

# UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS



## Provost's Report

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Academic, Research, and Student Affairs Committee

**Lora Bailey, PhD**

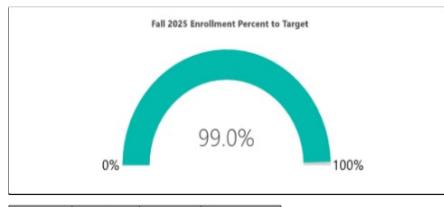
**Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs**

ARSA Committee

September 30, 2025

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Headcount by Level and Campus		Online Campus			A. A. Sheen Campus			St Martin Campus			O. E. Kean Campus		
Student Level		Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025
Certificate		0	1	0	5	2	1	0	0	0	5	2	1
Doctorate		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	90	67	77
Graduate		27	29	36	29	30	23	0	4	1	88	85	76
Undergraduate		78	118	112	585	596	629	14	32	28	852	803	879
<b>Total</b>		<b>105</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1035</b>	<b>957</b>	<b>1033</b>

FTE by Level and Campus		Online Campus			A. A. Sheen Campus			St Martin Campus			O. E. Kean Campus		
Student Level		Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025
Certificate		0			2	1	1				2	1	0
Doctorate											41	30	31
Graduate		14	16	35	27	30	24				66	67	71
Undergraduate		39	66	102	527	560	578	8	14	20	840	802	877
<b>Total</b>		<b>53</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>980</b>

Student Level	Fall 2023		Fall 2024		Fall 2025	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
Certificate	10	5	5	3	2	1
Doctorate	90	41	67	30	77	31
Graduate	144	107	148	114	136	131
Undergraduate	1529	1415	1549	1442	1648	1577
<b>Total</b>	<b>1773</b>	<b>1567</b>	<b>1769</b>	<b>1589</b>	<b>1863</b>	<b>1740</b>

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## Enrollment

The growth of applications and acceptances to UVI has been remarkable. The Enrollment Services recruitment efforts and use of online and electronic mediums for reaching students is paying dividends and seems to resonate strongly with perspective students. The university has experienced a considerable increase in the number of out-of-territory students who have applied to UVI in 2025 vs. 2024.

The difference in yield rates can be attributed to several factors. Our geographic location makes it difficult and costly for students to visit the campus. UVI has fewer on campus housing options when compared to its peers. Many of the admitted students may also receive offers from competing schools where the total cost per degree may be substantially lower. Students also

make decision based on extracellular activities and athletics programs which maybe more expansive with our mainland competitors.

These challenges present clear opportunities for UVI to improve its ability to compete for students by:

- Increasing housing options
- Improving student life by increasing the number of athletic teams
- Demonstrating how its program offerings are tied to the Caribbean and focused on sustainability and global learning. This helps with differentiating UVI from competing institutions.

It is important to note that the yield rates for in-territory students have remained largely the same as in previous years. In analyzing the transfer student population, it is important to note that the number of total transfer students is relatively small; 67 in 2025 compared to 70 in 2024. The largest increase in transfer students occurred in the College of Science and Mathematics and the School of Business. While the largest reductions occurred in the Schools of Nursing and Education, respectively. The good news is that the increases in admissions (3%) and yield rates (19%) speaks to UVI's improved ability to respond more expeditiously to prospective students and bodes well for future cohorts.

The same trend holds true for graduate students. While there were reductions in the number of completed applications (-23%) and admitted students (-20%) respectively, the matriculated rate (2%) and admissions rate (3%) and yield rate (16%) indicates that while there were few applicants, those that applied are more likely to be admitted and are more likely to enroll.

UVI's programmatic offerings on the graduate level demonstrates a continuing commitment to meeting the workforce needs and career development needs of the Virgin Islands.

## Personnel

The university welcomed several new hires in executive, faculty, and administrative positions since the last reporting period in June 2025. These individuals serve to strengthen the academic, research, and service programs across the institution. The table below provides a summary of the new hires by unit across the Provost's Component.

Name	Unit	Position
Lora Bailey, PhD	Provost's Office	Provost & VP of Academic Affairs
Austin Allen, PhD	College of Liberal Arts & Soc. Sci.	Assistant Professor of English
Allison Bair, PhD	College of Liberal Arts & Soc. Sci.	Assistant Professor of Psychology
Kendell Daughtry, PhD	College of Liberal Arts & Soc. Sci.	Assistant Professor of Soc. Sci.

Name	Unit	Position
Vanda Espinosa	College of Liberal Arts & Soc. Sci.	Instructor of English
Michelle Williams, LCSW, DSW	College of Liberal Arts & Soc. Sci.	Assistant Professor of Soc. Work
Hayden Brown, PhD	College of Sci. & Mathematics	Assistant Professor of Mathematics
Michael Francois, PhD	College of Sci. & Mathematics	Assistant Professor of Comp. Sci.
Jonathan Marcellin, PhD	College of Sci. & Mathematics	Assistant Professor of Biology
Yamilee Morency, PhD	College of Sci. & Mathematics	Assistant Professor of Chemistry
Jacques Romain Njimou, PhD	College of Sci. & Mathematics	Assistant Professor of Chemistry
Maria Fleming, PhD	School of Business	Assistant Professor of Mgmt.
Deanna McMillan, PhD	School of Business	Assistant Professor of Const. Mgmt.
Khalilah McCants, DNP	School of Nursing	Associate Professor of Nursing
Teresa Nigro-Lawrence, PhD	CLIC PhD Program	CLIC PhD Program Director
Devon Crossman	School of Agriculture	Agricultural Aide II
Kalunda Cuffy	Administrative Specialist I	Agricultural Experimental Station
Kenisha Florence	UVI CELL	Interim Program Manager
Maureen Lally	UVI CELL	Culinary/CELL Oper. Support
Jahmila Matthew	UVI CELL	Program Specialist

