Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning

RETURNING TO OUR ROOTS:
LINKING THE ACADEMY WITH THE COMMUNITY
In the Beginning We.....

Viewed economic development from the human capital vantage point

- Provided access to education not available to our people
- Institution primarily comprised of individuals in the surrounding community
- Partnerships focused on local institutions (primarily faith-based)
- Created focused programs important to the local economy and capacity building (agriculture, industry, education)
And Then We......

Recognized need to compete to survive

- Created programs to compete in the greater economy
- Extended our reach globally
- Forged partnerships across cities, states and nations
- Developed organizational structures detached from academics and in some instances detached from the institution
And Now We......

Need to “Get Back to Basics” and reaffirm our commitment to the community

- Link human capital development to economic and community development
- Move from halls of the academy to the streets of the community
- Apply academic capabilities to economic and neighborhood revitalization
Creating the Linkage: The Process

Commitment

- Must be at highest level of the organization - included in mission and vision, strategically placed in organizational structure

Engagement

- All key stakeholders must be involved at project inception and during the implementation

Integration

- Utilize resources, strengths and capacities of non-profits, government and businesses
The Refocused Role of UVI

- Mission, Vision and Strategic Plan revised to support economic development
- Strategically placed in university structure
  academic component reporting to the Provost
- Advisory Board established by President
  (Commissioners of DOE, DOL, Tourism, ED’s
  Chambers of Commerce, EDA, Union, Housing
  Authority and Industry - Hotel, Legal, Airline,
  Healthcare, Marine)
Awarded $541K from HUD for Community Training Centers – 2005 (Phase I)

Raised over $1M in cash and in-kind

- $300K UVI (for St. Thomas Facility)
- $100K Public Finance Authority
- $150K VI Legislature Appropriation
- $150K Our Town Frederiksted
- $5K FirstBank VI
Implementation: Revitalization
Building by Building

Site in 2007 after restoration
Linking to the Community

Collaborations to Strategic Partnerships

- **DOE** – low educational attainment ($80K commitment)
- **DOL** – Access point to supplement One Stop Center ($25K commitment plus human resources)
- **SBDC** – Micro-enterprise center to enhance small businesses
Implementation: Phase II
Building Expansion
Continuing the Legacy of Improving Communities

Thank you for the Opportunity to Share
Paradise: The Commitment
Internal Capacity, External Focus

- Developed CELL to address training and economic development needs of the US Virgin Islands
- Provided start-up resources
- Strategically placed in university structure – academic component reporting to the Provost
Implementation: Renovation Phase I

Site in 2004:

Town of Frederiksted

Historic District Site of First Black owned Grocery Store
The Process: Engagement

Community Based Advisory Board and Other Key Stakeholders

🌟 **Board Members** - Commissioners of DOE, DOL, Tourism, - Executive Directors of Chambers of Commerce, EDA, UVI, Union, Housing Authority Industry Representatives: Healthcare, Marine, Hotel, Legal, Airline
The Process: Community Services

Collaborations to Strategic Partnerships

- **DOE** – low educational attainment ($80K commitment)
- **DOL** – Access point to supplement One Stop Center ($25K commitment plus human resources)
- **SBDC** – Micro-enterprise center to enhance small businesses (human resources)
Agenda

1. In te begining
2. Paradise: The Reality
3. Paradise: The Challenge
4. Paradise: The Process
5. Paradise: The Implementation
6. Paradise: The Renaissance
The University of the Virgin Islands will be an exceptional U.S. institution of higher education in the Caribbean dedicated to student success, committed to excellence, and pledged to enhancing the social and economic transformation of the U.S. Virgin Islands.
The Commitment: Institutional Purpose

**UVI Mission Statement**

The University of the Virgin Islands is a learner-centered institution dedicated to the success of students and committed to enhancing the lives of the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands and the wider Caribbean through excellent teaching, innovative research, and responsive community services.
The Process: Institutional Responsibility

- Liberal Arts University – 45 years old
- 2 Campuses separated by 40 miles of sea
- 2800 students – 450 employees
- Only HBCU Outside US Mainland
- Land Grant Institution, 65% funded through appropriations
Paradise: The Reality

