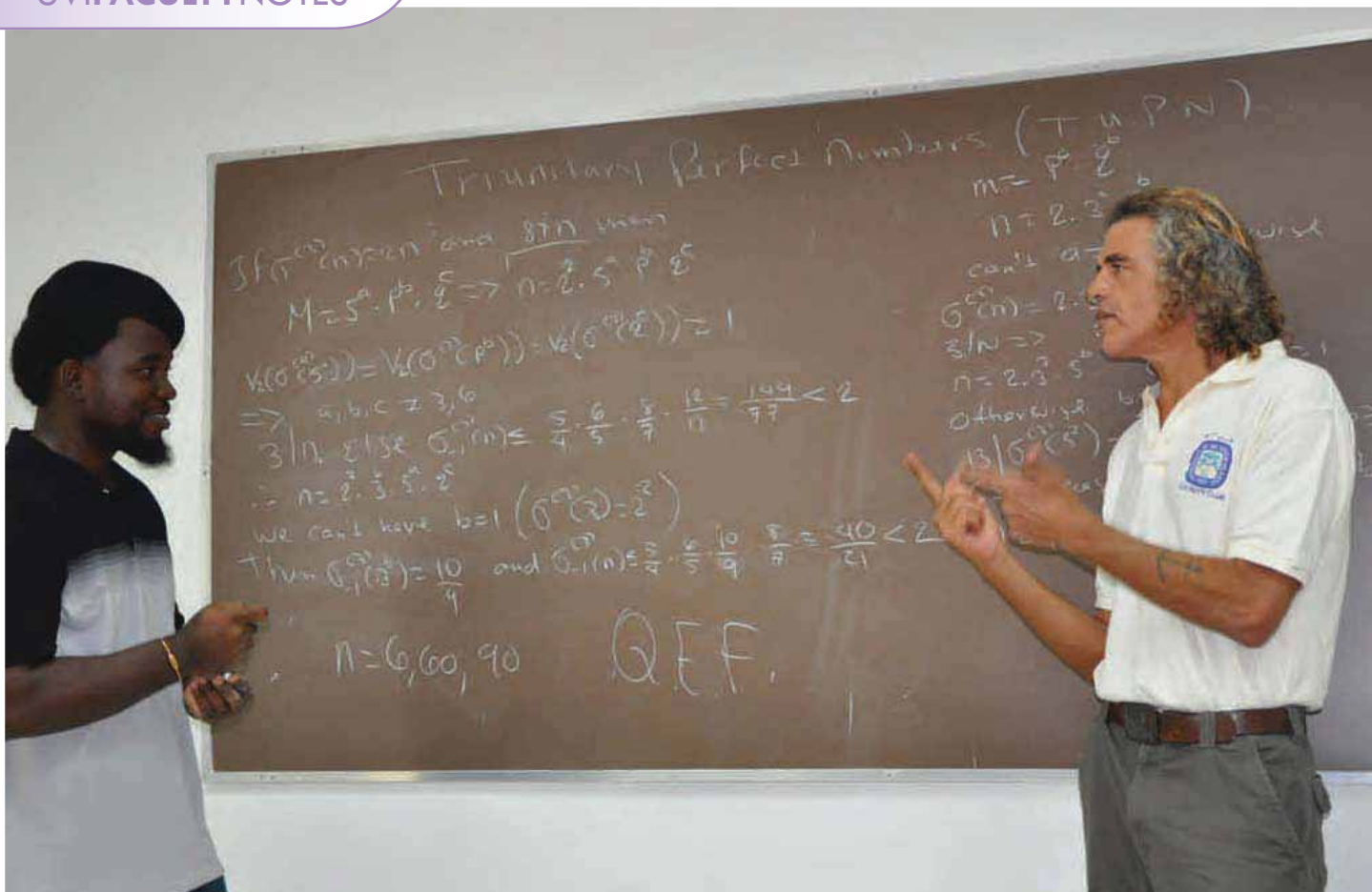
anticipate approaching storms, recreation enthusiasts can prepare for a day outdoors and farmers can get a better read on crop conditions.

MESONET is one of several UVI-based research projects brought to fruition through the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (VI-EPSCoR), a five-year old effort funded by the National Science Foundation. Dr. Idrisi also credits the work of Kevin Brown of UVI's MacLean Marine Science Center for getting the local MESONET system up and running, overseeing logistics and providing maintenance.

Local newspaper and media outlets recently took part in a pilot project where daily MESONET data sets were distributed to help them with their weather forecasting. The consistent delivery of relevant weather data has faced its share of challenges, some of which were brought on with the 2010 Atlantic Hurricane Season.

In early 2011, CaRA deployed its latest weather station to strengthen MESONET's reporting capabilities in the Virgin Islands.

VI Mesonet data is available directly through the Weatherflow web site, www.windalert.com, or the CarICOOS web site, www.caricoos.org/drupal. The CarICOOS site should be visited for other useful oceanic and atmospheric information in the Virgin Islands-Puerto Rico region. 



UVI mathematics major Leonardo Jose Bardomero, left, discusses mathematics principles with his mentor, UVI Professor Dr. Douglas Iannucci.

Math Student Lectures at International Conference on Fibonacci Numbers

UVI senior mathematics major Leonardo Jose Bardomero finds poetry in his passion for pure mathematics.

When UVI mathematics major Leonardo Jose Bardomero envisioned accompanying his UVI mentor to Mexico for the 14th International Conference on Fibonacci Numbers and their Applications, he anticipated scholarly discussion.

