

The Virgin Islands Consortium

USVI Joins The World In Commemorating World AIDS Day On Dec. 1

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Frederiksted Health Care, Inc.

ST. CROIX -- The Ryan White Program at Frederiksted Health Care, Inc. will be hosting several events in commemoration of World AIDS Day on December 1, 2015, according to a press release FHC issued on Wednesday.

Mary Bowman, a world-renowned poet, artist, and activist will be visiting the island from the DC Metro area. Ms. Bowman will be the featured guest artist at the World AIDS Day Poetry Slam to be held at the Caribbean Museum Center for the Arts on Tuesday,

December 1, 2015 at 6pm. Admission is free and the general public is invited to attend, according to the release. Other local poets will be presenting, and Junie “Bomba” Allick will be the lead accompaniment on drums.

While on island, Bowman will also be making presentations to the students of St. Croix Central High School at 8:30 am, and St. Croix Educational Complex at 9:45am on Monday, November 30. Bowman is committed to an effort to increase HIV awareness and education among youth.

In the Virgin Islands there are approximately 1,200 people living with HIV. Globally, there are an estimated 34 million people living with the virus. More than 35 million people have died from the AIDS, making it one of the most destructive pandemics in history. There have been many advances in HIV treatment and we know so much more about the condition. Despite this, there are still some people who do not know how to protect themselves and others from HIV. Unfortunately, stigma and discrimination are a harsh, daily reality for some people living with HIV.

World AIDS Day is of paramount importance as it reminds the public that HIV has not faded away – in fact, the virus is on the rise, particularly in communities of color. There is still a vital need to increase awareness, fight prejudice, and increase education, the release concluded.