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End of an Era: Dr. Hall Leaves Legacy of Agricultural Advancement at UVI

Agrifest 2024 marks last for President Hall, who pioneered degrees in agriculture at the University of the Virgin Islands during his 15-year tenure.

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Outgoing UVI President Dr. David Hall at Agrifest 2024 on Sat. Feb. 17, 2024. By. GOV'T HOUSE

The 2024 Agriculture and Food Fair will be the last for Dr. David Hall in an official capacity as he is [set to retire](#) as president of the University of the Virgin Islands in a few months.

Announcing his departure during Agrifest's opening ceremony on Saturday, Dr. Hall thanked the people of the Virgin Islands for "giving me the opportunity to be part of the special community, to

be able to serve and give back to this special and sacred industry.”

UVI has been intrinsically involved in keeping Agrifest “vibrant and alive” for several years, he said, and the university has made its own strides toward promoting the importance of agriculture in the territory with the introduction of new associates and bachelor of science degrees.

Apart from his role as UVI president, Dr. Hall serves as the co-chair of the Food and Farm Council - a body whose establishment is mandated under the Agriculture Plan - alongside Commissioner of Agriculture Louis Petersen.

The council, Dr. Hall explained, is “dedicated to raising the importance of agriculture in the territory.” He joked that while he “didn't grow anything in the last three years, I pray that the seeds that we have planted together in the Ag plan and in the Council will feed more Virgin Islanders for generations to come.”

Mr. Petersen expressed his gratitude to the outgoing president, and thanked him for “setting a good example for so many of us.” Senate President Novelle Francis also celebrated Dr. Hall’s contributions, and lamented that “we are sorry to see you leave but we know you have to move on.” He was bestowed parting gifts produced by local artisans, including a mahogany clock which Mr. Petersen hoped would remind him of his time with UVI and within the agricultural sector.

Speaking to the Consortium, Dr. Hall said he felt “wonderful” as he reflected on his tenure. He commented on the involvement of the UVI at the Fair and the growth of the event in the past 15 years. Dr. Hall also spoke about the expansion of agricultural pursuits within the learning institution. “When we started out there was no School of Agriculture,” he recalled, revealing that other universities would be invited to the fair because they had agriculture programs. “We no longer need to do that because we have all of the degrees and have students majoring in agriculture, so that just warms my heart,” he said.

Dr. Hall also shared that on a personal level, he has been working on the Agriculture Plan and more recently the Food and Farm Council, “so it's really a sense of personal accomplishment, and I just look forward to coming back and seeing growth that I know is going to continue.”