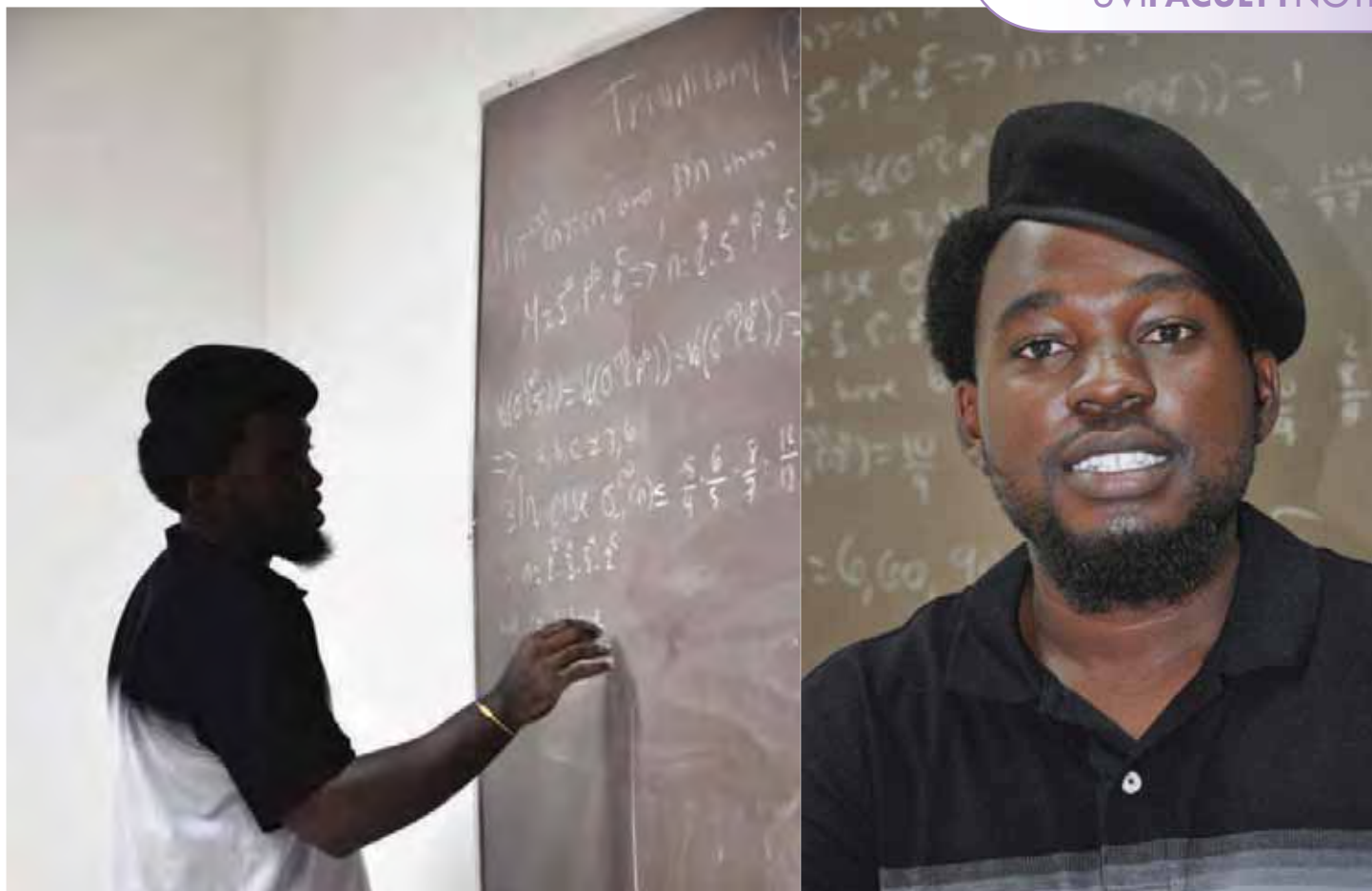
But what neither Bardomero nor UVI Associate Professor of Mathematics Dr. Doug Iannucci expected was for Iannucci to become hospitalized, leaving Bardomero to face a roomful of mathematicians alone.

Bardomero, who graduated in May, went to the conference in support of Dr. Iannucci, who was to lecture on Triunitary Perfect Numbers – numbers that equal the sum of their triunitary divisors. As fate would have it, with Dr. Iannucci ill, Bardomero became the sole lecturer representing the University of the Virgin Islands.

“I was in the hospital the whole time,” Dr. Iannucci said upon their return. “It was Leonardo who carried the ball and represented UVI well at the conference.”

Bardomero, 25, lectured to mathematicians from France, Germany, North Korea, Turkey and South Africa at the conference. He said they took note of the way he chose to conduct the lecture – without the use of technology. He simply wrote his computations on a blackboard in the front of the room.

“In the beginning I was nervous. They were all people with doctorates,” Bardomero said. By the time the self-described mathematics “purist” had finished his lecture, he felt great.



Bardomero prefers to use a blackboard and chalk to prove his point, as opposed to high-tech presentation software.

“I became the smartest person in the room. I just did my thing.”

Bardomero’s “thing” has been mathematics for as long as he can remember. “My passion is pure math – numbers. It’s like poetry,” he says.

Bardomero’s undergraduate research has been supported by the National Science Foundation’s Historically Black College and University Undergraduate Program (HBCU-UP) grant to study the number sequence named after Fibonacci, the great Italian mathematician of the early 13th century. The sequence is sound, Bardomero insists, while pointing out what he sees as historical distortions that can’t be ignored.

“Fibonacci got it from Egypt. They praise him as being a hero, but he got it from Egypt – from Africa. It’s kind of hard to balance the injustices of history.” 🇺🇸

What are Fibonacci Numbers?

The Fibonacci sequence is named after Leonardo of Pisa, who was known as Fibonacci. Fibonacci’s 1202 book *Liber Abaci* introduced the sequence to Western European mathematics although the sequence had been described earlier in Indian mathematics.

Fibonacci numbers are closely related to Lucas numbers in that they are a complementary pair of Lucas sequences. They are intimately connected with the golden ratio. Applications include computer algorithms such as the Fibonacci search technique and the Fibonacci heap data structure, and graphs called Fibonacci cubes used for interconnecting parallel and distributed systems. They also appear in biological settings such as branching in trees, arrangement of leaves on a stem, the fruit spouts of a pineapple, the flowering of artichoke, an uncurling fern and the arrangement of a pine cone.

Source: www.Wikipedia.org

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

by Ayesha Morris

PROGRESS ON THE PATH TO GREATNESS

With an ease of oratory that stirs its listener like a Baptist preacher, the University of the Virgin Island's fifth president, David Hall, S.J.D, reflects on his term in office, talking hands-free on his cell phone from his car after a busy day on the St. Thomas campus.

Accomplishments include solidifying a full cabinet, shepherding the institution through a change from deans of academic divisions to deans of schools and colleges; and visible progress in enrollment, fundraising, and new campus facilities.

"I feel very good. I think we've achieved a whole lot. I'm very appreciative of the support I've received in the University and in the community," Dr. Hall says. "I've enjoyed the chance to connect. I think it's been a very good year."

The towering presence, who has been featured in the Wall Street Journal and U.S. News and World Report for his legal mind, took charge of the institution on Aug. 1, 2009. Dr. Hall has been called "one of the most important leaders in legal education today," by Harvard Law Professor Charles Ogletree. He has received substantial recognition for his work to bring spirituality, law, and the inner city together. At UVI, his mission is to channel the University along the "pathways to greatness."

For Dr. Hall, that means building a high quality, high performance, service-oriented institution known for its uncompromised integrity, informed decision making, and fiscal responsibility in ways that are measurable. And coming from a wholistic point of view, he also recognizes the importance of nurturing the emotional and spiritual well-being of the members of the University family. These values are embodied in the seven management principles he developed as a blueprint to move the University towards

"greatness."

"I spent a lot of time listening to what the challenges were that existed in the way the University was operating," Dr. Hall says. "It's a system for saying we need to be better tomorrow than we are today."

Improving retention, graduation rates, finances, and educational partnerships are some of the main aspirations of his administration.

The fruits of his labor are beginning to show in some key performance indicators. Compared to 2009, enrollment for fall 2010 increased five percent to 2,733 students; and the number of male students – who have traditionally been underrepresented at UVI, jumped 10 percent to 746, mostly on St. Croix. Additionally in 2010, UVI raised \$1.5 million, a 13 percent increase from FY 2009, with alumni contributions accounting for \$66,564, a three percent rise.

"We have seen an increase in our enrollment. That is good progress for us," Dr. Hall says. "Our hope is that in the Spring that number will continue to go up."

A new Center for Student Success has been established to provide a comprehensive approach to providing support for students to achieve their academic goals and graduate from the University in a reasonable amount of time. The Center will provide faculty training, tutoring resources, counseling, and academic support resources, especially for incoming freshmen.

"We're looking at early warning signals to try to figure out sooner when students need support," Dr. Hall says. "We believe we can enhance student success, test-taking, and study skills by revising some of our skills and remediation courses."

To attract and keep more male students at the University, another Dr. Hall initiative – Brothers With A Cause – is a grassroots mentoring



IMPROVING RETENTION

program growing in popularity on both campuses.

