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Sorority Makes \$6,000 Donation to UVI With Aim of Attracting More Male Educators to Classrooms

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Dr. Karen Brown, Dr. Alfred Heath, Pamela V. Berkeley and UVI Vice President for Institutional Advancement Mitchell Neaves pose for photo at check presentation. By. UVI

The St. Thomas Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority made a \$6,000 donation on Thursday, June 24, to the Geraldine Heath Scholarship with the aim of attracting more male educators to classrooms, the University of the Virgin Islands has announced.

Established at UVI in 2008, the four-year scholarship is awarded to an undergraduate male education major enrolled at the institution of higher learning.

Immediate Past President Dr. Karen Brown and Immediate Past Vice President Pamela V. Berkeley of the St. Thomas Alumnae Chapter presented Dr. Alfred Heath with the check at the Ralph M. Paiewonsky Library on Orville E. Kean Campus on St. Thomas. The Geraldine Heath Scholarship was created in honor of his late wife.

“I know that if she was here today, she would want me to say thank you and I am saying thank you very very much,” Dr. Heath exclaimed. Geraldine Heath was one of the 17 founding members of the St. Thomas Alumnae Chapter, established on May 28, 1988.

“I appreciate this donation to the University for a worthy student,” Dr. Heath said, right before pledging to match the amount raised. “Six thousand plus six thousand in the fund for the student and this is in honor of Geraldine.”

Established in July 2008 with a donation of eight thousand from the St. Thomas Alumnae Chapter the Scholarship had mostly remained idle until now. “We have been wanting to bring it back,” said Dr. Brown.

“We have been fundraising to continue to replenish the scholarship,” Ms. Berkeley said. Fundraising efforts included cake sales, a car raffle, virtual carnival raffle and Halloween party. “It was kind of hard because we were not permitted to do this collectively in person, so we did a lot of virtual, drive-through kind of events to still make it happen and to show persistence, that in spite of a global pandemic we are still trying to meet the needs of primarily local, but also the needs of people in international spaces,” explained Dr. Brown.

When asked why it was so important for the Delta’s to revive the Scholarship, Dr. Brown responded, “It goes to a Historically Black College and University (HBCU), it goes to a student who is majoring in education, specifically males. Right now, nationwide it’s about one to two percent of teachers that are black males.” Brown continued, “There is a national teacher shortage, so this is the time to try to recruit and encourage more into the profession.”

According to UVI, in addition to the Delta Growing & Empowering Myself Successfully (GEMS) program, which is for our high school female students, the Sorority has Project Delta Sigma Theta (DST), which is for students, boys and girls from ages five to 12, with an emphasis on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics). The next program, which is for junior high young ladies, is the Dr. Betty Shabazz Program. This program teaches life skills and etiquette.

Other contributions include donations to the Donna Fret Gregory (DFG) Foundation – Kids Kitchen Summer Saturdays meal program, a book scholarship for college bound students, a scholarship for female graduates from the public high schools in St. Thomas and a scholarship for a high school graduate from a parochial or private school in St. Thomas.