## Unit Achievements

### School of Agriculture

#### *Horticulture Program Milestone*

On May 15, 2025, the first two students graduated from the Associate of Applied Science Degree Program in Horticulture during the spring commencement ceremony held at the Albert A. Sheen Campus.

#### *Grant Proposal*

Dr. Thomas W. Zimmerman and Imhotep Charles submitted a \$50,000 USDA-AMS Specialty Crop Block Grant proposal to the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture. The proposal, titled *Inkberry (Crucian Christmas Tree): A Local Tree for the Nursery Industry*, aims to support the development of native plant resources for the local horticulture sector.

### School of Business

The School of Business proudly sponsored students J'eraya Pickering and Brianna Lawrence to attend the Annual HBCU Business Dean's Roundtable and Student Summit, held June 5–7, 2025, in New York City. The event was hosted by the NYU Stern School of Business, with the Student Summit co-chaired by Dean Kendra Harris.

Both students reported that the summit was a highly impactful experience, offering meaningful

peer interaction and valuable networking opportunities. The conference highlighted the excellence of HBCU institutions and reinforced the theme: *Fueling the Future: Entrepreneurship as a Catalyst for Economic Power*.

### **College of Science and Mathematics**

A large group of students, faculty, staff, and alumni attended the National Marine Educators Conference held in Lafayette, Louisiana, from June 29 to July 3, 2025.

### **School of Nursing**

The School of Nursing has made significant strides in academic excellence, partnerships, and funding. A new scholarship program was launched in collaboration with the Virgin Islands Board of Nurse Licensure (VIBNL) and AeroMD, offering \$6,000 annually to six nursing students, three on the Orville E. Kean Campus and three on the Albert A. Sheen Campus. UVI also entered a strategic partnership with New York University Rory Meyers College of Nursing through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) titled "Bridging Borders for Health Equity," which will facilitate student and faculty exchanges, curriculum development, and joint research.

In April 2025, the School of Nursing was approved for membership in the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), a milestone that enhances the school's visibility, provides access to valuable resources, and strengthens its role in national nursing education advocacy. Additionally, UVI's Caribbean Exploratory Research Center (CERC), under the leadership of Dr. Noreen Michael, received Year 2 funding as a sub-awardee in the NIH/NCI-funded CARIB-CARES Center Grant in partnership with the University of Puerto Rico, supporting continued research efforts focused on health equity in the Caribbean region.

### **School of Education**

Twenty paraprofessionals from the Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) have been admitted into the Virgin Islands Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP), marking a significant step toward strengthening the local educator workforce. These cohort members have declared majors in Elementary Education (ELEM ED), Inclusive Early Childhood Education (IECE), and various content areas within the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, paired with the Secondary Teaching Certificate. This initiative supports career advancement for paraprofessionals while addressing critical teacher shortages across territory.

### **UVI Center for Excellence in Leadership and Learning (UVI CELL)**

Between May and August 2025, UVI CELL launched and expanded several impactful workforce development programs across the territory.

- In May, Cohort 2 of the Certified Residential Real Estate Appraiser Program began with seven students enrolled, while Cohort 3, starting in October, is currently open.
- June marked the launch of the Surveyor Technician Scholarship Program in partnership with Cincinnati State, with 14 students enrolled and classes beginning on September 8th.
- In July, the Bureau of Corrections partnership celebrated graduations and Family Fun Days at both St. Thomas and St. Croix facilities, highlighting a dramatic reduction in recidivism to 11%—down from 55% in 2009—thanks to CELL-supported programs such as Thinking

- for a Change, parenting education, and both in-person and online coursework.
- August saw the launch of the Taxi and Tour Operator Certification Program, with 71 students completing Cohort 1 across St. Thomas (37), St. John (16), and St. Croix (18), in collaboration with the Taxicab Commission and funded by the Department of Tourism.
- August also saw the expansion of the Certified Public Manager (CPM) Program to all three islands through a partnership with the Division of Personnel.
- Enrollment opened for FY25 Cohort 3 of the Culinary Arts Bartending Training Program—Diageo Learning Skills for Life—with classes set to begin October 8th on St. Thomas and St. John.

## UVI@USM

### *Regional Student Enrollment Milestone*

In Fall 2024, thirteen students from the neighboring islands of Saba and St. Eustatius matriculated into the Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education program at the University of the Virgin Islands. This milestone marks the launch of UVI@USM's first education major cohort based at the University of St. Martin (USM) campus, expanding UVI's regional impact and commitment to teacher education in the Caribbean.