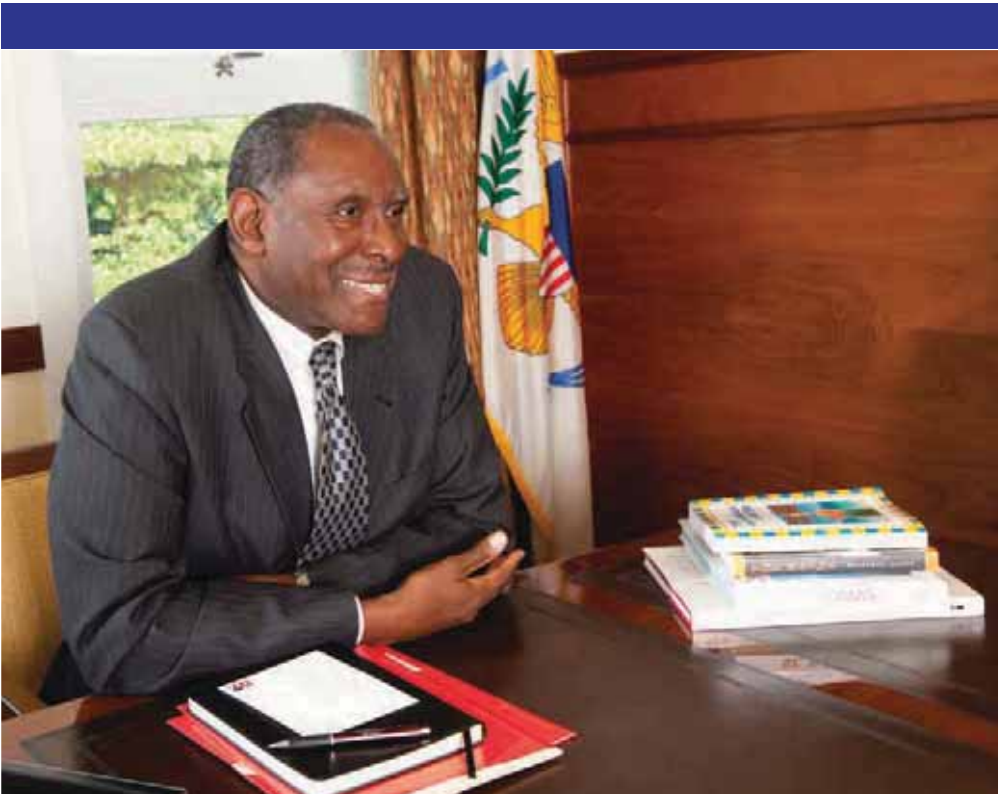
Richard Motta, the public relations representative for the St. Croix chapter, was among about two dozen young men, who attended the first meeting,

"I thought it was a very good cause especially considering what we deal with," he said. "Young black males get caught up in that street life, get in trouble. We just have this stigma that we're either in jail or murdered. It just seems to be something that's far too common in the Virgin Islands."

The junior communications major and co-editor of UVI Voice was inspired to see Dr. Hall there, and joined the group on the spot.

"Usually it's just layers and layers of personnel before you see the president," he says. "It gave instant credibility to the program."

Like a fresh coat of paint adding a facelift to an old building, the



“The psychological benefit of it is that when you use a label that I would argue is not truly representative of what it is we’re trying to do, then that holds us back,” Dr. Hall says.

Business Dean Dr. Charles Williams, who came to UVI from East Texas Baptist University, will introduce a new Hotel and Tourism Management bachelor’s degree in business administration, which focuses on hotel and hospitality management. The four-year program was developed in consultation with the V.I. Hotel and Tourism Association and the Department of Tourism -- which assisted by providing a planning grant for the program. It is patterned after successful hospitality programs in the states with emphasis on academic and practical knowledge and embodies the kind of public-private partnership which President

Continued on page 20

N, GRADUATION RATES, EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

“We have seen an increase in our enrollment. That is good progress for us,” Dr. Hall says.

University has shed its classification of academic divisions for the newer terminology of schools and colleges. The change was adopted to “provide clarity in the level of expectations and accountability to both internal and external stakeholders,” according to the resolution passed by the UVI Board of Trustees on March 13, 2010.

Leading up to the change, the deans of the divisions, faculty, and the UVI Senate voted in separate meetings, and each division chose between its new designation as a school or college -- an example of the significance Dr. Hall has placed on “shared governance” during his administration.

The names of UVI’s academic units were changed to the School of Business, the School of Education, the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, the College of Science and Mathematics, and the School of Nursing.



President Hall makes meeting with students a priority.



The University operates supported by the Seven Management Values, which Dr. Hall unveiled to guide the University toward greatness.

Continued from page 19

Hall hopes will serve as a model for future University programs.

The new business degree follows the implementation of a master's degree in counseling psychology, which attracted about 20 students in Fall 2009. The program was advanced by faculty members who recognized the urgency of preparing a cadre of individuals who could assist in addressing mental health needs in the territory. Future academic programs could include concentrations in healthcare and engineering technology related to rum production in the Virgin Islands.

"The industry requires persons to have certain credentials that traditionally students end up going to the mainland to get," Dr. Hall says. "Part of our goal is to ensure that we'll be producing the leaders that the Territory and region needs."

As the University moves forward along the path to greatness, key positions in the Hall Administration have been filled.

Provost Dr. Karl Wright began his term administering academic policy at UVI on July 15, 2010. The native-born Jamaican brings more than 20 years of administrative experience at the executive level to the job, and has a history of creating international educational partnerships in places such as Sierra Leone, Niger, Indonesia, the Philippines, Spain, the Dominican Republic and throughout the Caribbean.

Virgin Islands native Dionne Jackson, the new vice president for Institutional Advancement, has a history of attracting large donations to places such as the University of Pennsylvania and Vassar College. As vice president for Institutional Advancement, Jackson has oversight responsibility for Annual Giving, Major Gifts, Alumni Affairs, Public Relations, and the Reichhold Center for the Arts.

Other cabinet members include Vice Provost for Research and Public Service Dr. Henry Smith;

Vice President for Administration and Finance Vincent Samuel; Chief Information Officer Tina Koopmans; Vice Provost for Access and Enrollment Services, Dr. Judith Edwin; Chief of Staff Noreen Michael; and Special Assistant to the President Dr. Haldane Davies.

Additional new staff at the management level include Director of Human Resources Bettina Miller, Chief of Security Roderick Pullen and Internal Auditor Stacey Chados.

"I feel very fortunate to have a strong mix of existing and new cabinet members. We're in the process of forging a new team," Dr. Hall says. "I'm hoping the combination of new people with those who've been here for some time will allow us to solidify a very strong team."

Fronted by lush tropical plants on the outside, and a bright yellow wall in the lobby, the new Wellness Center buzzes with activity on a Monday afternoon, as students tone their muscles at the newest building to grace the St. Thomas campus. Inside it's all gym – chock full of exercise machines to burn extra calories, increase heart rates, and turn fat into muscle. Yoga, line dancing, kick-boxing, martial arts, and Zumba® Fitness are some of the class offerings. The \$2.6 million facility located next to the UVI Sports and Fitness Center held its grand opening on September 24, 2010. The 6,250 square foot facility includes an aerobics

and dance studio with a wooden floor, lockers, and weight training and cardiovascular equipment.

More new buildings and construction upgrades are promised for the University, as Dr. Hall believes the pathway to greatness is also exemplified by having facilities worthy of students.

