



UVI Alumni Chronicles

University of the Virgin Islands

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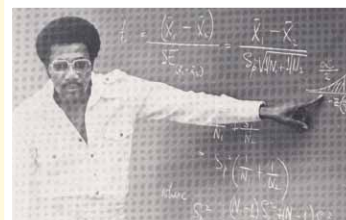
UVI Builds the Region, One Nation at a Time

A Look at UVI's Impact on St. Kitts and Nevis

It may have all started in Sandy Point—a northern town on the island of St. Kitts, in the island nation of St. Kitts and Nevis. The year was 1965. A group of promising young people from Sandy Point left St. Kitts, headed for the then College of the Virgin Islands (CVI). The fledgling institution was charted just three years before and was determined to attract the best and brightest students from the Virgin Islands and across the Caribbean. During that time, many students from the Caribbean studied at the University of the West Indies (UWI). If not UWI, students often went to schools in England or Canada. But this new institution, CVI, offered serious competi-

tion. Dr. Simon B. Jones-Hendrickson remembered Seymour Clarke as one of the early ambassadors of CVI. Father Clarke was an Anglican minister who was well traveled in the region. While posted in Sandy Point, he encouraged parishioners to consider this newly opened institution in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Dr. Frank Mills, also from Sandy Point, didn't hear about CVI from Clarke though. One summer day he got a message to go to the Post Office for an important call. Dr. Mills explained that most homes didn't have telephones then and getting a phone call was a big deal.

"I received word that George Bradley at Government Headquarters was on the phone for me, and he wanted to know if I would accept a scholarship to CVI," Dr. Mills said. "I asked, 'What is that?'" he said. "I had never heard anything about CVI before." At the time, Dr. Mills was a teacher and had considered attending UWI and schools in Canada and England. Bradley, who previously worked with Dr. Mills as a teacher, knew of



Dr. Frank Mills teaches at UVI, from the 1976 yearbook

Mills' interest and secured him a scholarship. Under the leadership of CVI's first president, Dr. Lawrence C. Wanlass, the institution was recruiting top students throughout the Caribbean with scholarship offers. "I thought 'a bird in the hand is better than two in the bush,'" Dr. Mills said.

That year, Dr. Mills and Dr. Jones-Hendrickson, along with others including Lucien Manchester, Charles Hamilton, Calvin Howell and Malcolm Kirwan, left for CVI.

At CVI those early attendees said they received a sound education inside and outside of the classroom.

"I wouldn't trade it for anything else," Dr. Mills said of his

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Welcome to the inaugural edition of the UVI Alumni Chronicles!

This newsletter is about you and the promotion of alumni pride. With over 7,600 traditional and 4,500 special alumni situated throughout the Territory, Caribbean, U.S. mainland, and the world, this quarterly newsletter will feature alumni-related stories, spotlights and trivia. This quarter features several alumni from the island nation of St. Kitts and Nevis, their personal stories and how the UVI experience continues to make a significant impact in their lives and the community they serve.

Enjoy!

Linda I. Smith, '98, '03
Director of Annual Giving and Alumni Affairs
lsmith@uvi.edu



Dr. Simon B. Jones-Hendrickson, from the 1982 yearbook

Best of the Best

We asked UVI alumni to identify their favorite on-campus study spot. This is what they said:

“Living on St. John, I was always on the run. I would mostly study in the Journalism Lab (Humanities Bldg. room 101).” - *Simonia Athanase-Dagou*, BA 1997, St. Thomas Campus

“I did most of my studying in groups in the East Hall dormitory lobby. I don’t know if it is because living on campus forms more of a tight-knitted bond... but it was a ritual that the day before an exam I would be ordering a couple boxes of Domino’s (pizza) and getting comfortable in someone’s lobby as we pulled an all-nighter.” - *Lario Duzanson*, BA 2011, St. Thomas Campus

“The library. I always liked to go up there. All the way to the back there was a computer room. It was close to a window and you could look out.” - *Avia Elcock Theophane*, BA