## Grants, Donations & Special Projects Funded

### College of Science and Mathematics

The NASA Space Grant, which was sub-awarded from the College of Charleston, has been renewed for an additional four years, through the 2028-2029 academic year. The grant amount is **\$150,000** per year. The primary objective of the grant is to revitalize the Saturday STEM academies that cater to students in grades 7 through 12. **Dr. Bernard Castillo** is the project lead for this initiative.

### UVI CELL

In May 2025, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act grant contract was renewed at **\$139,000**. The funding enables expansion of the GED preparation program and launch of Cohort 2, English as a Second Language (ESL) programming on St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. John. Classes start in September.

### The Virgin Island's Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (VI EPSCoR)

NSF EPSCoR Research Incubators for STEM Excellence (E-RISE) in collaboration with the Center for Marine and Environmental Studies (CMES), was awarded a **\$7 million** NSF grant for four years. This funding supports the establishment of the Virgin Islands Center for Autonomous Research (VICAR) at UVI, which will focus on cutting-edge technologies including robotics, artificial intelligence, and advanced survey tools for monitoring reefs, mangroves, and open-ocean ecosystems. The initiative aims to train students, engage over 3,000 youth, and build robust STEM career pathways, positioning the U.S. Virgin Islands as a leader in marine technology and the emerging blue economy. Strategic planning is currently underway, with a major stakeholder meeting scheduled for December 1-2, 2025, on the Orville E. Kean campus. Dr. Tyler Smith is

the PI on the grant. The Co-PI's include Dr. Lauren Olinger, Dr. Kristin Wilson Grimes, and Dr. Verleen McSween.

## Community Engagement

### **School of Agriculture**

#### *ACE Summer Enrichment Program Launch*

The School of Agriculture hosted its inaugural Agricultural Career Exploration (ACE) summer enrichment program from July 12–25, 2025, for students ages 12–18. The program aimed to introduce participants to diverse career opportunities in agricultural science.

### **School of Business**

From July 6–19, 2025, the School of Business successfully hosted the Entrepreneur Business Institute (EBI) Summer Program, welcoming 25 high school students from across the U.S. Virgin Islands. This immersive, tuition-free initiative was designed to cultivate students' entrepreneurial mindset, leadership skills, and professional development through short-term management courses and experiential learning.

Held on the Orville E. Kean Campus, the two-week residential program provided students with the opportunity to engage in interactive workshops, develop business strategies, and experience college life firsthand. Participants received mentorship from university faculty, business professionals, and community leaders committed to fostering innovation and youth empowerment.

### **College of Science and Mathematics**

From June 23 to July 18, the CSM Department of Computer and Computational Sciences, with support from Systilogic, LLC, delivered Girls Who Code and Data Science Training programs to University Bound participants, engaging 20 students with support from faculty, staff, and undergraduate mentors.

The Etelman Observatory, led by Dr. Bruce Gendre, hosted tours for over 100 middle and high school students, including NASA Space Camp participants, offering hands-on exposure to astronomy and space science.

The Caribbean Green Technology Center (CGTC), in partnership with VI-EPSCoR, the Global Resilience Institute, and DPNR, engaged community members in Estate Bovoni and guided 10 local students in fieldwork on heat resilience and stormwater infrastructure.

The Virgin Islands Marine Advisory Service (VIMAS) successfully ran its eighth Ocean Explorers Program, led by alumnus Howard Forbes Jr., providing youth with hands-on marine science experiences, fostering environmental stewardship, and highlighting careers in oceanography and marine biology.

### **College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences**

The Virgin Islands Caribbean Cultural Center (VICCC) continued its commitment to cultural heritage and educational outreach through several impactful events in 2025. From June 23 to July 5, VICCC collaborated with the Music In Motion School of Higher Dance Education (MIMSHDE) to present cultural heritage education and remarks during the VI Emancipation/Art Exhibition held at the Caribbean Museum Center for the Arts and Fort Frederik Museum on St. Croix.

In August, VICCC hosted a professional development series at the UVI Medical Simulation Center, featuring *The Art of Hosting™* and *Kids Count™* programs, in partnership with the St. Croix Foundation for Community Development and the Nonprofit Consortium. These sessions supported VICCC's ongoing research, publication, and teaching initiatives.

Earlier in the year, on April 13, VICCC also hosted a five-hour online mini-event as part of the Virgin Islands Literary Festival and Book Fair (VI LitFest), showcasing presentations by Patricia Harkins-Pierre and emerging graphic novelist Devon Pelle.

### **School of Agriculture**

From June 9 to July 11, 2025, the School of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service hosted its *Island Explorers: Summer Camp* on St. Croix and St. Thomas, engaging 98 children ages 5 to 14 in a dynamic blend of education and adventure. Campers participated in activities such as hiking, nature walks, cultural exploration, healthy snack preparation, personal development, and STEM-focused sessions including coding, LEGO robotics, and drone piloting. Highlights included visits to Smart Life Farm and the CES Demonstration Garden, a live beehive demonstration, and a U.S. Customs and Border Protection showcase featuring canine officers.

