Emerging Caribbean Scientists Programs

ECS Application Guidelines

OVERVIEW - The Emerging Caribbean Scientists (ECS) Program was developed to increase research training and to promote excellence for STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) students at the University of the Virgin Islands. This includes majors in Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics, Marine Biology, and Computer Science. It was expanded to include Psychology majors. Each year, students accepted in the program receive research experiences, academic support, and financial assistance. ECS Scholars are very successful and go on to complete PhDs, MDs, Masters, attend graduate school, and gain skills to make them competitive in the job market.

ELIGIBILITY - In general, eligible students are from all levels (freshmen, sophomore, juniors, & seniors), attend UVI full-time, have a GPA above 2.0, and seek a bachelor's degree in Chemistry, Applied Math, Biology, Marine Biology, Mathematics, Computer Science, or Psychology. *Depending on availability of funding, international students are eligible for our summer programs.*

BENEFITS - Students participating in the ECS Program receive many benefits like:

- Scholarships and stipends (**$$$**)
- Individual mentoring
- Research experiences
- Travel awards to national conferences
- Professional development workshops
- Scientific Seminars
- Academic support
- Learning community with peers

DEADLINE - The online application and all required supplemental materials are **due by February 28th**. Go to http://ecs.uvi.edu to start the application today. **WE HAVE MANY SLOTS AVAILABLE TO FILL!**

DESCRIPTIONS - ECS has opening for several **academic year research programs**, sponsored by the NIH, NSF, NASA and DOE. To be eligible for these programs, a student must be a full-time UVI undergraduate, Bachelor degree seeking, and US Citizen or Permanent resident.

1. **HBCU-UP ACE Fellowship** – The HBCU-UP fellowship is for students in the College of Science and Math that are interested in pursuing STEM careers. Must have a GPA of 3.0 or above. Research Scholars receive monthly stipends for the academic year to participate in research, seminars, community service, and mentoring. They also receive travel funding to attend scientific meetings.

2. **MARC Research Trainees** – The Maximizing Access to Research Careers (MARC) program promotes excellence in careers leading to a Ph.D. in Biomedical Science. Research Trainees are funded for their last two undergraduate years to participate in research, seminars, graduate school preparation, UVI faculty mentoring, and must complete a challenging curriculum. Trainees also receive monthly stipends, funding for summer research, travel sponsorship to off-island research conferences, and scholarships to cover tuition costs. Eligible majors include Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Marine Biology, Mathematics, or Psychology with a minimum GPA of 3.0.

3. **RISE Research Scholars** –The Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement (RISE) Program is for students interested in a career in biomedical research. Research Scholars receive a competitive hourly wage to work on a research project during the academic year and summer. They also receive travel sponsorship to off-island research conferences, graduate school preparation, and mentoring. Scholars are also actively involved in service learning through community service. Eligible majors include Applied Math, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Marine Biology, Mathematics, or Psychology with a cumulative GPA of at least 2.7.

4. **Cybersecurity Fellowship** - Interested students must have a strong desire in pursuing a career in cybersecurity. Activities include peer mentoring, recruitment, assisting K-12 teachers and youth, organize and participate in cybersecurity club. Eligibility includes a GPA of 3.2 or above and majoring in mathematics, computer science, applied math, chemistry, biology, or marine biology with a minor in computational science/cybersecurity.

5. **NASA-MIRO Internship** – The NASA MUREP Institutional Research Opportunity (MIRO) program supports undergraduate student to do astrophysics research at UVI in the Physics Department. Awards promote STEM literacy and enhance and sustain the capability of institutions to perform NASA-related research and education.

ECS will also offer **several summer opportunities**. The dates for the programs coincide with UVI's Summer Session II and conclude with a capstone symposium on the St. Thomas Campus. ***International students are eligible to receive summer funding to participate in these programs.***

1. **Summer Sophomore Research Institute (SSRI)** – SSRI participants will work with faculty on a research project. In addition, fellows in the SSRI program will be exposed to workshops on research methods, performing library research, computer and internet resources, service learning, and presenting research through poster and oral presentations. Students will be required to present work at the Summer Research Symposium. During the six-week summer program, each participant will receive a stipend, on-campus housing, and meal plan. Students must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 for eligibility. This program is located on the St. Thomas Campus (travel is included) for rising sophomores and juniors.