John Brewers Beach now boasts a new bathhouse. There are plans to build a new residence hall and science building on the St. Thomas campus, and a new academic building and multipurpose center on the Albert A. Sheen campus on St. Croix.

“We want our students, faculty and staff to have quality facilities when they come on campus,” Dr. Hall says. “We must have facilities that are commensurate with what a student would see on the mainland. Quality facilities

will address both the substantive and psychological needs of our students. I think it will do us well.”

But deeper than the new facilities, it’s Dr. Hall’s hands-on leadership style that gives students a sense that the University is continuing toward a bright future.

“Sometimes people would be intimidated, but he is very approachable, easy to talk to. He hears your problem and tries to find a solution,” said SGA president for the St. Croix campus Malkia Morton, as she watched Dr. Hall solicit student feedback at a forum on the administration’s proposal to hike tuition. “He’s not someone who will just have their assistant write you back. He’ll personally address you. It shows that he really does care and wants to help the University grow.”

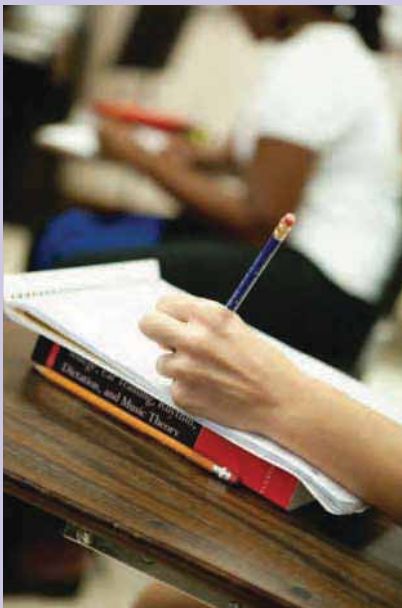
That quality in Dr. Hall also made an impression on Richard Motta, who attended two colleges in the states and had yet to meet the president, let alone know what the person looked like, before coming to UVI.

“I think it says a lot when students can identify the president,” Motta says. “It speaks to how personable he is.”

On Dr. Hall’s part, he notes there is still a lot of work to be done before UVI reaches its apex.

“I’m feeling good about the past but I know we cannot rest because there’s so much potential and the needs are great,” he says. “I want us to pass on a stronger and more vibrant University than the one we inherited. There is a bright future that we are planning and creating today, and we cannot relax until that future is this University’s past.” 📱

The Seven Management Values

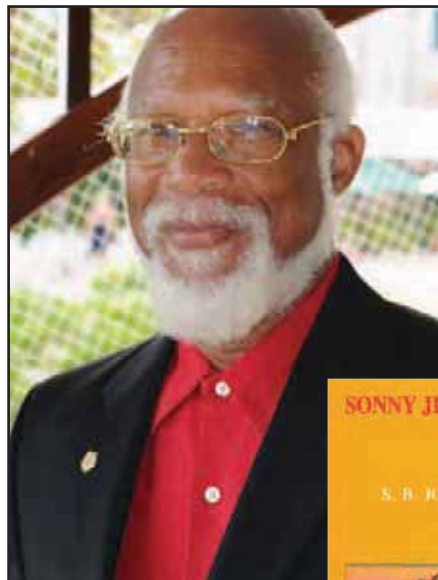


The seven management values are expected to serve as the framework within which we deliver programs and services, as well as address challenges.

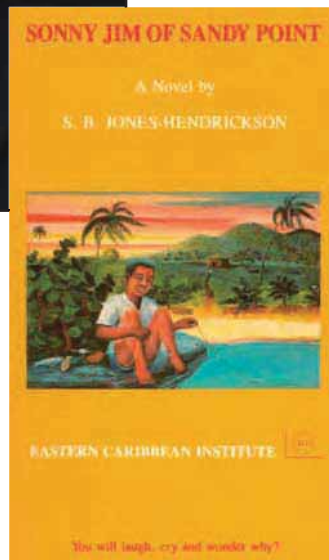
- High performance Institution with a focus on Quality
- Service Oriented
- Uncompromised Integrity
- Informed Decision Making
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Performance Assessment
- Emotional and Spritual Health



Dr. Doug Larche



Dr. Simon Jones-Hendrickson



In 2006 he penned “Remarkable Big Trees in the U.S. Virgin Islands,” which he says are culturally important to the West Indian community with

traditional reverence handed down through generations.

While she may be relatively new to the UVI family, Associate Professor of Communication Gillian Royes arrived in 2009, with 14 years of teaching experience under her belt. Royes had previously graced the halls of Georgia State and Clark Atlanta Universities, where she taught courses including Public Relations, Business

Communication and Mass Media.

Originally from Kingston, Jamaica, Professor Royes relocated to the U.S. to pursue her career and educational goals. She obtained a master’s degree in journalism from the University of Wisconsin and a doctorate from Atlanta’s Emory University. In Atlanta, Royes established herself (from 2001 to 2005) as a principal partner of a communications consulting business known as Gender Plus.

“We consulted with some big companies like Georgia Power and CB Richard Lewis, a commercial real estate firm.” It is during this time period that Professor Royes published her first two books. In 2002 she published “Business Is Good” a history of the Cannings Corporation. “It’s a coffee table book with a lot of content about the history of business in Trinidad,” Royes says. Her second book entitled, “Sexcess: the New Gender Rules at Work,” sprung forth in 2004.

Professor Royes has returned to the

Published Professors Give Writing Their All

To UVI professors Doug Larche, Robert Nicholls, Gillian Royes, Alexander Randall and Simon Jones-Hendrickson, writing is not a skill – it’s a passion. Writing provides an opportunity to express their deep-rooted dedication to topics and causes that remain close to their hearts.

Larche’s interests revolve around theater, education and the fun of childhood. Having been involved in theater for a number of years, he is currently a professor of communication at UVI and the University’s Playwright in Residence. An internationally recognized poet, performer, and composer, he is also a Senior American Fulbright Scholar. Larche received his master of fine arts degree in playwriting and dramaturgy from the University of Iowa Playwrights Workshop, his Ph.D. from the University of Indiana, and conducted post-doctoral studies at Yale, Oxford, and Harvard Universities.

He has authored several books,

plays, and collections of poetry over the years. Two of Larche’s most popular published works include, “Father Gander Nursery Rhymes: The Equal Rhymes Amendment” published in 1995, and “From the Heartland: An Ethos-Centered Experienced Hybrid Introduction to Speech Communication,” published in 2001 by Pearson Publishing of Putnam Books.

While Larche focuses on expressing his passion for the arts and theater, Nicholls has been busy exploring African art forms and traditions and how they relate to the African Diaspora. Nicholls, an associate professor of education at UVI, received his master of education and Ph.D. from Howard University. In his books he has concentrated primarily on the history and evolution of cultural traditions in the Virgin Islands. Nicholls authored “Old-Time Masquerading in the U.S. Virgin Islands” in 1998.

Caribbean, literally and figuratively. Joining UVI in January 2009, as an associate professor of journalism, Professor Royes oversees the journalism aspect of the Communication paradigm.

Her latest literary undertaking, entitled, "The Goat Woman of Largo Bay," is expected to be released in October 2011. This is the first novel of a 10-part detective series, based on a small town in Jamaica. Simon & Schuster has the manuscript for the sequel, with a release date in 2012.

"This is fun; this is how I want to start my day every day for the rest of my life," Royes says. "As soon as I get up, I sit down and I write for a couple of hours." Royes expresses her enthusiasm for writing, undaunted by the fact that she went through 21 drafts with this latest novel.

