



Believe...

St. Croix Foundation (A Year in Review)

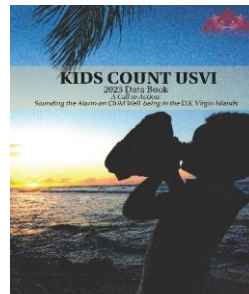
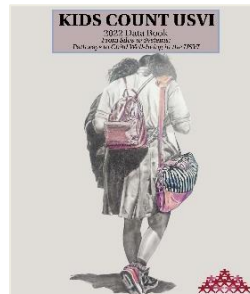
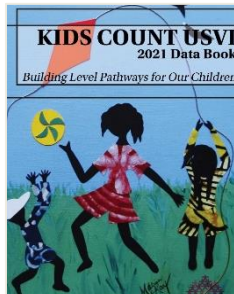
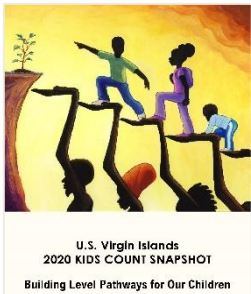
A Message from Our President



Reflecting upon last year, I can't fully articulate how absolutely privileged and honored I am to lead such a remarkable little organization that's doing so many BIG things. In addition to our Kids Count Initiative, which continues to evolve in scope to support child wellbeing in our Community, our Nonprofit Consortium continues to ground and inspire us as we build Power within the territory's civil society. Our national network and partnerships have also grown exponentially in fulfillment of St. Croix Foundation's mission (to encourage greater philanthropy and marshal resources for the benefit of the People of the Virgin Islands). And then, there's the single most comprehensive endeavor ever undertaken in our organization's history: the re-imagining and revitalization of Sunday Market Square into a community-centered, economic hub and cultural arts corridor.

Unquestionably, Leading such deep social impact work through challenging times like these demands a perfect blend of Fortitude, Courage and Vision! As I now enter my 9th year at the helm of St. Croix Foundation, I have never felt more confident and clearer about the work we're leading and the direction in which we're heading! As the Foundation now gears up for an even more productive and prodigious year ahead, I have re-doubled my commitment to honoring the pledge I made to my Team at the very start of 2020: to Lean into this moment of epic global shifting; to be courageous in my Leadership Walk; and to balance my Team's physical, mental and spiritual well-being with the work. BALANCE will be our grounding cornerstone as we transition into one of the most pivotal Chapters in St. Croix Foundation's 33 years of service. We invite all our Community Stakeholders, Partners and Friends, near and far, to watch this space...

KIDS COUNT USVI: From Strategy and Vision to a "Call to Action"



Since our 2022 newsletter, we've been busy! The Foundation has published 2 KIDS COUNT USVI Data Books, interviewed over 70 government and nonprofit partners, and convened data partners and policymakers over 10 times. These past two years represent a continuum of work going back to

2020, when we published our first snapshot, outlining our strategy for KIDS COUNT as the new stewards of this territory-wide initiative. As depicted by the cover art, *Ujima Journey* by Marcus Anderson, we outlined our collaborative, community-centered and inclusive approach to collecting and reporting real-time data. In 2021, we published our first official Data Book with cover art from local artist Elise McKay entitled *Childs Play*, this time capturing our vision of a future in which our children are happy and thriving. In 2022, we shifted gears and boldly selected an image for our Data Book based on the reality that many of our children live in isolation: *Riveted*, by St. Croix resident Niarus Walker.

SCF's 2023 KIDS COUNT USVI Data Book, entitled "A CALL TO ACTION: Sounding the Alarm on Child Well-being in the U.S. Virgin Islands." was presented to a broad range of community stakeholders on December 9, 2023, at 10:00 AM AST during a Virtual Community Stakeholder Presentation open to the public. Today SCF is working closely with public and nonprofit partners to begin to activate the data by fulfilling our fundamental role as a convener in order to drive systems change. Support this critical work and contact SCF today at 340.773.9898.



SCF HOSTS 5th Annual Philanthropy Retreat, Bringing 22 National Senior Executives to St. Croix...

Since February 2017, the Foundation has hosted an Annual Philanthropy Retreat bringing together our national philanthropic partners with our local Nonprofit Consortium members. In 2023, after a two-year hiatus due to the Pandemic, we resumed this powerful convening, with the 5th Annual Philanthropy Retreat entitled *The Power of Place*. Welcoming our largest delegation to date, (we hosted 22 national and regional foundation Executives, thought-leaders, climate resiliency partners, and educational grantmakers from a diverse set of organizations). Our Philanthropy Retreat has represented an unmatched opportunity for our local partners and our ever-expanding global network to connect, to commune, to learn and to build forward. It also affords national foundation executives a chance to really SEE the territory (which has historically been a persist blind-spot for philanthropy), with a clear goal of spotlighting the U.S. Virgin Islands as an important and worthy philanthropic investment.

St. Croix Foundation extends our sincere gratitude to all of our partners (new and veteran) who have made this convening possible, as well as lead sponsors, the Virgin Islands Department of Tourism and the Quantum Fund. As one of our national champions often reminds us: while our Community has much to learn from our global Partners, St. Croix Foundation and our Powerful coalition of Nonprofit Leaders also have much to Teach- about our innate ingenuity and resourcefulness; and about the Power of Relationships to transform communities for the better.

Expanding Networks: ABFE's Black Women in Philanthropy Retreat



In August of 2023, SCF served as the proud hostess for the Association of Black Foundation Executives (ABFE) Black Women in Philanthropy 10th Anniversary Retreat. As members of ABFE and numerous national philanthropy associations and networks, we have worked tirelessly to deepen and expand regional and national networks and strategic partnerships over the past 8 years. Today, we are pleased to report that our advocacy and relationship-building yielded this major win for the Territory.

On behalf of all of us at the Foundation, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to Susan Taylor Batten and the team at ABFE for "seeing us" and choosing St. Croix to host 100+ "of the nation's most influential female philanthropic decision makers." We also extend our heartfelt appreciation to Carambola Beach Resort and our dynamic event coordinator, Sharon Rosario, for making the event truly memorable.

The NEW Alexander Theater: Moving from Rendering to Reality

The St. Croix Foundation Team is excited to finally transition into the architecture and engineering phase of our Alexander Theatre renovation project. As we navigate the hurdles (and untold costs) that come with managing federal funding awards, this new phase of the project represents a major milestone for the Foundation. Funded largely through a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant awarded in 2019 to retrofit and redevelop this community asset into a disaster safe room. We are currently securing private philanthropic funding for a critical component of the project (that is unfunded by FEMA), which is a state-of-the-art performing arts center and community convening space. As we move into the conceptual design phase, we are so thrilled to begin engaging our many community partners- historians, culture-bearers and arts educators to adjoin us in envisioning and manifesting a truly Grand Vision for St. Croix and the entire Territory. Stay tuned!



The Sunday Market Square “Healing Humanities” Initiative: Targeting Arts and Humanities to Heal and Revitalize Community

Six years ago, when the Foundation conceived our “Healing Humanities” Initiative it was our intention to expand our Founders’ vision for Sunday Market Square by transforming it into a performing and healing arts space and an economic driver for our community. As an extension of our Alexander Theater Restoration Project, SCF acquired four properties adjacent to the Theater within the footprint of the Square. Our comprehensive blueprint now entails additional low/moderate income housing and nonprofit co-working space as well as culturally rooted after-school programs, conference convening space, and Afro-Caribbean-themed healing and learning centers. This project, which is very personal for the Foundation, will not only spur economic vitality for St. Croix, but is first and foremost intended to Serve and to Feed Our Community’s Spirit. This project is funded through HUD, CDBG-DR, Congressional Allocations, the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York, and a growing list of private philanthropic partners.

Fiscal Sponsorship Program Updates



In June 2023, SCF hosted two important Fiscal Sponsorship Orientations for new and existing sponsored projects. The culmination of over a year of legal audits and updates, these orientation sessions were intended to apprise our clients of the new policies and procedures by which the Fiscal Sponsorship program is governed. **Since 1990, St. Croix Foundation for Community Development has provided fiduciary and fiscal sponsorship services to over 250 grassroots efforts, nonprofit organizations, and charitable initiatives**

throughout the Territory. Providing a much more holistic suite of supports to nonprofits than traditional fiscal sponsors, the Foundation affords our sponsored projects access to the entire Operations team, who assists with consulting on programmatic development, organizational governance, financial management, mentoring, and coaching. The Foundation is so proud of our role over the past 33 years in incubating some of St. Croix’s strongest most high-impact community-based organizations many of which have graduated to high impact independent 501c3 nonprofits, like the VI Good Food Coalition.

SCF Awards over \$44,000 in Scholarships!



In July of 2023, St. Croix Foundation awarded \$25,000 in scholarships to four St. Croix youth during a virtual presentation through the Patrick & Amelia Williams Opportunity Fund, the St. Croix Educational Complex (SCEC) 20th Anniversary Reunion Committee Fund, and the Foundation Scholars Fund. Now in its sixth year, the Patrick & Amelia Williams Opportunity Fund awarded three \$5,000 scholarships in demonstration of SCF's ongoing support as students moved into their third year at their respective places of study: Abigail Valery, Caliyah Helliger, and Sanaa Burke. To date, the Patrick and Amelia Williams Opportunity Fund has awarded a total of \$71,000 in scholarships to 11

students who have had to overcome unprecedented difficulties throughout their high school tenure and early university education. Concurrently, the SCEC 20th Anniversary Reunion Fund established by Anquanette Gaspard, granddaughter of Patrick and Amelia Williams, awarded one \$5,000 scholarship to Jayden Ferdinand, a graduate of St. Croix Educational Complex. Jayden will study Psychology at Penn State University in the fall!



The Lang-Wise STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Scholarship Fund was also busy, and awarded \$18,900 in grants and scholarships in its inaugural cycle. Awards include an \$8,400 grant to the St. Croix Rocketry Association and \$10,500 in scholarships to five St. Croix graduates (pictured clockwise from top left): Una Alexander, Howard University, Major: Biology; Joscelyn Torres, Texas State University, Major: Physics; Bry'Nice Berley, Nova Southeastern University, Major: Computer Science; and Wyatt Bracy, Northeastern University, Major: Criminal Justice/Cybersecurity. Founded by St. Croix native and engineer, Raydiance Wise, to cover the significant costs of higher education beyond tuition, this award is designed to offset expenses related to travel, clothing, textbooks, and other unexpected expenses that become burdensome. The Fund supports graduating seniors from public, private, or parochial schools on the island of St. Croix.

Wine in the Warehouse Exceeds All Expectations! Save the Date for 2024!

After 2 years of suspending our annual fundraiser, the *St. Croix Food & Wine Experience's* premier event, we made a spectacular comeback in 2022 with our premier wine event, "Wine in the Warehouse" at the new Bohlke Int'l Aviation Hangar. In 2023, we did it again, this time exceeding all expectations. We brought in Celebrity Chef Tiffany Derry and packed the house with more wines, food, and amazing guests than ever before. Most importantly, the event once again fulfilled our fundamental role as a community convener and, as always, proceeds directly support our community development work year-round. It's all about celebrating the simple abundance of St. Croix through Food, Fun, and Philanthropy... so **join us as a sponsor, guest, volunteer, or valued vendor December 6, 2024! Contact us today at 340.773.9898 and get involved!**

