

The Virgin Islands Consortium

UVI Students Take Top Honors At National Biomedical Research Conference

Education / **Published On November 27, 2018 09:39 PM /**

Staff **November 27, 2018**



Three students from the University of the Virgin Islands captured Best Poster Awards at the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS) last week in Indianapolis, UVI has announced.

This recognition comes on the heels of five University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) students winning the 2nd Annual Hewlett Packard HBCU Business Challenge competition this month, according to the release.

Samuel Liburd, a senior biology major, was recognized for the poster he presented in developmental biology and genetics, which featured work he did using Clustered

Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR) gene techniques to understand regeneration in planarians. He did this research at the Massachusetts Institute for Technology (MIT) this summer under the guidance and mentorship of Malecek, Ph.D. and Peter Reddien, Ph.D. Samuel is mentored at UVI by Dr. Jennilee Robinson.

Sophomore Arziel Williams, a psychology major from the Albert A. Sheen Campus on St. Croix, won best poster in the social sciences for his research on depression and obesity in Virgin Islanders. He was assisted by his research mentor Dr. Janis Valmond.

Anthony Jolly, a biology major sophomore on the St. Thomas Campus, won best poster in the chemical sciences for research that he did this summer on the Sheen campus under the guidance of Dr. Bernard Castillo on the concentration of phenolic compounds in herbs.

“These winners encompass the breadth of what UVI is trying to do with its programs, and with its efforts to involve more students in research. We are proud of them, and proud of all students that presented,” said Dr. Camille McKayle, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at the University of the Virgin Islands.

Students from 700 universities presented 2,100 posters. While more than one best poster award was awarded in each category, UVI’s performance was notable given its size relative to other higher education institutions in attendance.

“We should be proud of the hard work of our students, their mentors and the faculty to achieve such outstanding results,” said Dr. Teresa Turner, professor of Marine Biology in the College of Science and Mathematics.

ABRCMS brings together students from across the nation, who are studying Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and are doing research.

UVI sent 17 students from both campuses to the meeting. They represented the University in mathematics, psychology, biology and chemistry.

Students, faculty, and staff at UVI are actively involved in research in a variety of areas, including education, economics, the sciences and environmental studies, and the University’s new strategic plan includes a commitment to research productivity.