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Virgin Islands Culture on Marvelous Display During Biden-Harris Inaugural Parade

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The Virgin Islands took part in the Virtual Parade Across America on Wednesday for the inauguration of President Joseph Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. By. YOUTUBE SCREENSHOT

The USVI was represented in one of the first official celebrations, called a Virtual Parade Across America, of the inauguration of President Joseph Biden and Vice-President Kamala Harris Wednesday. About four hours after the pair took the Oath of Office, the virtual, nation-wide parade began.

The parade commenced with Mr. Biden getting a military escort near the White House before he walked the final stretch surrounded by his family and entered the doors of the presidential home.

The virtual parade included short videos from groups across all 50 states and territories. Participants included musical groups, military drill teams, dance teams and more as each state did something different to represent some of their culture.

During the Virgin Islands short clip, the familiar sounds of steel pan and the sight of baton twirlers that Virgin Islanders are accustomed to hearing and seeing during carnival were broadcast for the nation to see. The video included nice visual shots displaying the territory's beauty.

Representatives in the video congratulated Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris on their inauguration. They added, "Sending our best wishes to the administration and our great nation, founded on the principles of life, liberty, equality and justice for all."

Virgin Islands neighbors Puerto Rico were represented by Puerto Rico Royalty Winterguard, Centenaria Banda Colegio University, Latin Power Dance & Arts and Banda Segunda Macana De Guayanilla.

One of the most notable musical selections was a performance by Grammy-nominee Andrea Day, who performed over Black Lives Matter mural on a section of the famed Hollywood boulevard, while 10 year-old Katilyn Sounders, also known as the Skate Kid, did a roller-skating dance routine in Black Lives Matter Plaza in Washington D.C. The collaboration was made possible as a result of the virtual element of the parade.

The event was hosted by Tony Goldwyn, known by some for his role as president in Scandal. Mr. Goldwyn, speaking after the Virgin Islands portion of the video, stated, "As soon as it is safe that's where I'm going on my next vacation."

There were sections during the virtual broadcast, including one called Heroes Next Door, that featured Americans who have done special things in their communities.

Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett helped in making sure the Virgin Islands was part of the celebration of new leadership.

Said Ms. Plaskett in a press release before the event, "As a nation, we are strengthened by our respect for one another. By lifting up voices from all walks of life, in every corner of our country, and with the help of the Virgin Islands, the first moments of the Biden-Harris Administration will be a celebration of an inclusive, resilient and united America."

In the same release, she added additional credit to those who helped make the Virgin Islands participation in the parade possible. "I want to thank Governor Albert Bryan, Commissioner of Tourism Joseph Boschulte and Assistant Director of the Division of Festivals Shamari Haynes, along with the participants from the Virgin Islands for working so diligently with my office to make this historic event an even more meaningful one," she said.