



**An Invitation to Apply for the Position of  
President  
University of the Virgin Islands  
*United States Virgin Islands***

**THE SEARCH**

The University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), a comprehensive, land-grant institution and the *only* Historically Black College and University (HBCU) outside of the continental U.S., seeks an innovative and entrepreneurial leader to serve as its sixth president. The incoming president must hold an appreciation for UVI's uniquely Caribbean, historically American, and globally interactive identity and position the institution to flourish for years to come.

Founded in 1962 as the College of the Virgin Islands (CVI), UVI offers a student-centered and intellectually rigorous curriculum that prepares its students to meet the ever-changing needs of the rapidly globalizing workforce and to become the leaders, changemakers, and innovators of the future.

Reporting to the Board of Trustees, the president serves as the chief executive officer of the University and shepherd of UVI's mission of education and empowerment. The new president will work with the Board of Trustees to envision emerging opportunities and partnerships which strengthen the university. This leader will be a skilled fundraiser, identifying opportunities for novel revenue streams, deepening community relationships, and expanding UVI's global presence and reputation. The president will steward and strengthen relationships with alumni, the local government, area businesses, Eastern Caribbean neighbors, and global industries. A staunch champion of shared governance, this leader will create conditions where UVI's talented, passionate, and dedicated faculty, students, and staff can thrive while supporting the development of local, national, and global student pipelines.

With its strong agricultural, marine biology, nursing, community engagement, and economic development programming, UVI is uniquely positioned to attract a variety of learners and to differentiate itself from its peers. The president will cultivate relationships with other educational institutions and become an invaluable partner to the Eastern Caribbean community, strategically broadening its scope of impact.

The University of the Virgin Islands has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search consulting firm, to assist in the search. All applications, inquiries, and nominations will remain confidential and should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS**

The University of the Virgin Islands was chartered in 1962 by the Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands as the College of the Virgin Islands (CVI) - a publicly funded, coeducational, liberal arts institution. This enabling legislation was the result of at least two years of preparation and planning after the need for a territorial college was surveyed and analyzed. It is the only university in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The first campus opened in 1963 on St. Thomas with land donated by the government. In 1964, the college founded the second campus on St. Croix. In its first four years, CVI offered associate's degrees, adding bachelor's degree programs in liberal arts and education in 1967. In the next decade, the college added master's degree programs in education, business, and public administration.

The College of the Virgin Islands was awarded land-grant status by the U.S. Congress in 1972. This allowed for the establishment of an Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service. Since then, many other programs and services have been added including the Reichhold Center for the Arts, the Eastern Caribbean Center, the William P. Maclean Marine Science Center, the Elridge Wilburn Blake Sports and Fitness Center, and the Virgin Islands Experimental Program to Stimulate Research.

The College was renamed the University of the Virgin Islands in 1986 to reflect the growth and diversification of its academic curricula, community and regional services, and research programs. Later that year, Congress named UVI one of America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities, making it the only HBCU outside of the continental United States. Today, UVI is a comprehensive Masters III institution offering associate's, bachelor's, master's, and PhD degrees on two main campuses along with an array of sponsored programs and certifications beyond the six schools and colleges. In its relatively short history, the University has produced heads-of-state, attorneys, physicians, numerous elected officials, a Truman Scholar, two Rhodes Scholars, and a Pulitzer Prize winner, among others.

## **CURRENT SITUATION**

In recent years, UVI has made important strides toward raising the image and position of the University. UVI's academic divisions have been restructured into colleges and schools, and new academic programs, such as a Master of Arts in counseling psychology and a Bachelor of Business Administration in hospitality and tourism management have been instituted. The University has also launched a new Caribbean Center for Green Technology, a Center for the Study of Spirituality and Professionalism, and an Institute for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness. A recycling program has been implemented on both campuses as part of the UVI Goes Green initiative. UVI has also made investments to launch a medical school (the only non-profit and LCME-accredited medical school in the Caribbean) including the construction of

academic and laboratory facilities on the St. Thomas campus and a state-of-the-art simulation center on the St. Croix campus. Recently, the University received a \$1 million pledge to create a science building and a \$5 million gift to create the 13D Student Entrepreneurial Competition and fund the Kiril Sokoloff endowed professorship in entrepreneurship. Alumni contributions have also doubled in the past decade. The University has also renewed its commitment to students by constructing a 100-bed state-of-the-art residence hall on St. Thomas and worked with the Research and Technology Park to construct an academic building on St. Croix.