2000 and MBA 2006, Albert A. Sheen Campus on St. Croix

“I’m a really quiet and reserved person. I like to study mostly by myself, but when studying with a group we went to the vacant classroom in the Nursing Building, across from the Biology Building.” - *Dr. Lisa E. Leslie-Williams*, BS 2001, St. Thomas Campus

“My first spot was on the picnic benches that were outside of the CA building just past the door where Upward Bound used to be. There was always somebody that would pass by that would sit and study with you, no matter what the subject; plus no matter how hot it got, there was a good breeze.” - *Imani Marley-Husbands*, BA 1996, St. Thomas Campus

“The small cubicles in the library. Just being right in there, I got a whole lot accomplished.” - *Deanna Rogers*, AA 1985 and BA 1987, St. Thomas Campus

Did You Know

Did you know that in 2012 the University of the Virgin Islands will celebrate its 50th anniversary with a yearlong celebration called the Golden Jubilee? The year will be filled with activities for alumni, students, staff and the general public to reflect on UVI’s past and plan for an even more glorious future. More information about the Golden Jubilee will be featured in upcoming issues of The UVI Alumni Chronicles.

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Where are They Now?

Pictured to the right is a photo from an early UVI Theatre Production. UVI alumni are invited to identify the people in this photo, the years they attended UVI and where they are now. Send submissions to mbartle@uvi.edu by noon on Friday, December 9. The first three winners will receive a free UVI alumni t-shirt. (The t-shirts will be mailed to winners who live outside of the territory.)



Can you name the alumni in this photo, their attending years and where they are now?



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CVI education.

He earned an associate's degree, then immediately went on to earn a bachelor's and a master's degree from the University of Western Ontario in Canada; eventually earning a Ph.D from Clark University. "The fact that I came back here immediately after graduation is a testament to that. It was that personal interaction (with faculty and administrators) that set the stage where they admired your activities and helped you to develop professionally," Dr. Mills said. CVI later became the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), reflecting its expanded degree offerings. Both Dr. Mills and Dr. Jones-Hendrickson are now UVI professors. Dr. Mills also heads UVI's Eastern Caribbean Center (ECC).

"Many of us, when we got our first degree, went on to our second and third degree with unheard of speed," said Dr. Jones-Hendrickson. "It was the faculty at CVI that pushed us to continue."

Those early graduates would return to St. Kitts and Nevis as shining examples of the schol-

ars that the institution produced. They paved the way for other students like Jonathan Bass, a senior financial officer at LIME (formerly Cable and Wireless) St. Kitts and Nevis, Ltd.

"Dr. Mills and Dr. Jones-



Jonathan Bass as "JB the Emperor" at the CVI 1982 calypso competition where he was the second runner up

Hendrickson would come home and ask, 'where are you going to further your studies?'" Bass said. "It wasn't only what they were saying; it was who they were. If they went to UVI and did so well, then why shouldn't I follow?" Bass said. "It was an easy choice," he added. "We were impressed with what was coming out of UVI."

Bass followed in the footsteps of his countrymen who had attended the institution before him. He cherished the balance of academics, cultural diversity and student leadership. "What UVI created was an atmosphere for one to develop holistically," Bass said.

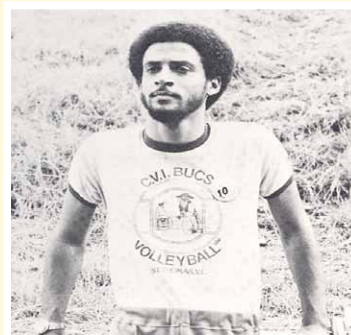
He participated in UVI's theater, athletics and music areas. He was twice named "UVI Calypso King." Bass, now an assistant pastor, came to territorial fame as the author of "Theresa Rocking," the popu-

"We were impressed with what was coming out of UVI."

- Jonathan Bass

lar calypso hit that went on to be produced and performed by Imaginations Brass.

