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## VI Society of CPA's to Present Accounting Scholarships to UVI Students October 20, 2016

The Virgin Islands Society of Certified Public Accountants (VISCPA) will present two minority accounting scholarships for \$5,000 each to University of the Virgin Islands accounting majors at its 2016 annual membership meeting on Friday, Nov. 4. The meeting is scheduled for 11 a.m. and will be teleconferenced between the St. Thomas Campus and the Albert A. Sheen Campus on St. Croix.

"Presenting these scholarships to students at UVI is a very special part of our annual meeting," said Dr. Sherri L. Levin, CPA and vice president of VISCPA on St. Thomas. "We invite not only the students, but also their parents, friends, classmates and professors." Levin continued, "In addition to rewarding the students for their hard work and achievement, the scholarships are a great way to bring attention to the accounting major, and to encourage other UVI students to enter the field."



In addition to presenting the scholarships, the Society will vote on new board members and will approve changes to the by-laws for membership vote that will accommodate retired Certified Public Accountants (CPA), non-resident CPA's licensed outside the Virgin Islands, and non-CPA accounting professionals. There will also be a guest speaker – Theresa Grafenstine, inspector general of the U.S. House of Representatives – who will discuss making a difference as a CPA in federal government.

Dr. Sherri Levin is a Graduate School of Accounting professor. As an educator committed to increasing diversity in the accounting industry, it was important to Levin to bring to fruition the scholarship project initiated by another VISCPA member years earlier. She reached out to the American Institute of CPAs (AICPA), which embraced VISCPA's initiative. AICPA incorporated VISCPA into its Minority Scholarship program, which for more than four decades has encouraged outstanding minority students to select accounting as a major, and to enter the profession. VISCPA members voted to raise scholarship money by increasing their annual dues. AICPA matches those funds and together with the VISCPA collaboratively selects the winners.

According to Levin, enrollment in accounting degree programs is on the rise nationally. "The demand for accounting services has expanded as the need to protect information assets, conduct sophisticated data analytics, and assist in strategic decision making have become an integral service CPAs are expected to perform." In addition, large numbers of baby boomer CPAs are retiring thus, intensifying demand for accounting professionals. VISCPA members are committed to encouraging and supporting UVI accounting majors to prepare for and become VI licensed CPA's.

"As older CPA's retire or leave the territory, it is important to have a younger generation of trained and certified professionals to fill the void," said Levin. "Our hope is the scholarship recipients and other UVI accounting graduates decide to work in the Virgin Islands to serve the public need for professional accountants in the territory."

This is the third year that the VISCPA/AICPA Minority Scholarship will be available to accounting majors at the University of the Virgin Islands. Last year's recipients were Eula Cyrille and Shanna Isaac. To apply, you must be a junior or senior accounting major attending UVI. The application deadline is April 1, 2017, and the scholarship will be awarded in the summer of 2017.

To apply for the scholarship [see this link](#) and click "[Apply Online HERE](#)" on the VISCPA website. To learn more about the scholarship, visit: <https://www.thiswaytocpa.com/>