In order to ensure that all students who enter the University achieve and realize their dreams of academic success, the University founded the Center for Student Success. The center provides coordinated and comprehensive support to students across the University. To ensure that UVI students from St. John, as well as members of the St. John community, are better served by the University, UVI established an Academic Learning Center on St. John that provided video conferencing and face-to-face daily classes. While the work of the Academic Center was interrupted as a result of the 2017 hurricanes, the Center is now fully operational.

The University also forged a closer working relationship with public and private schools throughout the territory. UVI now sponsors an expanded Summer Bridge Program, a Junior University for 8<sup>th</sup>-grade males, and other outreach efforts to ensure that more Virgin Islands students see college as an obtainable goal and are equipped to succeed at an early age. Working with leaders within the Virgin Islands Department of Education and the Virgin Islands Board of Education, UVI established a P-16 Collaborative to create a seamless pathway to success from preschool to college. UVI also maintains collaborative agreements or MOUs with 40+ higher educational institutions and organizations across the globe, 12 of which are in the Caribbean, attracting an international cohort of scholars.

## **ACADEMICS**

UVI offers six associate's degree programs, 47 bachelor's degree programs, 11 graduate programs, and one PhD program across two campuses that prepare students for careers in many fields including business, education, science, health care, and technology, or for further graduate study. The University has 101 tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track faculty – 79 percent of whom hold doctoral degrees. The academic departments are organized into six divisions: Business, Education, Humanities, Nursing, Social Science, and Science and Math. The University has been accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools since 1971. It also holds accreditation for specific programs in nursing and seeks accreditation for a medical school.

The UVI curriculum includes a comprehensive freshman-year experience to improve retention and introduce general education courses, academic counseling, and support services. It includes remediation as needed in English and math and facilitates interdisciplinary study and career planning activity.

The University also has cooperative agreements with other institutions including a partnership with Boston University School of Medicine whereby students are accepted to the School of Medicine in their sophomore year and receive a bachelor's degree from UVI after spending two summers and their senior year at BU. In addition, UVI has an articulation agreement in engineering with Columbia University which result in degrees from both UVI and Columbia. UVI also has several other special agreements and collaborative ventures which result in joint collaborations on faculty and student exchanges, faculty research, and program development in both the Caribbean and the U.S. mainland.

The academic programs at UVI are further enhanced by the research activities of the faculty. The University secured over \$92M in local, private, and federal funding over the past four years, averaging about \$23.6 million annually. 250 awards were collected by UVI during this time, including 110 competitive federal grants. Research units at the University include the Agricultural Experiment Station, the Center for Marine and Environmental Studies, the Eastern Caribbean Center, the Virgin Islands Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, and the Water Resources Institute. These initiatives help to attract and retain faculty, provide valuable research opportunities for students, and serve the community by studying issues with direct relevance on the Territory.

UVI employs 465 dedicated and passionate staff and has a total budget of \$49.9 million.

## **STUDENTS**

UVI's hard-working and capable students are the pride of the institution. In Spring 2023, UVI had 1,553 students. Approximately 260 students are in graduate programs. Approximately 75 percent of students are on the St. Thomas campus, with 25 percent on St. Croix. Just over 60 percent are full-time students, and many students work full time while attending UVI. Most students are from the Virgin Islands (about 88 percent) with the origins of remaining students evenly split between the U.S. mainland and other Caribbean islands. Women make up 69 percent of the student population. 65 percent of UVI students are black, 12 percent are Hispanic, and eight percent are white.

