

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Financial Consulting Firm in EDA Program Enables UVI Nursing Students to Benefit from Clinical Education Abroad

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Left to Right: Jessica Pena, Bonika Bartlette, Candice Ennis, E'Yonna Crooke, Ketura Harrigan, Dalissa Lettsome Kishana Anselm and Michelle Laudat pose for photos at Cyril King Airport on Saint Thomas. By. UVI

The University of the Virgin Islands announced Wednesday that students from its School of Nursing are receiving valuable clinical instruction at Whittier Rehabilitation Hospital-Bradford in Massachusetts thanks to financial support from Greenleaf VI, Inc., a financial consulting firm.

UVI said that a partnership between Greenleaf and the nursing school provides expanded learning opportunities and experiences for UVI nursing students. The cost of the trip, room and board is funded by Greenleaf, a member of the U.S. Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority.

A group of 10 students and two professors from the nursing program at the Albert A. Sheen Campus on St. Croix will participate in clinical rotations at Whittier, the premier acute rehabilitation hospital in the Merrimack Valley, through March 29, 2023, followed by ten students from the Orville E. Kean Campus on St. Thomas, who will fly to Massachusetts on March 29, 2023, and will stay through April 7, 2023.

The partnership between UVI and Whittier began in December 2021 and makes it possible to purchase software licenses for students to access the many virtual simulation products needed to sustain program delivery since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, students were spared the burden of covering the cost of the simulation products, and UVI was able to maintain enrollment numbers at the School of Nursing, also referred to as SON.

According to the release, in April 2022, Philip Arcidi, president of Greenleaf VI, who also serves as Treasurer of Whittier Health Network, presented an opportunity for UVI nursing students to visit Whittier's facilities in Massachusetts to help address some of the challenges of accessing clinical sites in the territory. Following a series of in-person assessments and the development of a clinical rotation program and schedule, a virtual orientation session was held, allowing the two groups of students and Whittier nursing staff to review the program.

Dean of the UVI SON Mary Beverley Lansiquot worked with Whittier's Director of Nursing Services Heather Grondin to ensure that the initiative met the School of Nursing's objectives to improve the quality of the clinical experiences for the nursing students.

"On behalf of the SON's students, faculty, and staff, I thank Mr. Philip Arcidi, the Arcidi family, and the Whittier Health team for their support in bringing this innovative initiative to fruition," said Dean Lansiquot.

Bob Iannaco, administrator at Whittier Rehabilitation Hospital-Bradford said, "We could not be more excited to be partnering with UVI and Dean Lansiquot. We look forward to hosting students from both St. Croix and St. Thomas along with their instructors and know that they will have a fulfilling experience here at Whittier."

"Greenleaf VI continues to demonstrate in very tangible ways its commitment to the University of the Virgin Islands. We are deeply grateful to Phillip Arcidi and his team for stepping up to the plate once again and demonstrating philanthropic leadership and much-needed community support," said Mitchell Neaves, vice president for Institutional Advancement at UVI.

While at Whittier Rehabilitation Hospital, the UVI students will have face-to-face clinical experiences. The hospital provides various medical and nursing services that will allow students to meet the End of Program Student Learning Outcome before they graduate in May 2023.

According to UVI, under Dean Lansiquot's leadership, the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) pass rate had improved, and enrollment at UVI's School of Nursing has grown. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on students, the health system and the delivery of nursing programs resulted in a drop limited access to the units at the territorial hospitals for face-to-face clinical learning experiences. This global learning experience provides an emersion in clinical practice for senior nursing students which in turn will prepare them for the NCLEX and entry into the nursing profession.

Greenleaf VI's previous philanthropic support of the University includes gifts to the UVI School of Medicine and to UVI's Rise Relief Fund Initiative, which was established after the 2017 hurricanes to assist students and employees with the recovery process. The have also contributed to the UVI School of Medicine.