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VIPD, Office of Highway Safety Team Up With Aliyah Boston to Promote Safe Traffic Behaviors

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Basketball superstar and Virgin Islands native (St. Thomas, USVI) Aliyah Boston.

National basketball superstar and Virgin Islands native Aliyah Boston has joined forces with the V.I. Police Department and the Office of Highway Safety to encourage safe traffic behaviors and improve road usage outcomes for resident and visitors.

According to the V.I.P.D., the traffic safety campaign is comprised of four audio and video ads targeting impaired driving, distracted driving, occupant protection, seat belt and child car safety seat usage, along with speeding.

“We are excited to partner with Ms. Boston to address traffic safety in the territory,” stated VIPD Commissioner Ray Martinez. “Despite the simplicity of our roads compared to those on the

mainland, we record too many avoidable crashes, injuries and fatalities.”

The V.I.P.D. said that during fiscal year 2021, the territory experienced 4,246 crashes (approximately 12 crashes per day) involving over 8,100 occupants. This resulted in over 340 injuries requiring medical care and 11 fatalities.

Driving too fast for road conditions accounted for 100 of these crashes, and 72 crashes involved impaired drivers, the police department made known. There were 340 crashes reported to involve unrestrained occupants, causing moderate to serious injuries for 174 occupants.

Additionally, with cell phone use becoming more pervasive behind the wheel, many of these crashes resulted from motorists driving while distracted, the V.I.P.D. said. “Shifting the risk-taking habits of motorists and their passengers will create safer roadways for everyone,” Mr. Martinez said.

During her visit to the territory in May, Boston witnessed the reckless roadway conduct responsible for this alarming data, according to the V.I.P.D. “When I proposed using my platform and voice to encourage highway safety in the U.S. Virgin Islands, I had to jump at it,” said an eager Ms. Boston. “It could literally save lives!”

According to the police department, it is Ms. Boston’s hope that her notoriety and reputation will provide a convincing voice that would shift risk-taking tendencies for several data-identified target groups. Safe driving habits improve motorway usage outcomes for all road users.

For more traffic safety information or to help address unsafe roadway practices in the territory, contact the Virgin Islands Office of Highway Safety through Director O’Neal at daphne.oneal@vipd.vi.gov, or Occupant Protection Planner/Coordinator Denise Gomes at denise.gomes@vipd.vi.gov. You may also contact the office via telephone at (340) 772-3025 or (340) 473-7383.