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UVI Renames St. Thomas Campus 'Dr. Orville E. Kean Campus of the University of the Virgin Islands'

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Aerial shot of UVI's St. Thomas campus. By. THE UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

The University of the Virgin Islands' St. Thomas Campus has been renamed the "Dr. Orville E. Kean Campus of the University of the Virgin Islands," to honor and commend UVI President Emeritus Orville E. Kean for more than three decades of extensive service and contributions to the University and the Virgin Islands, the institution of higher learning made known via release Monday.

Legislation to rename the campus was sponsored by Sen. Myron Jackson and adopted by the 33rd Legislature in December 2020. On Jan. 5, 2021, Gov. Albert Bryan, Jr. signed into law, Act 8404, legislation to honor and commend Dr. Kean for his contributions to the university, UVI said.

“President Kean’s leadership and commitment to the University and the Territory is worthy of recognition that will allow his name and contributions to be reflected upon by students, faculty, staff and this community for years to come,” said UVI President David Hall. “As President of the University, I am very grateful to the contributions of Dr. Kean, and the other presidents that preceded me for creating a strong and vibrant foundation upon which we could continue to build this University into a great University.”

According to the release, Dr. Kean began his career at the then College of the Virgin Islands as Professor of Mathematics in 1966. He advanced to Vice Chair of the Science and Mathematics Division, to Dean of Instruction, then Acting Director of the Caribbean Research Institute, Executive Vice President and Director of the Eastern Caribbean Center and acting Vice President for Academic Affairs. In 1990, the UVI Board of Trustees appointed Dr. Kean to serve as President of UVI. He held the position for 12 years until his retirement in 2002.

While serving as President, Dr. Kean led the University through the recovery from Hurricanes Hugo in 1989 and Marilyn in 1995, while improving and advancing the transformation of both the physical and institutional infrastructure, UVI said.

Dr. Kean successfully undertook the planning and completion of major capital projects to transform the University into a modern institution, including a research and extension center on St. Croix; a water production system on St. Thomas; a 72 and 102-bed residence hall on St. Thomas and St. Croix, respectively; a Department of Information Technology; video telephone conference rooms on each campus; a music education center on St. Thomas, an underground electrical system project for both St. Thomas and St. Croix campuses; and in 2001, the opening of the Sports and Fitness Center on St. Thomas.

Dr. Kean set the University of the Virgin Islands on a course to become a leader in the economic development in the Territory. Under his innovative leadership, UVI received approval through legislation to establish the Research and Technology Park (RT Park) on St. Croix.

“At a time when many university leaders were looking inward for support and diversification of revenues, Dr. Kean realized that the University and the Territory was poised to be a factor in economic development that was consistent with national and international economic trends,” said Mr. Hall. “Today that idea has manifested an operation that has an enormous impact on the economic development of the Territory. The University has certainly benefited from Dr. Kean’s vision.”

UVI said the RTPark has attracted approximately 70 companies to the territory and these companies provide benefits to the territory. The largest donation to the University was a \$5 million donation from Investment Strategist and Entrepreneur Kiril Sokoloff, founder of 13D Research, who was attracted to the territory by the RTPark. Sokoloff’s donation allowed the university to create what UVI described as "an outstanding entrepreneurship program."

To mark the name change, UVI said it will create a distinctive sign bearing the inscription, “The Dr. Orville Edward Kean Campus of the University of the Virgin Islands,” which will be permanently affixed on the grounds of the campus on St. Thomas.