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Eugene Gottlieb Jr. hired as VI-EPSCoR Coordinator

The Virgin Islands EPSCoR program is pleased to announce that Eugene Gottlieb Jr. has joined its staff as outreach coordinator. Gottlieb, a former early admission student at UVI, is a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology and Stanford University and holds degrees in industrial engineering and statistics, respectively. He worked for several years in information technology with IBM before returning to the University of the Virgin Islands.

Gottlieb says he welcomes the opportunity to apply his formal training and experience to assist in the development of the economic potential of the Virgin Islands.

As outreach coordinator, Gottlieb is responsible for ensuring that the wider Virgin Islands community is aware of and involved with the scientific and economic activities that are funded through VI-EPSCoR.

UVI President Dr. LaVerne E. Ragster says she is pleased that the University was successful in recruiting Gottlieb. "The University, through VI-EPSCoR, is committed to utilizing science and technology as a vehicle for propelling the territory's economic development", Dr. Ragster said. "Having Mr. Gottlieb on board as the outreach coordinator for VI-EPSCoR provides us with a talented, experienced Virgin Islander to facilitate our achievement of this goal."

VI-EPSCoR Kickoff at Government House VI-EPSCoR offers Grant Management Workshop

The Honorable Governor of the Virgin Islands Charles W. Turnbull, Ph.D., in collaboration with LaVerne E. Ragster, Ph.D., President of the University of the Virgin Islands, hosted the Virgin Islands EPSCoR kickoff at Government House, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands on Thursday, October 28.

Government officials, UVI faculty and staff, community advisors and the press mingled with VI-EPSCoR Governing Committee members, and VI-EPSCoR research and administrative personnel. This was the official unveiling of the Virgin Islands EPSCoR program to the Virgin Islands community.

VI-EPSCoR will be offering a grant management course on the St. Thomas campus of the University of the Virgin Islands. The course, entitled "Managing Federal Grants and Cooperative Agreements", is designed to provide participants with a "working knowledge of issues that affect the day-to-day operations and management of federal grants."

The course is a collaboration between the VI-EPSCoR and Title III programs that will provide three days of training to faculty and staff. Management Concepts, Inc. of Vienna, VA will conduct the course, which is scheduled for December 13-15, 2004 and will provide training for up to 30 participants. Members of faculty and staff that currently serve as principal investigators on grants, along with those who may serve in that

capacity in the near future, will benefit from this 3-day course. Topics to be covered include:

- Relationships in Managing Federal Grants
- Notices of Grant Award
- Developing and Operational Plan
- Changes in Budget and Scope
- Project Performance
- Award Closeout



Coordinator's Update by Camille McKayle

This fall is a busy one for the Virgin Islands EPSCoR program.

We welcome to our ranks VI-EPSCoR outreach coordinator, Eugene Gottlieb Jr. Please be sure to get acquainted with him through the introductory article in this newsletter.

Since August VI-EPSCoR and CMES has hosted a weekly seminar series that featured VI-EPSCoR researchers, BCCR Advisory Committee members, and other UVI and visiting scientists. The seminar is open

to the community, and is presented once a week on Fridays, tele-conferenced with St. Thomas and St. Croix.

During the second week of October, VI-EPSCoR hosted the BCCR Advisory Committee. They visited the St. Thomas campus, the St. Croix campus and the Virgin Islands Environmental Resource Station (VIERS) on St. John. During their visit, they met with

researchers and the VI-EPSCoR Administrative team. The advisory group provided excellent guidance during their stay and delivered a report summarizing their observations and made critical recommendations to the VI-EPSCoR program.

Our second call for incubator projects yielded 11 proposals. They represented St. Thomas and St. Croix, UVI faculty, off

island researchers with ties to the Virgin Islands, private foundations, the private sector and secondary schools. A review committee will be convened to make recommendations on funding.

Our fall activities are a perfect close-out to the first year of the Virgin Islands EPSCoR program. We are looking forward to a second year that is equally fruitful.

BCCR Update by Dr. Richard Nemeth

Renovations at the Virgin Islands Environmental Resource Station (VIERS) on St. John are progressing. A CZM permit is currently pending approval and a bid for contractors to do the work went out this week. The administration building is being reorganized to house the new computer lab. Renovations at the MacLean Marine Science Center on St. Thomas are also beginning to move forward. Internal renovations have started with a wall dividing the classroom and research lab. New cabinetry and gear lockers are on order. A CZM permit will

be going in soon for the new scuba compressor filling station and meetings with architects have begun to plan renovations to the dock and boat ramp.

The Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler (ADCP) meters have arrived on island and researchers will be receiving a training session on Nov. 18 and 19 to learn how to setup, deploy and download and analyze data from the ADCP's. The order for the new UVI research vessel has been placed and we expect delivery around February 2005.

Advertisements for two

research faculty and graduate program administrator were advertised. Applicants for the two research positions were reviewed and the top candidates interviewed. Due to the small pool of applicants the invertebrate biologist position will be re-advertised this month. The top oceanography candidate will be coming to UVI for a site visit and job seminar from Nov. 15-17. No applicants have applied for the administrative position. However, several other possible solutions have been proposed to develop the graduate program so feasibility of these will be further investigated.

VI-EPSCoR Governing Committee:

- * Frank Schulterbrandt, Esq., Chair of the Governing Committee
- * LaVerne Ragster, PhD, Vice-chair of the Governing Committee
- * Hon. Donna Christensen, MD, Member of Congress
- * Hon. David Jones, President V.I. Legislature
- * Anna Hector, President, St. Croix Chamber of Commerce
- * Hon. Noreen Michael, PhD, Commissioner, Department of Education
- * Richard Nemeth, PhD, Director, Center for Marine & Environmental Studies
- * Hon. Dean Plaskett, Esq., Commissioner, Department of Planning & Natural Resources
- * David Sharp, President & CEO, Innovative Telephone
- * Henry H. Smith, PhD, UVI Vice-Provost and VI-EPSCoR Project Director
- * Robert Stolz, PhD, UVI Faculty Representative, St. Thomas
- * Thomas N. Taylor, PhD, Kansas EPSCoR
- * President, St. Thomas/St. John Chamber of Commerce
- * Richard Moore, PhD, Economist

Research Highlight: by Dr. Jennifer Carroll

Biomedical Marine Prospecting:

The primary objective of this project is to identify novel compounds from marine invertebrates of the Caribbean which show activity against human diseases. Samples of marine sponges will be collected by SCUBA and returned to the UVI St. Thomas campus for workup. At UVI each sponge extract will be tested for cytotoxicity by simple, inexpensive bench-top bioassays such as the *Artemia* lethality test and the potato disk assay. Samples will also be submitted to

the University of Mississippi, National Center for Natural Products Research (NCNPR) for extensive bioassay screening in anti-cancer, anti-microbial and anti-malarial assays.

The workup of samples will include microanalysis by high performance liquid chromatography coupled with mass spectroscopy (LCMS) to obtain UV and molecular weight data. These data will be used to search literature, and thereby identify known

compounds. Priority will be given to extracts that contain compounds that are both active and novel. These will be purified by liquid-liquid extraction with solvents of differing polarity, followed by traditional chromatography (Flash or High Performance Liquid Chromatography) to obtain pure compounds. Initial characterization of crude extracts and follow-up extracts will be performed on the 60 MHz NMR located within the UVI chemistry department.

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