It has been a five-year journey.

"I'm finding my own voice. I've kept some of the Caribbean style but I merge it with American popular writing, I think that describes who I am, because I've lived half my life in the Caribbean and half on the mainland."

Just how did this savvy business-woman get into the novel-writing business? It all started with a dream.

Dreams happen to be one of Alexander Randall's many fortes; in fact he wrote his doctoral thesis on dream telepathy. In 2007 Randall wrote a book entitled "Dream Wizard Conquers His Knight Mare," a series of bedtime stories.

Originally from Philadelphia, Randall obtained advanced degrees from Columbia and Princeton Universities. He will tell you that it has been life itself, along with some of the greatest teachers of the 20th century, that have taught him the most profound lessons.

"My life is a series of disasters punctuated with miracles." Randall reflects in his autobiography entitled,

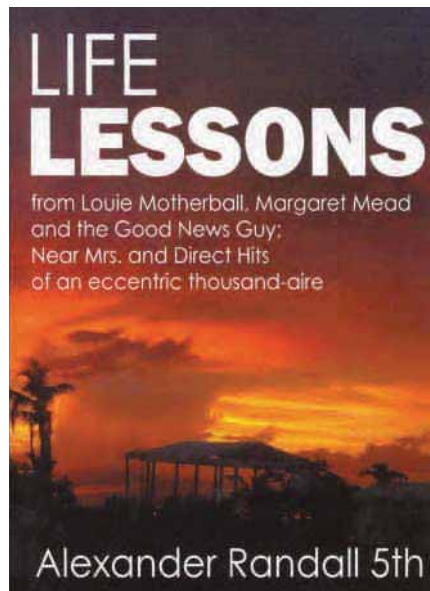


Dr. Gillian Royes

"Life Lessons from Louie Motherball, Margaret Mead and the Good News Guy; Near Mrs. and Direct Hits of an eccentric thousand-aire."

Randall's reasons for writing his latest book coincide with a goal of the UVI College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences family tree assignment. Each student must learn their history by detailing their family's heritage. "If you don't take the time to write it down, then how will your grandchildren know who you were?"

An entrepreneur at an early age, Randall sold hand-crafted stained glass



ornaments and tee-shirts in local fairs during his college days. Many years later he founded the Boston Computer Exchange, an e-commerce business and early cyber cafe.

Having made the VI his home in 1986, after 15 years in Boston and sailing vacations in and around the Virgin Islands since 1963, Randall introduced himself to the local community in 1995 as the "Good News

Guy" for Addie Ottley's "Morning Show" on WSTA radio. In 2001 Randall became an adjunct communications professor at UVI and later served as a faculty representative on the UVI Senate.

Continued on page 24

Continued from page 23

Economist and UVI Social Science Professor Dr. Simon Jones-Hendrickson is a prolific author and poet with four novels, two volumes of poetry and a host of published scholarly works to his credit.

An alumnus of the University of the Virgin Islands, Jones-Hendrickson went on to earn a master's degree from the University of Illinois and a doctorate from the University of Exeter in England. He is a tenured professor of economics at UVI, and the former ambassador of foreign affairs, international trade and Caricom affairs for St. Kitts-Nevis. He is chairman/president of the Eastern Caribbean Copyright Licensing Association, (ECCLA)


Jones-Hendrickson's first novel, "Sonny Jim of Sandy Point," published in 1991, is quasi-autobiographical. He wrote it, he says, to capture the events going on in Sandy Point, St. Kitts, where he grew up. Thinking of his children, Jones-Hendrickson says the book was written to give them an idea of how he got "from

there to here."

The process of writing fiction, he says, is freeing. "There are times when I can sit down and write serious mathematical equations and other times I like to sit down and let my mind go."

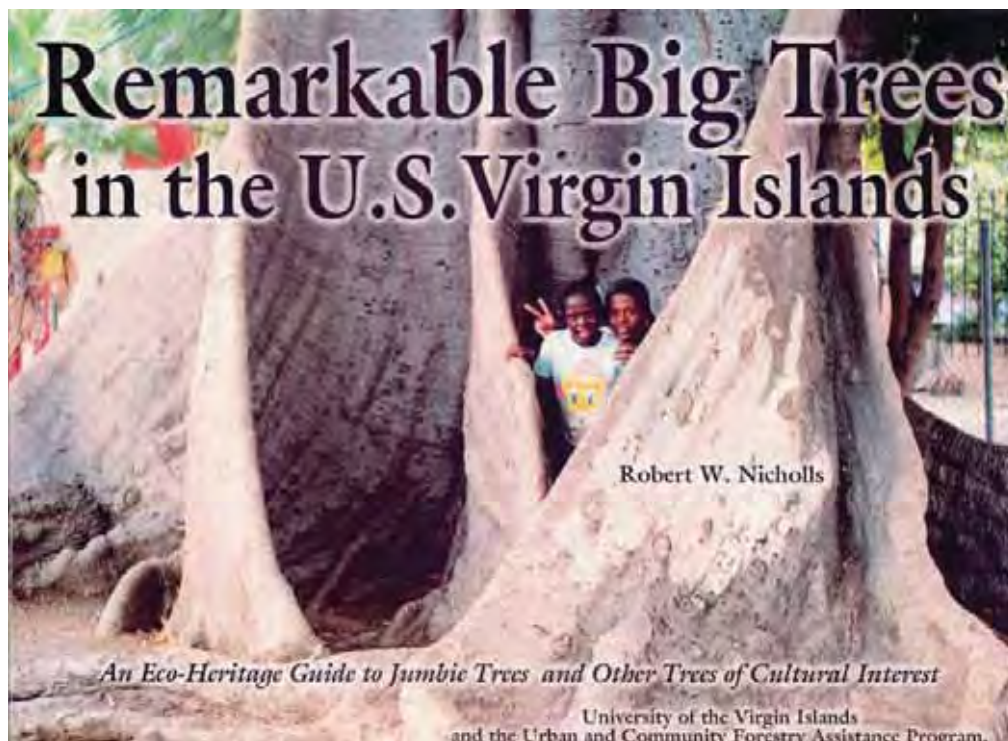
Jones-Hendrickson's second novel, "Death on the Pasture," (1994) is rife with political intrigue. His third novel, "Andy Browne's Departure," (2007), which was a 2008 finalist for the Eric Hoffer Award, is loosely based on campus life at a fictitious college.

His most recent novel, "Dana, Steven & Brenda" (2009), is about the intricacies of breaking the glass ceiling. Jones-Hendrickson's latest release, a novel entitled, "A Weekend in Paradise," is expected to be published in the fall of 2011.

Being able to share your interests and passion with others through writing is an opportunity that most people do not seize. For these UVI professors, putting time into their passion and creating works of art are what matter. 



Dr. Alex Randall V



Dr. Robert Nicholls



UVI now offers an online giving option, providing an alternative to the receipt and processing of in-person donations.

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by Ayesha Morris

The elusive donation letter. Stuffed in an envelope and mailed to a potential contributor, it required the recipient to put it down, go search for a checkbook, find a stamp, and stand in a long line at the post office just to respond. Now persons wishing to contribute to the University can kiss the cumbersome process goodbye with the new online giving campaign.

Launched on June 20, 2010, an inviting sea blue-green button lures visitors from the UVI homepage at www.uvi.edu to a secure site, and with a few clicks they can select the cause they want to support and safely enter their credit or debit card information.