"When I returned to St. Kitts I had no difficulty getting into the workplace," said Bass, who held several notable positions before becoming LIME's Regional Finance Team accountant and St. Kitts/Nevis secretary.



UVI's first Rhodes Scholar Richard "Ricky" Skerritt, from the 1979 yearbook.

"It was easy fitting in. People like Hugh Heyliger and Ricky Skerritt had already paved the way for us," he said.

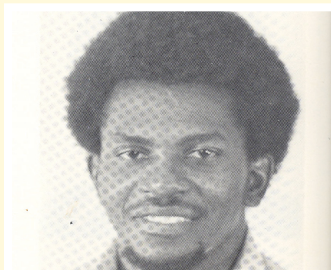
Richard "Ricky" Skerritt had earlier propelled the University into the international spotlight. His academic and athletic superiority earned him the distinction of being selected as a Rhodes Scholar. A highly selective process chooses only 80 students per year from uni-

Class of 2011 Pays it Forward

In honor of achieving a major milestone on their "pathway to greatness," 69 recent UVI graduates contributed \$1,395 to their alma mater. Annually, prospective graduates are asked to make contributions symbolic of their graduation year. This year the amount was \$20.11. These funds directly assist with academic programs and scholarships for students in need.

To see list of Donors

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Hugh Heyliger, from the 1973 yearbook

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versities throughout the world as Rhodes Scholars, with the opportunity to study at Oxford University.

Skerritt is modest about that accomplishment. "While I have experienced some degree of personal prestige as a result, I have never really been overly conscious of being a Rhodes Scholar," Skerritt said. "The main pleasure I received back then was the recognition it raised for UVI across the Caribbean." UVI's second Rhodes Scholar is Ian "Quincy" Quinlan, who is also from St. Kitts and Nevis.

Skerritt said UVI provided ample fertile ground both inside and outside the classroom for learning and growing. "I especially enjoyed the liberal arts education and the strong Caribbean consciousness that we created as students on campus," he said. "I was also fortunate to develop many close friends in the wider USVI community through my involvement in a variety of sporting and other activities."

Skerritt has experienced tremendous success in St. Kitts and the Caribbean. He is minister of Tourism and International Transport for St. Kitts and Nevis. He is also the chairman of the Caribbean Tourism Organization. Skerritt has also served as manager of the West Indies Cricket Team, among other notable positions.

Like other UVI graduates,

"I was also fortunate to develop many close friends in the wider USVI community through my involvement in a variety of sporting and other activities."

- Richard "Ricky" Skerritt

Skerritt became a mentor to others. "He took me under his wings and I've worked my way up," Bass said of Skerritt. "I have tremendous respect and admiration for him," said Bass.

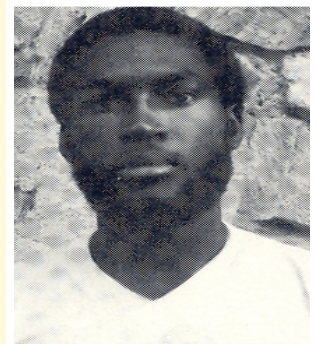
Throughout the years UVI continued to respond to the academic needs of the region and St. Kitts and Nevis students continued to attend. According to UVI Fall 2011 statistics, the second largest concentration of UVI students is from St. Kitts and Nevis.

Jacqueline Somersall-Berry, who had studied journalism and mass communications, earned a bachelor's degree from UVI in 1999, and continued on to earn a Master of Public Administration (MPA) in 2001. That year, the world changed as a result of the September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States. Because of her UVI education, Somersall-Berry was able to change with the times. She recalled an elective course for the MPA program that covered current events. The hot-button issue of the day was off-shore banking and the large amounts of money that left the United States because of the growing practice of U.S. companies

being incorporated in the Caribbean. "To gain a better understanding of what was happening at the time, one had to do a lot of research, analyze data, determine what sources to tap into and find the facts," Somersall-Berry remembered. "One elective opened a new career path, that to be honest, I did not know existed upon entering UVI," Somersall-Berry said. She is now the director of the St. Kitts and Nevis Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), the country's equivalent to the U.S. Treasury Department's Financial Crime Enforcement Network.

