

## UVI Says its Free Tuition Program Will Offer Greater Benefits This Fall

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The University of the Virgin Islands' free tuition program has been adjusted to make attending UVI much more affordable, the university said Thursday.

At the quarterly UVI Board of Trustees meeting on Saturday, March 5, board members voted in favor of a procedural change that will allow eligible students to receive the free tuition funding first, in addition to federal and institutional grants and scholarships. The change means students funded through the free tuition program who receive other financial aid will be able to apply that aid toward additional expenses such as room and board, fees, books and other school-related expenses, the university said. The change will be implemented for the start of the fall 2022 semester and will apply to full time enrolled students living on or off campus.

“Finances remain one of the reasons some students are not able to complete their studies and we want to remove as many barriers as possible to not only retain students but also recruit new students who might not otherwise be able to afford a college education,” said UVI President David Hall. “This significant decision made by the Board will allow us to support more students and address more of their financial needs.”

Formally called the VI Higher Education Scholarship Program, or VIHESP, the free tuition program became law in 2019. The program is available to residents pursuing their first degree at UVI who graduate from a private, public or parochial high school in the U.S. Virgin Islands regardless of age, date of graduation or household income. Some of the requirements for recipients of the tuition aid program are to maintain a GPA of 2.50 and to work in the Territory for a specific length of time after graduation. The obligation to work in the Territory must be completed within seven years after graduation and can be in the public or private sector.

“There is a national movement that is attempting to transform the nation’s understanding of the role and importance of higher education to the future of this country. One of those changes is to make sure the “free tuition” movement is being used in a manner that helps students maximize all forms of support. UVI is proud to be a pioneer in that movement and to be the first Historically Black College and University (HBCU) that provides comprehensive free tuition to students within its state or jurisdiction,” said Mr. Hall. “We are now pleased to be one of the first, if not the first, to apply free tuition first instead of other funds. This enhancement will make a UVI education more accessible and achievable for Virgin Islanders.”

For more information, go [here](#), or contact [pr@uvi.edu](mailto:pr@uvi.edu).