The fund designation option allows donors to make a one-time or recurring gift to areas such as academic scholarships, athletics, performing arts, and international students.

The form is then processed by a clearinghouse and an acknowledgment receipt and official tax sheet is sent to the donor's email within seconds.

"People are happy that we do have the option. They now have the convenience of contributing online and don't have to leave home or the office," Linda Smith, UVI's director of Annual Giving, says. "They have the ability to choose which fund they want to donate to and they're happy with the instant acknowledgement."

Response has been good, and there are plans to market the site more, according to Dionne Jackson, vice president of the University's Institutional Advancement component.

"We want to venture into social media and tie it back into the website," she says. "We'll be working on an overarching strategy in that arena."

In addition to online giving, UVI used different strategies such as a

Phone-A-Thon, Presidential Alumni Appeal, Class of 2010 gifts, and an Economic Development Commission drive over the past year. That helped the University raise more than \$230,000 in scholarships for about 92 students, Smith says.

In the area of development, the University surpassed its goal to raise \$1.1 million, with an increase of 13 percent over last year, to \$1.5 million in contributions. Alumni participation climbed to 10 percent, up from four percent in 2009, Jackson says.

This fiscal year, UVI also garnered a pledge of \$1 million from UVI Trustee Donald Sussman and a large donation

from one UVI family, Jackson says.

"My plan for UVI is to really be serious about cultivating prospects, getting people to the table, and getting people to raise their sights," she says.

"More than raising dollars for the University, the goal of the Office of Institutional Advancement has always been building a base for much needed resources," says former Vice President for Institutional Advancement Dr.

Gwen-Marie Moolenaar.

In the late 1990s, under the direction of former UVI President Orville Kean, the institution began to specialize in different funds, such as major gifts, annual donations, and family endowments starting at \$10,000. Popular events such as an annual telethon, an annual fund campaign, and an

appreciation event to honor those who gave to the university were held.

The Office of Institutional Advancement initially included the Office of Sponsored Programs, which is responsible for managing federal

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Giving to UVI

Continued from page 25

funds the University receives and making sure they are spent in accordance with federal regulations. That includes a grant up to \$2 million from the U.S. Department of Education, and a sum set aside for sub-grants to the University community, according to Steven Goode, director of the Office of Sponsored Programs. Examples include \$17.5 million combined from the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Health for research in marine science and minority health disparities, respectively.

"About ten years ago they decided to split off because the two behaved in a different way," Goode says of his office. "The sort of things you do when you ask people for gifts is different from when you request federal funds. You never take anyone to breakfast or lunch. It has all sorts of rules and contractual obligations and formal accounting of it."

The split came before Dr. Moolenaar left the position.

In the meantime, she helped establish an office for institutional research to work with faculty members on getting grants for UVI.

Another drive of her leadership was to develop policies to guide the Foundation for the University of the Virgin Islands (FUVI).

"Gifts to the University from the foundation used to be almost a random type of thing," she says. "It was very haphazard."

Back then, the consulting company Marts and Lundy was contracted to study the possibility of launching a capital campaign to raise millions for UVI.

"They felt it was a big stretch," Dr. Moolenaar says. "Here in the V.I., money was tight back then."

The advancement office took on several smaller kinds of campaigns, such as major gifts, increasing its annual donations from \$400,000 to \$900,000 while Dr. Moolenaar was in office.

"We were very proud of that. We essentially doubled the annual fund,"

she says.

Dr. Moolenaar was also responsible for creating the annual UVI magazine as a way to let the public know all the good things happening at the University.

"We thought we could bring in resources by getting the story out to the public about what the University was about," she says. "There was a lot going on that people didn't know about. It was a way of gaining friends and supporters."

Other initiatives included the Afternoon on the Green annual "friend raiser," letter writing campaigns, and private receptions held at Government House during the administration of V.I. Governor Charles Turnbull.

"We would invite worthy snowbirds to the islands. We were able to attract very wealthy persons. Some flew in private planes into private jet ports," Dr. Moolenaar says.

They also approached a number of families who were confident in the leadership of President Emeritus Dr. Orville Kean.

Dr. Moolenaar also changed the management of UVI's endowment funds.

"I think it really made for our foundation to be in league with the big donors. We can say we have policies, and these are the policies that guide our actions. People feel more comfortable when you have a logical system," she says.

In her time, garnering in-kind contributions was just as important as cash.

"I pushed the idea of institutional advancement for the University rather than just development," she says. "Dollars are scarce. It's about being

very creative in bringing resources to the university so that you can get those things done."

As former vice president for Institutional Advancement from 2003 to 2008, Joseph Boschulte remembers the main drive was to establish UVI's importance to the community and region.

"We tried to be more aggressive in branding the UVI brand name," he says.

That meant targeting the media, and setting up one-on-one meetings for community members with UVI President Dr. LaVerne Ragster, to increase the University's visibility.

"We started to take the University to the community," Boschulte says.

For three years in a row, the FUVI Celebrity Golf Tournament brought entertainers and professional athletes to the territory to raise money through the Foundation for the University of the Virgin Islands, which sponsored the activity.

"It allowed for members of the foundation to take an active part in fundraising and to look closer at the objectives for the University," he says.

Other initiatives included tapping into the syndicated "Tom Joyner Morning Show" radio program and cruise that led to UVI's recognition as the Tom Joyner School of the Month twice; targeting popular Economic Development Commission companies, and partnering with the V.I. Department of Tourism and Main Street merchants, he says.

There was also a push to market the Reichhold Center for the Arts as a major part of the University.

*Making
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with secure
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Examining the Art of the Ask

Boschulte says that during his five years in Institutional Advancement, there were attempts to start the online giving program.

“I think it’s great in this day and age, where technology now seems to be the norm, particularly for the students who now go to UVI, they can now give in the way they feel most comfortable giving,” Boschulte says. “Most of them do transactions through their computers and smart phones, so it’s definitely a way of keeping up with the times.”

In her passionate pursuit of philanthropy in higher education, there was one day when Dionne Jackson felt she was about to quit.

Jackson was courting an embittered family that was estranged from her previous employer for decades, when one of the family members finally agreed to lunch.

“At the initial meeting she started saying how the family had felt so disrespected. She assured me that no one in the family was going to give a dime,” Jackson says. “I walked out of that restaurant thinking ‘What am I doing in this career? Do I really want to be in a position where people could talk to me like that?’”

But fully committed to the path she had chosen, Jackson trudged ahead. She continued conversations with the family and learned that they wanted to preserve their grandfather’s legacy and have more of a say in how the funds were spent.

Reassured by Jackson and after about a year and a half of talks, the family doled out \$150,000 to the cause, and her mission in life was reaffirmed.

“I remember within my family hearing a real value placed on education,” Jackson says. “I always felt as if I wanted to be in a leadership role.”

She grew up in the Mountain Top area of St. Thomas as an only child, attended All Saints School, and was a Rotary Club member. Jackson went on to serve as the special events coordinator at the Reichhold Center for the



Dr. Lonnie Hudspeth teaches a marketing class in the School of Business. Donations to UVI can be earmarked for specific areas of interest.

Arts, her first official job in development. Within a year, she was promoted to marketing manager. She left about eight years ago to pursue a master of business administration degree from Cornell University and a master of fine arts degree in arts management from Brooklyn College.

