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Dr. Karen Brown Appointed Dean of UVI School of Education

Education / **Published On July 09, 2021 04:28 AM /**

Staff Consortium **July 09, 2021**

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Dr. Karen Brown By. **UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS**

The University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) made known Thursday that it has appointed Dr. Karen Brown to serve as Dean of the School of Education after an extensive external search for a permanent hire. Dr. Brown has more than 20 years of higher education experience and 14 years in higher education leadership, according to UVI, and she joined the institution in 2015 as an associate director of the Virgin Islands University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (VIUCEDD) and served as interim dean for two academic years.

“We are pleased to have Dr. Brown in this leadership position as UVI’s School of Education positions itself to provide 21st Century approaches to education,” said Dr. Camille McKayle,

provost and vice president of Academic Affairs. “Our School of Education recognizes that in working with future teachers, it is in fact playing an important role in preparing our Territory for the future through education of its citizens.” Dr. McKayle continued, “Dr. Brown will bring expertise and experience to the job of creating the team that will ensure excellence.”

Dr. Brown is a licensed speech-language pathologist with 29 years of experience and maintains the Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

According to UVI, prior to being appointed as Dean, Dr. Brown served as an associate professor of Curriculum and Instruction in 2018. She is the recipient of the President’s Appreciation Award in recognition of her dedicated service to the vision of innovative early childhood education through the establishment of the UVI Inclusive Childcare and Diagnostic Center.

Preceding her time at UVI, Dr. Brown was a tenured associate professor and served as the director for Speech-Language Pathology Programs at the University of West Georgia. There, she had the distinction of being the first African-American faculty member and first speech-language pathology faculty to earn tenure and be promoted to the associate professor rank at that institution.

A Virgin Islander educated in the territory’s public school system, Dr. Brown holds a Ph.D. in Special Education with a concentration in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of South Florida. She has two master’s degrees: a master’s in Speech-Language Pathology from Nova Southeastern University and a master’s in Public Health from Temple University.

Dr. Brown earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Speech Communication from the University of Miami. She is a graduate of the Georgia Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Other Disabilities (GaLEND) program and the National Leadership Consortium on Developmental Disabilities.

Some of Dr. Brown’s aspirations for the UVI School of Education include building a cadre of expert faculty in their respective disciplines who have embraced the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion; achieving an ongoing robust enrollment of both teachers and other school professionals so that the School of Education will be developing educational leaders who are culturally responsive and academically prepared to lead locally, regionally and globally with an equity lens.

“I believe this can be accomplished through igniting innovation and creativity in the School of Education and requires a paradigm shift,” said Dr. Brown. “As the Dean, I must write the vision and make it plain, communicating the shared vision clearly and fostering creativity and confidence. Persistence, resilience, and boldness for new ideas are prerequisites.”

At the territorial level, she is a member of the VI Advisory Panel for Special Education, appointed by former Gov. Kenneth Mapp and reappointed by Gov. Albert Bryan, Jr. At the national level, Dr. Brown is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Act Early Ambassador to the U.S. Virgin Islands for the “Learn the Signs. Act Early” campaign. She has served in this position for five years.

In addition, she serves as a committee member of the Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) Community of Practice (CoP) on Cultural and Linguistic Competence in Developmental Disabilities National Advisory Committee, UVI made known. Dr. Brown’s research interests are in Caribbean perspectives of disability and self-efficacy related to

early identification of developmental disabilities.

“I want to thank Dr. Thomas for seeing in me greatness and potential. She saw me in this position before I saw myself,” said Dr. Brown. “Through her succession planning I am here and I will be forever grateful,” she said. Dr. Linda V. Thomas served as Dean of the School of Education from 2011-2019 and is currently the interim associate provost of Graduate Studies and Academic Affairs.

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