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Ben Stout is Latest USVI Native to Pilot Major Aircraft Home, Stoking Island Pride

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Benjamin "Ben" Stout.

The U.S. Virgin Islands is celebrating another success story as St. Thomas native, Benjamin "Ben" Stout, landed in St. Thomas as a pilot with Delta Airlines on Sunday. The accomplishment is part of a wave of Virgin Islanders who are making their mark in the aviation industry, proudly representing their home at major airlines.

Born in 1965, Stout is the son of the late John Stout, a prominent attorney with a long-standing law office, Grunnert Stout on Government Hill in St. Thomas. Ben graduated from Antilles School and moved to Florida for college, where he pursued flight training.

In 1989, when Hurricane Hugo ravaged the islands, Stout arranged a relief flight, bringing much-needed supplies to the devastated areas. Governor Alexander Farrelly gave him the green light, stating, "If you can land on runway, you can bring it down."

Stout's community spirit didn't end there; he also facilitated charter flights for country musician Kenny Chesney, helping to relocate pets from animal shelters in the aftermath of Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

Stout, married for 27 years and a father to four children, continues to visit St. Thomas in his personal time, often indulging in fishing trips with friends.

This island pride was also in full swing recently when American Airlines flight 1461, expertly piloted by 33-year-old Virgin Islander Adrian P. Tutein, [touched down at Cyril E. King Airport in St. Thomas](#). A product of the public school system, Tutein earned his bachelor's in aeronautical science from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Tutein's landing was met with jubilation by family members, V.I. Port Authority officials, and the Department of Education commissioner. Education Commissioner Dr. Dionne Wells-Hedrington expressed her excitement, stating that Tutein's achievements were inspiring to young Virgin Islanders with ambitious goals.

VIPA Executive Director Carlton Dowe also highlighted the significance of the event, mentioning his personal contribution to Tutein's story. He was instrumental in helping Tutein build his flying hours by coordinating with local carriers, such as Cape Air and Seaborne.

Yet another young Virgin Islands pilot, Sheldon Martin, a captain with United Airlines, [recently co-piloted flight 1529](#) to the Cyril E. King Airport.