In parallel, Dr. Amy J. Dreves, in collaboration with local farmer Charles Burton, launched the *VI Farming for Success* pilot program on St. Croix. This 14-week initiative trains new farmers in tropical agriculture, sustainable practices, and farm management, while also producing practical resources like pocket guides on Integrated Pest Management and Pesticide Safety. Together, these programs reflect UVI's commitment to youth development, agricultural education, and community resilience.

### **Student Affairs**

Student Affairs teams across both campuses (AAS and OEK) successfully executed orientation planning, onboarding, and successfully executed New and Transfer Student Orientation and Welcome Week events during the second and third weeks of August, engaging over 100 students at each campus through activities such as Convocation, BucNic, Pajama Jam, and ID distribution.

The OEK campus welcomed 22 incoming National Student Exchange (NSE) students and supported seven outgoing participants. AAS welcomed 4 incoming NSE students.

UVI residence halls hosted over 100 students from NASA, CREW, Morehouse, University Bound, Summer Retention Boost and Bridge, (and others) on OEK, and about 50 students resided on AAS, in similar summer programs.

Athletics supported recruitment, hosted community events, and managed facility maintenance. Ten men's and 18 women's basketball recruits were identified. The lady Buccaneer won the 1<sup>st</sup> place spot in track and field in the 5K of September 2025.

The Center for Student Success (CSS) continued its support services and planning, by retaining 72% of matriculants from Spring 2025 to Fall 2025 (slightly down from 74% at the same time last year). CSS advisors are still collecting data on "why" the non-returners did not return. Preliminary data shows that many have owed balances and cannot register due to the unpaid balances.

CSS hired two new academic advisors and have (re)assigned advisors to the Schools/Colleges at UVI. Each advisor pair has communicated with the Deans/Dept Chairs of the schools/colleges to (re)introduce themselves and request to be included in dept. meetings, meet the faculty meetings, and any additional academic advising assistance that can be provided, to solidify the FR/SO CSS advising partnership with the JR/SR faculty advising model that is currently employed at UVI.

## Student & Alumni Achievements

### **School of Nursing**

Students from the School of Nursing participated in two enriching study abroad experiences this past summer. Ten Bachelor of Science in Nursing students completed clinical rotations at Whittier Rehabilitation Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts, gaining hands-on experience in a dynamic healthcare setting. Additionally, ten BSN students traveled to Costa Rica as part of the Global Learning Programs. There, they explored the local healthcare system, engaged with communities, and provided care to individuals experiencing homelessness in San José. These experiences deepened students' understanding of global health and the impact of social determinants on individual and family well-being.

### **School of Business**

Ms. Shania Farrington, a 2024 graduate of the Hospitality and Tourism Management program, successfully completed the Disney Hospitality Leadership Program—a prestigious management trainee initiative. She currently serves as the Guest Experience Manager at Disney's Caribbean Beach Resort in Florida.

### **School of Education**

- Seven students/St. Croix School District educators completed the *Teaching English as a Second Language Certificate* program, as part of a VIDE cohort.
- Four students completed the MA in *Educational Leadership* program.
- Four students completed the MA in *Organizational Leadership* program.
- Two doctoral students completed the Ph.D. CLIC degree *with a concentration in Education Leadership for Change* – Dr. Gary Molloy and Dr. Juan Christian.

### **Student Publications:**

CLIC Ph.D. program (*with concentration in Education Leadership for Change*) graduate Dr. Delroy Pierre, published the following articles:

**Pierre, D.** (2024). Decolonizing education through sensemaking in educational change. In S. S. Scatolini (Ed.), *Towards fairer geo-spiritual ecosystems: Decolonial education, language, and spirituality* (pp. 89–109). Cambridge Scholars Publishing. <https://tinyurl.com/yaaf67dy>

**Pierre, D.** (2024). *Restricting change? leadership influence on participatory action research during educational change at a school in Sint Maarten*. International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Studies, 11(1), 70–80. <https://doi.org/10.22259/2394-6296.1101004>

### **Student Academic Achievements**

- Seven students/St. Croix School District educators completed the *Teaching English as a Second Language Certificate* program, as part of a VIDE cohort.
- Four students completed the MA in *Educational Leadership* program.
- Four students completed the MA in *Organizational Leadership* program.
- Two doctoral students completed the Ph.D. CLIC degree *with a concentration in Education Leadership for Change* – Dr. Gary Molloy and Dr. Juan Christian. \*\*Dr. Clinton Valley served as their dissertation chair.

### **School of Graduate Studies**

The following student defended her dissertations:

**Barker, Nicole.** The Lived Experiences of Educational Administrators: Creativity in Perceptions, Approaches and Practices of Secondary School Administrators on the Teaching of STEAM Subjects in Barbados. Dissertation Defense.

### **College of Science and Mathematics**

More than twenty current and former students from the Master of Marine and Environmental Science (MMES) program at the University of the Virgin Islands presented oral and poster presentations at the 41st biannual meeting of the Association of Marine Laboratories of the Caribbean, held in San Juan, Puerto Rico. In total, 28 UVI faculty and students attended the conference, making UVI the second-largest contingent represented at the event.

MMES student Joshua Soll received the award for *Best Student Poster Presentation* for his research titled:

**“Automated Detection and Classification of Low-Frequency Whales Using PAM-Equipped Slocum Gliders in the USVI and Puerto Rico.”**

This recognition highlights the high caliber of research being conducted by UVI students and the university's growing presence in regional scientific communities.

