



News Release

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September 8, 2008

Public Invited to Tenth UVI Undergraduate Research Symposium

The Virgin Islands public is invited to attend the Tenth Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium sponsored by the Emerging Caribbean Scientists program of the Division of Science and Mathematics at the University of the Virgin Islands. The symposium is scheduled for 1 to 3 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 21, in the UVI Administration Conference Center (ACC) on the St. Thomas campus. Approximately 40 UVI students will present posters displaying the results of research they have conducted over the past year.

The symposium is part of an overall effort to increase research training and promote excellence in UVI students. It provides an opportunity for students to display the results of their work and for the public to interact with them. The event traditionally draws an audience from the UVI community, the general public, and junior high and high school students interested in mathematics and science.

Symposium presentations will showcase projects conducted under the direction of mentors at UVI and at other universities and at laboratories across the nation. Some students conducted research during UVI's on-campus Sophomore Science Research Institute and the Science Undergraduate Research Experience programs. UVI students also conducted research at the Lung and Blood Institute at the National Institutes of Health, the Pacific Northwest National Laboratories, the University of Florida, Morehouse College, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Rutgers University, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the University of Iowa, Carnegie Mellon University, the Genome Sequencing Center at Washington University in St. Louis, Boston University, the University of North Carolina and other locations.

Each year, the symposium's student presentations are evaluated by a panel of judges from the community for their scientific content and their clarity of presentation. Last year, biology major Ali Kareem won best poster award for his research on bread fruit leaves and their affect on hypertension. The title of his poster was Antihypertensive Metabolites from *Atrocarpus altilis* (Breadfruit). Chemistry majors Ophelia Wadsworth and Digna Washington tied for second place. Wadsworth's poster was entitled Antimicrotubule Metabolites from *Ircinia strobilina*

and other Virgin Islands Sponges, while Washington's poster was entitled Cytotoxic metabolites from *Pseudocerintina crassa*.

Student research projects are supported by grants from many sources, including funding from the National Science Foundation's HBCU-UP program, the South East Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (SEAGEP) and the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Scholars programs, EPSCoR, the MARC and RISE programs of the National Institutes of Health, and by grants supporting their faculty mentors' scientific research. General support is also provided by UVI's Division of Science and Mathematics.

Persons interested in participating in or sponsoring this event should call 693-1232 or send email to tpeters@uvi.edu. Additional information can be found at the Emerging Caribbean Scientists program web site - <http://ecs.uvi.edu>.

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