



# University of the Virgin Islands School of Nursing

## FROM THE DEAN'S DESK



BSN Class of '27 students Moné Wilson, Nawal Yanes, and Keanu Ritter joined Professor A. Chaney at the SRMC Careers in Health Care Fair.

### Dean's Message: Connection Beyond the Classroom

As we reflect on the recent celebration of Latino Heritage Month, I am reminded of how deeply our diversity enriches our community. The languages we speak, the cultures we cherish, and the stories we share create a tapestry of belonging that makes the University of the Virgin Islands a remarkable place to learn and grow.

Connection has always been at the heart of my journey as an educator in higher education, a journey that spans 23 years and continues to inspire me every day. During my 15 years living in residence as a faculty member with students at the University of Pennsylvania, I experienced firsthand how relationships transform learning. I often hosted conversations in my apartment where students shared their dreams, challenges, and hopes for the future. We attended campus events together, supported one another during late-night study sessions, and celebrated milestones as neighbors. Those experiences reminded me that education is most powerful when it extends beyond the classroom walls.

I have seen that same spirit of connection here at UVI. This semester, our pizza parties brought students together for fun, laughter, and community building. These gatherings provided us with an opportunity to relax, recharge, and get to know one another outside of class. We will continue that tradition with an end-of-semester study break during finals week, reminding you that taking time to pause and connect is just as important as studying hard.

This edition of our newsletter celebrates that same spirit by highlighting the accomplishments of our student leaders and the many ways they represent UVI SON in the community. It highlights Student Government Association officers Franchel Rodriguez, President, Class of '28, and Lea Cornelius, Secretary, Class of '27, along with Beyond the Sheets Ambassador Jada Romer, Class of '27, whose leadership and outreach exemplify our School's mission of advocacy, service, and education. Their efforts, along with the countless hours our nursing students contribute to U.S.V.I. communities, reflect the compassion and commitment that define our program.

Whether you are leading campus organizations, volunteering in the community, helping to resolve a conflict among your peers, or simply checking in on a classmate, you are showing what it means to be a UVI nurse. My challenge to you is to continue to build those connections with one another, with your faculty, and with the communities you serve. Together, we can make the UVI School of Nursing the number one nursing program in the Caribbean.

I hope you enjoy this student-centered edition of our newsletter and take pride, as I do every day, in all of the wonderful things our students do to make a difference on our campuses, throughout the Virgin Islands, and beyond.

With pride and admiration,

Lisa M. Lewis, PhD, RN, FAAN, FAHA, FADLN  
Dean, School of Nursing

# Opportunities for BSN Students Scholarship Deadlines Approaching!

It would be wonderful to see UVI BSN students apply for these national opportunities. Please review the information below and reach out if you need assistance with your application.



## Chi Eta Phi Nursing Scholarship

**Deadline: October 31**

**There is still time to apply.** This scholarship recognizes nursing students who demonstrate leadership, academic commitment, and community service. Reach out to your advisor or the Dean's Office if you need guidance completing your application. Check previous emails for scholarship information.



## AACN Certiphi Nursing Scholarship

**Deadline: November 1**

Three \$5,000 scholarships will be awarded.

Eligibility:

- Enrolled in a pre-licensure nursing program at an AACN member school
- U.S. citizen or permanent resident
- GPA of 3.2 or higher

Application Requirements:

- Contact information for your academic advisor
- 500-word essay responding to the prompt provided

\*Please reach out to Dean Lewis if you would like her to review your essay before submission for the AACN scholarship.

**Apply here:**

<https://www.aacnnursing.org/foundation/scholarships/certiphi-aacn-scholarship>





## Student Spotlight: Leadership and Service

Honoring nursing students who lead with purpose, compassion, and a commitment to excellence.

One of my proudest Dean moments this semester was attending the Student Government Association Officer Installation Ceremony on the Albert A. Sheen Campus on Friday, October 17, 2025. Witnessing our nursing students take on key leadership roles filled me with immense pride and optimism for the future of our profession.

### Congratulations to Our New Albert A. Sheen Campus Leaders

**Congratulations to Mr. Franchel Rodriguez, Class of '28, who was installed as President, and Ms. Lea Cornelius, Class of '27, who was installed as Secretary of the Albert A. Sheen Campus Student Government Association. Their election reflects the trust and admiration of their peers and the leadership qualities they demonstrate both in and beyond the classroom.**



**Franchel and Lea exemplify the spirit of UVI Nursing, leaders who serve with compassion, purpose, and integrity. Their commitment to representing the voices of students and strengthening our campus community embodies what it means to be a UVI nurse.**





# UVI BSN STUDENTS IN ACTION

Highlights from recent community events.

## *Community Advocacy*

UVI BSN students conducted 75 health screenings and shared wellness information with community members at Afternoon on the Green 2025.



Under the leadership of Jada Romer, BSN Class of '27 and Beyond the Sheets Ambassador (BTS), UVI nursing students joined forces with BTS and the St. Croix Women's Coalition to educate the community on domestic violence. Through sharing vital resources and U.S. Virgin Islands statistics, the students helped raise awareness and inspire advocacy for those impacted across the Territory.



# UVI BSN STUDENTS IN ACTION

Highlights from recent community events.

## Community Advocacy

UVI BSN students joined Territory-wide events like the Day of Remembrance and Domestic Violence Walks to advocate for safety, healing, and awareness throughout the Virgin Islands.



AAS BSN Class of '26 participated in the Domestic Violence Walk



UVI BSN Class of '27 students Keanu Ritter (Class Representative), Moné Wilson, and Nawal Yanes shared their clinical skills with local high schoolers during the SRMC Careers in Health Fair on October 28, 2025 demonstrating how to properly use a stethoscope and engage patients with care and confidence.



