



## Emerging Caribbean Scientists Programs

### ECS Application Guidelines

**OVERVIEW** - The Emerging Caribbean Scientists (ECS) Program was created to increase research training and promote excellence for STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) students at the University of the Virgin Islands. This includes majors in Applied Math, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Engineering, Marine Biology, Mathematics, Physics and Psychology. Each year, students accepted in the program receive research experiences, academic support, and financial assistance. ECS Scholars are very successful and go on to complete PhDs, MDs, Masters, attend graduate school, and gain skills to make them competitive in the job market. Major funding is made available through federal grant awards from agencies like the NSF, NIH, NASA, and also contributions from private donors.

**ELIGIBILITY** - In general, eligible students are from all levels (freshmen, sophomore, juniors, & seniors), attend UVI full-time, have a GPA above 2.0, and seek a bachelor's degree in Applied Math, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Marine Biology, Mathematics, Physics or Psychology. *Depending on availability of funding, international students are eligible for our summer programs.*

**BENEFITS** - Students participating in the ECS Program receive many benefits like:

- Scholarships and Stipends (**up to \$18,000 per year**)
- Individual Mentoring
- Research Experiences
- Travel Awards to National Conferences
- Professional Development Workshops
- Scientific Seminars
- Academic & Career Advising
- Peer Learning Community

**DEADLINE** - The online application and all required supplemental materials are **due by February 28th**. Go to <http://ecs.uvi.edu> to start the application today. **WE HAVE MANY SLOTS AVAILABLE TO FILL!**

**PROGRAMS** - ECS has openings for several **academic year research experiences**. To be eligible for these programs, a student must be a full-time UVI undergraduate, bachelor degree seeking, and US Citizen or Permanent resident.

1. **[NSF HBCU-UPACE Fellowship](#)** – The Historically Black Colleges and Universities Undergraduate Program (HBCU-UP) ACE fellowship is for students in the College of Science and Math that are interested in pursuing STEM careers. Funding is provided by the National Science Foundation (NSF). Must have a GPA of 3.0 or above. Fellows receive monthly stipends for the academic year to participate in research, seminars, community service, and mentoring. They also receive travel funding to attend scientific meetings.
2. **[NIH RISE Research Scholars](#)** –The Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement (RISE) Program is for students interested in getting a PhD and pursue a career in biomedical research. Funding is provided by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). RISE Scholars receive an hourly wage to work on a research project during the academic year and summer. They also receive travel sponsorship to off-island research conferences, graduate school preparation, and mentoring. Eligible majors include Applied Math, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Marine Biology, Mathematics, or Psychology with a cumulative GPA of at least 2.7.
3. **[NASA MIRO Internship](#)** – The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) MUREP Institutional Research Opportunity (MIRO) Program supports undergraduate student to do astrophysics research at UVI in the Department of Chemical and Physical Sciences. Awards promote STEM literacy and enhance and sustain the capability of institutions to perform NASA-related research and education. Off-island astronomy and engineering summer internships at partner institutions and at NASA are also available.
4. **[Space Grant Fellowship](#)** – Program supports undergraduates doing NASA related research. Summer internships at NASA are also available. Contact Dr. Jan Staff ([jan.staff@uvi.edu](mailto:jan.staff@uvi.edu)) on St. Thomas or Dr. Michael Henry ([mhenry@uvi.edu](mailto:mhenry@uvi.edu)) on St. Croix for more information. US citizenship is required.

**SUMMER** - ECS also offers **several summer opportunities**. The summer research programs start and end dates will be announced. Participants are required to present at a capstone symposium on the St. Thomas Campus at the end of July. ***International students are eligible to receive summer funding to participate in these programs.***

1. **[Summer Sophomore Research Institute \(SSRI\)](#)** – SSRI participants will work with faculty on a research project. In addition, fellows in the SSRI program will be exposed to workshops on research methods, performing library research, computer and internet resources, service learning, and presenting research through poster and oral presentations. Students will be required to present work at the Summer Research Symposium. During the six-week summer program, each

participant will receive a stipend, on-campus housing, and meal plan. Students must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 for eligibility. This program includes travel and is intended for Freshmen and Sophomores.

