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## UVI Marks Earth Day With Mangrove Cleanup in Vessup Bay April 2

Community Center / **Published On March 28, 2022 06:05 PM /**

Staff Consortium **March 28, 2022**

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As part of a larger effort to reduce marine debris in the territory, the University of the Virgin Islands said Monday it is organizing the fifth Great Mangrove Cleanup along the mangrove shoreline in Vessup Bay, St. Thomas. The event is scheduled for April 2 in celebration of Earth Day observed on April 22.

“Mangrove shorelines are important habitats that support a wide range of plant and animal species. Trash, carried in by wind and waves, can collect among the roots and cause lasting damage to the ecosystem,” said Dr. Kristin Wilson Grimes, research assistant professor of Watershed Ecology and project lead. “Cleanups like this give volunteers a chance to get out in nature and make a difference. Students can earn community service hours for their participation.”

According to Dr. Grimes, last year over 1,700 pounds of trash was removed by 54 volunteers. Much of that trash had been there since the 2017 storms. Together, we got a lot of that out, but there's still a lot left to be removed," she said.

To volunteer at the April 2 Great Mangrove Cleanup, register at <https://viepscor.org/5th-great-mangrove-cleanup-2022>.

To learn more about Marine Debris cleanup efforts in the territory, contact Zola Roper at [zola.roper@uvi.edu](mailto:zola.roper@uvi.edu) or visit <https://viepscor.org/about-marine-debris-in-the-usvi>.

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