

The Virgin Islands Consortium

UVI Receives \$250K Gift From Diageo For Process Technology Program

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The University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) on Wednesday announced the receipt of a \$250,000 gift from Captain Morgan's parent company, Diageo, in support of its process technology program housed in the college of science and mathematics. As a part of ongoing efforts to enrich and grow the Process Technology program the funds will be used for scholarships and to support research in the areas of energy and water management.

The research is anticipated to produce valuable information and potentially actionable ideas for the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Caribbean region, especially when major disasters strike.

"This support from Diageo is not a one-off; it represents the latest in a series of investments by Diageo in our Process Technology program. It also symbolizes the type of partnerships with industry that UVI needs to reach our full potential," said UVI President David Hall.

The funding provided by Diageo will enhance core process technology instruction and support research to help address the need for a more resilient energy grid and improved water management systems, UVI said. Monies will be used to:

- Expand an on-campus lab to enable research, hands-on demonstration of applied industrial processes and incorporate a combined electrical and alternative energy section as well as a water management section.
- Employ two students as Captain Morgan Fellows who will work in the simulation lab on innovative energy and water management projects to enhance their experience and research skills.
- Provide renewable academic scholarships to assist in retention and recruitment efforts of students across the territory and throughout the Eastern Caribbean region.

"Investment in UVI by Diageo is helping to sustain and grow our program in notably new ways" added Process Technology Program Director Dr. Victoria Henry. "This combined research and academic experience will result in more robust learning and allow the University to produce stronger candidates for the workforce and potentially some techpreneurs. I expect that our graduates will be well equipped to contribute to the type of problem-solving needed in the face of hurricanes and other severe conditions."

Michael Williams, a current student in the program, said, "Thanks to UVI's world-class faculty who care about their students, this support means we can get the hands-on technical experience we need to take our education to the next level."

"Diageo is pleased to expand our support of the University of the Virgin Islands with this gift of \$250,000 to the Process Technology Program," said Erica J. Johnson, director of corporate and community relations at Diageo USVI. "Following the 2017 hurricane season, we wanted to make an investment in recovery efforts that could have a long-term positive impact on important institutions and on the community at large. We think the work that will be done at UVI with the grant will accomplish both. We look forward to seeing the students thrive and the ideas they will produce through their energy and water management research studies."

The quarter of a million dollars to UVI is part of Diageo's commitment of \$1 million in support of long-term recovery efforts following the disastrous 2017 hurricane season, the institution of higher learning said. Other funds were donated to the Community Foundation for the Virgin Islands (CFVI) and efforts led by Tim Duncan, who worked to provide relief supplies in the immediate aftermath of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, according to the release. Diageo's previous support for UVI's Process Technology program was in the form of a \$150,000 grant over three years to establish a process simulation lab with new modules that include a range of beverage alcohol industry applications.