2. **Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE)** - SURE is an intensive 6 to 10 week non-residential research program open to UVI students with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above. Through a competitive selection process, students will be matched with faculty members doing research in a topic of mutual interest. Students will be required to work full time on the research project and present work at the Summer Research Symposium. A competitive stipend for the summer will be provided. This program can take place on St. Thomas or St. Croix.
3. **Summer Internships** – Additional opportunities are available with funding from various funding sources, including VI-EPSCoR, other federal grants and private donations. Funding opportunities are always changing. ECS receives different sponsorships each year, sometimes as late as May. By applying, you will be considered for “new” opportunities as they arrive.

## HOW TO APPLY

The following application materials are **due by February 28<sup>th</sup>**. It is highly recommended that students attend the workshop titled “How to Apply to Summer Programs” which will take place early in the Spring Semester. Visit our website at <http://ecs.uvi.edu> for updates.

1. **Online Application Form** – A link to the ECS Online Application is found on our website at <http://ecs.uvi.edu>. Students should complete and submit the form by the deadline.
2. **Personal Statement** – It is required to write an essay (250 - 500 words) that describes your background, previous experiences in science or research, and career goals. For tips on preparing the personal statement go to the following link: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job\\_search\\_writing/preparing\\_an\\_application/writing\\_the\\_personal\\_statement/index.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/preparing_an_application/writing_the_personal_statement/index.html). Additional tips can be found in the following link: [http://www.uvi.edu/files/documents/ECS/personal\\_statement\\_guidelines.pdf](http://www.uvi.edu/files/documents/ECS/personal_statement_guidelines.pdf).
3. **Letter(s) of Recommendation** – Ask 1 – 2 of your professors for letters of recommendation and have them email it to [ecs@uvi.edu](mailto:ecs@uvi.edu) by the deadline. **At least one letter is required, two is preferred.** It is preferred to have one STEM or psychology professor write a letter on your behalf. The persons you choose should know you well and are able to *highly* recommend you. It’s a good idea to give them your personal statement or a resume/CV to help them prepare the letter.
4. **List of off-island summer research programs** – Although not a requirement, we strongly encourage you to apply to several external summer research opportunities. These programs provide a rich research experience and give students the opportunity to spend the summer off-island working productively. Most programs provide funding for travel, stipends, meals, and housing. Create a list with the names of the off-island summer research programs to which you have already applied for or are planning to apply for in the future.

If you need help finding an off-island summer research program, we recommend browsing our Classifieds which is accessed through this link: <https://sites.google.com/myuvi.net/classifieds/home>. Also, you can do a Google search for “NSF REUs” or go to PathwaysToScience.org.

Additionally, applicants may be invited for an **INTERVIEW** during the review process to answer questions about academic and career goals as well as research interests. Please monitor your email after you’ve submitted the application form since someone may contact you to setup an appointment based on schedule availability. If you haven’t been invited for an interview, send an email to [ecs@uvi.edu](mailto:ecs@uvi.edu).

**QUESTIONS?** Visit our website at <http://ecs.uvi.edu>, contact us by email at [ecs@uvi.edu](mailto:ecs@uvi.edu) or call 340-692-4109. If you would like to discuss your application or get more information about the opportunities available, feel free to contact one of the ECS Steering Committee Members listed below.

- Dr. Alice Stanford, STT, [astanfo@uvi.edu](mailto:astanfo@uvi.edu), (340) 693-1241
- Dr. Marc Boumedine, STT, [mboumed@uvi.edu](mailto:mboumed@uvi.edu), (340) 693-1255
- Dr. Robert Stolz, STT, [rstolz@uvi.edu](mailto:rstolz@uvi.edu), (340) 693-1231
- Dr. Lavida Rogers, STT, [lavida.brooks@uvi.edu](mailto:lavida.brooks@uvi.edu)
- Dr. Verleen McSween, STX, [verleen.mcsween@uvi.edu](mailto:verleen.mcsween@uvi.edu), (340) 692-4108
- Dr. Jan Staff, STT, [jan.staff@uvi.edu](mailto:jan.staff@uvi.edu)
- Ms. Aimee Sanchez, STX, [aimee.sanchez@uvi.edu](mailto:aimee.sanchez@uvi.edu), (340) 692-4109