

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Amid Rise In Gun Crime, Sen. Blyden Calls For More Trade School Options

Business / **Published On November 09, 2015 10:13 AM /**

Staff **November 09, 2015**



ST. THOMAS -- As a direct response to the steady increase in gun violence that has plagued the territory, Senator Marvin Blyden recently met with individuals in the community to include non-profit organizations, business owners, and Department of Property and Procurement Commissioner Randolph Bennett to discuss "creative solutions", a press release Mr. Blyden's office issued late Sunday has revealed.

According to Mr. Blyden, the recent rise in crime triggered him to act more urgently, and he immediately contacted Mr. Bennett's office to requested a listing of all government-owned properties so he could determine where a trade school could be housed.

"A trade school where young adults can get skillfully trained in utilizing their hands for something more productive than pulling a trigger is needed," Mr. Blyden said. "The time for positive change in our community is now."

He added: "There is clearly a void in our community when it comes to programs for our young adults, in particular our young black men. I strongly believe there is a need for more technical training programs in our territory and I will stop at nothing to achieve this goal."

According to the release, Mr. Blyden met with individuals in the performing arts, certified welders, plumbers, electricians and other tradesmen here to discuss having more certified programs for young men to obtain certifications in different trades, which would help them obtain gainful employment.

"The Department of Property and Procurement plays a vital role in our community, and in my opinion, can help our non-profit organizations and businesses fulfill different initiatives that will help our community by providing space," Mr. Blyden, a first-term Democrat, continued.

The release further stated that Mr. Blyden believes meaningful and productive partnerships can be forged that would benefit the territory if resources are pooled and the community works together.

The senator closed by stating that he looks forward to fulfilling what he calls a "most needed" mandate. Mr. Blyden also asked the community for their support, and believes that the initiative is needed to help curb gun violence and give young adults a place to learn new skills and, in return, gain employment.