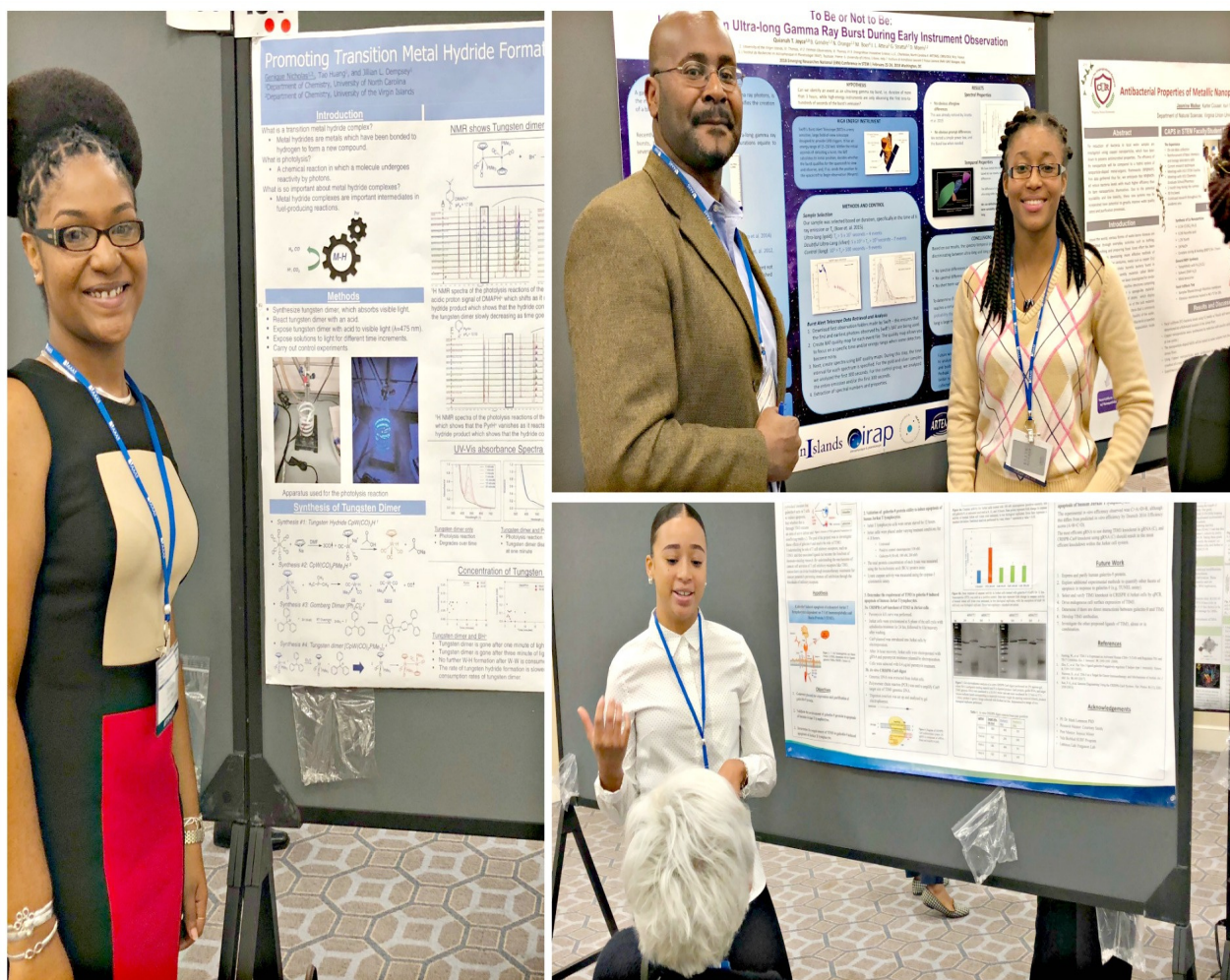


The Virgin Islands Consortium

UVI STEM Students Win National Awards At 2018 ERN Conference

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Three University of the Virgin Islands undergraduate students emerged victorious after their presentations were judged at the Annual Emerging Researchers National (ERN) Conference in STEM on Feb. 22 – 24, at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington D.C. Nineteen UVI students were among the over 800 students that attended from colleges and universities across the country.

The three students, from UVI's College of Science and Mathematics, were Torhera Durand, Genique Nicholas and Quianah Joyce.

- Durand won first prize in the category of Cancer Biology for her poster presentation titled “T-Cell Immunoglobulin and Mucin Protein 3 Involvement in Galectin-9 Induced Apoptosis of Exhausted T-Cells”.
- Nicholas won first prize in Chemistry for her poster presentation titled “Promoting Transition Metal Hydride Formation with Visible Light”.
- Joyce won first prize in Nanotechnology and Physics for her poster presentation titled “To Be or Not to Be: Identifying an Ultra-long Gamma Ray Burst During Early Instrument Observation”.

Genique Nicholas, senior Chemistry major and UVI MARC Program Research Trainee, presented research that she conducted as part of an extramural summer research internship. Nicholas interned at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill under the mentorship of Dr. Jillian L. Dempsey. She is mentored by Dr. Yakini Brandy at UVI.

“At the Emerging Researchers National conference I got to present my research to a large group of people from different universities. It was a great way to get exposure and practice on how to relay scientific information,” said Nicholas. “This conference is a great place for networking which is important... At this conference not only do I get to network, but the conference also hosts great workshops with information on topics such as finding funding for graduate school or how to apply to graduate school.”

“Being able to attend the Emerging Researchers National is a great opportunity and I would suggest it to all researchers,” said Nicholas.

Sixteen research posters and one oral presentation were presented by UVI students at the conference. Provost Dr. Camille McKayle and UVI Professors Dr. Bob Stolz, Dr. Aletha Baumann, Dr. Yakini Brandy, and Dr. Teresa Turner accompanied the students to the conference.

Students received travel funding from UVI’s National Institutes of Health (NIH) Maximizing Access to Research Careers (MARC) Program grant, NSF HBCU-Undergraduate Program grant and ECS Honors Fund.

Support for student research at UVI is provided by the Emerging Caribbean Scientists (ECS) Program. The Emerging Caribbean Scientists (ECS) Program offers scholarships, summer programs, research experiences, mentoring, and advising to UVI students majoring in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), and psychology. ECS also provided travel awards for students to present their work at national research conferences and meetings in their discipline.

For more information about student research at UVI, visit the ECS website at <http://ecs.uvi.edu> or at <https://www.facebook.com/UVI.ECS>. The 2018 ERN Conference was organized by the American Association for the Advancement of Science.