

Virgin Islands Public Broadcasting System
FY 2017 BUDGET HEARING PRESENTATION

*Submitted by: Tanya-Marie Singh, Chief Executive Officer & Chief Operating Officer
July 12, 2016*

GOOD AFTERNOON SENATOR GRAHAM, MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE, AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE 31ST LEGISLATURE. I AM TANYA-MARIE SINGH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM. I AM HERE TODAY TO PRESENT TO YOU THE VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM'S 2017 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$4,436,061.

TODAY, I HAVE WITH ME IN THE WELL, DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AFFAIRS, CHERYL MARTIN-LIBURD, DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING, ROBERT DICKINSON, AND HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR, DIANE RICHARDSON. IN THE AUDIENCE IS OUR DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING, ROXANNE FLEMING-COSTON, AND MY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT, MONIQUE WALTERS.

THE VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM CONTINUES TO BE THE PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE (PBS) MEMBER STATION HERE IN THE TERRITORY. WE ARE ALSO THE NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO (NPR) STATION SERVING THE TERRITORY. PBS PROVIDES ITS MEMBER STATIONS WITH PROGRAMMING IN CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND SCIENTIFIC AREAS, IN CHILDREN'S FARE, AND IN NEWS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS. IT ALSO PROVIDES EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES TO ITS MEMBER STATIONS TO SUPPORT THE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIVIDUALS, STARTING FROM PRE-SCHOOL. NPR OFFERS A BROAD RANGE OF HIGH-QUALITY NEWS AND CULTURAL PROGRAMMING TO RADIO STATIONS THROUGH PROGRAMS SUCH AS: *MORNING EDITION, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, FRESH AIR, THE DIANE REHM SHOW, AND LATINO USA* TO NAME A FEW.

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IN 1972 THE VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM BEGAN TO TRANSMIT, AND FOR THE PAST 44 YEARS, WTJX-TV HAS PROVIDED NON-COMMERCIAL, EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL, ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORTS PROGRAMMING, ALONG WITH INFORMATIVE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMS TO THE PEOPLE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS. IN CONTRAST, WTJX-FM IS OUR NEW BABY, HAVING BEEN ON THE AIR NOW FOR A YEAR AND A HALF AND BROADCASTING NPR PROGRAMMING FOR 9 MONTHS. VIPBS RECEIVES OVERSIGHT BY A DYNAMIC 11-MEMBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

SENATORS, LAST YEAR WHEN I CAME BEFORE YOU, I RELATED THAT WE RECEIVED A GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$750,000 FROM THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO FUND THE PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT FOR A NEW MOBILE PRODUCTION UNIT. THIS UNIT WAS NECESSARY FOR THE SYSTEM TO CONTINUE TO EFFECTIVELY PROVIDE LIVE REMOTE PROGRAMS. I ALSO INFORMED YOU THAT SINCE WE WERE RESTRICTED FROM PURCHASING THE VEHICLE WITH THE GRANT MONIES, THE PUBLIC FINANCE AUTHORITY SET ASIDE \$136,500 FOR WTJX TO PURCHASE SAID VEHICLE. AS WE DEMONSTRATED TO MOST OF YOU TWO WEEKS AGO, WE ARE IN RECEIPT OF OUR NEW MOBILE UNIT WHICH HAS PUT US IN A POSITION TO KEEP PACE WITH TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES. ALTHOUGH THE UNIT IS NOT YET EQUIPPED WITH THE SATELLITE UPLINK FEATURE, WE ARE DETERMINED TO ACQUIRE SAID EQUIPMENT. THE SATELLITE UPLINK WILL ALLOW US TO BROADCAST NATIONALLY WHICH IS ESPECIALLY BENEFICIAL DURING TIMES OF MAJOR STORMS WHICH KNOCKS OUT COMMUNICATION. IT WILL ALSO ALLOW US MORE VERSATILITY IN BROADCASTING LIVE FROM ANYWHERE IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS. ADDITIONALLY, IT WOULD PROVIDE VISITING BROADCASTERS WITH

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STATE OF THE ART EQUIPMENT ALREADY ON ISLAND TO BE USED IN ORDER TO BROADCAST EVENTS.

