



dateline: UVI

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Mangoes and More Featured at Annual Festival



(left) An attendee attempts to graft a mango tree at the Eighth Annual Mango Melee and Tropical Fruit Festival held in July at the St. George Village Botanical Garden on St. Croix. (right) Children compete in the mango-eating contest. The festival featured delicacies made from mango, including a mango swirl cheesecake and mango ice cream. More than 70 varieties of mango and other tropical fruit were on display. The UVI Cooperative Extension Service was a co-sponsor of the event.



UVI Joins the Fight Against Cancer

UVI knocked out the competition at the St. Thomas 2004 Relay for Life with its theme "A Night at the Fights to Knock Out Cancer" and the corresponding display of a boxing ring, which won the event's best decorated tent award. At intervals during the walk-a-thon held at the Charlotte Amalie High School track in June, the battle against cancer was acted out in the boxing ring. Equipped with boxing gloves, UVI student Shanequa Williams played the role of cancer and UVI Alum Lyra Thomas Harrigan portrayed those united in the fight against the disease. In each instance cancer was knocked out.

At the Relay for Life, a member of each team must walk on the track throughout the 18-hour walk-a-thon. As a result, members of each team take turns walking. There were a total of 60 teams made up of people from the public and private sectors and the community at-large. UVI was one of the many organizations represented at the annual fund-raiser for cancer research and education. UVI had two teams whose combined total of 24 members raised \$2,400.

The peak of the event was between 6 p.m. and midnight when entire families came out to walk for the various teams. There were activities and contests for children, including tug-of-war and a moonwalker. Other events included a fashion show and karaoke contest.



(left to right) UVI Alum Lyra Thomas Harrigan portrays people united in the fight against cancer knocking out the disease, which is portrayed by UVI student Shanequa Williams at the Relay for Life.

At 9 p.m. the night turned solemn as all the lights on the track were turned off for the official candle light ceremony.

The ceremony included a cancer survivor's story of her battle with the disease and quiet reflections by those who have lost loved ones to the disease. Following the ceremony, cancer survivors made a lap around the track then they were joined by their supporters.

UVI Special Events Coordinator Raul Carrillo served as the chairman of the Relay for Life. He said that the event raised more than \$107,000 for the local American Cancer Society.

Events Calendar

July 19-23	Food Crop Society Meeting	STJ
July 21	Wellness Seminar	STT
July 21	Free HIV Testing	STT
Aug. 13	Oliver Samuels Show	STX
Aug. 14-15	Oliver Samuels Show	STT
Aug. 15-18	New Student Orientation	STT
Aug. 16-18	New Student Orientation	STX

"I Love My Job" UVI Award Recipient Says

For years the Royal Palm Drive on UVI's St. Croix campus has attracted people who marvel at its majesty. To ensure the beauty of the University's signature drive, the first plan of action in a campus-wide reforestation effort was to replace the damaged and destroyed Puerto Rican royal palms. That restoration was in 2003. One year later the Royal Palm Drive, the only of its kind in the territory, and the entire St. Croix campus, were recognized at the 9th Annual Caribbean Urban Forestry Conference with a "Project Award."

The five-day Caribbean Urban Forestry Conference attracted professionals from around the region. The theme was "Managing the Caribbean Urban and Community Forest."

Peter Abrahams, the St. Croix campus director of Business and Facilities Services, was acknowledged for his leadership in transforming the campus grounds from a manicured lawn into a beautiful urban forest. An urban forest is defined as all vegetation and green spaces within communities that provide benefits vital to enriching the quality of life.

Through grants, donations and input from the landscaping committee, lush gardens and blossoming trees and shrubs were developed on the St. Croix campus.

Also winning an award from UVI was Extension Specialist Carlos Robles. He won the "Outstanding Professional" award for his 23 years of providing information, education



(top) The Royal Palm Drive at the entrance of UVI's St. Croix campus. The campus won a "Project Award" at the Caribbean Urban Forestry Conference. (bottom) UVI's Cooperative Extension Service State Director Kwame Garcia bestows the conference's "Outstanding Professional" award on Carlos Robles, a UVI extension specialist.



and technical advice in urban gardening, sustainable agriculture, urban forestry and farm safety with the Cooperative Extension Service (CES).

"I felt honored and gratified for being recognized for something I love to do," Robles said. Notably, Robles is one of the few certified arborists in the territory. He conducts forestry workshops, seminars and demonstrations for home gardeners, public and private agencies, and landscape maintenance crews. Since 2002, Robles has been responsible for administering a USDA Urban Forestry grant. He also educates individual homeowners, neighborhood groups and students about the value of trees and the means of caring for them. Additionally, he is involved in the "Remarkable Big Trees of the Virgin Islands" project.

"Part of my responsibility is to educate whoever will listen," Robles said. And he does it with a passion. "I just love my job."

The 9th Annual Caribbean Urban Forestry Conference was jointly sponsored by the UVI-CES, V.I. Department of Agriculture and the USDA Forest Service/International Institute of Tropical Forestry.

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dateline:UVI
2 John Brewer's Bay
St. Thomas, VI 00802