



CELEBRATING
36 YEARS
Together we can make a difference!



36th Anniversary Message from the President *Deanna James, President & CEO*

For 36 years, St. Croix Foundation for Community Development (SCF) has quietly and deliberately built the civic infrastructure that today, we believe, has put St. Croix on the map as a model of place-based philanthropy. Despite every challenge we have faced, we continue to exceed our founders' wildest dreams as we undertake one of the most ambitious systems transformation agendas in the Foundation's epic journey.

Launched as an unendowed community foundation back in 1990, over three decades later we remain unendowed. And yet, we can proudly say that SCF has served as a conduit for more than **\$50 million in strategic investments into the U.S. Virgin Islands.**

Of course, the road to this milestone has not been easy, and it repeatedly tests our resolve and our commitment to being authentically philanthropic in a field that continues to question our approach and diminish the virtues upon which it rests.

Convicted by our charge to steward the Foundation with integrity and unwavering courage to go against the grain (even when conventional wisdom

inventorying our impact (though the list is [DEEP and WIDE](#)), or even about calculating how much money we've marshaled for our Community. Our reflection is primarily guided by the lessons we have learned: the ones that must inform our future trajectory, and those that no longer serve us and must be released.

This year during our reflection, while mining through our archives, ***we struck GOLD***: a 2015 draft memo from one of our visionary founders, the late, great Claudette "Adjoa" Young-Hinds, whose homegoing coincides with this year's Anniversary. In it, Claudette recounted SCF's inception and her vision for its future. Like a nod from beyond, her words offered powerful affirmation of our current vision for the Foundation—and the perfect framing for our 36th Anniversary message.

According to Claudette, SCF was launched *with a call to action* from our principal founder, the late Philip Gerard. A community stalwart, Philip was also a staunch advocate for sovereignty and municipal governance in the aftermath of Hurricane Hugo, when much of St. Croix had been flattened, and our Community was confronting wholesale recovery...



IN HER OWN WORDS: *"It's tiiiime Ahh-ju-wah!!" Phillip Gerard said with his piercing gaze. Somewhere in my 2 years managing Sunday Market properties for Tri Island Economic Development Corporation (VITIED), Mr. Gerard discovered my experience with foundations, boards, and community development, engaged me in discussion of models and approaches, and enlisted my involvement in joining him, Michael*

when he stated, again, "It is tiime", pointed us to the community planning model offered by the National Civic League, and [together we] underwrote Lisa's attendance at their conference. Buoyed by her Report, Michael and Phillip believed that model would help to frame the way forward in creating a "foundation for community development" - although their philosophical discussions on "community foundation vs foundation for community..." could fill volumes!

Let it suffice to say that... where the SCF approach was questioned in 1991, a track record of [civic] leadership and accomplishments has contributed to the Foundation world's recognition of, and appropriate support for, Caribbean Philanthropy." (2015)



With Claudette and Philip's words and Vision as our buoy (and anchor), the mandate driving the next chapter of St. Croix Foundation's journey is a big one: ***Sovereignty!***

Defined simply as "freedom from external control," for us, sovereignty is rooted in **self-determination and ancestral wisdom**: the ability of people and communities to meaningfully shape the conditions that influence their health, wealth, safety, and future. It is not a statement about political status, but rather about strengthening the capacity of communities to make decisions, build solutions, and determine their own path forward. Can we build and retain local wealth? Can we educate our children according to our values and aspirations? Can we steward our land and preserve our culture and institutions? Can we produce more of what we need? And, can we design solutions rooted in our own lived experience rather than waiting for distant systems to rescue us?

and Appalachia to the Mississippi Delta and the U.S. “territories,” *all* communities marginalized by poverty and distance from power are wrestling with the same fundamental challenge: **How do we reclaim greater agency over our own future?**

Perhaps that is why St. Croix Foundation’s story matters far beyond St. Croix. Because, by conventional measurements, **SCF shouldn’t still be here - no endowment, an unconventional approach to philanthropy, compounded by nominal donor and national philanthropic investments - yet still, we are here, building the muscles of sovereignty for 36 years.** We have harnessed ancestral ingenuity to marshal resources and steward community assets with unbreached integrity (without hoarding or compromising our values around the spiritual ethos of real philanthropy in the face of unrelenting political or economic pressures). We have strengthened nonprofit capacity, cultivated local civic leadership, collected and activated data, built strategic national philanthropic alliances, and connected our small island to an expanding regional network of Caribbean philanthropy.