Jackson’s most recent position prior to returning to UVI was as associate director of major gifts in the provost’s area at the University of Pennsylvania. There she raised \$5 million in the span of two years through a new fundraising program she created. Before that, Jackson helped Vassar College secure more than \$10 million as assistant director of corporate, foundation and

government relations.

“I just felt like I wanted to learn more about how to contribute to UVI in a more substantial way,” she says. “I knew I wanted to be a change agent, somebody who would come into an institution and turn it around through philanthropy.”


Some of her accomplishments before UVI include creating a program that raised major gifts in excess of \$10,000 for about six different cultural organizations, as well as the Graduate Student Center.

How’d she do it? Jackson built a prospect pool from scratch and approached communities that didn’t have a strong history of institutional giving.

“You connect the dots. You find people who are invested in the success of the University and make it so enticing,” she says. “You figure out why people would be motivated. Do they want to build a legacy, a tax write off? Do they want you to go away and leave them alone, are they feeling guilty?”

Jackson plans to use her creative energy to bring resources to the University of the Virgin Islands, where she has served as vice president since September 2010. She has oversight of the areas of Annual Giving, Major Gifts, Alumni Affairs, Public Relations, and the Reichhold Center for the Arts, which all fall under the umbrella of the Office of Institutional Advancement.

Her immediate goals are to strengthen UVI stakeholder relationships and to launch a feasibility study for a future capital campaign.

“UVI is an institution that is really worth supporting. It’s a relatively young institution but we’re doing some really wonderful things. What we’re all working for right now is something we’ll be reaping in the generations to come,” she says, adding that it is a privilege to serve her community in this way. “We’re not just running a University but building an institution. We’re really focused on taking this institution to the next level.” 

UVI Awarded \$500,000 National Science Foundation Grant

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has awarded a grant of \$499,692 to the University of the Virgin Islands in support of a project to assess the impact of creative problem solving skills training on STEM retention. STEM refers to the science, technology, engineering and mathematics academic disciplines.

The project entitled, "Education Research Grant: The Use of Creative Problem Solving as Curriculum Enhancement to Improve Cognitive, Behavioral, and Social Transformation in STEM Retention," became effective Sept. 1, 2010 and expires Aug. 31, 2013.

The UVI project team includes principal investigator Dr. Kimarie Engerman of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, and co-principal investigators Dr. Donald Drost and Dr. Konstantinos Alexandridis, both of the UVI College of Science and Mathematics. "It's a team effort," Dr. Engerman said.

Creative problem solving, as a teacher training discipline, is seen as a way of potentially improving the retention rate of students who pursue

science, technology, engineering and mathematics degrees. Creative problem solving is already being utilized in UVI's Science 100 classes, Dr.

Engerman said. "We're hoping that it will ignite an interest in STEM."

Creative problem solving taps into the beliefs, attitudes and aspirations of students while maximizing peer academic support. The NSF grant will support the assessment of many aspects of STEM students' academic challenges, including what assistance exists for those who must complete projects. It

also studies behavioral influences that can either work in favor of or against a student's decision to major in science, technology, education or mathematics.

"By giving them the ability to think about things in a different way, students find out that science isn't difficult – it's fun," Dr. Engerman said. She is particularly interested in the motivations of STEM students in the Caribbean, which is a unique population for NSF research. "The NSF is looking for innovation," she said. "Our population is unique in that the Caribbean is hardly ever studied."



The UVI project team includes principal investigator Dr. Kimarie Engerman of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.



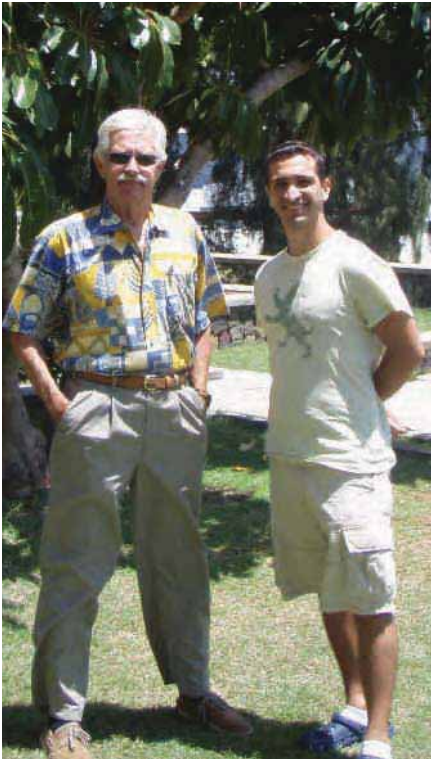
Kenya Emanuel working in the laboratory with paper chromatography of sorrel juice.

Student Wins at Spring Science Symposium

Kenya Emanuel won first place for undergraduate first time presenters at the 9th Annual Spring Science Symposium held in March on St. Croix. The title of Emanuel's research poster was 'Influence of Extraction Solvent on Anthocyanin Concentration in Sorrel.'

Emanuel is a junior majoring in education on the Albert A. Sheen campus on St. Croix. He works part time as a student aide with the UVI Agricultural Experiment Station's Biotechnology & Agroforestry Program.

The mentor for Emanuel's sorrel research is Dr. Thomas W. Zimmerman. Emanuel's research was supported through grants from the USDA-NIFA Resident Instruction in Insular Areas and the VI Department of Agriculture USDA-Specialty Crops Block Grant.



UVI Professor Dr. Don Drost (left) and graduate student Stavros Michailidis presented theory on creative problem solving at a conference in Italy.

Michailidis and Drost

Immersed in Creative Problem Solving, the Duo Presents at the 7th Creativity Europe Association


New York state graduate student Stavros Michailidis and UVI Physics Professor Dr. Don Drost represented the University of the Virgin Islands at an international conference in Italy April 13-17. The conference took place in the small Italian Riviera town of Sestri Levante just east of Genoa.

Michailidis and Drost presented two 90-minute presentations at the Creativity Europe Association (CREA) Conference 2011, an annual conference on creative problem solving, creativity and innovation. Michailidis is a graduate student at the International Center for Studies in Creativity at Buffalo State College.

One presentation was a report and workshop on progress in momentum transformation, a development first presented by Michailidis and Drost in Brussels in the fall of 2009, at the 11th European Conference on Creativity and Innovation. In Brussels, this workshop was named one of the top five at the ECCI Conference.

The second presentation was a

report on early progress in delivering creative problem solving thinking skills to freshmen at UVI in the Science 100 class. This creative problem solving delivery process is funded by a National Science Foundation (NSF) Education Research Project grant, which has been awarded to UVI Psychology Professor Dr. Kimarie Engerman (principal investigator), UVI Research Assistant Professor Kostas Alexandridis, Drost and Michailidis. Both of the presentations made by Michailidis and Drost were accepted by CREA in a competitive process.

Michailidis and Drost brought back ideas on improving the process of teaching creative problem solving to UVI students. In addition to the two presentations made by Michailidis and Drost, Drost says he attended a program session offered at CREA on creative problem solving thinking skills, in order to bring additional creative thinking expertise back to UVI. 

Southern Association of Agricultural Science Conference Awards Khalid Matthew

UVI student Khalid Matthew placed second in a student competition at the Southern Association of Agricultural Science (SAAS) conference, which took place in February.


The Southern Association of Agricultural Science (SAAS) conference was held in February in Corpus Christi, Texas. Within the SAAS conference there was a meeting of the Southern Regional American Society for Horticultural Sciences.

The conference was an excellent

opportunity to allow for interaction with students, researchers and colleagues in the Southern Region. It was the first time a UVI student attended and competed in the Horticulture Division.

