

The Virgin Islands Consortium

UVI Board Expands Academic Portfolio, Approves Nursing Facility, Ends Covid Policy For Students Living on Campus

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UVI Dorms By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

In a move signaling dedication to education and industry relevance, the University of the Virgin Islands Board of Trustees announced the approval of four new degree programs during its regular quarterly meeting on June 24. UVI also ended its Covid-19 policy for students living on campus, and approved the construction of a new facility for its school of nursing.

The board unanimously agreed to introduce a new associate of applied science degree in renewable energy technology (RET), along with bachelor of science degrees in agroecology, agricultural business, and animal science. These innovative programs are aimed at aligning the university's offerings with the evolving demands of the job market, both locally and internationally, UVI said.

The new RET degree aims to arm the future workforce with vital knowledge about renewable energy technologies, basic electrical concepts, and the installation and repair of photovoltaic systems. The program is poised to provide an educated labor force that will support the territory, the Caribbean region, and the United States in their transition to renewable energy, UVI stated.

In the realm of agriculture, the three new bachelor of science degree programs have been carefully designed to prepare students for various sectors. The Agroecology program will focus on sustainable agriculture and natural resource management, while the Agricultural Business degree offers a comprehensive foundation in agriculture, finance, management, and economics. Lastly, the Animal Science degree will enable students to explore careers in livestock operations, barn/ranch management, food processing, and more.

"These degrees will prepare students for agricultural employment that requires bachelor's degree programs," said Dr. Camille McKayle, UVI provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. "They will complement our existing certificate programs and prepare students for the workforce."

The announcement of these degree programs signifies the completion of a comprehensive academic build-out for the University's School of Agriculture, the university said. UVI will now focus on attracting qualified students from the Caribbean and beyond to take up these studies.

During the meeting, the President's Report highlighted some of the university's notable achievements in the past quarter. Among them was the recognition of Dr. Leslyn Tonge, interim dean of Student Affairs, who was honored with the Presidential Award for her leadership of the UVI Passport to the World program. This program offers international travel opportunities for students, faculty, retirees, and alumni, with a recent successful ten-day trip to Egypt involving 77 participants.

The President's Report also celebrated the achievements of UVI's nursing and education students who had recently participated in an educational trip to Costa Rica, as well as the success of three UVI students who represented the university at an international sea turtle symposium in Columbia.

In addition to academic announcements, the board made crucial administrative decisions. It re-elected Henry Smock to serve as chairman and Oran Roebuck as vice-chair. Also, the board provided authorization for the administration to borrow funds to construct a new facility for the School of Nursing and approved an amendment to eliminate the Covid-19 Policy for students living in the residence halls.