"The FIU's role is to protect the financial system, not only in St. Kitts-Nevis but also worldwide, from being abused by money launderers and terrorist financiers," Somersall-Berry said. "As director of the FIU, my journalism skills provide the ability to determine the how, why, when, who and where while analyzing matters," she said. "It is extremely important to get it right in the analytical process in order to provide intelligence that could be acted upon with confidence."

In the early 2000s UVI con-



UVI's second Rhodes Scholar Ian "Quincy" Quinlan, from the 1982 yearbook.

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tinued to strengthen its relationships in the region by partnering with other institutions. One of those partnerships is with the Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College (CFBC) in St. Kitts. Former UVI President Dr. LaVerne E. Ragster said the first UVI/CFBC agreement was under Dr. Orville Kean's presidency, when she was provost. UVI has had several agreements with the St. Kitts college since. A recent memorandum of agreement establishes a list of courses at CFBC that are equivalent to UVI courses, allowing CFBC students to have credits transferable toward a degree from UVI. It also provides a special tuition rate for CFBC students wishing to transfer to UVI.

St. Clair Hodge took advantage of the UVI/CFBC agreement. "I had an opportunity to play the sport of my passion – volleyball – and study at the same time," Hodge said. "Also, the reduced tuition arrangement between CFBC and UVI had the most influence on my decision to attend UVI." Along with playing on the UVI men's volleyball team, Hodge served as president of the St. Kitts-Nevis Association, the vice president of the St. Thomas campus Student Government Association, president of Brothers With A Cause and student senator on the UVI Senate. He was certified as a Student Leader and won a Silver ADDY Student

Award. Still, Hodge said his greatest moments were in the classroom. "What stood out were the personal relationships that were very possible between students and faculty, staff and administration," said Hodge, who graduated magna cum laude in May 2011, with a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration. "I felt welcomed and had personal service at UVI. In addition, the size of the campus was conducive to camaraderie among peers."

Hodge is an assistant manager at the St. Kitts Nevis Anguilla Trading and Development Company Limited (TDC). He continues to play volleyball, representing St. Kitts and Nevis in regional, national and international indoor and outdoor tournaments. He also sings in his church's assembly choir.

Another agreement allowed CFBC students to take graduate classes at UVI via video conference. In May 2011, Vernice Rogers and Delores Stapleton-Harris of St. Kitts and Nevis tied as the graduate students on UVI's Albert A. Sheen Campus on St. Croix with the highest grade point averages. They both earned Master of Arts in Education degrees, through the collaboration between UVI and CFBC.

"In every single case what UVI did was give people an opportunity to get credentials so that they can have a

Notable UVI Alumni from St. Kitts and Nevis

Rhodes Scholars

Richard Skerritt BA, 1980, STT
Minister of St. Kitts/Nevis Tourism & International
Transport, Chairman of the CTO~

Ian "Quincy" Quinlan BA, 1984, STT
Associate General Counsel
Texas Association of Counties

Government

Vance Amory..... MBA, 1988, STT
Former Premier of Nevis

Hugh Heyliger..... BA, 1975, STT
Lecturer at CFBC*, Former
St. Kitts/Nevis Minister of Agriculture

Janet V. Harris..... AA, BA, 1984, STT
Financial Secretary of St. Kitts/Nevis, CPA

Jacqueline Sommersall-Berry..... BA, MPA, STT
Director of the St. Kitts/Nevis
Financial Intelligence Unit

Kaye Bass..... BA (2), 1995, STT
Ministry of St. Kitts/Nevis Foreign Affairs
and Education

Education

Dr. Frank Mills..... AA, 1967, STT
Director of UVI's Eastern Caribbean Center,
Chair of CFBC* Board of Governors

