



**340 Integrated Project Team  
USVI Registered Construction Apprenticeship Training  
Program Outline**



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340 Integrated Project Team  
463 Work and Rest  
Christiansted, VI 00820  
340-998-1602

**Email: [340IPT@gmail.com](mailto:340IPT@gmail.com)**

**Submitted To:**  
United States Virgin Islands  
Stakeholders



## **Virgin Islands Construction Apprenticeship Program Overview:**

340 Integrated Project Team (340-IPT) is specifically structured to Implement a Registered Apprenticeship Program in the United States Virgin Islands (USVI). Our work will involve training and creating employment opportunities as part of the Disaster Recovery, Housing and Community Development Initiatives. We will partner and work with plans that benefit people and communities on St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. John. The overall objective is to empower the people of the islands to make positive changes to the local economy while improving and restoring the quality of life for locals and visitors alike.

The task of community revitalization can be overwhelming. It takes people, government, organizations, businesses, schools, universities, community groups and others to commit to work together toward a better future. No matter how monumental the task may be this certainly can be accomplished with the resources the people, businesses that the USVI has at hand.

The Virgin Islands is one of the premier vacation destinations in the Caribbean. The islands attract people from all over the world year around. However, recently, the islands have experienced severe storm damage that has affected homes and businesses. The reality is that this may very well occur again. The current long term disaster recovery efforts are making a tremendous impact on the many homes and communities affected by the storms. This being said, "How do we not only recover but revitalize the islands?" Our Apprenticeship Program looks at the greatest assets that the islands have to offer, its people, the culture, businesses, and government.

## **What Are Apprenticeships?**

The practice of apprenticeships has been around for some time, to say the least. In the 18th century B.C., the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi — best known for its "eye for an eye" dictum required artisans to teach the next generation their crafts.

Traditionally, apprenticeships have been associated with trade vocations such as carpenters, electricians, plumbers, masons, construction workers, and machinists. Today, you also can find apprentices in fields such as healthcare, information technology, cybersecurity, financial services, and graphic design.

An apprenticeship features hands-on learning under the supervision of a mentor, along with relevant technical or classroom instruction. These **positions are paid, and apprentices earn increasingly higher wages as they progress** in their programs.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, in 2020, there were more than 636,000 apprentices nationwide, with about 221,000 individuals entering the apprenticeship system that year. Over 3,100 registered apprenticeship programs were established in 2020, 73% more than in 2009.

Despite this growth, the overall numbers remain modest. Nationwide, apprentices constitute only 0.2% of the labor force.

The term "**registered**" refers to a program **certified** by the Department of Labor or a state apprenticeship agency. It's the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval for such programs, a sort of accreditation recognizing a program's validity. Today's apprenticeship system was established in 1937 by the National Apprenticeship Act, also known as the Fitzgerald Act. Data from 2017 showed that 92.7% of apprentices were men, which perhaps isn't surprising given the prevalence of males in the trade professions.

One study found that in fiscal year 2017, just over 16% of apprentices were Hispanic or Latino. Other findings showed that 10.7% of apprentices were Black, while some 63% identified as white. It seems minorities are well-represented among the ranks of apprentices. An Aspen Institute report concludes **that apprenticeships "hold the appeal and promise of improving workplace diversity and providing career pathways for low-income people."**

### **340 Integrated Project Team (340-IPT)-DOL Registered Apprenticeship**

The key to the success and timely completion of this initiative is centered around the commitment of a strong Integrated Project Team and various Subject Matter Experts. Program start-up activities will be identified and implemented and an overall 2-year training program curriculum that will be created and executed for each individual candidate. Critical to the effort is that major team members with a previous track record with Work Force Development, Training/Instruction, Construction /Technology and Field experience must be engaged. 340IPT is a locally based business committed to the rescue, recovery and economic revitalization of the region.

## **Community Development Partnerships**

The Community Development Partnerships will ideally, be a collaboration of subject matter experts with a long history of providing technical assistance to State and Local Non-Profit Developers. The Mission is to provide professional consulting services to local community development organizations and government agencies who are involved with affordable housing development including construction training on the United States Virgin Islands. We want to provide technical assistance to those engaged in recovery efforts and empower local residents to rebuild their homes and communities.

Our Team members have many years of experience working with housing, economic and community development programs including Community Development Block Grant Funding (CDBG), HOME programs, CHDO organizations, disaster recovery, construction management, fiscal management, organizational capacity building, technical assistance and Safety Training programs.



## **Organizational Development**

We believe that the USVI can utilize its own resources in conjunction with CDBG and diligent leadership to make a positive difference for all who live there. This initiative will require commitment to a new vision of community development and empowerment. The idea would be to identify and grow existing organizations that would take on the task of community development while partnering with government and local businesses.

