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Hotel and Tourism Association Awards Two UVI Students \$5,000 Lorette Resch Scholarship

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USVIHTA Education and Training Committee Chairman Samuel Rey (center) presents scholarship awards to recipients J'Mari Clarke (left center) and Omaira Rachid (right center) along with their family members. By. USVIHTA

University of the Virgin Islands sophomores Omaira Rachid and J'Mari Clarke were awarded \$5,000 in scholarships on Friday from the USVI Hotel and Tourism Association Education and Training Committee, the association has announced. Both students received \$2,500 toward furthering their education.

“It is vital during these uncertain times that we uphold our mission to support continuing education and training,” said USVIHTA President Lisa Hamilton. “Every one of us has felt the

repercussions of the current economic climate and health crisis, and we must ensure that our future industry leaders have the resources they need to succeed.”

Rachid is a second time recipient of the Lorette Resch Scholarship and is continuing her studies in hospitality and tourism management. Clarke is a first time recipient of the scholarship and is majoring in business administration and management, according to the release.

“This scholarship has given me the opportunity to shape my future. I am granted the opportunity to learn more about my passion that is in this industry, and for that, I am grateful. I am hereby privileged to have been honored such reward, and it is even more of a privilege to be able to showcase my knowledge and experience in the hospitality industry,” said Rachid.

“By awarding me the Lorette Resch Scholarship, [the association] has lightened my financial burden, which allows me to focus more on the essential aspect of school - learning! This scholarship will help me achieve my educational goal and career goals. [The association’s] generosity has inspired me to help others and give back to my community,” said Clarke.

According to the association, the Lorette Resch Scholarship has continued to thrive despite numerous obstacles throughout the territory over the last three years, including Hurricanes Irma and Maria and the ongoing pandemic. The association, its board of directors and members recognize the need for a strong emphasis on supporting education and growth in the tourism and hospitality industry.

To be eligible for the scholarship, students must meet the requirements for admission into the hospitality/restaurant management program or business administration program at UVI or other USVIHTA approved hospitality schools. The applicant must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, and a resident of the U.S. Virgin Islands for at least five years. Applicants must also submit documentation from their high school, including transcripts and recommendations, as well as an essay.

Funds for the Lorette Resch Scholarship are raised annually during the USVIHTA Holiday Party as well as through additional contributions. The USVIHTA Education and Training Fund was established over two decades ago to aid youth who are seeking higher education with a concentration in hospitality. In 2014, the scholarship was posthumously named in honor of Lorette Resch, honorary member on the USVIHTA Board of Directors and scholarship contributor.