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CFVI Awards \$232,000 in Humanities Grants to Enrich Virgin Islands Culture

Initiatives include cultural dance, anti-gun violence films, and historical storytelling

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The Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands has announced the awarding of \$232,000 in humanities grants, thanks to funding provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). This significant financial support aims to enrich the cultural and historical landscape of the U.S. Virgin Islands through various educational and cultural projects.?

"We are grateful to NEH for providing this critical support to organizations and individuals who are doing the important work of highlighting the culture and history of our Virgin Islands," said CFVI President Dee Baecher-Brown. "Since the beginning of CFVI's partnership with NEH in 2020, we have provided more than \$1.5 million in support for humanities projects throughout the

territory,” she added

According to the release, the primary goal of this funding is to enhance the lives of residents across the U.S. Virgin Islands by focusing on humanities education, lifelong learning, and public humanities programming. These grants are designed to reflect the unique needs of the territory's diverse communities, advance public knowledge of humanities, culture, heritage, and preservation, and make humanities programs accessible to all residents.?

The following organizations have been awarded grants:?

Caribbean Museum Center for the Arts received \$7,000 for the Dance is a Universal Language program. This grant will support cultural dance workshops focusing on traditional African dance, Haitian, Bamboula, and Capoeira, guiding participants through a rhythmic journey to explore the cultural significance of each dance.

?Center for Educational Growth, Inc. received \$25,000 for the Film Over Gun Violence Program, where CFEG and Blue Tarp Productions will launch the first Virgin Islands film training and education campaign to combat gun violence by turning knowledge of crime development into film scripts.

Fireburn Heritage, Inc received \$25,000 for the Virgin Islands ABCs Initiative: Cultivating Cultural Literacy in VI Youth. In collaboration with the Caribbean Museum Center for the Arts, this project will create an ABC book showcasing the Virgin Islands' heritage, involving local third graders and award-winning author Angela Golden Bryan.?

Friends of Virgin Islands National Park were awarded \$25,000 for a project titled St. John Mosaic: Honoring the Island. Seniors and younger community members will create a permanent mosaic wall depicting historical and cultural imagery of St. John, accompanied by video stories accessible via QR codes.

The St. Croix Montessori School received \$25,000 for increasing educational and cultural literacy through library sciences. This grant will help establish an Educational and Cultural Library at the school's new campus, curating materials that reflect both Virgin Islands and global cultures.

Ten Sleepless Knights, Inc. received \$25,000 for a Bamboula/Bomba Documentary Film. This project aims to strengthen ties between the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico by highlighting cultural dances within the Caribbean African diaspora.

The University of the Virgin Islands was awarded \$25,000 for Collaboration and Conversations: Connecting Virgin Islands Historical Collections. The funding will support a workshop to create research resources in Virgin Islands history and culture, including open educational resources and introductory videos.?

The University of the Virgin Islands also received a \$25,000 grant for its Unbreakable Film Academy. The academy will train students in film production, focusing on the post-production of "The Unbreakable Virgin Islanders 2.0" under the supervision of journalist and filmmaker Peter Bailey.

?The Virgin Islands Architecture Center for Built Heritage and Crafts has been awarded \$25,000 for Phase 2 of the VIAC Old Barracks Neighborhood Storytelling Project. This phase includes more research on the history of the Old Barracks Property, culminating in a documentary film and lecture for local educators and the community.?

VI Crawl, Inc. received \$25,000 for their Folklore to Film: A Cinematic Anansi Project, which will produce a film spotlighting the trickster Anansi, aiming to revitalize Virgin Islands folklore storytelling and serve as a pilot for a Caribbean folklore film series.

?These grants represent significant investments in the cultural and educational fabric of the territory, facilitating the enrichment of the community's understanding and appreciation of their heritage.

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