

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Governor Bryan Provides St. Croix Nonprofit 'Ten Thousand Helpers' With \$30,000 Grant

Community Center / **Published On September 11, 2020 07:36 PM /**

Staff Consortium **September 11, 2020**



Governor Bryan poses for a photo with Malik Stridiron, right, head of Ten Thousand Helpers. By. YOUTUBE VIDEO

Government House on Friday announced that Governor Albert Bryan awarded St. Croix nonprofit Ten Thousand Helpers a \$30,000 grant to assist the organization with its Fiscal Year 2021 operations.

Ten Thousand Helpers — led by Executive Director Malik Stridiron — is based in Frederiksted and advocates for people who are homeless or suffering from mental health or substance abuse. The organization also provides shelter, life skills programs and job

training to help aid them in their transition back into society.

"Groups like Ten Thousand Helpers are the cornerstone of social services that are key in helping the government provide the care needed to all people of the community, and I am grateful for the good work they do," said Governor Bryan. "My Administration is committed to maximizing social services in the territory, particularly for persons experiencing homelessness, substance or alcohol abuse or developmental disabilities, and our non-profit organizations are instrumental in achieving that goal."

In January, Mr. Bryan submitted legislation to the 33rd Legislature to establish the Virgin Islands Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Act, legislation the administration described as "sweeping and comprehensive reform of the mental health system that would unify the various parts of the V.I. Code, some dating back to 1965, into one cohesive system across Health, Human Services, Justice and other related agencies and departments."

The legislation also would establish the territory's first behavioral health, mental health, developmental disability and alcohol and substance abuse facility, and it would allow for interdepartmental coordination between the court, government agencies, private and public facilities, health professionals and non-profit organizations to address Virgin Islanders' mental health needs through the creation and expansion of new divisions, programs, treatments and patient rights policies, according to the release.

Ten Thousand Helpers was established in 2007 to recognize the devastating impact of mental illness on individuals, families and friends and recognize the isolation and social rejection that the condition triggers. The organization also operates the transitional facility Rainbow House in Frederiksted.

To become a volunteer or for more information, call 340-719-282 or 340-422-2828 or send an email to tenthousandhelpersofstcroixinc@gmail.com.