EVEN AS THE TECHNOLOGICAL FUTURE COMES RUSHING AT US AT DIZZYING SPEED, OUR FUNDAMENTAL MISSION IS THE CONSTANT STAR BY WHICH WE SET OUR COURSE. WE ARE FOCUSED ON BEING THE TERRITORY'S WINDOW TO THE WORLD, PROVIDING ESSENTIAL HIGH QUALITY CONTENT THAT REFLECTS OUR TERRITORY AND COUNTRY'S DIVERSITY AND CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS. AS SUCH, WE CONTINUE TO PRODUCE LOCAL PROGRAMS THAT ARE MEANINGFUL TO OUR COMMUNITY. THIS FISCAL YEAR, WE CONTINUED OUR REGULAR PROGRAMS TO INCLUDE, *FACE TO FACE WITH ADDIE OTTLEY*, *RITMO DEL DOCE*, HORSE RACING FROM THE RANDALL "DOC" JAMES AND CLINTON PHIPPS RACETRACKS, LIVE COVERAGE OF THE STATE OF THE TERRITORY ADDRESS, LIVE COVERAGE OF CARNIVAL AND FESTIVAL PARADES, *THE TASTE OF TWO ISLANDS*, AND *QUIZ BOWL*. IN HONOR OF NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH, WE PRESENTED *COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS: MY DISABILITY IS ONE PART OF WHO I AM*. WE ALSO AIRED *REFLECTIVE CONVERSATIONS ON HEALTH DISPARITIES RESEARCH* WHICH EXPLORES THE INEQUALITIES THAT EXIST IN THE DELIVERY OF HEALTHCARE TO DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PEOPLE. IN ADVANCE OF OUR CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION, WE HAVE BEEN RECORDING AND AIRING VARIOUS LECTURES PRESENTED BY THE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION, WE AIRED THE *99TH TRANSFER DAY COMMEMORATION* ON BOTH ST. THOMAS AND ST. CROIX, WE RECORDED THE REFLECTIONS OF A CRUCIAN CENTENARIAN WITH OUR PRESENTATION, *CONVERSATION WITH LIVING TREASURES: JOHN TRANBERG*, AND WE WRAPPED UP THE FIRST SEASON OF *HALL PASS* WHICH TAKES A LOOK AT STUDENTS, SCHOOL EVENTS, AND ADDITIONAL VIEWS AND OPINIONS OF STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND

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PARENTS IN OUR COMMUNITY. NATIONALLY, WE HAVE INCREDIBLE, ICONIC SERIES LIKE THE *NEWSHOUR*, *FRONTLINE*, *NOVA*, AND *NATURE*. SOME OF OUR NATIONAL SERIES AND PRODUCERS ARE MARKING MAJOR MILESTONES THIS YEAR, WITH *MASTERPIECE* CELEBRATING 45 YEARS OF GREAT DRAMA, *LIVE FROM LINCOLN CENTER* MARKING ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON, *AMERICAN MASTERS* CELEBRATING ITS 30TH BIRTHDAY, AND *INDEPENDENT LENS* AND *CHARLIE ROSE* BOTH CELEBRATING THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY. WE JOIN THE OTHER PBS STATIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN BEING OUR NATION'S STORYTELLERS, USING OUR PLATFORMS TO REFLECT AND REMIND OUR VIEWERS OF OUR SHARED HISTORY AND OUR COMMON FUTURE. NOTABLY, WE AIRED *THE BLACK PANTHERS: VANGUARD OF THE REVOLUTION* WHICH IS THE FIRST FEATURE LENGTH DOCUMENTARY TO SHOWCASE THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY, ITS SIGNIFICANCE TO THE BROADER AMERICAN CULTURE, ITS CULTURAL AND POLITICAL AWAKENING OF BLACK PEOPLE, AND THE PAINFUL LESSONS WROUGHT WHEN A MOVEMENT DERAILS; *JACKIE ROBINSON*, A TWO-PART SERIES WHICH EXAMINES THE LIFE OF JACK ROOSEVELT ROBINSON, WHO IN 1947 LIFTED A NATION AND AN ENTIRE RACE ON HIS SHOULDERS WHEN HE CROSSED BASEBALL'S COLOR LINE; AND *LATINO AMERICANS*, A SERIES WHICH TELLS THE HISTORY OF EARLY SETTLEMENT, CONQUEST AND IMMIGRATION, OF TRADITION AND REINVENTION, OF ANGUISH AND CELEBRATION AND THE GRADUAL CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW AMERICAN IDENTITY FROM DIVERSE SOURCES THAT CONNECTS AND EMPOWERS MILLIONS OF PEOPLE TODAY. AS WE APPROACH FY 2017, WE LOOK FORWARD TO FINISHING UP OUR DOCUMENTARY ON GOVERNOR JUAN LUIS. WE ASPIRE TO HELP EDUCATE THE VOTING PUBLIC BY PARTNERING WITH THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS TO BRING A PRIMARY DEBATE FOR THE OFFICE OF DELEGATE TO CONGRESS AND FORUMS FOR THOSE CANDIDATES FOR THE 32ND

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LEGISLATURE. WE WILL CONTINUE OUR DECADES OLD PARTNERSHIP WITH THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS TO PRODUCE OUR MEET THE CANDIDATES SERIES. AND, WE WILL BRING LIVE GENERAL ELECTION NIGHT COVERAGE.

WE'VE EXPANDED OUR MISSION TO EDUCATE ACROSS PLATFORMS, INCORPORATING THE POTENTIAL OF NEW TECHNOLOGY INTO OUR GROUND GAME TO FURTHER OUR REACH. WE CONTINUE TO LEVERAGE OUR CONTENT AND OUR PBS EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES TO ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITY AND ASSIST IN BRIDGING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP WITH PBS'S INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL CONTENT AND SERVICES. MOST OF THESE RESOURCES ARE FOCUSED ON HELPING CHILDREN IN LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES BUILD THE MATH AND LITERACY SKILLS THEY NEED FOR SUCCESS IN SCHOOL AND IN LIFE.

TO ELABORATE ON THE TOPIC OF BROADENING OUR REACH, WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED OUR GOAL OF STREAMING OUR PROGRAMS LIVE TO A WORLD WIDE AUDIENCE. WHILE THIS MAY SEEM SIMPLE ENOUGH, OUR STREAMING REQUIREMENTS ARE EXCEPTIONAL. THE FCC MANDATES THAT WE MUST STREAM LIVE WITH CLOSED CAPTIONING. WITH THE HELP OF WGBH, THE FLAGSHIP PUBLIC TELEVISION STATION OUT OF BOSTON, WE WERE ABLE TO RECEIVE NEW TECHNOLOGY. NOW, WE ARE ABLE LIVE STREAM EVERY PARADE, FORUM, AND LOCAL PROGRAM TO VIRGIN ISLANDERS LOCATED ANYWHERE THERE IS INTERNET WHILE ABIDING BY FCC REQUIREMENTS.

GOING BACK TO THE SUBJECT OF EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH, WE PROMOTED OUR NEWEST PBS KIDS ANIMATED SERIES, READY JET GO! THROUGH A PBS MINI GRANT. THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION OF READY JET GO! IS TO BUILD ON CHILDREN'S CURIOSITY ABOUT ASTRONOMY

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AND EARTH SCIENCE, TELLING STORIES ABOUT SPACE IN A WAY THAT IS ACCESSIBLE TO CHILDREN. THE GOAL IS TO ENCOURAGE KIDS, AGES 3 TO 8, TO GET TO KNOW THE EARTH AND TO UNDERSTAND OUR PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE. MONIES FROM THIS GRANT WAS ALSO USED TO SUPPORT THE AWARD TO THE CROP FARMER OF THE YEAR DURING THE ST. CROIX AGRICULTURAL FAIR.