Ideally, these organizations would work in conjunction with government, local business and community leaders. We want to work with organizations and community groups who may be comprised of people who represent banking, industry, tourism, legal, government, local leadership, commerce, utilities, communication and others. This format suggests a very prominent and influential group of people who can both attract resources and decide how those resources should be utilized. These groups and their Board of Directors can craft a Mission Statement and identify the goals and objectives required to be successful affordable housing developers. With a diverse Board, forming Partnerships with other entities would be an added benefit.



## **Accounting / Fiscal Management**

It is the policy of our Partnership Agreement to ensure applicable financial systems to promote and maintain sustainable fiscal stability through the effective and efficient deployment of all assigned assets and resources. The purpose of the Fiscal Management Plan is to provide specific guidelines for the practice of sound fiscal management throughout the organization. The organization will establish and maintain fiscal policies and procedures, including internal control practices.

We will work with a Fiscal Manager-Compliance Officer who will be responsible for establishing and maintaining an internal control structure adequate to ensure that the assets and resources of the agency are protected from loss, theft, or misuse and for ensuring that accounting data is compiled in a timely manner allowing for the preparation of required financial statements. The fiscal control structure will provide reasonable assurance that these objectives are met.

Our Community Partners will be in Compliance with all relevant governmental accounting principles and with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), the preparation and maintenance of the general ledger, payroll records (including checks, tax returns, W2's, and 1099 as well as the operation of the accounts receivable and accounts payable functions. Additionally, comply with those contractual provisions delineated in the requirements of the funding agencies.

Budget and Monitoring is an important aspect of responsible fiscal management. An operating budget will be prepared annually, reflecting the goals and objectives delineated in the annual cash flow plan.



### **RELATED TRAINING INSTRUCTION (RTI):**

#### **Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3)**

We are implementing a Comprehensive Apprenticeship Readiness Program (ARP) developed and approved by the building trades national Apprenticeship and Training and Sanctioned by the US Department of Labor. This is a Program designed to include curriculum on tools and materials, basic math, construction safety, diversity and financial literacy. MC3 provides pathways for candidates to gain access to a variety of construction trades, construction management, construction contractors, inspectors, engineers, safety professionals, surveyors and affordable housing developers.

- **HANDS ON JOB TRAINING**
- **OSHA TRAINING 10 and 30**
- **CPR TRAINING and CERTIFICATION**
- **LIFE SKILLS/FINANCIAL LITERACY/COACHING**
- **NATIONAL CENTER for CONSTRUCTION EDUCATION and RESEARCH CERTIFICATIONS (NCCER)**
- **CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT TRAINING**
- **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**
- **SPECIALIZED STORM RESISTANT CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY**



### **USVI Apprentice Training Program Partners**

What Partners do we need to effectively implement the Apprenticeship Training Program? We believe that working together, Partners help identify resources to launch this apprenticeship program, work on crafting a comprehensive curriculum designed to reflect the unique requirements of the Islands that will help build the related instruction, on-the job training and help to recruit qualified apprentices. Each Partner has a crucial role to play in promoting the success of the Registered Apprenticeship Programs. We are seeking to work with Organizations/ Agencies/Businesses/Individuals who are associated in some way with the following Stakeholders:

- **Workforce Development Agencies and Programs**
- **Local, State and Federal Government/OSHA**
- **Virgin Islands Housing and Community Development Initiatives**
- **University of the Virgin Islands Degree Programs**
- **Disaster Recovery Contractors**
- **Departments of Education/Public Works**
- **Community Organizations/Groups/Churches**
- **Major Corporations/ Local Businesses**
- **Existing Local Construction Contractors**
- **Department of Planning and Natural Resources**
- **Professionals- Architects/Engineers/Planners/Consultants**
- **Federal Emergency Management Agency-CDBG**



## **How Apprenticeships Intersect With Higher Education**

Because apprenticeships include what's called "related technical instruction," the work experience often overlaps with higher education. The two forms of learning share a common goal — **to prepare individuals for success in their careers.**

Given the role of community colleges in addressing the needs of local economies, it's no surprise apprenticeship programs overlap significantly with this sector. Community colleges deliver curricula around apprenticeships, work with local businesses to design academic programs, grant credits and credentials, and provide support services such as tutoring and counseling. They might also operate a Registered Apprenticeship Program, assuming responsibility for its administration.

"Apprenticeship is not an alternative to higher education," said Brent Parton, deputy director of the Center on Education and Skills with the Education Policy program at New America. "It's an alternative way through higher education."