Dr. Simon Jones-Hendrickson..... AA, 1967, STT
UVI Professor of Social Science,
Former Ambassador to OECS**, CARICOM^, ACS^^

Medicine

Dr. Clayton Heyliger BA, 1973, STT
Ross School of Medicine, Lecturer at CFBC*

Dr. Lucien Manchester..... BA, 1970, STT
Physician

Law

Desmond Maynard..... AA, 1965, STT
Attorney for St. Kitts/Nevis Regulatory Trust Industry,
Member of the VI Bar Association

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better standard of living, give them an experience that they couldn't get any place else and keep them grounded in the Caribbean," Dr. Ragster said.

One of UVI's pioneers, Skerritt said that the institution has been very valuable to St. Kitts and Nevis. "Throughout its history, hundreds of our citizens have studied there at a relatively affordable cost. Most of UVI's graduates have made positive contributions to our nation in both the private and public sectors," he said. UVI graduate Vance Amory advanced to head of local government as the former premier of Nevis.

For Skerritt and many others, their greatest desire was to serve the Caribbean. "I have never wanted to work and live anywhere else but in the Caribbean, and I am grateful that I have been able to be based at home in St Kitts and Nevis while serving the entire region," he said. "I believe I have helped to bring greater economic awareness and opportunities to my country as well as helped significantly to promote the rich natural and cultural assets that we are blessed with in our region."

That's a success that UVI can also claim. "Virgin Islands students, students from the mainland and students from the Caribbean, including those from St. Kitts, all learn more about the world through each other," said Dr. Ragster. "I think that's one of the bright spots of our

legacy as a University. There are not a lot of schools that can say they have offered the opportunity for people to have a higher education degree and do it in a manner that also makes people want to go back home and contribute to their home. We're helping to build the capacity of the region as opposed to contributing significantly to the brain drain."



The UVI Alumni Affairs office is pleased to announce Colleen Williams ('83, '97) as the winner of the alumni e-newsletter naming contest. This newsletter is named "The UVI Alumni Chronicles," after Williams' winning entry. A panel of judges, including the Vice President for Institutional Advancement Dionne V. Jackson and the Director of Annual Giving and Alumni Affairs Linda I. Smith ('98, '03), reviewed the 367 entries. Alumna Williams is a principal at the Ricardo Richards Elementary School on St. Croix.

Notable UVI Alumni from St. Kitts and Nevis

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Banking and Finance

- Arthur Williams..... BA, 1974, STT
Economist at the
Eastern Caribbean Central Bank
- Ira Mills..... BA, 1976, STT
Former Director V.I.
Office of Management and Budget
- Janette Harris..... AA, BA, 1984, STT
Financial Secretary of St. Kitts and Nevis, CPA
- Carolyn Adams BA, 1998
Manager of the Credit Division at the
St. Kitts, Nevis, Anguilla National Bank
- Rawlinson A. Isaac..... BA, 1983, STT
Former Manager of the Bank of Nevis,
Entrepreneur
- Malcolm Kirwan..... AA, 1967, STT
Former VP of Administration and Finance at
UVI, Former Director of the UVIRTP[~]

Business

- Dennis Knight BA, 1985, STT
General Manager of TDC, Community Activist
- Glenn Quinlan..... BS, 1983, STT
Agency Manager for Quinlan, Walwyn & Associates
- St. Clair Hodge..... BA, 2011, STT
Assistant Manager TDC, Youth Mentor
- Cornel Williams BA, 1982, STX
President of International Capital and Management
Company

Telecommunications

- Jonathan Bass..... BA, 1985, STT
LIME Regional Finance Team Accountant
and St. Kitts/Nevis Secretary
- Jaedee Caines..... AA, BA, 2010, STT
Nevis Island Administration Information
Department, Host of Candid TV show

- ~ = Caribbean Tourism Organization
- * = Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College
- ** = Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
- ^ = Caribbean Community
- ^^ = Association of Caribbean States
- ˘ = UVI Research and Technology Park