UVI is the first HBCU to provide comprehensive free tuition to eligible students thanks to the Virgin Islands Higher Education Scholarship Program, also known as the [Free Tuition](#) program, signed into law in 2019.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

In addition to the academic research which directly impacts the territory, the University offers programs and instruction to address the needs of the community.

### *Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning Center (CELL)*

The Center for Excellence in Leadership and Learning (CELL) was established to meet the workforce and professional development training needs critical to the economic prosperity of the United States Virgin Islands and surrounding Caribbean islands. CELL focuses on providing quality training opportunities

designed to contribute to organizational and individual achievement. The programs utilize the University's faculty, staff, students, alumni, and affiliates to provide a pool of expertise that is responsive to clients' needs. Programs are offered through a range of teaching modalities that include face-to-face instruction, self-paced study, and online instruction. Confidence in the CELL product has led to increased demand.

#### *University of the Virgin Islands Research and Technology Park (RTPark)*

The University of the Virgin Islands Research and Technology Park (RTPark) was established in 2002 and secured its first client in 2006. It was created through a vision of leaders at the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), working closely with members of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands and the private sector. Their aim was to create a platform for diversifying the USVI economy, stimulating growth and development of the islands, and establishing USVI as the premier business destination of choice for firms in knowledge and technology-intensive sectors. The RTPark program headquarters is located on the island of St. Croix and the President of UVI sits on the RTPark board. Most recently, RTPark has initiated ACCELERATE VI to help early-stage companies grow and scale their businesses from the U.S. Virgin Islands.

In 2014, the number of RTPark tenants was 27, accelerating to 52 at the end of January 2018. As of 2022, there were 82 active or in-process clients in the program, with operations on all three islands. The current structure of the RTPark client agreements allows for each RTPark company to have partnerships with the University of the Virgin Islands in two distinct ways: a) annual scholarships and; b) specific programmatic commitments determined through discussions with the President of the University OR a contribution towards the UVI Innovation Fund. UVI Innovation Fund contributions are used to support University projects identified through the Strategic Plan. RTPark clients contribute a collective total of \$2.9M annually and 59% of RTPark's headquarters are used to support the UVI science and math departments.

#### *13D Research & Strategy Innovation Center*

The 18,000-square-foot Innovation Center is a multi-purpose, multi-level space designed to inspire creativity and collaboration. Inside the glass-walled Creativity Lab, users will be able to delve into the creative process facilitated by certified members of UVI's Creativity Lab Unit. With lots of imagining space, conference rooms, whiteboards, and media tables, participants can engage in strategic planning, ideation sessions, and other brainstorming activities.

At the heart of the Innovation Center is a flexible, state-of-the-art presentation platform that can accommodate a live audience of approximately 50 people with streaming capabilities. This is where students and other groups will be able to utilize 3D printers, present their work, and display projects. The mezzanine level will house a classroom and discussion areas and will offer a bird's eye view into the Innovation Center.

The Center features a teaching kitchen, a full-service restaurant, and a bakery to be operated by the UVI CELL Culinary Arts program. The Center also houses the U.S. Small Business Administration's Small Business Development Center.

### *Reichhold Center for the Arts (RCA)*

Built in 1978 on UVI's St. Thomas campus, the Reichhold Center welcomed world-renowned artists throughout its annual season which showcased international acts and hosted regional exhibitions. In September 2017, the Center suffered significant damages from Hurricanes Irma and Maria and has been shuttered temporarily. However, the Center continues to serve the community through partnerships, outreach activities, and support of local arts and culture. As an integral part of the Virgin Islands community for many decades and a revenue-generating center, the incoming president must be supportive of ongoing plans to rebound, rebuild, and renew.

