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## UVI Student Miranda Goad Wins Award at Coastal and Estuarine Research Conference

**Third place in undergraduate oral presentations for Goad's mangrove research**

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**Miranda Goad presents at the 27th Biennial Conference of the Coastal & Estuarine Research Federation held in Portland, Oregon. By. UVI**

The work of Miranda Goad, an undergraduate student from the University of the Virgin Islands, achieved remarkable recognition at the 27th Biennial Conference of the Coastal & Estuarine Research Federation held in Portland, Oregon, from November 12-16, UVI has made known.

Ms. Goad, who was among a contingent of 22 UVI students, alumni, staff, and faculty attending the conference, won third place in the undergraduate oral presentations category.

Her presentation, “Analysis of animal activity within mangrove wetlands on St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands”, showcased her research conducted under the Emerging Caribbean Scientists program at UVI, mentored by faculty and staff from the Center for Marine & Environmental Studies, including Dr. Kristin Wilson Grimes, Allie Durdall, and Allison Hoelvoet.

Ms. Goad's achievement highlights the successful participation of the UVI contingent, whose trip was funded by four National Science Foundation (NSF) grants and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

These grants are aimed at supporting individuals from the U.S. Virgin Islands in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

The UVI group, along with over 30 participants from Puerto Rico and Guam, were part of the NSF INCLUDES SEAS Islands Alliance and NSF Navigating Home projects. These initiatives focus on supporting individuals from historically marginalized and underrepresented groups in the geosciences, illuminating career pathways, and fostering a sense of belonging in STEM.

Dr. Kristin Wilson Grimes, one of Goad's mentors, expressed pride in the UVI team's performance, particularly noting Goad's accomplishment. “This year marked the greatest representation from U.S. island territories in CERF’s history. It was really quite something to see the islands shine at this international meeting and to see our students and early career professionals share their research,” she said. Dr. Grimes also acknowledged the critical role of NSF and NOAA funding in facilitating these opportunities for academic and professional growth.