

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Watch: In Keynote Address, Tourism Commissioner Conveys Hope In Territory's Resurgence

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ST. THOMAS -- Department of Tourism Commissioner, Beverly Nicholson-Doty, keyed the USVI Hotel and Tourism Association's annual meeting at the Ritz-Carlton on Thursday, unveiling the department's strategy in promoting the territory with a limited budget, while sharing data that gave insight on the pace of the USVI's recovery as it relates to hotel stay, airlift and cruise ship arrivals.

She spoke of the territory's current "Still Nice" marketing campaign, which was employed after Hurricanes Irma and Maria disrupted the "Real Nice" campaign, which came after the original "Virgin Islands Nice" campaign, all based on VI recording artist Pressure Buss Pipe's [hit song](#). (D.O.T. hopes to revert to the "Real Nice" campaign soon,

according to the commissioner.)

During the keynote, which lasted about an hour, Mrs. Nicholson-Doty also conveyed a sense of hope in the territory's resurgence, but cautioned in an interview with The Consortium following her keynote, that the process would take time.

"I think this is going to be a journey; it's not a sprint by any stretch of the imagination," she said. "However, I'm optimistic because we have to look at where we were. The truth of the matter is that we had an inventory that needed refurbishing. Certainly not the way we wanted to get enhancements of our hotel product, but we have an opportunity now, and it really is about looking at what is the opportunity." The commissioner spoke of opportunities of enhancements and rebranding, as well as room for new development.

And she said the recovery must happen in tandem with the wellbeing of Virgin Islanders, many of whom lost homes and jobs. "Getting our homes back, getting back to normalcy in terms of our healthcare and education and all those areas are equally important, because I've always said that if a place is a good place to live, then it's a good place to visit," Mrs. Nicholson-Doty said. "And so collectively we have to get to that place where it's good, but I only see us having opportunity, and it is managing those opportunities so that we come out with a harden infrastructure and a better product."

Watch the full keynote below, along with our interviews with Mrs. Nicholson-Doty, WICO head Clifford Graham, and Lisa Hamilton, president of the association.

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