

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Dept. Of Tourism Promotes Territory At Black Journalists Convention In New Orleans

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The territory was promoted to travel agents and journalists as a prime destination for travelers to spend their hard-earned vacations and participate in meetings and conventions, the Department of Tourism (D.O.T.) announced Friday.

D.O.T. outlined the territory's many attractions for a broad variety of activities to the participants at the National Association of Black Journalists (N.A.B.J.) convention, which attracted more than 3,300 delegates, according to the release.

The USVI tourism offerings enjoyed high visibility with journalists and communication specialists attending the 2017 NABJ Convention through its hosting of the convention's

popular Founders Reception for the seventh consecutive year.

D.O.T. Commissioner Beverly Nicholson-Doty highlighted the importance of cultivating strong relationships with African-American media professionals, including those who work with Black-owned media houses and those who are reporting on the national stage. She also enjoyed an informal discussion with former New Orleans Mayor Marc Morial, who is now the president and CEO of the National Urban League, which has 88 affiliates serving 300 communities, in 36 states and the District of Columbia, providing direct services that impact and improve the lives of more than 2 million people nationwide, according to the release.

Mrs. Nicholson-Doty was pleased to report on how the strong relationship with NABJ had positively impacted the coverage of the USVI in the multicultural and mainstream media served by NABJ members: "Our partnership with NABJ has truly changed the complexion of the stories emanating from the U.S. Virgin Islands as writers focus on our history, our culture and our people. This coverage is encouraging for our residents and enriching for our visitors," she said.

During the reception, guests were entertained by gifted Virgin Islands steel pan player Stan Brown, as well as mocko jumbie Alison Foy, who was accompanied by carnival dancers. A cocktail recipe featuring Cruzan rum was served at the reception at which NABJ Founder Paul Brock was honored for his tireless work in support of the 42-year-old organization. Mr. Brock began his journalism career in St. Thomas.

The commissioner participated in a NABJ panel about film and television where the department's new "Real Nice" ad campaign was unveiled and which encouraged aspiring and seasoned filmmakers to consider the territory as a convenient location for shooting their upcoming projects.

Continuing its policy of encouraging youth to look more closely at the importance of tourism to the territory's economy, D.O.T. hosted two recent communications graduates of the University of the Virgin Islands, Kevon Browne and Augustus Laurencin, whose participation in the NABJ convention gave them rich networking opportunities, as well as continuing education.

As part of its marketing push in New Orleans, D.O.T. hosted a lunch for travel agents and meeting planners. A presentation by the commissioner, and a vibrant cultural showcase, gave attendees deeper insight into what's new in the USVI and travel sellers were reminded of the territory's rich offerings.

"The interest in the USVI was strong. A few already had upcoming bookings in the cards, while others - inspired by destination updates as well as a vibrant cultural presentation - are now keen to introduce their clients to the prospect of a Virgin Islands getaway," the commissioner noted.

Senate President Senator Myron Jackson and Senator Marvin A. Blyden also attended the conference. Supporting the department's events in New Orleans with prize giveaways were Bolongo Bay Beach Resort, Frenchman's Reef & Morning Star Marriott Beach Resort and The Buccaneer.