- Student employment in their fields:
  - **Kaliegh Schlender**, MMES Alum, was hired as the Senior Biologist with the Audubon Society in the Florida Keys August 10, 2025.

- **Courtney Tierney** was hired by the University of North Carolina Wilmington Center for Support of Undergraduate Research and Fellowships.
- Alumni Achievements:
  - **Scott Eanes** completed the first year of a three year study in Guanaja, Honduras. The Hawksbill Project is financially supporting the host project, ProTECTOR Inc, and Dr Steve Dunbar, including labor. **Dr. Paul Jobsis** and **Andrew McGregor** were two of the three from The Hawksbill Project present. The study is an island wide assessment of the population of juvenile critically endangered Caribbean hawksbill turtles.  
[https://www.instagram.com/p/DJT9IVyxizM/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/DJT9IVyxizM/?img_index=1)
  - **Scott Eanes, Dr. Alex Webb, Dr. Paul Jobsis, Andrew McGregor**, and **Jessica Michael** finished the third and final year of The Hawksbill Project's study looking at the abundance and distribution of hawksbills around St. John.  
[Final year of hawksbill sea turtle survey completed on St. John](#)
  - **Brown, Adina. Coble, Avery. Funk, Kristin. Harris, Elizabeth. Holt, Helen. McGregor, Andrew. Micheal, Jessica.** (3 September, 2025). "Coral World Ocean Park Operations and Opportunities". Oral presentation given to the 2025 MMES cohort in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands

### **College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences**

- Student admission to graduate schools and special programs:
  - **Hendricks-Thomas, Cheryl.** MA in Psychology, Counseling Program. UVI.
  - **Jarvis, Jadah.** [BA Communication, 2025]. (Spring 2025). Professional Internship. VI Architecture Center (VIAC).  
<https://www.facebook.com/viacstx/photos/another-great-day-at-the-virgin-islands-architecture-center-for-built-heritage-a/948487080785921/>
  - **Perez, Neishalee.** (Summer 2025). Pathways to Psychological Sciences Program. University of California - Riverside.
  - **Regius, Makisha.** [MSW, 2022]. (July 17, 2025). UVI's Ph.D. Program in Creative Leadership for Innovation and Change (CLIC).
  - **Veira, Justice.** MA in Psychology, Counseling Program. UVI.
- Student employment in their fields:
  - **Athanase, Ariana.** [MSW, May 2025]. State Opioid Coordinator Appointee – VI Department of Health.
  - **Capriola, Mario.** New York. Licensed Neuropsychologist.
  - **Jarvis, Jadah.** [BA Communication, 2025]. Media communication, community outreach, and historic preservation research. VI Architecture Center (VIAC).
  - **Marchant, Lennise.** [BASW, 2025]. Social Worker in the Case Management Department. Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center. St. Croix, VI.

- Student Presentations:
 

**Creque, Amarah** and **Jaeger, Elizabeth**. (June 2025). *Social Media Use and Body Dissatisfaction in USVI Female College Students*. The Caribbean Regional Conference on Psychology (CRCP). Barbados.
- Student Publications: Local.
  - **Challenger, Samber**. (July 18, 2025). *Why Can't WAPA, Public Works coordinate on road projects?* Virgin Islands Daily News.
  - **Monsanto, Safa**. (July 18, 2025). *Will "Big Beautiful Bill" make the lives of working-class Americans Harder?* Virgin Islands Daily News.

### School of Agriculture

- Student Publications:
 

Brayan Vilanova-Cuevas, Christopher M. DeRito, Isabella T. Ritchie, Christina A. Kellogg, James S. Evans, Alizee Zimmerman, Stacey M. Williams, Marilyn Brandt, **Moriah Sevier, Samuel Gittens Jr., Kayla A. Budd**, Matthew Warham, William C. Sharp, Gabriel A. Delgado, Alwin Hylkema, Kimani Kitson-Walters, Jean-Pascal Quod, Mya Breitbart, Ian Hewson (2025). *Investigating the influence of Diadematidae scuticociliatosis on host microbiome composition*. American Society for Microbiology.
- Student Presentations:
  - **McIntosh, Naseem**, Sydney, Philbert M., **Gonzalez, Donna, & Awika Henry O.** (July 28 – August 1, 2025). *Evaluating New Sweetcorn Hybrids for Abiotic Stress Tolerance in the Virgin Islands*. American Society of Horticultural Science (ASHS2025). Location: New Orleans, LA.
  - **Hodge, Isaiah, Richards Jr., Daryl**, Wu, Xingbo, & **Zimmerman, Thomas W.** (July 28 – August 1, 2025). *Pot Size Influences Establishment of Vanilla planifolia in the USVI*. American Society of Horticultural Science. Location: New Orleans, LA.

### UVI @ USM

The following students received honors during the Spring 2025 Commencement ceremony

Smith, Romillia, Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education

Reid, Donatien, Bachelor of Business Administration in Management

Upon request of the Ministry of Education Youth, Culture, and Sports, six teachers were enrolled in the Post-Baccalaureate in Special Education program and successfully completed this program in Fall 2024.