## **LOCATION AND CAMPUSES**

The University of the Virgin Islands is located in the Eastern Caribbean. UVI has two beautiful campuses each with its own distinct personality. Sunlit and serene yet buzzing with student activity, the 130-acre [Albert A. Sheen Campus](#) is located on St. Croix, midway between the towns of Christiansted and Frederiksted. Students enjoy a close-knit community with all facilities within easy walking distance. On St. Croix, the largest of the U.S. Virgin Islands, the campus includes academic facilities, a student life complex (including residence halls), the VI Cooperative Extension Service, the Agricultural Experiment Station, the Research and Technology Park, and the Simulation Center.

The 388-acre [Orville E. Kean Campus](#) is located three miles from the capital of Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, and overlooks John Brewers Bay. Brewer's Beach is immediately accessible to the campus and accommodates UVI's marine science programs and research. Picturesque and lively, the sprawling campus is connected by walkways and shuttle service. The St. Thomas campus contains academic facilities, administrative and student service buildings, residence halls with a capacity for 260 students, the Reichhold Center for the Arts, and the William P. MacLean Marine Science Center.

The St. Thomas campus includes 203 acres of undeveloped land that has been acquired over the last several years and the University expects to build more facilities on that property, including a medical school. The University has also improved its physical plant and the physical condition of classrooms, offices, residence halls, and grounds.

In addition to these campuses, the University maintains the Virgin Islands Environmental Resource Station on the island of St. John.

## **FINANCES**

The University currently receives 56 percent of its general operating revenues of \$27.8 million from the Virgin Islands government and there is an effort underway to diversify the University's funding. Underutilized university resources have been turned into revenue-generating assets and several capital improvement projects have been funded through federal grants, bonds, and special local government

appropriations; however, further diversification and more aggressive fundraising are needed in order to mitigate the cyclical nature in government funding.

The university endowment has a professional fund manager and an 11-member private board to oversee investment strategies. The endowment is among the largest for a public HBCU.

## **GOVERNANCE**

The University is governed by a 17-member independent board of trustees and meets three times per year. Nine trustees are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Legislature. Of the remaining trustees, two are elected by the board, one by the student body, one by the teaching faculty, and one by the UVI Alumni Association. The Chair of the Board of Education of the Virgin Islands and the Commissioner of Education of the Virgin Islands serve as ex officio members. The president of the University serves as the secretary of the board and the responsible leader of the University. The president exercises his or her responsibilities through a cabinet of senior university officers and must, like all university presidents, build a shared governance system including faculty and staff in the leadership of the university.

## **THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT**

Reporting directly to the Board, the president is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the University and its strategic institutional leadership, promoting the educational and administrative effectiveness of the institution, building community and professional relationships, fundraising, and executing a vision that will ultimately advance the mission of The University of the Virgin Islands. The incoming president must be a civically engaged ambassador and spokesperson for the University. This leader will be highly visible, an active community participant, and engaged with various business entities and the local and federal government.

The president must be an intentional and respectful manager; a relentless advocate for students, faculty, and staff; and a convincing, credible leader of a complex organization dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, and service. The president must be inspirational, encouraging key campus constituents to work together to achieve operational, instructional, and academic excellence. As an external advocate, the president must develop appropriate coalitions, build pathway and bridge programming with local public and private schools, promote higher education, engage in educational finance debates, and build strong working relationships and partnerships with government, businesses, and industry.

UVI's dedicated and passionate students, faculty, staff, and alumni are ardently supportive of the institution and its future. Though the University is still rebuilding following back-to-back Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, the institution has remained resilient in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. The next president will celebrate and support this resilience through the establishment of an emergency response fund and emergency preparedness plan. Ultimately, UVI's next leader will strategically advance the



institution for a future of innovative educational initiatives and expand and strengthen the existing relationships with local educational institutions.

Reporting directly to the president are the provost & vice president for academic affairs, vice president for information services and institutional assessment, vice president for institutional advancement, vice president for business development and innovation, vice provost for research and graduate studies, the vice president for administration and finance & chief financial officer, dean of students on the St. Thomas campus, dean of students on the Albert A. Sheen campus, director of campus operations on the Albert A. Sheen campus, and the director of presidential operations.