SOVEREIGNTY AS RESILIENCE

Through our Nonprofit Consortium, our deep Systems-Thinking Praxis, and an emerging **System Bypass** framework, we are empowering our Community Partners to imagine radical solutions. Looking beyond the limitations of broken systems, SCF is inviting our Community to move from scarcity mindsets toward abundance and ‘enoughness’ and from dependency toward sovereignty.

grantmaker or intermediary. **We are coherent civic infrastructure:** a connector, convener, policy advocate, fiscal steward, community historian, philanthropic bridge and, increasingly, a civic laboratory for what courageous, deeply rooted place-based philanthropy can become.

In truth, that commitment to community-led action was foundational from the very beginning, which makes reading Claudette's words today profoundly poignant. Thirty-six years ago, our founders did not wait for perfect systems, financial capital, or permission. Standing amid devastation, they looked at their Community and decided: The time is now!

So, as we celebrate 36 years, we celebrate much more than the longevity of an institution, or even the \$50 million invested. We celebrate an idea that endures. We celebrate the audacity of our founders; the trust of our Community; the courage and competence of our staff and Board; the integrity of our Fiscal Stewardship; the generosity of our donors and partners; and the growing coherence in our civic and philanthropic network, locally, regionally, and nationally, who believe that a small island can model something consequential for the world.

Perhaps Claudette saw it coming.

Once again, in her words:



“SCF has been a leader, a beacon, an advocate, and as it approaches the status as ‘elder statesman’ in its leadership around civic organization development, and cooperative expansion of financial and other resources, I suspect and hope that the next 25 years will bring hard fought, dearly-earned Regional and National attention, and prominence!!”

– Claudette “Adjoa” Young-Hinds

To look at those words today is to realize that Adjoa was speaking prophecy that we are nurturing to fruition. 36 years after our humble beginnings, standing on the foundation that Adjoa, Philip, Michael, Lisa, and others so courageously laid, perhaps the greatest tribute we can offer in their honor is to keep building—to keep pushing toward a collective vision of a Community that

Because the massive social and economic shifts facing our world today are not a crisis to be managed—they are an invitation to lead and invest differently. To national Philanthropy, this is a call to abandon outdated methods and dare to invest radically. To our Community, it is an invitation to step fully into our collective power and lead courageously from the grassroots up.

With gratitude, pride, and audacious hope, we echo Philip's call once again

It's tiiiime!

Celebrate 36 Years With Us

As we mark St. Croix Foundation's 36th Anniversary, we invite you to celebrate by joining us at **Wine in the Warehouse**, our signature annual benefit. Early bird tickets are now on sale for a limited time.

For individuals, businesses, and philanthropic partners looking to deepen their support, **sponsorship opportunities are also available**, providing another meaningful way to invest in the Foundation's year-round work and the communities we serve.

[Get Your Tickets](#) | [Explore Sponsorship Opportunities](#)



The banner features a warm, evening scene of a warehouse event. In the background, a private jet is visible through a large open bay door. The foreground is filled with festive decorations, including wine glasses, a barrel, and a sign that reads 'PEOPLE PURPOSE POSSIBILITY'. A red cloth with the text 'Philanthropy Rooted in Place' is draped over a barrel. The event title 'WINE IN THE WAREHOUSE' is displayed in large, illuminated letters on the right. The St. Croix Foundation logo and 'FOOD & WINE experience' are in the top left corner.

ST. CROIX
FOOD & WINE
experience

ST. Croix Foundation
Together We Create a Better Tomorrow

Celebrate *With Us*

Wine in the Warehouse, December 4, 2026

Join us for St. Croix Foundation's signature annual benefit, where community, philanthropy, food, and wine come together in support of our work.

GET YOUR TICKETS >

PEOPLE
PURPOSE
POSSIBILITY

*Philanthropy
Rooted in Place*



ABOUT ST. CROIX FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Established in 1990, St. Croix Foundation has served as a conduit for over 50 million dollars in funding for community-based projects throughout the Virgin Islands. With an incomparable track record of successful community development initiatives and national recognition for its work in education reform, small business development, and public-private partnerships, the Foundation has also received international acknowledgment for its community revitalization initiatives and, today, continues directing its focus on holistic community building and development, policy research and data collection, and the broad-based support of nonprofits, including fiscal sponsorship, grantmaking, and the Nonprofit Consortium.

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