

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Fall Semester of Project Promise's Exciting 'Ticket to Ride' Program Commences

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ST. CROIX -- Last week, officials from Project Promise kicked off their annual Ticket to Ride (TTR) program. The Project Promise program allows fifth graders in the public-school system a chance to visit the Buck Island Reef National Monument and is sponsored through a grant from the National Park Foundation (NPF).

The NPF, the official nonprofit partner of the National Park Service (NPS), is expanding the impact of its programs by providing efficient transportation support for thousands of students to visit U.S. national parks, and Project Promise has again received a grant from NPF to conduct its 2019-2020 program, according to a release the nonprofit issued.

“We are excited to once again partner with the National Park Service and Big Beard’s Adventure Tours to offer this program to our island’s youth,” said Resa O’Reilly, Project Promise president. “Thanks to our collaborative efforts and funding from the National Park Foundation, many of the students participating in this year’s program will be visiting Buck Island for the first time.”

According to the release, program kicked off last week at Lew Muckle Elementary School, and students learned about the ecological significance of Buck Island, one of the most pristine barrier coral reef systems in the Caribbean. The TTR program occurs over several days and begins with an in-school visit to provide students with information on the reef. Students will then take a field trip to Buck Island on the second day and conclude on the final day with a post-park visit and activity at the students’ schools.

Project Promise also manages the *Open Outdoors for Kids* program through its partnership with NPS, which allows fourth graders the opportunity to visit and learn about the Salt River Bay National Historic Site and Ecological Preserve.