### Faculty and Staff Achievements and Scholarship

## School of Business

### Peer Reviewed.

**Ukpe, Emmanuel (2025).** Empowering Nigeria's e-Society: A Comprehensive Exploration of Cutting-Edge Digital Services. *East African Journal of Information Technology*, 8(1), 80-91.  
<https://doi.org/10.37284/eajit.8.1.2995>

## Research and Publications

### School of Agriculture

#### Publications

**Joseph, Samuel S., & Zimmerman, Thomas W.** (2025). *Effects of flower bud pruning on jicama production in the Caribbean*. *Acta Horticulturae*, 1422: 159–162.  
<https://doi.org/10.17660/ActaHortic.2025.1422.19>

**Zimmerman, Thomas W.** (2025). 'Midnite': combining Caribbean and African *Hibiscus sabdariffa*. *Acta Horticulturae*, 1422: 163–166.  
<https://doi.org/10.17660/ActaHortic.2025.1422.20>

#### Peer Reviewed

**Hensley, David.** Knappenberger, Thorsten, **Lancellotti, Brittany**, Brantley, Eve, Shaw, Joey, Dobre, Mariana, Lindner, James. (2025). *Runoff generation in ephemeral streams of the Virgin Islands: The case of Salt River, St. Croix*. *Journal of Hydrology: Regional Studies*, 56:102372.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejrh.2025.102372>

#### National Presentations:

**Awika, Henry O., Ewer, Jessica, & Dreves, Amy, J.** (July 28 – August 1, 2025). *Screening for Cucumber with Disease and Pest Resistance and Consumer-Defined Visual Appeal in the Virgin Islands*. American Society of Horticultural Science (ASHS2025). Location: New Orleans, LA.

**Charles, Imhotep, Joseph, Samuel, & Zimmerman, Thomas W.** (July 28 – August 1, 2025). *Sweetpotato Cutting Length Influence on Production in the USVI*. American Society of Horticultural Science. Location: New Orleans, LA.

**Awika, Henry O., Hazard, Hannah, Gonzalez, Donna, & Southwell, Johnson.** (July 28 – August 1, 2025). *Watermelon Glycemic Index Footprint: Management through Production System, Breeding and Precision Dieting*. American Society of Horticultural Science (ASHS2025). Location: New Orleans, LA.

**Awika, Henry O., Southwell, Johnson, McIntosh, Naseem, Sydney, Philbert M., & Gonzalez, Donna.** (July 28 – August 1, 2025). *Effectiveness of the Visible Spectra Over*

*Infrared for Sugar Estimation in Frozen Sweetcorn (Zea mays convar. Saccharat)*. American Society of Horticultural Science (ASHS2025). Location: New Orleans, LA.

International: Presentation

**Smart, Raheem, & Zimmerman, Thomas W.** (May 2025). *Dragon Fruit Cacti: Potential in the Virgin Islands*. XI International Congress on Cacti as Food, Fodder and Other Uses. Canary Islands, Spain.

Local

**Davis, Kenneth Olasee** (June 10, 2025) *Wildlife & Insects of the Virgin Islands*: St. Croix Central Seventh Day Adventist School students.

**Dreves, Amy J.**, and Burton, Charles (farmer). (August 20, 2025). Presented *4-D, VI Farming for Success* program grant-funded by USDA-NIFA-CPPM-EIP 2024-2027 to the farming community who are interested in increasing local food production.

**Dreves, Amy J.** (May 22, 2025). Presented the *Farmers First* talk discussing technical and business skills and focusing on profitable succession crops and efficient best management practices to increase quality and crop production.

**Dreves, Amy J.** (August 29, 2025). Presented the *New DPNR-USVI Pesticide Regulations* and a *Pesticide Safety uncertified Technician and Handler Training* to pest control clients in the USVI with Mr. Nevlin Williams, Pesticide Program, Department of Planning & Natural Resources (DPNR), Division of Environmental Protection.

**Dreves, Amy J.** (July 18, 2025). Presented "Who is Munching on What?" Agriculture Career Exploration program for high school students on the UVI campus.

**Dreves, Amy J.** (July 13, 2025). Presented "Butterflies Take Flight" at the 29<sup>th</sup> annual Mango Melee held at the Botanical Gardens on St. Croix. (200+ visitors)

**Morton, Dale.** *Careers in Agriculture*. Raphael Wheatley Skill Center Summer Program.

**Santiago, Lamani, & Davis, Kenneth Olasee.** (June 9, 2025). "Insects found in the Forest of USVI" UVI Research Tech Park Summer Program, hike held in the Caledonia area, St. Croix.

**Santiago, Lamani, & Davis, Olasee.** (June 12, 2025). "Natural marine resources and insects" students at the Boys and Girls Club during a hike held at the Salt River National Park and Ecological Preserve, St. Croix.

**Santiago, Lamani, & Davis, Olasee.** (June 25, 2025). "Beneficial insects and other organisms (amphibians, mammals, reptiles) in the natural world of USVI," held at Central 7-Day Adventist Church, St. Croix.

