



Believe...

St. Croix Foundation

Since our inception, St. Croix Foundation has been empowering and mobilizing residents to tackle critical issues affecting our community. Our efforts in our priority areas, community and economic development, education reform, and public safety, continue to net results, and we are encouraged by the partners who have joined forces with us to become Believers...

The *Experience* of a Lifetime: Food and wine leads to **jobs and internships at Facebook!**

The St. Croix Food & Wine Experience, the Foundation's annual fundraiser and culinary extravaganza, has proven to be a life-changing *Experience* for more than just attendees and the many businesses that benefit from this growing event. In 2013, three Executive Chefs from Facebook took part in the Experience and the results have been dramatic: contract positions for two St. Croix youth and the development of an official Culinary Internship Program that has now expanded to provide more training and exposure for youth on St. Croix.

In 2013, Facebook Chef Josef Desimone participated in the Sunset BBQ where he was paired with students from CTEC's Culinary Program. Inspired and impressed with two students in particular, Desimone invited Denika Boyd and Aaron Tutein to intern with him at Facebook. Although Josef tragically passed away, his colleagues at Facebook didn't let his dream end there and in February 2014, Aaron and Denika travelled to Facebook and completed a two-week internship under the instruction of the Facebook Culinary team. Just two months later, the chefs announced their offer of full-time positions to Aaron and Denika at Facebook's Culinary Department at the social media giant's headquarters in Silicon Valley.

The Foundation has also finalized the details of a formal Culinary Internship Program. Two new interns have already been selected for an expanded internship in early 2015, which will include two weeks at Facebook followed by a week in Hawaii at Chef Sam Choy's restaurant. St. Croix Foundation is urging dedicated corporate citizens, patrons of fine wine, lovers of the culinary arts, and ardent supporters of youth and education to contribute to our Internship Fund. Join us April 12 – 18, 2015, for another exciting Experience at www.stcroixfoodandwine.com!



Above: Facebook Executive Chefs Dean Spinks (left) and Tony Castellucci (right) join forces with Chef Sam Choy (center) to provide internships for St. Croix youth. Below: Denika Boyd and Aaron Tutein are now pursuing their careers at Facebook.

(Photo credit: Lindsay Kammerzelt)



\$25,500 granted to public schools

As an extension of our Model Schools Initiative, the Sprint to Excellence Grant Program offers grants to public schools for projects in Innovative Instruction and Professional Development, Literacy Enrichment and Assessment, Classroom Management & Discipline, and Mentoring & Personal Development. After a comprehensive selection process, the Foundation's Grant Review Committee awarded grants to four public schools for the implementation of high-impact, academic-based initiatives that support the whole child. 2014 grants were awarded to Ricardo Richards Elementary School, the VI Dept. of Education's

Individual Determination (AVID) Program, Arthur Richards Junior High School, and the Ja Goju Jitsu-Ryu Federation at Charles H. Emmanuel. To contribute to the Sprint to Excellence Fund, contact us directly.



Youth Advisory Council Launches Global Youth Network & Presents at National Youth Conference

Since 2009, the St. Croix Foundation Youth Advisory Council (YAC) has been committed to providing greater leadership development and civics training to youth in our community. Over the past 5 years, YAC members have awarded grants, hosted forums, and conducted surveys. In February, the Council officially launched a dynamic, new interactive website for their peers entitled the Global Youth Network (GYN). And in April, the Council was invited to present their new project at the 25th Annual National Youth Leadership Council in Washington D.C. Two YAC members, Central High junior Bria James and Complex sophomore Shideya Parilla, were excited to share the Council's GYN with youth organizations and representatives from the U.S. Department of Education and around the country.

As YAC continues to build their social media forum, they are cataloging interviews with local professionals and showcasing local and international youth leadership groups who are positively impacting their communities. The initiative seeks to address concerns brought to light as a result of the Council's 2012 *Answers for Change Survey*, which found an absence of meaningful adult mentors and a lack of exposure to post-secondary high school options as some of the most pressing challenges facing young people in our community. YAC hopes that by sharing their work, the GYN will ignite a fire of hope in youths throughout the Territory while ensuring that they are aware of the endless career opportunities open to them. **To watch professional interviews and learn more visit yacstx.org!**



Bria (left) and Shideya (right) stand tall with Eleanor Roosevelt in DC at the National Youth Leadership Conference



The Council conducts a community mapping workshop

YAC ANNOUNCES 2014 GRANTEES

As a part of their work, the Youth Advisory Council also learns about effective philanthropy, and in July, announced three grants to organizations serving youth.

The Council congratulates and looks forward to the results from grantees:

STX Deaf Camp, A Love of Culture at the St. Croix Montessori School, and the National Mathematics Honors Program through the St. Croix Educational Complex's Mu Alpha Theta Chapter.

YAC will be checking in with grantees to track and encourage their progress. Join the YAC and help support our youth by visiting www.yacstx.org!

SUCCEED shares tools and tips, CCA shines up Christiansted

Through the Foundation's fiduciary services and fiscal sponsorship program, we currently provide an accountable and flexible vehicle for over 45 grassroots organizations to achieve their philanthropic goals.

