

PRESS RELEASE

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for immediate release

**UVI's Julie Wright and CDC Receive
2001 Quality Awards from EPA**

The Virgin Islands Conservation Data Center (CDC) and Julie Wright, a supervisor with UVI's Cooperative Extension Service, have been selected to receive 2001 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Environmental Quality Awards, in recognition of their outstanding commitment to protecting and enhancing environmental quality in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Although four nominations were submitted to the EPA from the U.S. Virgin Islands, only two of the four nominees received awards -- and both were from UVI.

Wright and representatives of the CDC have been invited to attend an awards reception on Monday, April 16, in the EPA's New York City headquarters. Each year, the EPA chooses award recipients from all sectors -- non-profit, environmental and community groups, individual citizens, environmental educators, business organizations and members of the news media.

The Conservation Data Center, which is part of the Eastern Caribbean Center on the St. Thomas campus of the University of the Virgin Islands, has been involved in a number of projects, including the mapping of terrestrial vegetation and marine benthic communities, Geographic Information Systems and Global Positioning Systems instruction, and a pilot project to develop a wellhead protection program in collaboration with the Department of Planning and Natural Resources.

Dayle Barry, project coordinator for the CDC, said the agency recently finalized the production of the Rapid Ecological Assessment maps for St. Thomas -- the last in a series that began with the mapping of St. Croix and St. John.

"We feel a sense of fulfillment for having received national recognition for the work that

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we have done,” Barry said.

In her position with the Cooperative Extension Service, Wright is often called on to provide advice about erosion and storm water control to individuals and groups with pending construction projects. Wright holds a master’s degree in agricultural engineering, with a soil and water engineering discipline.

Last year, Olasee Davis, an extension specialist with UVI’s Cooperative Extension Service on St. Croix, won an EPA Environmental Quality Award, Wright said.

“We’re proud of our program here at Extension,” she said. “We’ve been trying to involve the community as much as possible and raise awareness of environmental issues here in the Virgin Islands.

To find out more about the CDC, visit it on the World Wide Web at <http://cdc.uvi.edu> and for information on the Cooperative Extension Service, visit <http://rps.uvi.edu/CES/> .

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