



NEWS RELEASE For Immediate Release

April 13, 2001

ANEGADA PASSAGE CLIMATE STUDY UNDERWAY

University of the Virgin Islands students and staff members are returning home, after finalizing the 12th expedition in the Anegada Climate Tracers Study or (ACTS) on the Research Vessel *Oceanus*. ACTS-12 started on April 8th when the UVI group left the V.I. to rendezvous with the research vessel in Barbados.

The Study originally started in 1995 and examines the flow of climatically significant chemicals in the water that is exchanged between the Caribbean and the Atlantic. In the process of the ACTS research, the UVI team assists a major study of ocean circulation called the Windward Islands Passages Monitoring Project, which is conducted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). In so doing, UVI earns berth on major research vessels that can cost in excess of \$20,000 per day to operate.

ACTS was originally started with funding from the US Department of Energy and continues because of UVI's collaborations with NOAA, the University of Miami and other institutions. This is the first time the UVI team will be using the Research Vessel *Oceanus*, which is owned by the National Science Foundation and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. UVI Principal Investigator Roy Watlington is interested in hiring local vessels that can take a winch with a 2000 meter spool of wire for one-day studies in the Anegada Passage. For additional information contact Roy A. Watlington at 693-1140 or 693-1391.

Students and staff help the NOAA scientists to monitor the flow between the passages from Trinidad and Tobago to the Anegada Passage east of Virgin Gorda. UVI students completing the current research on the *Oceanus* are Shenell Gordon, Celeste Mosher, Leukemia Mounce and Barry Volson. Senior scientists are Kevin Brown, Lincoln Critchley, and Adam Quandt. The second team, who will set out for the Mona Passage between Puerto Rico and Hispaniola, will include student Eugene Nelson and scientists Laurie Requa and Roy Watlington. On this leg, sampling of sea water will take place at the site of a proposed study to measure the stream of neutrinos (short-lived cosmic particles) penetrating to the ocean floor. The site off the north coast of St. Croix reaches a depth of over 4,000 meters (2 1/2 miles).