St. Croix Unified for Community, Culture, Environment, and Economic Development, better known as SUCCEED, is building capacity for cultural organizations to preserve and expand cultural, environmental, and economic growth. In May 2014, SUCCEED, in partnership with the University of the Virgin Islands, held their *Expanding Capacity within Cultural Organizations Conference* to assist organizations with collaboration, identifying and using tools and resources for organizational development, and successfully developing indigenous businesses. The event was well attended by new and veteran organizations, cultural groups, and the Department of Education Cultural Education Division-- all of whom gave the full day session high marks and identified future ideas for capacity building.

Another Foundation sponsored project, the **Christiansted Community Alliance (CCA)** is working together with residents, business and property owners, schools, and churches, to secure, beautify, and clean up neighborhoods to address issues of community blight that have plagued Christiansted for many years. To find out how you can support these and other projects contact the Foundation or visit our website at www.stxfoundation.org.



Advocating for System Reform

Launched in June of 2014, the Foundation's *Education First* campaign aims to build public will and support for system-wide education reform in the Virgin Islands. Providing current data on the Territory's public education system and local, national, and international models of success, the Foundation began publishing editorials in the *St. Croix Avis* and the *Daily News* covering a myriad of topics, from teacher quality and graduation rates to how we appoint our commissioner and the role of our board of education. In the *Avis*, every Wednesday up to Election Day, the Foundation seeks to establish a clear link between the Territory's economic stability and future prosperity with the academic performance of our children. The series also encourages readers to ask political candidates for specific policies they will support to hasten the pace of educational reform and innovation in our public schools. Focusing on models of collaboration and advocating for greater autonomy and training for principals and teachers, the series has already garnered attention from residents and policy makers alike.

The Foundation's *Education First* series is a part of our broader work to build a Policy "Road Map" to help community stakeholders understand, analyze, and implement bold, relevant reforms where they are needed most. To join the conversation and read the Foundation's series, visit www.facebook.com/STXFoundation.

Building Capacity:

The 4th Delegation to Grantmakers for Education

In 2011, the Foundation organized its first delegation to attend the Grantmakers for Education (GFE) conference with the goal of exposing our isolated community to successful trends in the education reform movement. Today, the Foundation is coordinating its 4th Delegation to the 18th Annual GFE Conference, *Education on the Global Stage: Advancing Opportunities for All Learners*. Always located in a rapidly improving, innovative region in the United States, this year's conference takes place in Florida, the 5th highest performing state in the nation. VI delegates will attend sessions on education policy, common core standards, and participate in site visits to groundbreaking educational initiatives, all of which serve as viable models for the VI. In 2013, our delegation consisted of 13 VI policy makers and key stakeholders--the largest consortium of stakeholders present at the GFE conference from any state or organization. Delegates included representatives from the University of the Virgin Islands, the Career and Technical Education Board, public and parochial school teachers, private sector employers, and the Senate Committee on Education.

For more information on the conference or how you can sponsor attendees, please contact the Foundation today!



Michelle Obama feels the love from St. Croix's Kids Cooking

The St. Croix Food & Wine Experience continues to introduce the special spirit and flavor of St. Croix to the wider world--including First Lady Michelle Obama! In 2014, Chef Todd Gray, a favorite of the First Lady's national program Chefs Move to Schools, presented an "official" Kid's Cooking apron autographed by youths participating in the class. Chefs Move to Schools is a program in which chefs and public schools partner to eliminate child obesity, and it was an honor to have Chef Gray make a special appearance at Kids Cooking to talk about nutrition and the sheer fun of creating a good meal. The 60 budding cooks at the event were so inspired that they signed the apron and just weeks later, the First Lady posed with Chef Gray proudly sporting it. Kids Cooking brings together 6-12 year olds who are eager to learn the basics of cooking and the importance of locally grown produce. The event is sponsored by Innovative, Inc. and is growing in popularity year after year.

To join us in 2015, visit www.stcroixfoodandwine.com!

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

The Avis

Education First:

It's the teacher, it's the teacher



WEDNESDAY, JULY 23, 2014

The Avis

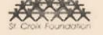
Education First:

"The Finland phenomenon"



Education First:

A bright future for our children



Do you know who the smartest kids in the world are? Amanda Ripley, author of *The Smartest Kids in the World*, recently decided to look for the answer. In her book, *The Smartest Kids in the World*, she follows three American students who studied in some of the highest performing education systems in the world. What Ripley found was that the smartest kids were not the ones with the highest test scores. They were the ones who were curious, who asked questions, who were not afraid to be wrong. They were the ones who were passionate about learning.

