

The Virgin Islands Consortium

U.S. Department of Education Awards \$2 Million Project SERV Grant To USVI

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The U.S. Department of Education has awarded a \$2 million Project School Emergency Response to Violence (SERV) grant to the U.S. Virgin Islands, along with selfsame grants to Texas and Puerto Rico.

“The victims of these hurricanes remain in our constant thoughts and prayers, but as I continue to visit the many impacted schools, I am heartened and in awe of those who are working around the clock to ensure our nation’s children are able to get back to class as quickly as possible,” said U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos. “While Project SERV grants are but a small part of this administration’s overall recovery and rebuilding efforts, they provide much-needed funds to help schools become operational again. As these

funds are distributed, the Department of Education will remain a partner in the long road to recovery ahead."

"This funding, which is larger than the SERV funding typically awarded to the U.S. Virgin Islands, is welcomed news for our education officials throughout the territory. While our needs concerning restoring an environment conducive to learning are vast, this funding represents good faith from the federal government in supporting the recovery and rebuilding effort," said Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett.

Project SERV funds can be used by local education agencies (LEAs) and institutions of higher education (IHEs) to help them recover from violent or traumatic events in which the learning environment has been disrupted. The Project SERV grants will complement federal, state and local recovery efforts to restore the learning environment.

The following are types of services allowable under Project SERV:

- Targeted mental health assessments, referrals and services related to the traumatic event with the goal of restoring victims/survivors to their pre-incident levels of functioning
- Overtime for teachers, counselors, law enforcement and security officers and other staff
- Substitute teachers and other staff as necessary
- Emergency transportation
- Technical assistance on developing an appropriate response to crisis
- Transportation and other costs to operate school at an alternative site
- Temporary security measures

To date, the Office of Safe and Healthy Students has awarded approximately \$49.7 million to 148 grantees since the grants program began in 2001.

To view a list of Project SERV grantees and award amounts, or to learn more about the program, visit <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/dvppserv/index.html>.