

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Encouraging Update On St. Croix Coast Guard Officer Involved In Tragic Accident

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In August, The Consortium [ran a story](#) about Diana Isidore, a member of the United States Coast Guard who was involved in an accident that nearly cut her life short. But the determined Virgin Islander has been fighting for her life ever since, and a new update reveals the progress she's made in three months. It's also a story we believe is fit for Veterans Day.

And as she's still in the recovery stages, a GoFundMe page has been created for those who wish to support her financially, [here](#).

In 2006, Ms. Isidore graduated from the United States Coast Guard Academy and so. She holds a BS in Operations Research and Computer Analysis from North Central University.



Diana Isidore, right, pose for a pic with an

assistant.

In 2015, while traveling on vacation, Ms. Isidore was in a vehicle accident that left her unable to speak and walk. During her rehabilitation at McGuire Veterans Hospital, she worked with speech pathologist Monique Jones who introduced her to communication devices. With the help of the McGuire Assistive Technology Program's clinical rehabilitation engineer Ben Salatin, Ms. Isidore tried out different communication devices until she found one that worked best for her.

She chose a device based on a tablet computer with software allowing her to type out what she wants to say. She chooses letters on the screen with an eye tracking system that makes the computer mouse follow her gaze. To click on the letter, she uses a special headband that senses the electrical signal from her muscles when she raises her eyebrow. She has become quite adept at operating her system and in addition to communicating, can control her environment via wireless home automation technology and use the tablet computer to do anything you and I would use a computer for.

When asked about her experience with the Assistive Technology Program, here is what she had to say:

Tell us about your experience with the Assistive Technology Program.

I had a good experience. Yes.

What challenges were you having that had you referred to the program?

Communication and controlling my environment.

Who did you work with?

Monique Jones and Ben Salatin.

What device did you get?

A GridPad Pro tablet computer communication device with eye tracking and the Brain Fingers hands free computer control system.

How has the AAC device made your life better?

I can communicate with you all.

What do you like about your communication device?

Easy to use.

What was the hardest thing to learn with the communication device?

Word prediction.

What activities are you doing now that you were not able to do before?

Playing games like Solitaire.

Would you say your quality of life has improved?

Yes.

Feature Image: Diana Isidore.