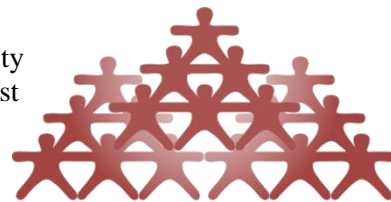
For the past 10 years, St. Croix Foundation has also sought to crack the code, exploring national models of educational excellence with one overarching mission: to advocate for and support innovative and sustainable strategies that will lead to rapid public education transformation. We have read about and personally witnessed groundbreaking programs both locally and abroad. But we believe, if replicated with fidelity, could lead to radical improvements in our educational system. But in order to get there, we have learned that what we do is much less important than the how we do it. When building strong systems that best serve the needs of all our community's youth, in our research, we have also seen that long and short term goals are more often met when reform plans are built on a solid foundation of collaboration--broad-based and community inclusive. For the Foundation, collaboration is really the fundamental "how" to the issue of education reform. Sadly, collaboration is also the greatest challenge for most reform efforts as far too many stakeholders haven't fully mastered the art of working together. Thankfully, there are many models of collaboration for us to examine and model our reform efforts after, some of which we think are particularly noteworthy and could help the VI find solutions.

RACE TO THE TOP: In 2009, Barack Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan launched Race to the Top (RTTT), and radically changed America's educational reform landscape. As the largest competitive grant-making program in the history of American public education, RTTT awarded \$4.35 billion through the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) to spur K-12 education reform. While the Territory was not eligible to participate in RTTT (Puerto Rico was), one criteria for applying, was that states had to build broad collaboration into their strategies, which meant that major stakeholder groups had to sign off on each state's reform plan. States that passed the first round of the application process had to submit video presentations demonstrating collaboration and alignment between stakeholders including unions, boards of education, departments of education, political parties, business leaders, charter operators, parent groups, and more. In the end, Delaware and Tennessee were chosen by the USDOE as the first states to be awarded RTTT grants and their little doubt why. Both states took the challenge seriously and set a high standard for radical and rapid reform. We urge local stakeholders to review their RTTT video presentations, which can be found on the St. Croix Foundation's Facebook page, to see what collaborative reform really looks like. It's an inspiring demonstration of Leadership and Commitment -- one that our education stakeholders can model.

VISION 2015: Delaware's RTTT plan, "Vision 2015," resulted in an award of \$100 million and a bold agenda designed to provide a world-class education to all public school students in Delaware. Developed by a coalition of education, government, business and civic leaders throughout Delaware, Vision 2015 established the following goals for the state's reform agenda: 1. Setting High Standards and Developing a Common Curriculum; 2. Developing and Supporting High-Quality Teachers; 3. Empowering Principals to Lead their Schools and; 4. Establishing a Simple and Equitable Funding System. L.A. COMPACT: Another reform model is the L.A. Compact, which is a city-wide plan signed by 18 major stakeholder groups in the Los Angeles Unified School District that has become a national model of collaboration and common vision. The L.A. Compact established the following goals (among others) for its reform efforts: 1. Achieve High Quality Teaching and Learning in Classrooms; 2. Build Collaborative Leadership Capacity; 3. Streamline and Decentralize Operations; 4. Expand Innovative Practices that are Working; 5. Implement a New Accountability System; and 6. Provide Students Multiple Pathways for Workforce/Career Preparation. Education reform is too big of a task for just one group to tackle. The whole village needs to be a part of the process, recognizing that our children are pouring out of our schools and onto our streets unprepared in the midst of a depressed economy and an unprecedented crime wave. In the words of Rahm Emanuel (Obama's former Chief of staff), we would be foolish "to let a good crisis go to waste." This election season, let's ask our political candidates how they intend to support collaborative efforts that serve our children and our schools.

Thank you... from the St. Croix Foundation

On behalf of the Board and the Staff of the Foundation, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our donors and community partners. As we reflect on the last 24 years, the best illustration of the St. Croix Foundation's role in the Virgin Islands is our logo, a pyramid of people standing on the shoulders of people, standing on the shoulders of people. We see ourselves as the second rung of that pyramid, with our donors, community partners, and forbearers on the first rung. Unquestionably, it is that first rung that supports us and allows us to reach a shared vision: to provide models of good governance and opportunities for the underserved so that we can collectively reach our potential... *together*. This approach to community development has allowed us to make deep inroads in a number of critical priority areas Territory-wide. To date, through our Community Revitalization efforts, the Foundation has restored over 100 properties in downtown Christiansted and supported similar efforts in Frederiksted and Charlotte Amalie; as one of the most vocal advocates for Education Reform, we have invested over a million dollars into our public education system; and with our Fiscal Sponsorship and Nonprofit Development efforts, we have supported hundreds of local nonprofit initiatives throughout the VI. Our accomplishments inspire and motivate us to keep working harder, and we cannot thank all of our donors and partners enough for what they do to make our work possible. As we now affix our focus on our milestone anniversary of 25 years of Leadership in Service to our Community in 2015, we ask that you continue to partner with us on our journey to create a healthy community by contributing to our 2015 Believe Capital Campaign. **Our goal:** to raise \$2.5 million for comprehensive public safety, community revitalization, and education reform initiatives. ***Believe with us, and together we will make a difference. Together, we will make it better!***



Roger Dewey, President

Deanna James, Chief Operations Officer

Donate today and Believe...



\$2.5 Million by 2015!
Contribute today to our
Believe Capital Campaign
and start your legacy today!

For more information about any of the Foundation's programs, please call us at 340.773.9898.

Together we can make a difference!



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