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Virgin Islands
Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research

Research Infrastructure Improvement Proposal Submitted! The carefully developed, much-invested VI-EPSCoR proposal for a Research Infrastructure Improvement (RII) grant was submitted to the National Science Foundation (NSF) on Thursday, July 17th. VI-EPSCoR Project Director Henry Smith expressed satisfaction with the proposal and with the efforts of the teams of people that worked on its development. In extending his appreciation to the Assembly of Community Advisors and the UVI Planning Committee, out of which the VI-EPSCoR Governing Board was born, and to members of the RII Subcommittee, Smith noted, "We have a good proposal and it represents the invaluable efforts of many hard-working people". The proposal has several funded aspects.

Funding was requested for building capability for two focus areas: research on biocomplexity in Caribbean coral reefs and research on education for K-12 mathematics. Funding was also requested for an education and human resources outreach component, wherein an institute would be established to support improvements in pre-service and in-service teacher education. The institute would also foster outreach activities, including collaborations with the VI Department of Education, that advance Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) preparedness among Virgin Islands teachers, students and members of the workforce. In the proposal, funds were requested to support the incubation of new research areas, such as weather modeling, materials science, data visualization and research on undergraduate education for science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Supporting Dr. Smith in managing these aspects of the proposal are Co-principal investigators Richard Nemeth, Rosalie Dance, Camille McKayle and Roy Watlington, respectively. Among the other UVI personnel who assisted the preparation of the proposal were Lynn Rosenthal, Sandra Romano, Patricia Rhymer-Todman, Diana Demers, Jeannette Loverne, Marc Boumedine and David Smith. The NSF decision on the proposal may be received as early as November 2003.

VI-EPSCoR Governing Board Elected Officers

On July 11, 2003, the members of the VI-EPSCoR Governing Board met and elected its officers for the next year. The Governing Board, which represents the "state committee" for the Virgin Islands in advising and guiding VI-EPSCoR, elected Frank J. Fox, President of the St. Croix Chamber of Commerce, as its first Chair. UVI's President LaVerne E. Ragster was elected Vice Chair. The Board also approved a resolution agreeing to advise the project director and endorsing "...the concept of enhancing the economy of the United States Virgin Islands through research and development using the opportunities available through the EPSCoR program." Finally, the Governing Board commissioned a subcommittee to develop its bylaws. The Governing Board will meet quarterly. Its next regular meeting will take place on October 17, 2003.

Virgin Islands' Presence at NSF-EPSCoR Workshop in Wyoming

VI-EPSCoR Project Director Henry Smith and St. Croix Chamber of Commerce President Frank J. Fox traveled to the Jackson Hole, Wyoming, hosted by Wyoming-EPSCoR. The goal of the workshop was "... to capture new and refined management strategies appropriate

to the new EPSCoR realities during the workshop and to produce a publication that would serve as a “resource manual” of best ideas”.

UVI Junior Leia LaPlace joins Dr. McKayle at DoE EPSCoR Conference in New Mexico

On June 2nd through the 4th 2003, Dr. Camille McKayle was joined by UVI junior Leia LaPlace in attending a conference co-sponsored by New Mexico EPSCoR, Sandia National Laboratories and Los Alamos National Laboratory. The laboratories are agencies of the US Department of Energy. Held in Albuquerque, N.M., the conference had the objective of “... [providing] university and laboratory researchers, faculty, students, and EPSCoR and policy leaders a venue to understand the lab's and universities' needs for research, talent and strategic collaborations”.

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VI-EPSCoR is supported by a planning grant from the National Science Foundation. As an “EPSCoR jurisdiction”, the Virgin Islands is eligible for technical advice and co-funding opportunities for proposals submitted to the NSF or to programs recognized by Department of Defense EPSCoR (DEPSCoR) or by the Environmental Protection Agency’s EPSCoR (EPA-EPSCoR). Dr. Henry H. Smith, Vice Provost for Research & Public Service, is the Project Director of VI-EPSCoR.
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