The research that Matthew conducted was supported by grants from USDA Distance Learning Education at Land Grant Institutions in the Pacific and Caribbean Islands and the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture Specialty Crops Block

Grant.

Matthew presented a poster on research he conducted with fellow student Charkym Philemon at the UVI Agricultural Experiment Station's Biotechnology Program. Research involved the influence of plant spacing on sorrel production. His presentation was part of the undergraduate student competition in the Horticultural Sciences division. He placed second in the competition with other undergraduate students. 

St. John Academic Center

The University of the Virgin Islands has expanded its outreach program to St. John by opening the new St. John Academic Center. The center has been installed on the third floor of The Marketplace shopping center. At the official opening in March, University of the Virgin Islands officials spoke about the impact the center is expected to have on UVI's St. John students and the wider community of St. John.

The center has video conferencing technology, which will allow students to take courses offered on St. Thomas and St. Croix, and study or meet with professors and students on those campuses. The center also has offices for the Cooperative Extension Service and the Small Business Development Center. The St. John Academic Center is funded through a US Department of Education Title III grant that is renewable for five years. 🌐



The St. John Academic Center, on the third floor of the Marketplace on St. John, contains classroom space and videoconferencing capability with state-of-the-art technology.



The St. John Academic Center is funded through a US Department of Education Title III grant.

UVI Wellness Center



No more excuses for putting off fitness training. The UVI Wellness Center offers courses such as martial arts, Zumba®, kickboxing, Calypso steep, spin circuit, ballet, yoga, pilates, and self defense.

The 6,250 square foot UVI Wellness Center officially opened on St. Thomas in September of 2010, home to state-of-the-art exercise equipment and a dance studio.

Since its doors opened, the Wellness Center has come alive with activity. Many students, faculty, staff and alumni are taking advantage of the facility, eagerly putting in the work to build on their health and wellbeing. Who can blame them?

Students enrolled in University of the Virgin Islands classes, whether full or part time, can exercise in the facility at no additional cost. Faculty, staff and alumni are also welcome to utilize the modern equipment for a fee.

Students that take part in classes offered in the 2,800-square foot dance studio, are asked to pay a nominal fee for courses such as Martial Arts, Zumba®, kickboxing, Calypso step,

spin circuit, ballet, yoga, pilates, and self defense.

Another advantage to the Wellness Center is that it serves as the practice facility for the student athletes. The volleyball and basketball teams and the dance squad all benefit.

The opening of the Center has provided a number of students an opportunity to begin practical work experience. These Wellness Center employees are students who are striving to become nurses, physical therapists or as professionals in sports and fitness. Each student employee has undergone 32 hours of training, requiring that they master safe use of the equipment, know how to incorporate them into a workout program, and display knowledge of human anatomy and physiology.

There are two main areas in the Wellness Center: the fitness room and

Students enrolled in University of the Virgin Islands classes, whether full- or part-time, can exercise in the facility at no additional cost.

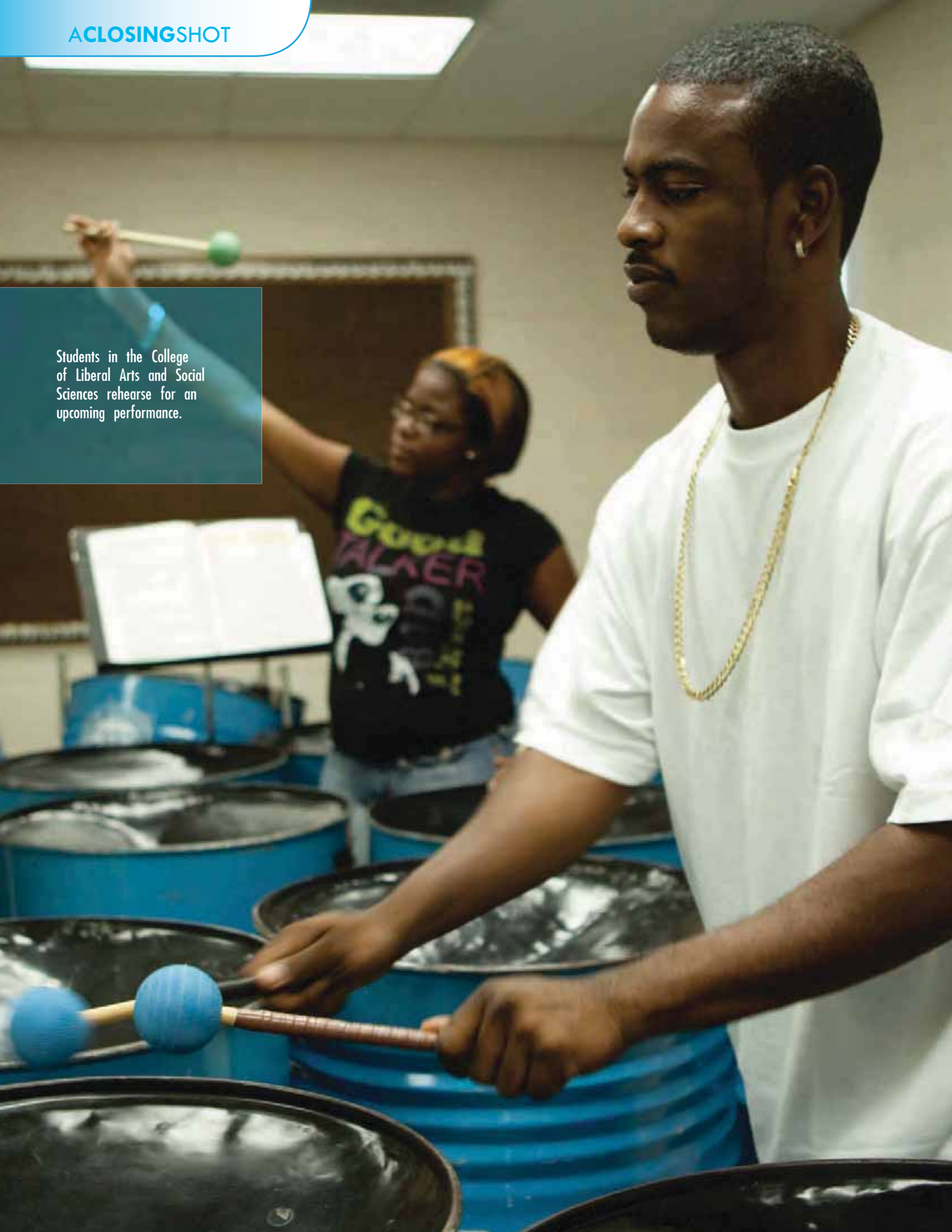
Faculty and alumni are also welcome to utilize the modern equipment for a fee.

the dance studio. The fitness room features state-of-the-art equipment, including pulse metered treadmills and elliptical machines, free weights, circuit machines and two major cable jungle gyms.

“We have the only hip machine on the island,” points out Amy Gurlea, who was the Wellness Center coordinator. “This piece of equipment is used for rehab for hip injuries and helps strengthen legs.

“The dance studio boasts an aerodynamically constructed wooden floor that offsets the pain and damage to the shins and knees. This room is also equipped exercise balls, yoga mats and a divider that facilitate classes being conducted simultaneously. This is the largest class room of its kind in the entire territory. It’s almost three times bigger than any other class space,” Gurlea added. 📷

Students in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences rehearse for an upcoming performance.



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