

Wednesday, September 11, 2002

9/11 Anniversary Comments from UVI President Dr. LaVerne Ragster

This is the text of a voice message presented by University of the Virgin Islands President Dr. LaVerne Ragster to the University community on Wednesday, September 11, 2002, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York, Washington D.C. and Pennsylvania.

Good morning to the University of the Virgin Islands community.

This is President Ragster.

I just wanted to take a moment on this September 11, 2002, to share a few thoughts with you concerning the observance of the tragic and very terrible events that happened last year at this time to our country.

Even though millions of people are mourning the deaths of thousands and the loss of a way of living, it's important for all of us to understand that we are privileged to be alive. We need to take the time to work out the lessons that have been forced on us as a country and as a people.

Life is certainly different for all of us now in so many ways. There are a number of things that are negative in our social, economic and health areas. However, in spite of all of these, Americans and other citizens of the world have also begun to realize that there are some positives to be gained from even terrible experiences.

If you look at the linkages that are important between people and countries that make globalization work, there are positives there. If you look at the strength that you get out of diversity in a country or in an institution, there are positives there. And if you look at the peace that comes to a place when there is tolerance to the differences in people, there are certainly positives there.

The University of the Virgin Islands is an institution of people from many cultures and races. We are also a place of learning, diversity and many expressions of tolerance. This is good. We should be grateful and celebrate these aspects of ourselves.

I ask that you treasure the privilege of life and share the best of your humanity with the world as we go forward. Please remember the lessons of history. Cleave to the positive side of your humanity and walk in peace.

I wish you a great day.