2. **Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE)** - SURE is an intensive six to eight (6-8) week non-residential research program open to UVI students majoring in science, mathematics or engineering. Through a competitive selection process, students will be chosen and paired with faculty members doing research in an area of interest. Students will be required to work full time on the research project and present work at the Summer Research Symposium. A competitive stipend for the summer will be provided. Students must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 for eligibility. This program can take place on St. Thomas or St. Croix.

3. **Sophomore Boost Program** - Sophomore Boost is an innovative summer program that will target those STEM students who need to improve their academics (GPA < 2.3). The approach will focus on improving GPA, improve self-efficacy and focus on creativity and innovation.

4. **Others** – Additional opportunities are available through grants from NASA, vi-EPSCOR, and private donations. Funding opportunities are always changing. ECS receives different sponsorships each year. Check out our website regularly for updates on more funding opportunities.

HOW TO APPLY

It is highly recommended that students attend the helpful and insightful workshop titled **"How to Apply to Summer Programs"** which will take place in the Spring Semester. Visit our website at http://ecs.uvi.edu for updates.

The following required application materials are due by February 28th.

1. **Application** – Complete the ECS Online Application by going to http://ecs.uvi.edu. You will be considered for all programs mentioned above and recommended for the one with the best fit based on your interests.
2. **Personal Statement** – Write an essay that describes your background, experiences, achievements, interests, and goals. A personal statement should clearly describe how your personal experiences have influenced your intellectual development and professional goals. You should mention your research interests and describe any research experience. Describe how you will contribute to increasing diversity in science and include reasons for applying to this program and any benefits you expect to gain. Additional tips can be found here: http://www.uvi.edu/files/documents/ECS/personal_statement_guidelines.pdf.
3. **Letters of Recommendation** – Ask in advance for two (2) letters of recommendation from UVI science, mathematics, psychology, and/or nursing professors and have them email it to ecs@uvi.edu by the deadline. Make sure the references you choose know you well and are able to *highly* recommend you. It's a good idea to give them your personal statement or a resume/CV to help them prepare the letter.
4. **List of off-island summer research programs** –To search for off-island opportunities, you can Google "NSF REU" or check out the ECS Classifieds at https://sites.google.com/myuvi.net/classifieds/home. Create a list of the programs you plan to apply for and their description.
5. **List of preferred research topics and/or mentor** – We recommend creating a list of your research interests then speak to UVI professors about their research to try and find a good fit for you. If you need help deciding, we recommend going to the UVI Directory online and browse faculty profiles to learn about their research interests.
6. **Transcript** – Students can print an unofficial copy from Banweb. You should be able to provide a copy upon request.
7. **Interview - Applicant should schedule an appointment to meet with one of the ECS Steering Committee Members listed below.** At the interview, you should be able to discuss graduation timeline, academic goals, career goals, and research interests. Student should bring his/her transcript, list of preferred research topics and/or mentor, list of off-island summer programs, and a copy of the personal statement.
    - Dr. Alice Stanford, STT, astanfo@uvi.edu, (340) 693-1241
    - Dr. Marc Boumedine, STT, mboumed@uvi.edu, (340) 693-1255
    - Dr. Robert Stolz, STT, rstolz@uvi.edu, (340) 693-1231
    - Dr. Teresa Turner, STT, tturner@uvi.edu, (340) 642-2355
    - Dr. Aletha Baumann, STX, abauman@uvi.edu, (340) 692-4178
    - Dr. David Morris, STT, dmorris@uvi.edu, (340) 693-1391

QUESTIONS? Visit our website at http://ecs.uvi.edu or contact us by email at ecs@uvi.edu or call 340-693-1249.