

# UVI Launches Essential Needs Pantry to Combat Food Insecurity Among Students

**New initiative aims to alleviate food and financial insecurities among students across St. Croix and St. Thomas campuses**

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The University of the Virgin Islands is combating food and financial insecurity amongst its student population with the establishment of the Essential Needs Pantry. Introduced last month, the pantry aims to provide crucial support to students across both the St. Croix and St. Thomas campuses, UVI made via release Tuesday.

Sponsored by the Eastern Area Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, and orchestrated by UVI's Division of Student Affairs, the Essential Needs Pantry is equipped to supply food assistance, personal care items, and various other items to meet the immediate needs of UVI students, regardless of their residential status.

"UVI is committed to ensuring that every student has access to the tools, resources, and support needed to fulfill their academic aspirations," remarked David Hall, UVI president. "The Essential Needs Pantry symbolizes our dedication to educate, nurture, and empower our students in every aspect of their lives."

Colvin Georges, who oversees the pantry on St. Croix, expressed pride in the project. "This initiative is more than just a resource. It's a commitment to the well-being and success of our students," declared Georges.

Meanwhile, Leslyn Tonge, placed in charge of the St. Thomas pantry, said that there would be events at both campuses in the near future. "Our launch events far exceeded our expectations, and we are looking forward to another opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to our students at the next pantry event. We know that our students need support both in and out of the classroom, and this is one tangible way for us to help meet some of those needs," Tonge stated.

Mr. Hall expressed the university's gratitude to the Eastern Area Chapter of The Links, Incorporated for playing a crucial role in the establishment of the pantry. With the initiative already receiving positive feedback from the student body, UVI officials expressed optimism about the pantry's potential for growth and expansion.

"Our fervent hope and long-term vision for the pantry is that many others, including students, faculty, staff, alumni, community members and businesses around the Virgin Islands will see the tremendous value in being part of this essential initiative," stated Mr. Hall.

Those interested in contributing to the Essential Needs Pantry, may contact Dr. Georges on St. Croix ([colvin.georgesjr@uvi.edu](mailto:colvin.georgesjr@uvi.edu)) and Dr. Tonge on St. Thomas ([leslyn.tonge@uvi.edu](mailto:leslyn.tonge@uvi.edu)).