Devastated by two CAT 4 hurricanes (Hugo 1989 and Marilyn 1995):

bullet Many uninsured businesses and homeowners
bullet Tourism economy collapse
bullet Mass exodus of businesses and residents
bullet Infrastructure and services completely destroyed
Further Complications:

- VI Government in economic depression
- Breakdown in educational system (low attainment, high drop-out rate)
- Limited local capacity (human and financial)
- Insularity of territory posing difficulties developing partnerships in the US Mainland
Paradise: The Back-Drop

- Comprised of four islands (pop. 119,000)
- Flown Under 7 flags (historic significance)
- Major Industry (Tourism) over 1.4M/yr.
- One University – (2 Campuses) – No other institution of Higher Learning
- Guided by a Governor, Legislature and one Congressional Delegate (non-voting member)
Paradise: The Reality

Slow Recovery; Major problem to address

- Many abandoned buildings located in historic zones
- Highly dependent fragile economy
- Broken educational system
- Very high construction costs
- Limited local financial resources (government, businesses)
Paradise: The Back-Drop

View of Downtown, St. Thomas

View of Christiansted, St. Croix
Paradise: The Back-Drop

The Sun

The Sand

The Sea
Transforming Paradise: Historic Revitalization

- More complex than new construction
- Subject to the whims of current Historic Preservation Board
- Oftentimes more expensive
- Can significantly impact project timelines
- Additional layers of complexity incurred with rezoning
Health Care and Hospitality identified as needs by Advisory Board and key stakeholders

Created entry-level programs (CNA/HHA) and Beverage Equipment Service Technician

Worked with Department of Labor to identify dislocated, unemployed and veterans as candidates for program

Partnered with Hospitals, Hospices, Nursing Homes and off-island Beverage Machine Manufacturers to secure jobs, supply training and equipment
Implementation: Revitalization
Reformation of a Town

Center Site

Across the street
South
Paradise: The Recovery Healthcare Job Training Results

Home Health Aide – National Certification Exam

✦ 17/17 passed
✦ St. Croix: 13/13 passed
✦ St. Thomas: 4/4 passed

Placement after Graduation

✦ 3 Students applied to and were accepted into the UVI ASN or BSN Programs
✦ All other students working in Nursing Homes, Hospices or Hospitals
Paradise: The Recovery
Hospitality Training Results

Certification Training for Beverage Technician –
Equipment and Certified trainers provided by
US Mainland Partners

- 14 Students Enrolled in Level I training program
- Recruited from DOL, included dislocated workers and veterans
- 12 out of 14 students completed level I and were certified

After Graduation

- 10 of the 12 students were hired to conduct assessments
- One high potential student sent to US Mainland for additional training as instructor – dislocated worker now entrepreneur
Paradise: The Recovery
The Strategic Approach

CELL

✨ Address Community needs:
1. Focus on Training and skills enhancements
2. Realize Economic Development through partnerships and collaborations

✨ Engage the general community and other key stakeholders
Transforming Paradise: Reconstruction Plans

Former Danish Home – Future Home of St., Croix Legislature

Future American Legion Post Headquarters
Transforming Paradise: The Renaissance

Affordable Housing

Community Training Center

First Bank VI Frederiksted Branch
Transforming Paradise: Bringing Back the Tourists
Paradise: The Recovery Healthcare Job Training Results

Certified Nursing Assistant/Home Health Aide Training

- 30 students trained in territory; 28 completed program
- St. Croix: 15 students started program; 14 graduated
- St. Thomas: 15 students started program; 14 graduated

Certified Nursing Assistant – Licensing Exam

- 22/26 passed on first try
- St. Croix: 9/12 passed
- St. Thomas: 13/14 passed
Paradise: The Recovery

Enabling Initiatives:

- Proactive involvement of the University
- 2 HUD-HBCU Grants
- Development of Strong local partnerships
- Enterprise Zone Designations affixed to three major areas – attracting external resources
Paradise: The Engagement

Approach:

- Forge strong local partnerships
- Seek external resources as stimulus for local support
- Utilize two-pronged approach (revitalization coupled with community services)
Transforming Paradise: Block-by-Block

UVI Community Training Center

Caribbean Museum Center for the Arts