

The Virgin Islands Consortium

UVI Celebrates 55th Anniversary with Revolutionary Fund-Raising Campaign

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The University of the Virgin Islands is celebrating the University's Emerald Anniversary with a revolutionary philanthropic initiative. "55 for 55: The Great Alumni Challenge!" encourages UVI alumni to make history by achieving a 55 percent alumni giving rate in honor of the institution's 55th anniversary, UVI announced today.

"UVI's Alumni Affairs Office was overjoyed when we received an anonymous \$55,000 gift," said Linda Smith '98, '03, UVI director of Annual Giving and Alumni Affairs. "The anonymous donor issued a surprise challenge with this gift." If UVI alumni donate \$55,000 collectively, the donor will match the contribution, making the total value of the gift \$110,000.

As part of the challenge, alumni and friends who make a contribution in the amount of \$55 or more will be automatically entered into the running for an all-expense paid trip for two to our nation's capital, Washington, D. C. Sponsored by Ian Tomlinson '88 and Reginald Vigilant '88, UVI alumni and owners of OmniSystems, this prize includes two round-trip tickets, two nights and three days in a downtown hotel, and two tickets to the newly opened [Smithsonian's National Museum of African History and Culture](#).

"I appreciate the quality education received from my alma mater, and it has made me who I am today," said Tomlinson. "In celebration of UVI's 55th Anniversary, Reginald, myself, and the OmniSystems team are honored to give back in this momentous and special way."

"UVI Alumni made history with our "50 for 50" challenge during the 50th anniversary," said UVI President David Hall. "I am confident that our graduates will rise to this challenge and make the "55 for 55" challenge a major and historic success as well."

As always, alumni contributions may be designated to support an area of the university for which the donor has a specific passion. The "55 for 55" campaign is empowering alumni in Caribbean nations to directly fund their very own academic scholarships. Alumni in St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Maarten, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, the British Virgin Islands, St. Lucia, Antigua, Anguilla, St. Eustatius and Saba and others in Caribbean nations, have formalized scholarships which will benefit students from their countries. Donors on St. Thomas and St. Croix can make donations into scholarships funds, which have already been established.

"While I attended UVI, my fellow Kittitian and Nevisians struggled to gain additional funding to support college life," St. Clair Hodge '10, UVI alumnus. "As international students the opportunities for scholarships were paper thin, with only one available. As an executive of the UVI Student Government Association, I lobbied for more scholarships for international students but was asked, 'What is your government doing?'"

"That hit home. I made a commitment that I will do what I can to ensure other nationals did not struggle like we did," said Hodge. "I was extremely pleased when I heard of the approved scholarship initiative set up by the Alumni Giving Office. This is an excellent way for alumni to participate and for us Kittitians and Nevisians to support our own in a tangible way."

In honor of their institutional pride, all funds raised for each country will be awarded to a prospective or current student, as directed by the alumni scholarship.

"What better way to celebrate UVI's Emerald anniversary than inviting all alumni to support their alma mater from wherever in the world they are and opening new pathways which will afford others the opportunity of a quality education," said Smith.

"Our goal is to increase our alumni engagement and utilize the funding raised to enhance the student and faculty experience at UVI," said Mitchell Neaves, vice president for Institutional Advancement. "The Great Alumni Challenge offers our graduates the opportunity to invest in programs which will profoundly impact our students and the long-term growth of the communities they serve."

Alumni, supporters and friends can participate immediately by making a donation online, in person or via mail. To make a donation online visit <http://donation.uvi.edu>. Checks may be mailed to University of the Virgin Islands; Office of Institutional Advancement; 2 John Brewers Bay; St. Thomas, VI 00802-9990. To make a donation in person on the Albert A. Sheen Campus on St. Croix, visit the Alumni Affairs Office in the Research and Extension Service Building. On the St. Thomas Campus, visit the Institutional Advancement Office, east of the Administration and Conference Center.

For more information about [the Great Alumni Challenge](#), the promotion and its rules, visit www.uvi.edu.

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