



Contact: Sigorney Dorsey
Telephone: (340) 772-4099 ext. 24
E-mail: publicrelations@lssvi.org

PRESS RELEASE

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Marion and John E. Anderson Foundation awards Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands \$400,000 in support

ST. CROIX — Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands, Inc. is pleased to announce that The Marion and John E. Anderson Foundation has awarded \$400,000 to support its services in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Half of the Foundation's contribution is designated specifically for Queen Louise Home for Children on St. Croix.

During the short ceremony held at Queen Louise Home for Children, both Junia John-Straker, Chief Executive Officer of LSSVI, and Cindy Gerber, LSSVI Board of Trustees member, reiterated how the grant will support LSSVI's nine programs on St. Croix and St. Thomas. LSSVI serves children who have been abandoned, abused, or neglected, low-income seniors, adults with disabilities and at-risk families.

"We are just tremendously grateful for the support that you've given over the years and are about to give in light of the recent circumstances," said Gerber. "We serve an incredibly vulnerable population here who often can be forgotten by many, many other people.... We just are eternally grateful to you and really glad that we have you as partners in this community."

Vice President of West Indies Company on St. Croix, Peter Marcellin, said "Lutheran Social Services and Queen Louise Home for Children have served our community well! They are and continue to take care of our abused and neglected children on the island of St. Croix. This non-profit organization expresses true love and care to the community."

Since Hurricane's Irma and Maria, LSSVI has been one of the many non-profits in the USVI grappling with the hurricanes' aftermath. The agency tackles critical challenges in the community, which include providing low-income housing for seniors and adults with disabilities as well as supportive services that assist them in maintaining their independence. Three 24-hour residential care programs on St. Croix and St. Thomas also offer a safe home, medical support and supportive services for adults and children with developmental and physical disabilities. LSSVI's longest serving program, Queen Louise Home for Children, provides love and care in a supportive family-like setting for abused, abandoned and/or neglected children in the Territory.

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Sales Director of Bellows International, Gary Smith, said “Thank you for your service! For the past 114 years, Queen Louise Home has rendered services to the children of the Virgin Islands, giving our children the life lessons and support that’s needed to become the productive Men and Women of tomorrow. We do not always get the opportunity to tell the people who staffs these institutions how much we appreciate their commitment and work that they do! So thank you, thank you, thank you. Job well done!!!!”

With repairs needed at many of the programs sites, extra services to sure up the underserved populations, and the recent increases in minimum wage, the Foundation’s award will be used to counter the expenses incurred as a result of the storms and help the agency focus on maintaining its critical services to the Territory.

The Marion and John E. Anderson Foundation’s donation to LSSVI is part of grant awards announced on Monday to nonprofit organizations across the U.S. Virgin Islands. The philanthropic organization focuses on supporting education and healthcare through community organizations within its subsidiaries areas of service. Local subsidiaries include Bellows International, West Indies Company, Leeward Islands Management Company, Dorchester Insurance Company, TOPA Insurance Services, TOPA Properties, and Caribbean Cellars BVI.

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