In general, the apprentice route tends to be much cheaper than the traditional path to a degree. Students can follow this path to a four-year degree. For example, at the University of Richmond, a designated provider of Virginia's registered apprenticeship program, students can earn a bachelor's degree in such fields as human resources management, information security, and paralegal studies.

How much students pay for these programs varies by state. In some cases, the cost to students is zero. Florida colleges are prohibited by state law from charging tuition or fees for the classroom component of their apprenticeship. In other instances, states offer colleges reimbursements to cover instructional costs. And in some states, students are left with the option of taking federal loans. Employers often absorb  some apprenticeship costs as well.

In general, the apprentice route tends to be much cheaper than the traditional path to a degree. Yet New America's Michael Prebil believes it should be even more accessible.

"To attain their maximum potential for social benefit," he writes, **"college-connected apprenticeships must provide a more affordable — and ideally tuition-free — pathway to a college degree."**



## **Marketing and Community Outreach**

Community outreach efforts will involve active marketing of the 340 IPT Apprenticeship Program in the Virgin Islands on social media, community newsletters, schools, universities, general public meetings, partner relationships, word of mouth, community events, newsletters, local non-profits, church bulletins, internet, and through other "localized" methods that will get information about this opportunity to our intended target candidates.

## **Community Organization/Capacity Building**

Similarly, at the community level, the task at hand is identifying community leadership who have a commitment to work in their neighborhoods and advocate for the needs for their community. These community development corporations (CDC) on each island could specifically identify the needs to be addressed in their area.

This grassroots approach will assure that the issues and concerns of the local residents are heard. These type organizations should be comprised of local leaders perhaps, community advocates, church leaders, local businesses, educators or people who have been living in their community and have a vision for its future.

## **Construction Training Program Curriculum**

The construction training program is a curriculum that will provide training and employment opportunities to residents of the Virgin Islands. It is designed to train residents in the areas of employment skills training and construction skills training. This will include soft skills training such as resume development and interviewing skills.

The program will target 15-20 participants for each class, the age range of the participants will vary, and candidates will pre-screened through the local workforce agency. Participants will be selected based on employability.

The program will be comprised of four six-month cycles over a period of two years; the six-month training will include soft skills training and construction skills training. A certified construction trainer will provide construction skills training. Participants will be able to get certifications that are nationally recognized in the construction industry. These certifications will include basic plumbing, roofing, safety, construction literacy, painting, masonry and specialized training.

Participants will be provided with a pair of work boots, two pairs of khaki pants and two work shirts, construction belt with tools, participants will also be provided a bus cards as well as a weekly stipend based on attendance. Soft skills training will be provided by the local workforce agency as well as local community based organizations.



**Roof Construction**



**Completed Roof**

During the training program, participants will receive on-site training that will include actually working on projects that need repairs. This will include roofing, light rehab, renovation and turnkey. It is also the goal to develop capacity within the group of participants to also become capable and competent trainers and general contractors.

Cost of the program will include training, uniforms, bus cards, stipends, program oversight and monitoring. The program budget should also include Administrative cost (fees over two year period), Trainers salary and Trainees Costs (includes stipends, bus card, uniform, tools, and tool belt) for 20 participants each class.

The idea behind the construction training program is to teach local residents about the construction industry and get them certified as skilled labor and professionals allowing them to work on local projects, earning a living, while contributing to the Island economy. Recent recovery efforts brought workers from the outside the region whereas many local residents could have benefited from those jobs. This scenario is a "Win Win" for those who want to learn a skill in demand and for the community at large. If or when there is a need for roofers, carpenters, plumbers etc., the first line of recovery will come from the people who live on the Islands.

### **Executive Summary**

Our approach is to work hand on hand with existing businesses, churches, community groups and local government to improve the quality of life for residents in the Virgin Islands. We believe that this can be achieved through building relationships that are based on a shared vision of building better communities by empowering the people who live there.

We want to open doors for the people of the Islands so that there is a means by which these initiatives are achievable and sustainable for years to come. Growing, learning, empowering is best served through relationships. That is the KEY.

There is an opportunity to make a positive difference for many of the local residents and businesses. We want to help using our knowledge of housing, economic and community development programs. Too many times resources are underutilized or wasted that have been set aside for communities and people who are in need. Our group of experts has the ability to work with stakeholders on the island and to coach others in a way that will produce positive results and enhance the quality of life for Island residents.



### **Objectives/Outcomes/Results**

- **Nationally Recognized Certifications**
- **On the Job Training/Work Experience/Skills/Coaching**
- **Greater Earnings /Expanded Employment Potential**
- **Opportunity to Further Education**
- **Pathways to Higher Education**
- **Local Business Opportunities /Economic Development and Growth**

***Building Better Communities- Investing in People***