## *Building Community, One Slice at a Time*



Students, staff and faculty joined Dean Lewis on both the Albert A. Sheen and Orville E. Kean campuses for pizza, laughter, and connection. These gatherings create space for conversation and community beyond the classroom.



**This semester, students and faculty gathered for Pizza Socials on both the Albert A. Sheen and Orville E. Kean campuses—an opportunity to connect, laugh, and strengthen our sense of community. These informal gatherings created space for conversation and camaraderie outside of the classroom, reminding us that connection fuels learning. Whether enjoying a quick slice or staying to share stories, everyone left with full hearts and renewed appreciation for the UVI School of Nursing family.**

# VISNA CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

## The Power of Nursing: Advocacy, Policy, and Practice

### EXPANDING KNOWLEDGE BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

#### INSPIRING SPEAKERS & VOICES OF LEADERSHIP

This month, UVI nursing students participated in the Virgin Islands State Nurses Association (VISNA) Convention under the leadership of Dr. Suzette Lettsome, VISNA President and the School of Nursing's Academic Program Chair and Assistant Professor. The convention highlighted the power of nursing through advocacy, policy, and practice.

The keynote address by Dr. Jennifer Mensik-Kennedy, President of the American Nurses Association, and the Voices of Leadership panel—including Dr. Mensik-Kennedy, Senator Ray Fonseca, MBA, BS, Chairman of the Committee on Health, Hospitals, and Human Services; Carmen Vanterpool-Romney, BSN, RN, CPM, Territorial Executive Director of the Virgin Islands Board of Nurse Licensure; Darice Plaskett, BSN, MSA, RN, FACHE, Chief Nursing Officer at the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital; and Dr. Delphine D. Olivacce, DHA, MSN, RN, Chief Nursing Officer at Schneider Regional Medical Center—showcased the innovation, collaboration, and dedication that define nurses across the Virgin Islands.

Messages from Schneider Regional Medical Center CEO Tina Comissiong and a continuing education session on medication safety led by Professor Duval, MSN, RN, CNOR, a UVI School of Nursing part-time faculty member and Clinical Nurse Educator at Schneider Regional Medical Center, further inspired students and faculty to continue advancing excellence in nursing practice and leadership.





## Thriving as a BSN Student: A Mini Guide to Success

We are in the middle of early registration for Spring 2026, which makes this the perfect time to plan ahead and meet with your advisor. Thoughtful advising and preparation now will help ensure a smooth and successful semester.

### 1. Advising Tips

- Schedule advising appointments early and come prepared with your course plan and goals
- Keep track of important dates such as registration, clinical clearances, and graduation applications
- Use advising sessions to discuss your long-term professional goals, not just your class schedule

### 2. Connect with Your Faculty

- Attend office hours to ask questions, review material, or seek guidance about your progress
- Communicate clearly when reaching out by email. Include your name, course, and what you would like to discuss
- Ask faculty about opportunities for mentoring, research, or community engagement

### 3. Study Smart and Reflect

- Use Claire AI, part of the ATI program, to quiz yourself immediately after reviewing material. Active recall strengthens learning.
- After each exam, use an Exam Wrapper as a self-assessment tool. Ask yourself:
  - What study methods did I use?
  - What worked best?
  - What will I change next time?

Every test becomes an opportunity for growth when you reflect on your learning process. Ask the Dean's office for an Exam Wrapper document

### 4. Stay Balanced and Engaged

- Participate in student organizations and professional activities to build leadership skills
- Maintain a healthy balance with rest, nutrition, and recreation. Caring for yourself enables you to care for others
- Remember that success is a journey built on progress, persistence, and connection



# Important Dates to Remember

<b>October 16:</b>	<b>Start of Administrative Withdrawal with Dean's Permission</b>
<b>October 23:</b>	<b>Early Registration for Spring 2026</b>
<b>October 31:</b>	<b>Liberty Day Recess</b>
<b>November 11:</b>	<b>Veteran's Day Recess</b>
<b>November 25:</b>	<b>Last Day of Classes</b>
<b>November 26:</b>	<b>Study Day</b>
<b>November 27–28:</b>	<b>Thanksgiving and Fortsberg Day Recess</b>
<b>December 1–6:</b>	<b>Final Exams</b>

## THIS WEEK

This week, Beyond the Sheets, led by Jada Romer, Class of 2027, a Beyond the Sheets Ambassador, will host a free STD/STI screening in collaboration with Frederiksted Health Care and the School of Nursing. The event will take place during Homecoming on November 2, 2025, from 1-6 PM, and will provide students with access to sexual and reproductive health resources. Attendees can also participate in fun games, connect with future nurses, and enter raffle prize drawings while promoting healthy living and wellness within the UVI community.



The poster for "PASSPORTS TO PROTECTION" features a vibrant pink and blue color scheme with a festive banner at the top. It includes the University of the Virgin Islands logo and a "BEYOND THE SHEETS" logo. Three circular images show students at the event: one holding a pink balloon, another with a large box, and a group of students behind a table. A graphic of a passport with a globe is also present. The text describes the event as a day of sharing, making memories, and participating in fun activities, listing educational workshops, raffles, and free STD/STI testing. The event is held at AAS Campus from 1-6 PM on November 2nd, 2025.

# PASSPORTS TO PROTECTION

Get ready for a day of sharing, making memories and participating in a variety of fun activities. Here's what you can expect:

- ✓ Educational & Fun-filled workshops
- ✓ Raffles and FREE STD/STI TESTING!

**AAS CAMPUS**  
1-6 PM  
NOV. 2<sup>ND</sup>, 2025