**Shoy, Carol.** *Preparing Healthy Food for Virgin Islands Students*. Department of Education School Lunch Authority.

**Taylor, De-Vaughn.** (July 23, 2025). *Technology in Agriculture*. UVI SOA Agricultural Career Exploration program for high school students at UVI AAS Campus

## **School of Education**

Faculty and Staff presentations

Local

**Allen, Xuri M.** (Allen, X. M. (2025, August 12). *"Ethical best practices and current trends in school counseling."* [Invited presentation]. Back to School Professional Development Day, Virgin Islands Department of Education (St. Thomas/St. John District), St. Thomas, VI, United States.

## **School of Graduate Studies**

Bentz, V. M., **Marlatt, J.**, Shapiro, J. J., & Fortune, L. D. (2025). *Mindful inquiry in social research*. Sage Publications.

**Hendrickson, K. A.** & Francis, K. A. (Eds.). (2026). *Strategies and Solutions for Public Sector Burnout*. IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

Francis, K. A. & **Hendrickson, K. A.** (Eds.). (2026). *Public Sector Burnout and Wellness: Research and Experiences*. IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

## **Book Chapters**

**Dorsey, A. A.** (2026). *A Creative Approach to Addressing Burnout in Higher Education*. In **K.**

**Hendrickson** & K. Francis (Eds.). *Public Sector Burnout and Wellness: Research and Experiences* (pp. 161-182). IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

Francis, K. A. & **Hendrickson, K. A.** (2026). *Crisis Epidemiology of Burnout Syndrome in the US Virgin Islands' Government: The Consequences of COVID-19*. In **K. Hendrickson** & K. Francis (Eds.). *Strategies and Solutions for Public Sector Burnout* (pp. 1-26). IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

## **College of Science and Mathematics**

Peer Reviewed.

Beavers, K. M., Gutierrez-Andrade, D., Van Buren, E. W., Emery, M. A., **Brandt, M.** E., Apprill, A., & Mydlarz, L. D. (2025). Machine learning reveals distinct gene expression signatures across tissue states in stony coral tissue loss disease. *Royal Society Open Science*, 12(7), 241993.

**Blincow KM, Nemeth RS, Smith TB, Kadison E.** Heidmann SL, Brandtneris VW, **Quetel J**, Townsend J, Smith E, Kintzing E, Gochfeld DJ, Slattery M (2025) Characterizing changes in density, space use, and diel behavior of lionfish (*Pterois volitans*) on mesophotic coral reefs in the US Virgin Islands. *Marine Biology*

Edwards, Clinton B., T. Shay Viehman, Sophie Cook, Leslie Henderson, **Marilyn Brandt**, Matthew Davies, Alex Fireman et al. "Coral restoration in the US Virgin Islands: an assessment of current and planned monitoring activities." (2025).

**Goad, Miranda, Tara Thompson, Zachary Briggs, Allie Durdall, Kristin R. Wilson Grimes, and Guilherme Corte.** *Extreme Climatic Events and Urbanization Impacts on Sandy Beach Ecosystems: A Field Experiment before and after Hurricane Lee*. *Estuaries and Coasts* 48, no. 2 (2025): 41.

**Moore, Marianne**, Duane, E.G., Frank, H.K., Smith, C.A., Aguilar-Setién, A., Aréchiga-Ceballos, N., Cárdenas-Canales, E.M., Falendysz, E.A., Fraser, D., Moore, M. S., Fujimoto, G.R., Hudson, T.W., Jones, S.M., Carrera, L.a.O., Vleck, S.E., and G.L. Powell. *Field safety considerations during work with bats: returning to the laboratory environment*. *Applied Biosafety*. <https://doi.org/10.1089/apb.2025.0001>

**Squillace, Joseph & George, C.** (2025). *Stochastic Domination of Prime Powers of a Uniform Random Integer by Geometric Distributions*. *The PUMP Journal of Undergraduate Research*, 8, 322–337. <https://doi.org/10.46787/pump.v8i.4783>

Van Buren, E. W., Beavers, K. M., Cornelio, M. N., Stokes, A., Emery, M., **Brandt, M.** E., ... & Mydlarz, L. D. (2025). *Leveraging machine learning to classify and characterize gene expression patterns in two coral diseases*. *Discover Applied Sciences*, 7(9), 1003.

Vilanova-Cuevas, Brayan, Christopher M. DeRito, Isabella T. Ritchie, Christina A. Kellogg, James S. Evans, Alizee Zimmerman, Stacey M. Williams, **Marilyn Brandt, Moriah Sevier, Samuel Gittens, Jr., Kayla Budd**, et al. (2025) *Investigating the influence of Diadematidae scuticociliatosis on host microbiome composition*. *MSystems* 10, no. 3 : e01418-24.

Vilanova-Cuevas, Brayan, Katherine H. Philipp, Ashley K. Altera, Amy Apprill, Cynthia C. Becker, Donald C. Behringer, **Marilyn E. Brandt** et al. (2025) *Detection of the Diadema antillarum scuticociliatosis Philaster clade on sympatric metazoa, plankton, and abiotic surfaces and assessment for its potential reemergence*. *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 753 (2025): 19-35.