THIS SUMMER, OUR MISSION AGAIN IS TO HELP PREVENT LEARNING LOSS. WE INTEND TO SUPPORT THIS MISSION THROUGH SEVERAL ACTIVITIES. THROUGH A MINI GRANT FROM PBS, WE ARE PARTNERING WITH THE VIRGIN ISLANDS HOUSING AUTHORITY TO BRING THE ODD SQUAD CURRICULUM TO AUREO DIAZ HEIGHTS AND WALTER IM HODGE HOUSING COMMUNITIES ON ST. CROIX. FOR TWO WEEKS IN JULY, CAMPERS WILL DEDICATE HALF THEIR DAY TO AN ODD SQUAD MATH CURRICULUM. WTJX WILL PROVIDE A TWO WEEK CURRICULUM FROM PBS, WITH ACCOMPANYING MATERIAL, WHICH EMPHASIZES PROBLEM SOLVING, TEAMWORK, AND PERSEVERANCE. CAMPERS WILL LEARN TO USE EFFECTIVE MATHEMATICAL PRACTICES AND CRITICAL MATHEMATICAL CONCEPTS AND SKILLS. AS WE USUALLY DO, WE PARTNERED WITH THE GOVERNOR'S SUMMER READING PROGRAM. THIS YEAR, WE DISTRIBUTED SUMMER ADVENTURES CORNER BOOKLETS, WORDGIRL SUMMER FUN BOOKLETS, LEARNING ACTIVITY CHECKLISTS, READING CHARTS, AND BOOKMARKS. THESE ACTIVITIES ARE IN ADDITION TO OUR ON AIR AND ON LINE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN.

WE'VE CONTINUED OUR ROLE AS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATION PARTNER BY ASSISTING WITH THE SCREENING OF THE INDEPENDENTLY PRODUCED DOCUMENTARY, *PROUDLY WE SERVED: VIRGIN ISLANDS VETERANS OF THE VIETNAM*

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WAR. IN ADDITION TO ASSISTING WITH THE SCREENINGS, WE AIRED THE PROGRAM DURING VIRGIN ISLANDS HISTORY MONTH.

THIS PAST CHRISTMAS WE PUT ON OUR NINTH CHRISTMAS FOREDAY SERENADE WITH STANLEY AND THE TEN SLEEPLESS KNIGHTS ON ST. CROIX. ON ST. THOMAS, WE PARTNERED AGAIN WITH HOOTERS RESTAURANT IN GETTING TOYS DONATED FOR THE MARINES CORP RESERVE TOYS FOR TOTS PROGRAM. AND, AS USUAL, WE AIRED 24-HOURS OF LOCAL CHRISTMAS PROGRAMMING ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

BEFORE I CLOSE, I WANT TO THANK MY STAFF FOR THEIR CONTINUOUS COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION. I'D LIKE TO THANK OUR VOLUNTEERS, OUR SUPPORTERS, OUR MEMBERS, OUR UNDERWRITERS, OUR DONORS, OUR MANY PARTNERS WHO HELP US TO REACH A BROAD RANGE OF VIRGIN ISLANDERS, AND, OF COURSE, OUR VIEWERS. I'D ALSO LIKE TO THANK MY BOARD OF DIRECTORS, WHO VOLUNTEER THEIR SERVICE TO THE SYSTEM. LAST BUT NOT LEAST, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE GOVERNOR AND THE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE WHO KEEP US FUNDED.

SENATORS, I APPRECIATE YOUR INDULGENCE IN ALLOWING ME TO PRESENT OUR BUDGET TO YOU TODAY. I WELCOME YOUR QUESTIONS, SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY.