Title III Impact

The Annual Newsletter of the UVI Title III Program

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What is Title III?

Title III is a formula grant that is designed to assist Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the development and strengthening of their physical, financial, and academic resources, as well as their endowments. Through the U.S. Department of Education’s office of Institutional Development and Undergraduate Education Service (IDUES), the Title III program awards over $200 million to HBCUs across the United States each year.

Since 1968, the U.S. Department of Education has partnered with the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), through its Title III, Part B—Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities, to assist with the development of the university’s infrastructure. Each year UVI is awarded approximately $1.5 million in Title III support.

Some of the projects that have been funded in whole or in part by the University’s Title III program include:
- UVI Freshman Center
- Construction of the Music Suite
- Development of the Inter-Campus Communication Systems
- Development of the Office of Sponsored Program
- VISION 2012

According to Mr. Dayle Barry, UVI’s Title III Coordinator “Over the years, Title III has allowed UVI to provide services it may not have otherwise been able to provide. Some of these services include the upgrade of the Marine Science laboratory, establishment of computer labs in the libraries on both campuses, the development of the Freshman Center and the expansion of the Freshman Center to include the Campus Advising and Tutorial Services (CATS) to serve all students.”

Other ongoing Title III-funded activities include: improvements to technology infrastructure, enhancement of the chemistry program, and strengthening the Sponsored Programs Office.

What’s Happening in Communications

As reported in a January article in the St. Croix Avis, the Communications major on the St. Croix campus has received a significant “leg up” with the installation of new computer equipment and software in the lab.

Through grant funding from the University of the Virgin Islands Title III program and a donation from a local company receiving Economic Development Commission benefits, the UVI Division of Humanities and Social Sciences has upgraded a computer laboratory on the St. Croix campus with new computer equipment and software. An Associated Press affiliate, U.S. Viking, donated the software, which runs on the DELL desktop computers purchased with grant funding.

Along with the regularly used software, the computers are also loaded with new web design software.

With the new equipment, Communications students are now able to learn ENPS software, described by one Associated Press web site as the “world’s best selling news production software.” One of the objectives of the Title III grant is to increase the number of Communications majors from 20 in 2007 to 60 by 2012. According to Dr. Alex Randall, co-author of the approved grant proposal, the Division’s revised curriculum will “teach our students to use this software, offering them an opportunity unique in the region to compete for top jobs upon graduation.”

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Visit the Title III web site at http://www.uvi.edu/TitleIII/t3index.html.

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Title III & IT—Transitioning Forward University Systems

The Information Technology Services (ITS) Component has partnered with the Title III program on several ongoing or planned projects that are expected to take UVI several steps forward in the use of technology for academic and administrative processes.

Some of these include:

Banner Training/Documentation

Ayedha Williams, until recently a Programmer Analyst I, has been promoted to a Programmer Analyst II. The promotion allows Ms. Williams to focus on Banner training and documentation for the various Banner modules.

CollegeNet

UVI prospective students can now apply online through CollegeNet. Via this service, applications and program inquiries can now be made online. Work is in progress to integrate the application sent once the request is approved. Requests can be made at http://schedule.uvi.edu.

TouchNet

Students can now pay for UVI tuition and fees using credit/ATH cards and checks online. Using the TouchNet service, the registration process can now be completed totally online, eliminating the need to stand in line at the Cashier’s Office for payment of tuition.

CATS—A New Paradigm for the 21st Century

What used to be known as the Freshman Center on both campuses of the University of the Virgin Islands has been transformed to the Campus Advising and Tutorial Services (CATS) Centers. With a new focus on students at all levels, not just freshmen, CATS is making strides in providing academic assistance to students.

CATS was created in 2006 under the former Director of Enrollment Services, Ms. Carolyne Cook, the CATS Centers are an evolution of what had been a bridge program to assist students with the transition from high school to college. Recognizing the need for intervention at all stages of the college experience, UVI expanded the Center’s services to address at-risk students at the sophomore, junior, and senior levels.

Now under the direction of Dr. Angela McGhee, CATS utilizes a cadre of subject area tutors to provide assistance to students identified by their instructors as having need of assistance outside the classroom. Additionally, students are able to use the technology available in the CATS Centers to do research on the Internet, access assignments on Blackboard, and prepare and practice PowerPoint presentations. The space is also available for informal study sessions and student organization meetings.

During the fall 2007 semester, CATS delivered a total of 668 student contacts. The majority of the students using the Center’s services received tutelage in English; however, other subjects at the Center included mathematics, communications, and social sciences.

On the St. Croix campus, CATS is located on the upper floor of the Evans Center, while it is on the first floor of the Classroom Administration Building on St. Thomas. The Writing Center on St. Croix is located at Room 104 of the Modular Building. For additional information about CATS, please contact Dr. McGhee at (340) 693-1226.

Chemistry Program Moves Towards Certification

The chemistry program at UVI has been gearing towards improving its infrastructure. To enable the program to complete this feat, it applied for and received Title III support. The activity entitled “Chemistry Infrastructure Improvements” has received over $300,000 this fiscal year to upgrade and acquire modern chemical instrumentation and apparatus, and identification of the appropriate lab space. The activity directors, Drs. Stanley Latesky and Thomas Archibald, are working diligently to meet all the necessary ACS requirements. To date, a majority of the much needed equipment has been ordered and the lab space has been identified. The project hopes to achieve ACS certification by 2010.

Hearing Chemistry certified by the American Chemical Society could provide a number of benefits for the institution. It would certainly be instrumental in the professional development of chemistry major here at UVI. According to Dr. Latesky, “ACS certification here at UVI could result in our graduates being able to apply to more graduate schools as well as attract students from other universities.”

NAHBCUT3A Comes to the Virgin Islands

In June, the National Association of Historically Black Colleges and Universities Title III Administrators’ Association (NAHBCUT3A) will hold its Annual Technical Assistance Workshop in the US Virgin Islands. This will be the first such workshop held outside the continental United States.

Representing a total of 97 institutions, the mission of the NAHBCUT3A is “to encourage and facilitate an open dialogue among Title III eligible institutions on the best approaches to development and implementation of the Title III program, best practices in grant management and evaluation, and exemplary projects from participating institutions.

President LaVerne Ragster has also been asked to serve on the organization’s President’s Advisory Council, a gathering of some of the presidents of participating institutions who provide guidance to the executive board of NAHBCUT3A. In this role, President Ragster anticipates providing a voice on a national level for any concerns that this institution may have in the implementation of its Title III program.

The workshop will be held on June 25-27, 2008 at the Wyndham Sugar Bay Resort on St. Thomas. For additional information, please visit the organization’s web site at http://www.hbcut3a.org/ or contact the UVI Title III office at (340) 693-1052.

Event Management Systems (EMS)

Scheduling rooms and events is now easier with Event Management System. This product allows the University and persons from the community to view academic and other scheduled events online. Reservations can also be made online, with an email confirmation sent once the request is approved. Requests can be made at http://schedule.uvi.edu.