

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Croix And St. Thomas Relay For Life 2017 Events Raise Over \$180,000

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The American Cancer Society (ACS) USVI recently extended its deepest gratitude to residents, businesses, organizations and government agencies, for their participation and support of its two Relay For Life events recently held on May 20-21 at Canegata Ball Park, St. Croix and on June 24-25 at the Addelita Cancryn Junior High School, St. Thomas.

To date, the two events have netted \$183,000, according to ACS. The single largest sponsor was Limetree Bay Terminals on St. Croix with \$20,000. St. Croix fielded 35 fundraising teams, 17 of which have already met or exceeded their team goal of \$1,650. St. Thomas fielded 38 fundraising teams, 25 of which have met or exceeded their team

goal of \$1,650. Special mention must be made of the following teams, all of whom raised over \$5,000: Super Heroes Against Cancer, Limetree Bay Terminals and the Sunshine Teams, St. Croix, and Total Fitness and YaYa Sisters Rising Phoenix, St. Thomas.

Relay For Life is the biggest annual fundraiser for ACS. It is a community event, led by passionate volunteers and supported by a small staff. The year-round effort is a labor of love and expression of passion for the American Cancer Society's mission: to save lives, celebrate lives, and lead the fight for a world without cancer, according to ACS.

The effort on both islands is led by a core leadership team in the areas of event, teams, mission and experience. ACS USVI said it's deeply grateful to the core lead on both islands, Angel Torres, Vivian Furet, Rosalie Javois, Luz Rodriguez and Darren "Bogel" Stevens on St. Croix, and Vernice Gumbs, Loretta Lloyd, Therese Hodge, Daphne O'Neal and Merle Sasso on St. Thomas, who were ably supported by fuller committees of hard-working and dedicated volunteers.

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The American Cancer Society USVI currently has the unique privilege where the money raised here, stays here, and funds are primarily used in the following areas:

1. The ACS USVI Financial Assistance Program, for active treatment, medication, medical supplies and transportation. In 2016, ACS USVI provided over \$127,000 in patient financial assistance to uninsured, underinsured and underserved active cancer patients in the territory;
2. A \$50,000 grant to Cancer Support VI through the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands, used in tandem with the ACS USVI Financial Assistance Program;
3. Vouchers for free screening mammograms to uninsured and underinsured residents which are honored at participating local entities. In 2016 we distributed a total of 150 vouchers (70 for St. Croix, 70 for St. Thomas/Water Island, 10 for St. John);
4. Colorectal screening: In 2017, ACS has undertaken an additional \$20,000 grant with 2 public health care facilities: Frederiksted Health Care Inc on St. Croix and the East End Medical Center on St. Thomas to support increased colorectal screening primarily in USVI's population over 50 years old.

This year, ACS USVI has experienced an even greater demand for direct financial assistance. As such, the American Cancer Society, USVI urges Relay For Life teams who have not yet met their goal to complete and turn in their funds by no later than August 2017, according to the release. ACS USVI also urged the public to continue supporting other ACS USVI fundraising initiatives throughout the year. "Your donation, no matter how small, makes a difference in the life of someone who is journeying with cancer," reads the release.

The American Cancer Society is a global grassroots force of over 2 million volunteers saving lives in every community. As the largest voluntary health organization, the Society's efforts have contributed to a 25 percent decline in cancer death rates in the U.S. since 1991, according to the release.