

Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research

***Virgin Islands EPSCoR hears from National Science Foundation***

After one year of planning, funded by a planning grant from the National Science Foundation, the University of the Virgin Islands, on behalf of VI-EPSCoR, submitted a grant proposal to the National Science Foundation's EPSCoR Program on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2003. The complete plan requested \$7 million from NSF in support of research infrastructure improvement in the Virgin Islands. With the input from many entities from the Virgin Islands community, and the advice from a board which included representatives from the Virgin Islands public and private sector, and representatives from EPSCoR programs in Puerto Rico and Kansas, VI-EPSCoR formulated a plan that would emphasize research in the biocomplexity in Caribbean reef coral, and research in K-12 mathematics education in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

We are proud of the effort that the final submission represented. VI EPSCoR is the only jurisdiction in which the EPSCoR program is hosted by an institution that is primarily undergraduate. The Virgin Islands is also the smallest participating EPSCoR jurisdiction.

The proposal was reviewed by a panel in late August, and we anxiously awaited word. On Tuesday, September 29 we learned from our program officers at NSF that the NSF review panel has recommended that VI-EPSCoR be funded at a total of no more than \$4 - \$4.5 million over four years. Though at a reduced funding level, this is quite a feat. It is unusual for EPSCoR jurisdiction to receive funding on their first submitted proposal. Our proposal will require some revisions to accommodate this and other recommendations made by the panel. Revisions will be made during the remainder of October.

***VI EPSCoR welcomes new EPSCoR Coordinator***

After performing the Herculean task of coordinating the submission of the VI EPSCoR grant proposal, Professor Roy Watlington stepped down as EPSCoR coordinator to return to the Division of Science and Mathematics, where he now coordinates the Science 100 program, affecting each UVI student in their freshman year. He will be returning to VI EPSCoR in a different role when we begin the new program.

Dr. Camille McKayle, Associate Professor of Mathematics, has taken over as EPSCoR Coordinator. Dr. McKayle comes to EPSCoR with experience coordinating the \$3.5 million NSF HBCU-UP (Historically Black College and Universities—Undergraduate Program) grant, and has served as Principal Investigator on other NSF, NASA and Mathematical Association of America grant programs. Dr. McKayle is in her 8<sup>th</sup> year at the University of the Virgin Islands, and was a part of the large team that provided input for the VI-EPSCoR submission.

***VI EPSCoR sends delegation to the National EPSCoR Conference (September 7 – 9)***

VI EPSCoR sent a six person delegation to the National EPSCoR conference in September. The delegation consisted of VI EPSCoR staff and members of the governing board. The national conference supported the travel of our governing board members. Representing the Virgin Islands were Dr. Henry Smith, Principal Investigator and UVI's Vice Provost, Frank Fox, VI EPSCoR governing board president and president of the St. Croix Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Bernard Adrien (representing Mr. Frank Schulerbrandt, JD, CEO for USVI Economic Development Authority), Dr. Richard Moore, Dr. Camille McKayle, VI-EPSCoR Coordinator, and Ms. Marilyn Henderson, VI EPSCoR Administrative Assistant.

The conference was an informative one, and showcased the economic impact that EPSCoR programs had in other EPSCoR jurisdictions. Mr. Adrien, in his conference report, stated that "it was indeed amazing to have learned first hand the quality of support that legislators gave to the EPSCoR activities of their individual state". He noted that the "territory's participation is of paramount importance in ensuring the success of this program". In understanding that "knowledge is the currency of the 21<sup>st</sup> century", the conference underscored the benefits that research can have on the economy of EPSCoR jurisdictions.

### ***VI EPSCoR Governing Board to Meet***

The VI EPSCoR governing board will have its next quarterly meeting at on October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2003. The VI-EPSCoR Governing Board represents the greater Virgin Islands community as well as the broadest interests of the University in advising the Project Director and in garnering community support for the activities of VI-EPSCoR. This board was constituted to include the Virgin Islands Delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, four senior members of the Territorial Government, three representatives of the private business community, two EPSCoR leaders from other jurisdictions, and four representatives of the University, including its President and the VI-EPSCoR Project Director. The Governing Board holds meetings quarterly in addition to an annual meeting with a larger Assembly of Community Advisors and Planning Committee (the Assembly), at which its membership is replenished.

### ***Upcoming NSF activities relevant to VI EPSCoR***

In order to better position ourselves for success in grant applications, VI EPSCoR will support participation in activities that will strengthen the Virgin Islands ability to submit competitive proposals, especially in those areas that emerged as VI EPSCoR priorities. If interested, please contact Dr. McKayle at [cmckayl@uvi.edu](mailto:cmckayl@uvi.edu) or 693-1478.

Relevant web page: <http://ehr.nsf.gov> will connect you to the EHR web page

- MET Summit II: Conference on the Mathematical Education of Teachers to be held at the Hilton Crystal City at National Airport on October 11-12th 2003.
- VI EPSCoR addresses UVI faculty, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2003 at Noon
- The EPSCoR Centers Development Initiative (CDI), in collaboration with the University of Oklahoma, is holding an assistance workshop on NSF's Graduate Teaching Fellows in K-12 Education (GK-12) program - November 12, 2003 University of Oklahoma (Norman, OK). See [www.epscorfoundation.org/cdi/GK-12workshop/](http://www.epscorfoundation.org/cdi/GK-12workshop/). The workshop will feature presentations from NSF GK-12 Program Directors and 'best practice' presentations from PIs of ongoing NSF GK-12 projects. This program supports fellowships and associated training that enable graduate students and advanced undergraduates in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to serve in K-12 schools as resources knowledgeable about both the content and applications of these disciplines.
- **Outreach Visit:** Bev Sherman, NSF Fastlane expert, and John Cruikshank, a long-time NSF employee who has worked in grants and policy administration as well as education and human resources programs will visit the Virgin Islands January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2004 (tentative).
- **Undergraduate Research Centers grant competition, deadline January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2004.** This pilot program seeks new models and partnerships with the potential (1) to expand the reach of undergraduate research to include first- and second-year college students; and (2) to enhance the research capacity, infrastructure, and culture of participating institutions, thereby strengthening the nation's research enterprise. For this pilot program, research should be in the chemical sciences or interdisciplinary areas supported by the chemical sciences. This effort is being headed by Dr. Tony Perry, Visiting Assistant Professor of Chemistry.