



Believe...

St. Croix Foundation

In the fall of 2012, the Foundation launched its Believe Campaign to empower and mobilize residents to band together and tackle critical issues affecting our community. The Foundation is directing specific focus on three strategic programmatic areas including island beautification and revitalization, education reform, and public safety. We are encouraging our partners and supporters to join forces with us and Believe...

Education Excellence...Looking Up and Out

The Foundation's fundamental belief is that a high quality public education system is the single greatest insurance for our Territory's health and welfare.

In October of 2012, the Foundation organized a delegation of local education stakeholders to attend the 2012 Annual Grantmakers for Education Conference, *Rethink, Reframe, Redesign Education* in New York. Each year, this conference convenes representatives from the largest educational funders in the country, including the Bill and Melinda Gates and Annie E. Casey Foundations, to share experiences and assess reform models.

Our goal? To expose local stakeholders to innovative strategies that are transforming public schools in some of the toughest neighborhoods in the nation. Seeking to encourage deeper engagement and greater collaboration among diverse educational stakeholders, our work is committed to building consensus around viable reform options that are the right fit for the Territory.

Our delegation consisted of a broad cross section of education stakeholders, including representatives from the VI Board of Education, the Vocational Board, and local media. All delegates attended site visits to bold educational models such as the New American Academy (NAA) pilot, a public school created in partnership with the American Federation of Teachers, the New York Department of Education, and The Harvard Graduate School of Education.

NAA was of particular interest to our delegation because the average teacher there makes 38% more than their colleagues in traditional schools while enjoying collaborative teaching practices and a career ladder aimed at developing Master Teachers. The school also boasts 15% lower overhead costs than the average public school in New York. Today, the New York Department of Education is actively supporting the replication of this model.

An educational roadmap

After witnessing such innovative and collaborative educational reform initiatives, the Foundation convened a select group of stakeholders to be part of the next phase of our work. Our 20/20 Vision Coalition will spend up to one year exploring viable education practices and policies from some of the leading educational models around the world. The result of this work will be a strategic, collaborative, and comprehensive policy map that includes reform recommendations for systemic public education improvements Territory-wide.



Contentment Road gets a facelift through youth training program

As a component of our Believe Campaign, the Foundation is currently spearheading several beautification projects to lift community spirits as well as put our "best foot forward" to visitors and entice potential investors. Recognizing that beautification efforts are critical to the long term economic health of our community, one of our ancillary goals is to improve St. Croix's eligibility for World Heritage Status from the United Nations for our historic architecture.

This January, in partnership with the Department of Labor, St. Croix Foundation hired unemployed Virgin

Islands youth to participate in a workforce creation and beautification initiative. The candidates selected are actively learning the latest painting techniques through classroom instruction and hands on work according to standards set by the National Center for Construction Education and Research.

Today, trainees are putting their skills to the test on dilapidated properties at the entrance of historic downtown Christiansted. Upon completion of the program and the passing of a

test, the participants will receive a nationally recognized certificate that can be presented to any contractor throughout the United States.

As an example of our leadership strategy to rebuilding our towns, this is the first of many projects that we are seeking to expand throughout the Territory.

**How can you help?
Donate paint
or adopt a building!**



Public Safety

Investing in Healthy Communities

Building upon our 15 year partnership with the VI Police Department, the St. Croix Foundation is continuing our focus on improving public safety by developing more strategic public-private partnerships. Through our Community Police Partnership Fund, we recently purchased bulletproof vests for our police dogs and hand held surveillance cameras that provide proof of criminal activity, resulting in successful prosecutions.

Today, our Believe Campaign is advocating for the expansion of the Territory's security camera system into neighborhoods and along strategic roadways. We also continue to sponsor officer training and Neighborhood Watch outreach activities.

Grassroots efforts making a difference...

AED Fund goes **above** and **beyond**

As a preeminent Fiduciary Agent and Fiscal Sponsor, the St. Croix Foundation continues to administer and manage funds for small nonprofits as well as public and private agencies that do not possess the capacity to do so themselves. With more than 20 grassroots projects under our 501(c)3 nonprofit umbrella, the Foundation's sponsorship services help community-based projects fill critical service gaps.

