

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Love City Community Network To Continue Providing Service Through Viya

Technology / **Published On April 15, 2018 03:42 PM /**

Staff **April 15, 2018**



ST. JOHN -- Viya has partnered with Love City Community Network (L.C.C.N.) to provide service to the residents of St. John, the communications firm announced over the weekend.

The announcement comes days following the Virgin Islands Next Generation Network's (viNGN) decision to halt its service to the nonprofit organization, which served as a communications lifeline to St. John residents following Hurricane Irma.

With L.C.C.N. no longer receiving free bandwidth, Viya and the nonprofit came to an agreement. Viya Vice President of Public Relations, Jennifer Matarangas-King, told The

Consortium that Viya has offered a competitive rate to L.C.C.N., which allows the nonprofit to use Viya's network for its service.

This speaks to viNGN's intention all along. By law, viNGN serves as a wholesale provider of bandwidth to local Internet service providers (I.S.P.s), and therefore would be undercutting the market if it had continued offering L.C.C.N. bandwidth.

Ivan Jacobs, L.C.C.N.'s outreach development director, said the nonprofit currently solicits donations, and could later charge a minimal "fee per service" to its over 400 customers to maintain operations. The company, formed immediately following Hurricane Irma, has grown into a respected operation that aims to provide service to St. John residents after devastating storms. Mr. Jacobs said L.C.C.N.'s network is being built in a way that allows it to quickly uninstall equipment before storms and get back up and running swiftly. He said it's a model L.C.C.N. would like to see replicated in St. Thomas and St. Croix as well.

"Love City Community Network, a nonprofit internet service provider that was created in the wake of Hurricane Irma by fellow communications experts, addressed an immediate need for telecommunications that Viya could not provide at the time, due to the decimation of our plant in St. John," said Viya CEO Alvaro Pilar.

"This nonprofit organization has been able to provide internet service to hundreds of business and residential customers that now rely on them for their communication needs. Today, I am proud to announce that Viya, the true local service provider, will join with L.C.C.N. to keep St. John connected," he added.

L.C.C.N. currently serves most of St. John, including the following areas: Cruz Bay, Contant, Pastory, Giff Hill, Susannaberg, Lovango Cay, Peter Bay, Maria Bluff, Fish Bay, Bordeaux Mt. and Coral Bay. Future sites include Ajax Peak and East End.

Update: April 15, 2018

Ivan Jacobs has since reached out to The Consortium to clarify that viNGN's service to L.C.C.N. was not being provided free of charge. "We worked quite well with viNGN until quite recently when it came time to sign an agreement and pay," he said. "Viya thankfully was happy to work out a fair agreement with us."