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Founding Documents of U.S. Virgin Islands to Soon be More Accessible

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Virgin Islanders everywhere will soon have user-friendly access to the founding documents of the U.S. Virgin Islands, announced the University of the Virgin Islands Monday.

UVI Professor of Political Science and History, Dr. Malik Sekou, has been awarded a grant in the amount of \$20,000 from the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI) for the purpose of creating an integrated, easily accessible, plain language brochure of the Revised Organic Act of 1954 that provides both the legislation and its amendments in both electronic and hard copy formats, UVI said.

This project is a collaborative effort between Dr. Sekou and professor emeritus Dr. Paul Leary. Dr. Leary served as professor of Political Science at the University for 25 years before retiring in

1997.

The Revised Organic Act of 1954 declared the Virgin Islands to be an unincorporated territory, and completely reorganized its government, abolishing the two existing municipalities with their separate municipal government councils and joint legislative assembly, and creating a single territorial government with a single legislature. This act made comprehensive and complete provisions for the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government, defining their duties and imposing many specific limitations upon them.

“The constitutional development of the Virgin Islands is integral in our quest for self-determination and political development,” said Dr. Sekou. “The accessible Revised Organic Act of 1954 will provide a step towards better government. We thank the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for funding this project.”

“This grant to the University of the Virgin Islands will support the University’s efforts to provide helpful resources for students and the general public to interpret and understand legislative and foundational aspects of the Accessible Revised Organic Act of 1954,” said Dee Baecher-Brown, president of CFVI. “We are so thankful to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), for funding which allows CFVI to support humanities programs which reflect the unique gifts of our Territory’s diverse communities and the importance of our culture, heritage and its preservations,” added Brown.

The Accessible Revised Organic Act of 1954 grant project is expected to be completed in the Fall of 2021.