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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Flambouyant Gardens Celebrates 30th Anniversary

ST. CROIX – Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands (LSSVI) celebrates thirty years of service at Flambouyant Gardens, providing safe, comfortable and affordable housing to seniors and adults with physical disabilities.

Flambouyant Gardens opened in 1986 in response to the need for senior housing on St. Croix. The site was built with funding from Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and was the first of its kind on St. Croix and the first senior housing site for Lutheran Social Services. The housing community has 56 one-bedroom units, six of which can accommodate individuals with physical disabilities. Seniors who are 62 years and older as well as adults with physical disabilities rely on LSSVI for security, easy access to services, and a caring staff that allow them to remain independent and age comfortably in place.

The idea of opening a community for seniors was planned after deep reflection and the conviction that the best of humankind is realized when we tap into the depth of our being and reach out to those most vulnerable in our communities. It was a sentiment shared by Ms. Julie Swanson, then Executive Director of Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands at the time, believing that housing was a form of “economic justice.” The shortage of housing for seniors in the Virgin Islands and the desire to assist the elderly to live independent lives were confirmations to forge ahead, regardless of the obstacles. Convinced that the need fit with the mission of the agency, the board set the wheels in motion and gave their blessings to begin construction.

Thirty years later, Flambouyant Gardens still remains a very attractive housing option for elderly adults. Under the guidance of Ms. Junia John-Straker, Chief Executive Officer of Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands, the facility is undergoing major renovations to make the entire complex ADA compliant. She said, “We are so excited to upgrade the site with new amenities to include doubling the size and air conditioning of the Community Center and re-fencing of the entire property. We would like to express our appreciation to our community friends for their support throughout our 30 years of service at Flambouyant Gardens and invite everyone to celebrate this major milestone with us.”

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The staff at Flamboyant Gardens is committed to serving the residents – keeping with the same spirit of service that propelled the governing board many years ago. Residents receive services that include: case management, general information referral, health care services, home management, isolation intervention, and transportation. The Service Coordinator, with the support of four AmeriCorps members, makes regular check-ins with residents. Many residents enjoy socializing with the AmeriCorps members and rely on their company as they make their regular visits to the doctor or the store. The staff takes great pride in assisting the residents, some of whom have resided at Flamboyant Gardens since its opening, and consider it as a blessing to serve.

In the words of Marian Wright Edelman, “service is the rent we pay to be living. It is the very purpose of life and not something you do in your spare time.” Service for us at LSSVI is a calling.

For more information on how to apply for housing at Flamboyant Gardens or any other housing facility managed by Lutheran Social Services contact the Housing Management Director at (340) 772-2060 or write to the Housing Management Director, PO Box 866, Frederiksted, VI, 00841.

Lutheran Social Services of the V. I., Inc. is the largest private child and family services agency in the Virgin Islands with five housing complexes for low income seniors and adults with disabilities; a safe haven for neglected, abused and severely disabled children; and two 24-hour residential care facilities for adults with disabilities unable to live independently. Early Head Start and AmeriCorps are also programs of LSSVI. Lutheran Social Services of the V. I., Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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