### **OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE SIXTH PRESIDENT**

In carrying out the duties of the presidency, the successful candidate must undertake several key challenges and opportunities, which are outlined below:

#### ***Refine, articulate, and implement the strategic vision for UVI***

In 2018, UVI completed the *Greatness Through Innovation* strategic plan. The plan was built around six strategic pillars: Innovation and Distinction; Leadership and Excellence in Academics, Research, and Public Services; Student Access, Recruitment, and Success; Measurement, Analysis, Knowledge Management, and Results; Operational Efficiencies and Focus; and Valuing People, Relationships, and Culture. The new president must build on the solid foundation of this plan while partnering with campus constituents and community stakeholders to cultivate the next iteration of the strategic plan which will position UVI to achieve its goals for the future and to be responsive to the changing landscape of higher education and the world outside of academia.

The next president must be willing to take the thoughtful, calculated risks that bolster innovation, and manage competing internal and external interests while maintaining the balance of UVI's historically American, uniquely Caribbean, and globally interactive identity.

#### ***Grow enrollment, raise UVI's profile, and enhance the student experience***

UVI's students are at the heart of the University's mission. The new president must have robust experience partnering with senior leaders to enhance enrollment management strategies and to identify novel sources of students. This leader will enhance student-centeredness and academic excellence to help facilitate a uniquely Caribbean HBCU experience for students. This leader will partner with institutional research to make data-informed decisions about marketing and recruitment that will raise the University's profile, continue to attract top-notch students, and position UVI as the institution of choice within the territory and the Caribbean.



The president will partner closely with the provost to develop and enhance educational programming that meets the current and future needs of UVI students and the demands of the workforce for continuing education programs and skill acquisition through short-term online courses and certificates. These strategies must align with student interests and community and business needs, and position students for success within the marketplace.

Strategic investment in the University's technological infrastructure and online presence will also help to expand the institution's online course offerings and expand enrollment opportunities.

***Assess, enhance, and stabilize operations to increase exceptional stakeholder service***

The unique governance challenges of a multi-campus institution are magnified when those campuses are on islands separated by miles of ocean. The administrative needs and operational demands of the University have changed on both campuses over time, and the president will work with senior leadership to promote cross-campus communication, reduce redundancies, and ensure that both campuses have the physical and technological infrastructure needed to support the next generation of scholar-citizens. The president will partner with senior leadership to promote the necessary IT training and technical assistance to support a robust research and teaching infrastructure for faculty.

The president will also work in tandem with senior leadership to assess operational structures, streamline operational processes, and clarify pathways for students, faculty, and staff seeking resources to support their personal, professional, and career development.

It will also be important for the new president to conduct a strategic assessment of programmatic offerings across the campuses, identify and sunset underperforming programs, and prioritize impactful programs to help minimize financial and administrative burdens across the University.

***Provide inclusive and accessible leadership for the UVI community that enhances communication, collegiality, and transparency***

UVI's students, faculty, and staff are deeply committed to the success of the institution. The president will continue to harness the passion, dedication, and engagement of these stakeholders and must be an ardent supporter of and advocate for shared governance. This continued commitment will help to recruit and retain top-notch faculty and staff to the institution and renew UVI's culture of collaboration, communication, accountability, and transparency.

The UVI community welcomes a highly visible leader with a strong vision and an inclusive, collaborative approach towards its execution. Trustworthiness is integral to UVI's culture, and the president will cultivate mutually respectful relationships that embolden innovation, meaningful dialogue, and accountability. This leader will celebrate the accomplishments of students, faculty, and staff, drawing upon UVI's strong sense of institutional pride to boost morale and promote a cohesive experience. In spite

of multiple demands upon UVI's fiscal resources, the president will prioritize opportunities and programs that recognize and celebrate UVI's dedicated faculty and staff.

