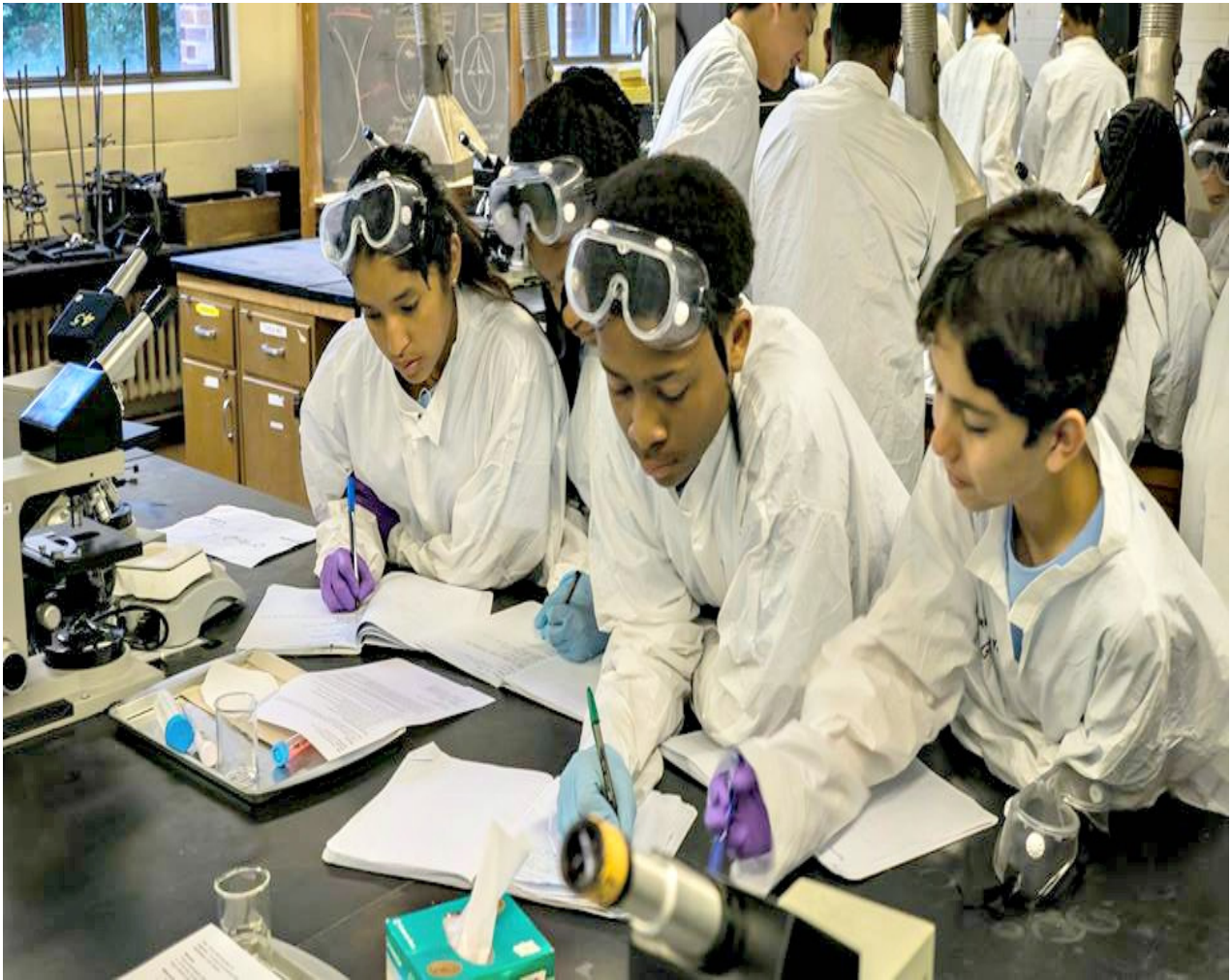


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Virgin Islands Students Participate In Summer STEMPREP Project

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Virgin Islands students are participating in the 2017 STEMPREP Project at the University of Washington, Seattle and the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, according to a recently issued release.

For five weeks this summer junior high school students Maya Griffith, Good Hope Country Day School, Brent Biscoe, Antilles School and Branden Hodge, John H. Woodson Jr. High School learned basic laboratory science techniques, experiments and procedures, technology and engineering concepts and labs, research writing skills, research presentation, and research statistics.

The program completed on August 5 for the 7th-10th grade students, and will end for the 11th and 12th graders on August 12, according to the release.

Senior High School students Bryah Martin, All Saints Cathedral School, Nyla Griffth, Good Hope Country Day School, Jebron Perkins, St. Croix Educational Complex, Jada Rommer, Good Hope Country Day School, Segen Assefa formerly of St. Thomas and Claudia Walker, Peter Gruber International Academy will utilize the skills they acquired in junior high to work in basic science laboratories under the direct supervision of assigned mentor scientists.

These trainees are part of The STEMPREP Project, a STEM training program for "high achieving" underrepresented minority students. For the past 27 years, the STEMPREP Project has been driven by a training model that supports a national pool of underrepresented minority 7th graders across a ten-year period (junior high, senior high, college), and a multi-institutional mentorship approach that rotates these trainees through STEM labs in academia, the government, private research institutes and the pharmaceutical industry. The Project provides a year-round support platform to the national pool of trainees. The relevance of this revolutionary training program is that it produces significant numbers of underrepresented minority STEM advanced degree holders, according to the release.

The STEMPREP trainees are drawn from minority populations underrepresented in the STEM arena; African-Americans, Mexican-Americans, Native Hawaiians and Puerto Ricans. Students in the STEMPREP Project experience the benefits of preparation for biomedicine, participation in a positive peer network, acquisition of above grade level scientific knowledge, preparation for AP level science courses, and serve as school/community ambassadors for the STEM.

In the 2002-2003 school year, officials from the Distance Learning Center shared information about the STEMPREP program with the VI Department of Education. In the summer of 2003, the first cadres of Virgin Islands trainees were admitted into the program. VI trainees have participated every summer since the inaugural class. To date, thirteen schools and approximately 60 trainees have completed the summer internships.

The program cost is \$5,500 per trainee to include courses, housing, dining, supplies, uniforms, supervision and weekend events. In April 2016, The Distance Learning Center STEMPREP Project lost funding supplied by the Department of Defense. This loss has jeopardized the participation of Virgin Islands trainees in need of financial assistance. Due to the lack of funding nine additional students were accepted but were unable to attend. The VI Lottery Sponsorship provided a \$1000.00 grant in accordance with their "Make A Difference Pillars": Education, Economic and Business Development, and Health and Public Welfare that have a positive impact on our community. Valance Corporation's Warren Mosler donated \$250.00. The STEMPREP Project applauds these two groups for investing in our students.

The organization is calling private citizens, the medical community, EDC companies, and government agencies to support the program. For more information contact Charlene Abramson Joseph at (340) 513-4883, mattedconsult@gmail.com and see website; thedistancelearningcenter.org.

