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Fifth Community Business Forum Ahead of Tourist Season Set For Sept. 8th

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Cruise ship at the Frederiksted Pier on St. Croix By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

Government House announced Thursday that the Office of the Governor in partnership with Royal Caribbean Cruise Line and the Department of Tourism, is holding the fifth USVI Community Business Forum to engage the business community in preparing for the upcoming enhanced cruising season.

The forum will be held from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., on Thursday, September 8, at the University of the Virgin Islands' Great Hall, on St. Croix. The event will also be live-streamed at facebook.com/GovernmentHouseUSVI, Gov't House said.

“In April, Royal Caribbean announced plans to increase port calls to St. Croix in the upcoming cruising season, from approximately 50,000 passengers before the COVID pandemic hit, to now 140,000 passengers. That is incredible and welcome news, and we want to make sure the business community is planning and preparing for the increase in passengers,” said David Bornn, Chief Legal Counsel for the Office of the Governor, who developed the Community Business Forum series. “The governor’s mission is for outreach to the St. Croix business community to give them the information and tools they need for the enhanced cruise ships calls. The forum gives our business community an opportunity to engage directly with Administration officials, cruise line and hospitality experts.”

According to the release, the theme of this forum is "Reshaping the Guest Experience", and the conversation will address business opportunities, prioritizing customer service, the tourism infrastructure and building a skilled hospitality workforce.

Speakers include:

- Crystal Campbell, Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, Director, Business Integration, Destination Development
- Joseph Boschulte, Tourism Commissioner, USVI Department of Tourism
- Calvert White, Sports, Parks & Recreation Commissioner, USVI Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation
- Julien Henley, ADA Coordinator, Office of the USVI Governor
- Akeel St. Jean, President, St. Croix Chamber of Commerce
- Dr. Kendra Harris, Dean, School of Business, University of the Virgin Islands
- Lisa Hamilton, President, USVI Hotel & Tourism Association

The USVI Community Business Forum series was developed to address Covid-19’s impact on the territory’s economy and building a path to recovery – putting our businesses, and our livelihoods, back together, according to Government House. The series is an initiative of the Office of the Governor, the V.I. Economic Development Authority, and the V.I. Department of Tourism in partnership with the Royal Caribbean Group. Since its inception 2020, four virtual sessions have been held to engage the USVI business community.

For more information and to register visit www.vi.gov/cbf.