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Owners of Frenchman's Reef to Provide \$30,000 Annual Scholarship to UVI Hospitality Students

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Governor Bryan and UVI officials accept Hospitality Scholarship funds from Frenchman's Reef Marriott Beach Resort and DiamondRock Hospitality in the amount of \$30,000 per year for five years By. DiamondRock Hospitality

At a special presentation following Governor Albert Bryan Jr.'s keynote address at the Governor's Workforce Development Summit, DiamondRock Hospitality, owners of Frenchman's Reef Marriott Beach Resort, announced their five-year University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) hospitality scholarship program, DiamondRock said in a release Friday.

Witnessed by the more than 150 attendees of the first annual event held aboard the Carnival Conquest, Shalinder Singh, vice president of Asset Management for DiamondRock Hospitality and Kurt Wiksten, managing director of Frenchman's Reef Marriott Beach Resort and Noni Beach, presented a ceremonial check to representatives from UVI and Mr. Bryan. DiamondRock said the donation represents a commitment of funding for six annual hospitality scholarships in the amount of \$30,000 per year, totaling \$150,000 over the five-year period.

"This is a shining example of private sector support for the USVI scholastic program," said the governor following the presentation. "DiamondRock's "Beacon of Light" scholarship will give recipients the opportunity to prepare for rewarding hospitality careers in our growing tourism industry. It is through generous and ongoing support like this that the Territory will achieve sustainable employment, attracting further investment to enable us to grow the economy."

The scholarship is designated for students in the university's Hospitality and Tourism Management program who are graduates of high school in the territory of the US Virgin Islands, or accredited online program, while residing in the US Virgin Islands, DiamondRock said. A period of time between graduation and entrance to UVI will not disqualify the applicant.

"The two exciting resorts we are opening in 2020 will need creative, intelligent and driven individuals; the very best St. Thomas has to offer. Hospitality and tourism are a rapidly growing industry and can provide a highly challenging and rewarding career," said Mr. Wiksten, who presented the donation.

DiamondRock said it is committed to developing the next generation of industry leaders. In addition to extending UVI coursework through on-the-job training and internships, we are pleased to foster growth in the community through the creation of our new Beacon of Light scholarship and encourage any full-time student seeking a career in Hospitality to apply."

Application information for the DiamondRock Hospitality Scholarships will be available in the next few days from UVI and posted in local media.