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## Thriving Charities Advocates Fuels UVI's Music Program Growth with \$30,000 Support

**With the donation from Thriving Charities Advocates, UVI's music program will advance its state-of-the-art recording capabilities, providing students with hands-on experience in music performance and production**

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**12r: Dr. Kimarie Engerman (Dean of College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences), Kristine Galgay (TCA), Lauryl Knowles (TCA), Dion Parsons (UVI Faculty), Carlton Holmes (UVI faculty) and Dr. Austin Oting Har (UVI faculty). By. UVI**

The University of the Virgin Islands on Tuesday announced a \$30,000 donation from Thriving Charities Advocates (TCA), a fundraising organization and Economic Development Commission

beneficiary based in St. Thomas. The funds will enhance the university's music program, particularly its recording studio capabilities, as UVI aims to provide students with state-of-the-art facilities for music education and performance.

Acclaimed jazz musician Dion Parson, chair of the Communication and Performing Arts Department at UVI, shared how the donation has propelled the ongoing development of the recording studio. "Thanks to the ongoing generosity of Thriving Charities Advocates, we have made steady progress as we build the recording studio in different phases," said Mr. Parson. The funding has already enabled the purchase of essential equipment, including microphones, cables, and software. "Our next step is to buy soundproofing materials. The overall purpose of the recording studio is to make it a performance space that we can use as a teaching classroom and a recording space where we can create quality recordings," he added.

UVI said its music program is designed to engage students deeply in the arts and prepare them for various career paths, including teaching in the K-12 education system and working in the music industry. The program offers a bachelor of arts in music education, a bachelor of fine arts in music performance, and a music industry certificate, which trains students in audio engineering and entrepreneurial skills. Directed by Parson, the program emphasizes a comprehensive music education, covering areas such as piano, voice, steel pan, percussion, and woodwind or brass instruments.

During the check presentation, Dr. Kimarie Engerman, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences at UVI, expressed gratitude for TCA's continued support, noting that their contributions allowed students to attend the Music Educators National Convention last December. "We are indeed putting the funds to good use and it's making a difference. We truly appreciate it," she said.

According to the release, TCA's involvement extends beyond UVI. The organization has also supported Partners for Strings Inc., a nonprofit that runs a free after-school youth orchestra program for children aged six to 17 on St. Thomas and St. Croix. As a boutique brokerage, TCA connects artists, tours, and live events with nonprofit organizations to foster growth and community engagement.

Lauryl Knowles, TCA's Director of Operations and Compliance, stated, "We are honored to offer this gift to support the growth and creativity of students in UVI's Music Program. It is our goal to make music accessible to young people and to help them enhance their skills." Ms. Knowles praised UVI's music program for its quality and visionary approach, citing the positive impact it has on the community.

The check presentation took place in September 2024 at UVI's Music Building on the Orville E. Kean Campus in St. Thomas, with Lauryl Knowles and TCA Contract Specialist Kristine Galgay presenting the donation.

For more information about the UVI Music Program, visit [www.uvi.edu](http://www.uvi.edu).