

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## Passion For Local Traditions Reignited At Elena Christian Jr. High's First Annual Cultural Extravaganza

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ST. CROIX -- The Elena Christian Jr. High (ECJH) School grounds were the setting for two days of cultural activities designed to captivate students' interest and to motivate them to embrace Virgin Islands traditions—especially in games and cuisine, according to a press release issued on Friday by the Department of Education.

The school hosted its first annual Cultural Extravaganza on Thursday, May 14 and Friday, May 15, 2015. Several workshops were conducted on Thursday by culture bearers to help give students a better understanding of the cultural foundation of the Virgin Islands. Workshop presenters included Clint Ferris on making homemade ice cream and Asta Williams, of the Masqueraders of Frederiksted, who taught students the

art of mask making.

Eleanor Pemberton kept the coals in the coal pot burning long enough to fry banana fritters, roast peanuts and to bake dumb bread. She was assisted by the enthusiastic ECJH Paraprofessional Jina Belle and 8th grader Andy Pemberton. The students learned to arrange the coals in a coal pot and how to ignite them without using fuel.

ECJH Computer Science Teachers Margot Oyake and Johan Creque-Vanlow brought back the old time fun of` playing a game of “jax” on the classroom floor. Andrina Griffin brought her blender and accessories, along with fresh fruits and juices to show students how to get the best mixes of smoothies and fruit punches in their own kitchens. Restaurant owner Janesta Ritter wasted no time in getting students interested in preparing a mixture to roll out salmon balls. Members of the faculty and staff kept a close watch in order to pluck salmon balls as they fried.

Chef Bernard Vanterpool came out to get students glued up in a dough mixture to prepare johnnycakes, encouraging them to wash their hands thoroughly before pounding and battering the dough mixture with their palms, then crafting them into round shapes before flattening to fry into the pastry treats craved by locals and tourists alike.

Going back to his roots, ECJH Agriculture Instructor Stanley Farrelly guided students in the playing of the ancient African game of “Warri,” an intellectually engaging pastime he learned during his traverse of Ghana and Ethiopia.

Stanley Jacobs of the fabulous Ten Sleepless Knights (TSK) with his Quelbe orchestra got students started into some of the popular Quadrille dances. Friday, students got the opportunity to apply what they learned on Thursday.