

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Larsen School Students Take African Heritage And Local Culture Seriously At VI History Month Celebration

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ST. CROIX -- Pearl B. Larsen Elementary School students recognized the rich African culture and history that is infused in their way of life, while boosting their multi-cultural home of St. Croix at the school's V.I. History Month program on Friday, March 9, the Department of Education said on Wednesday.

Following an opening remarks from Principal Joan Claxton extolling the rich African heritage that we have inherited today, students beckoned by Mistress of Ceremony took turns from Kindergarten to sixth grade to show appreciation of their cultures and history

with poems, placards and songs. Music teacher Casey with a her multi-grade group came out strong with students singing the lyrics to two popular West African songs, “Tue Tue” and “Obwissan.” After making the case that African roots are precious and to be respected especially through the fourth (4) graders outstanding performance, “Slaves: Priceless”, the focus shifted to the local culture on St. Croix.

Larsen’s Assistant Principal Delicia Espinosa set the tone musically and nostalgically with a V.I. Music Flashback,” playing local music from the late Quelbe performer Jamesie and Reggae Singer Devon Peters to begin with. The students were curious about the records and the phonograph she used, but quickly cherished the messages in the music that portrayed the beauty of St. Croix.

As the program progress, there were more local musical flashbacks and poems praising the island of St. Croix and its people. And to bring the observance to a close, Lisa Magras fourth grade class came off singing a local hit. Suddenly, to their surprise, Dynce, the performer of the song, jumped on stage to sing along with the students.

The crowd of students, parents and educators showed their appreciation with loud applauses and shouts as Dynce belted out the lyrics to his popular tune, “No Place Like Home.” Dynce, Dennis Hospedales is a singer and businessman and a product of the Virgin Islands public schools who was taught by Larsen’s Principal Joan Claxton among others. The students were unaware that he will be performing along with them.