

The Virgin Islands Consortium

UVI Appoints Benjamin Kraft To Serve As Major Gifts Director

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The University of the Virgin Islands has a new Director of Major Gifts, Benjamin F. Kraft. While serving in this position, which is a component of the Office of the Vice President for Institutional Advancement at the University, the institution of higher learning announced today.

Mr. Kraft is charged with garnering gifts and donations of no less than \$10,000.

Formerly, Mr. Kraft has served as an attorney advisor with the District of Columbia's Public Employee Relations Board. While at South Carolina State University (SCSU), he was vice president for institutional advancement, special assistant to two presidents,

executive director of the SCSU Educational Foundation, and National Collegiate Athletic Association compliance coordinator. While at Alcorn State University (ASU) in Mississippi, he served as the executive director of the ASU Foundation and director of development, and assistant to the president.

With an impressive list of accolades recognizing his leadership and service, and membership on a number of community, academic and non-profit organization boards, Kraft intends to continue his trend of leadership and service at UVI. "I look forward to drawing on my past experiences in higher education for the betterment of UVI," Mr. Kraft said.

Vice President for Institutional Advancement and former Director of Major Gifts, Mitchell Neaves eagerly anticipates the growth and development the University will achieve with the efforts of Kraft. "His extensive higher education background is what sold the selection committee on his ability to move our fundraising efforts forward," Neaves said. "The University undertook an extensive search process, which allowed us to hire the absolute best candidate."

"I am particularly intrigued with the prospect of Mr. Kraft working with our alumni and constituents to strengthen our planned giving program," he said. "There are numerous ways to support the University, in addition to cash and gifts of stock, planned giving allows supporters of varying capacities with the opportunity to leave a lasting legacy at the University. We are extremely pleased to acquire such a quality individual on the Institutional Advancement team."

Mr. Kraft is a native of Baton Rouge, La. He completed public high school in Washington, D.C. and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from Rutgers College, a juris doctorate degree from the Northeastern University School of Law, and a master's degree in business administration from The American University. He also earned a certificate in fundraising management from The Fund Raising School of Indiana University.

Prior to his position at the DC Public Employee Relations Board, Kraft was the chief administrative officer of Windsor Village United Methodist Church, in Houston, Tx., and has an extensive history working with Historically Black Colleges and Universities. At Florida Memorial College, he was at various times assistant professor of business, department chairs of business administration and airway science, associate dean of the faculty, National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics faculty athletics representative, and director of Government Relations and Sponsored Programs.

The director of Major Gifts position has been vacant for two years. To speak with Kraft or make a donation to UVI call the Institutional Advancement office at (340) 693-1046.