**Vondriska, Clayton**, Sikkel, P (2025) *Chemosensory behaviour of free-living stages of aquatic parasites*. In: Smit, NJ, Sure, B (eds.) *Aquatic Parasitology: Ecological and Environmental Concepts and Implications of Marine and Freshwater Parasites*.

**Vondriska, Clayton**, Grabb, KC, Lord, N, Dobson, K, Gordon-Smith, D-ADS, Escobar, E, Ford, MC, Lander, S, Kitch, GD, Melendez, M, Morell, J, Caravaca, AM, Newton, J, Packard, AJ, Valladarez, J, Valaui-Orton, A, Wright-Fairbanks, E (2025) *Building ocean acidification research capacity in the wider Caribbean region: A case study for advancing regional resilience*. Frontiers in Marine Science.

**Vondriska, Clayton**, Franks, S, Hinow, P, Sikkel, PC (2025) *Observation and simulation of chemically mediated searches in marine zooplankton*. PLOS One.

**Wilson D, Smith T**, Sheeley C (2025) *Measurements of Internal Tides in the Vicinity of Mesophotic Ecosystems in the US Virgin Islands*. OCEANS 2025 Brest:1-7

Not Peer Reviewed.

Smith, K., Gokuldass, P., **Orange, N. B., Gendre, B.**, Morris, D., Lombardi, T., George, F., Smith, D., **Watson, C.**, (2025), *GRB250424A VIRT Optical Upper Limit*, NASA GCN 40920

**Gendre, B.**, (2025), *Gravitational Reconnection: Can We Thaw the Frozen Environment of Black Holes?*, Annual NSF PAARE funded workshop Talk, US Virgin Islands.

Karnish, A, **Ratchford, Stephen**, & Caves, Eleanor. (2025) *The Effect of Third-party Species on Client Behavior at Cleaner Shrimp Stations*. Presented at the annual conference of the Animal Behavior Society. July 2025. Baltimore Maryland.

**Orange, N. B.**, (2025), *Etelman Observatory and the Virgin Islands Robotic Telescope: Operational Review and Coordinated Observing*, Annual NSF PAARE funded workshop Talk, US Virgin Islands.

**Ratchford, Stephen**. 2025. *Species-specific fish behavior while visiting anemoneshrimp cleaning stations*. Presented at the annual conference of the Association of Marine Labs of the Caribbean. June 2025, San Juan Puerto Rico.

**Vondriska, Clayton**, Strickler, JR, Baker, A, Hardy, KM, Strickley, M, Sikkel, PC. (2025) *Beyond the Y-maze: Implementation of a novel olfactometer for study of chemosensory behavior in small aquatic invertebrates*. 41<sup>st</sup> Association of the Marine Laboratories of the Caribbean Scientific Meeting. San Juan, Puerto Rico.

**Vondriska, Clayton**, Strickler, JR, Sikkel, PC (2025) *Beyond the Y-maze: Olfaction in host-finding in a common external parasite of coral reef fishes*. International Symposium of Fish Parasites 2025. Mérida, México.

## College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

Peer Reviewed.

*Davis-Kahina, ChenziRa.* (2025). *Reflections on Maroon Societies. Studies of the Languages, Literatures and Cultures of the Greater Caribbean and Beyond.* Research Journal of the Eastern Caribbean Island Cultures Conference.

*Walter, Mary Ann.* (Summer 2025). *The linguist's view on Guilty by Definition.* Babel: The Language Magazine (51).

*Walter, Mary Ann.* (Autumn 2025). *Linguist's View on In This Sign.* Babel: The Language Magazine (52).

National/International.

*Allen, Carolyn.* (2025). Book Chapter - *Burnout in the Social Work Profession: Now, Then, and With Planning, Maybe Never Again.* (pp. 191-220). IGI Global Scientific Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3373-0169-3.ch007> (Appendix B).

*Ariza, Julio.* (2025). *Transmedial Silence: From Saer's Prose to Alonso's Cinema.* Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies.

*Engerman, Kimarie* and *Jaeger, Elizabeth.* (2025). Forward in N. Retland & O. Taylor (Eds.), *Mental Health after Covid* (pp. 9-12). Fielding University Press.

*Francis, Kula* and *Hendrickson, Kenny.* (2025). Book Chapter - *Crisis Epidemiology of Burnout Syndrome in the US Virgin Islands' Government. The Consequences of COVID-19.* (1-16). In Strategies and Solutions for Public Sector Burnout. IGI Global.

Local.

*Wenner, Mark.* (June 9, 2025). Editorial: *The VI Public Officials Compensation Commission Did Not Seem to Have Done a Statistical Analysis in Determining the Salary of the Governor:* The VI Source <https://stthomassource.com/content/2025/06/09/analysis-the-vi-public-officials-compensation-commission-did-not-seem-to-have-done-a-statistical-analysis-in-determining-the-salary-of-the-governor/>

## VI-EPSCoR

Beavers, K. M., Gutierrez-Andrade, D., Van Buren, E. W., Emery, **M. A., Brandt**, M. E., Apprill, A., & Mydlarz, L. D. (2025). Machine learning reveals distinct gene expression signatures across tissue states in stony coral tissue loss disease. *Royal Society open science*, 12(7), 241993. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rsos.241993>