One of our sponsored projects, the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Fund has grown over the past several years from one woman's dream into a successful island-wide movement. Today, the AED Fund has provided 25 defibrillators to the VI Fire Service (13), VI Police Department (4), and one each to Government House, Canegata Park, Craemer Park, Vincent Mason Pool, VI Air National Guard, VI Army National Guard, Coast Guard

Auxiliary, and St. Croix Rescue. The AED Fund also provides critical training, including 58 police officers, 90% of firefighters, as well as lifeguards and St. Croix Rescue personnel. Last month, Project Director Cher Will organized Student Heart Health Day, empowering over 200 students to save lives. Soon after, she presented at the Juan F. Louis Hospital's VI Cardiac Symposium on the importance of these life saving devices. And, with the help of Senator Sanes, she has spearheaded the development of an app for cell phones called CROWDSAV that shows the location of AEDs island-wide.

Ms. Will is now working to have defibrillators in every school. With each success, the AED Fund proves that grassroots organizations that dream big can truly make a difference.



Over 900 Students Respond to Youth Council's survey

Throughout our educational outreach efforts, St. Croix Foundation has been committed to developing high impact programming for our most important educational stakeholders—our students. In 2009, our Youth Advisory Council (YAC) began as a pilot program to teach youth about philanthropy. In their first year, YAC learned the how, why and what of grantmaking, awarding grants to UVI's Upward Bound, the Boys & Girls Club Teen Program, and Juanita Gardine's Steel Pan Band. One year later, YAC determined that grants alone could not address youth issues in our Territory and held their first Youth Forum, offering a safe space for young people to explore their talents and push beyond perceived limitations. The Forum drew over 300 students and received rave reviews from all attendees.

"Answers for Change" Survey Guides Youth Council

"We are focused on pinpointing the challenges of negativity, crime, peer pressure, and accessibility to higher education.

Having identified a desperate need for positive mentors, leaders, and counselors, we seek to find innovative ways to link the voices of youth with adults in our community."

~St. Croix Foundation
Youth Advisory Council

In conjunction, YAC members developed their own survey, **Answers for Change**, and distributed it to over 900 students on St. Croix to ask young people what they thought about homework, school climate, personal motivators, and school safety. In the fall of 2012, they released the results of the survey and committed to using results to address youth concerns.



Sprint to Excellence brings tutors into three junior high schools

Over the past two years, the Foundation's Sprint to Excellence grant program has awarded \$45,000 in educational grants to public and parochial schools focused on: (1) innovative instruction and professional development, (2) literacy, (3) classroom management and discipline, and (4) student mentoring and personal development.

In February of this year, the Foundation awarded the Virgin Islands Department of Education a \$5,000 grant to provide tutors for St. Croix's public junior high schools in support of the AVID program. "(AVID) Advancement Via Individual Determination, is a college readiness system for elementary through higher education that is designed to increase school wide learning and performance. The AVID system accelerates student learning, uses research based methods of effective instruction, provides meaningful and motivational professional learning, and acts as a catalyst for systemic reform and change." Through the Foundation's support, tutors will now be available in every AVID classroom, a key component to student success.

St. Croix Food & Wine Experience

Leveraging Resources for education, public safety, and community & economic development.

While the St. Croix Food & Wine Experience lasts just one week, the impact of this culinary extravaganza expands throughout the year. Named as one of the top 10 international food and wine events by ForbesTravel.com, the St. Croix Food & Wine Experience has raised nearly \$1.4 million for community programs since its inception. In addition to the programs its



supports, the Experience brings millions of dollars of revenue into our the St. Croix economy: hotels are full, restaurants bustling, distributors and wholesalers see a boost in sales, and shops outfit guests from near and far with the best attire they have to offer.

If you are a dedicated corporate citizen, a patron of fine wine, a lover of the culinary arts, a follower of celebrity chefs, or if you just LOVE TO EAT, join us April 14 – 20th.

stcroixfoodandwine.com



St. Croix Food and Wine Experience



@StxFoodandWine

A message from our President

For 22 years, St. Croix Foundation has worked to address needs critical to the long term health of our community. The Territory faces many challenges today, but at the Foundation, we believe that if we tackle the *root causes* of those challenges, we will improve the well being of us all. This is difficult work, but we believe it is both necessary and possible. We must continue to rebuild our towns as healthy towns make a healthy community; we must continue to improve public safety, because that impacts us all; but the education of our young people is the paramount issue before us. It is abundantly clear to the Foundation that almost all roads to addressing our socioeconomic problems lead back to education. Today, our belief is that exposure to model policies and comprehensive education reform is the key to ensuring our youth become productive, globally competitive citizens of tomorrow.

Under our Believe Campaign, our three priority areas are providing every resident and friend of the Virgin Islands with a way to reach out and to work together. Join us. Believe with us, and together we can make a difference.



~Roger Dewey, President



Believe...

For more information about any of the Foundation's programs or to learn how you can be a part of our Believe Campaign, please call us at 340.773.9898.

Together we can make a difference!



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