***Diversify, generate, and steward financial resources through fundraising***

The president will be responsible for stewarding UVI's operating budget and maintaining the financial stability of the institution. Working in tandem with the Board, the president will ensure that UVI is prepared for the economic scenarios of the future and will garner support from a wide range of constituents. Much of UVI's budget is tied to legislative appropriations, which reflect the economic well-being of the territory and can be influenced by natural disasters and other pressing concerns. This leader must be a skilled fundraiser who understands the critical importance of maintaining healthy relationships with the legislature while reducing UVI's dependency on government funding. The U.S. Virgin Islands are replete with economic, entrepreneurial, and innovative opportunities and the next president is uniquely positioned to deepen existing and cultivate novel partnerships with business entities, community stakeholders, and the legislature. There exists a deep admiration for the University and its rich history; a strategic leader will identify and partner with university champions and alumni to promote UVI's story, convey its distinct niche, and marshal support for its next chapter.

***Ensure that UVI is an integral strategic partner to the Territory***

The future of UVI and the prosperity of the U.S. Virgin Islands are inextricably linked. Given the economic challenges facing the Territory and the region, economic development is a strategic imperative for UVI and the community. UVI has the unique opportunity to strengthen its position as the intellectual center of the Territory and to deepen existing and cultivate novel relationships that will help to drive economic and intellectual innovation within the Territory.

UVI must remain accessible to the wider community, continuing to provide meeting spaces and spaces for ideas to collide, shelter during times of environmental emergencies, and resources that promote public health and community well-being. As the president works to raise UVI's national and international profile, they must also share its successes and outcomes with the local community, helping to align the University's aspirations with those of the territory.

**QUALIFICATIONS & CHARACTERISTICS**

The University of the Virgin Islands seeks an exceptional, visionary leader with a track record of success in internal management, strategic planning, financial administration, fundraising, building partnerships, and communicating effectively. Experience in the successful administration of large, complex organizations is required. Familiarity with the Virgin Islands' culture would be an asset for candidates. The Board of Trustees and Search Committee understand that no single candidate will meet all qualifications, but seeks candidates with the following experiences and abilities:

- An earned terminal degree;
- An understanding and deep appreciation of Historically Black Colleges and Universities and their invaluable contribution to the global community;
- A demonstrated commitment to diversity, a track record of individual action and institutional leadership to advance diversity in all its forms.
- Experience leading administratively within a large, complex organization;
- Demonstrated skills in identifying financial resources including public and private funding; adroitness as a fiscal manager; and an ability to develop and execute a long-range financial plan;
- Experience in and knowledge of national and global business, educational, and cultural matters; rapport with corporate, educational, and governmental leaders;
- Experience establishing strong community relationships and developing strategic partnerships with a broad range of organizations;
- Strong moral compass and uncompromising integrity;
- Experience crafting and executing a strategic plan that encompasses communal priorities;
- Skilled communicator and relationship-builder;
- A commitment to shared governance;
- Management experience and an administrative style that is personable, consensus-building, and inclusive; personal qualities that ensure transparency in governance and the highest standards of honesty and integrity;
- A commitment to the use and development of technology and digital transformation; a data-driven, strategic decision-maker;
- Experience in crisis management, including public health, natural disasters, etc.;
- A proven ability to implement change and manage conflict;
- Energy, passion, flexibility, and an abiding sense of humor.

## TO APPLY

The University of the Virgin Islands has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist the Presidential Search Committee in its identification and review of candidates. Nominations and applications, including – as individual attachments – a cover letter and a resume, should be submitted online at: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-virgin-islands/president>.

Donna Cramer, Partner  
Monroe “Bud” Moseley, Of Counsel  
Afi Tettey-Fio, Senior Associate  
Janette Martinez, Senior Associate  
Ryan Smillie, Senior Search Coordinator  
Isaacson, Miller

*The University of the Virgin Islands is an equal opportunity, affirmative action, Title IX, Section 504, PL 101-542 educator and employer.*