

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Ritz and ICF Celebrate Success of Restoring Futures Program

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Kyle Murphy **October 14, 2021**



The Ritz-Carlton and ICF held a reception in celebration of the success of the Restoring Futures program, a model for disaster recovery, workforce innovation, and inclusive economic transformation developed at the hotel over a two year period that can be duplicated in the territory and nationwide.

Evelyn Turnbull-Banson, employee consultant at ICF, said at the reception that after the “double-disasters” of Hurricane Irma and Maria “a lot of people were hurting, they didn’t have jobs and I was so pleased to be apart and embedded here at the Ritz Carlton St.

Thomas to help people to regain their jobs through our program of Restoring Futures and we did that, restore futures.”

She stated that they hired approximately 125 people through the dislocated workers program and “that is something to be very proud of.”

She completed the Human Resources department at the hotel for making the success of the program possible “I used to blow their phones up to get people registered...and the rest is history.”

Arjun Channa, General Manager of The Ritz-Carlton, St. Thomas “the word that comes to mind is tenacity and resilience and those are two very precious words out of the dictionary that shows that when you have those nothing else can come in the way. You are always going to win, the more I hear about you (Ms. Turnbull-Banson) personally drove this as a mission... we are forever grateful.”

In a press release about the program Mr. Channa said “Restoring Futures wage reimbursements enabled us to quickly identify and hire more employees and provide them with impactful on-the-job training. By following the intricate step-by-step process, Restoring Futures was an integral factor in helping us effectively achieve our objectives – and it was more than successful” and “Restoring Futures benefited employers and eligible jobseekers across the Territory. We look forward to future collaborations with ICF and the Government of the Virgin Islands.”

The press release stated “On behalf of the Government of the Virgin Islands, ICF, a global consulting services company, was the recipient of a Trade and Economic Transition National Dislocated Worker Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.”

“Leveraging Restoring Futures, ICF and the Ritz-Carlton, St. Thomas collaborated to create a national model for disaster recovery, workforce innovation, and inclusive economic transformation. The Restoring Futures model, developed in the USVI, can be replicated, and scaled up across the Territory and nationwide” according to the press release.