



"WTJX is number one, I love our public broadcasting station and I will do whatever I can to be able to help out ... The clean education, the knowledge that comes across, the local programs are like no other."

Barbara LaRonde, co-owner of The Pressure Spot restaurant in St. Thomas, VI

2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

The Virgin Islands Public Broadcasting System's mission is to provide quality programming suitable for all ages throughout the Virgin Islands via television and radio broadcasting and online streaming and information. In doing so, WTJX strives to lead the community with relevant content that engages and inspires Virgin Islanders to have a deeper understanding and greater appreciation of culture, history, public affairs, and current events.

LOCAL VALUE

WTJX is a respected and valued source of information to the Virgin Islands community.

WTJX-TV continuously provides quality local programming and live broadcasts of community events. We engage with other non-profits and government organizations to share relevant and timely information to our community audience.

2023 KEY SERVICES

In 2023, WTJX provided these key local services:

- Launched new weekly Sunday political show, "Comes With the Territory."
- Major partner and sponsor of Regonition Reception and Parade honoring Virgin Islands Athletes who won gold in the CAC games in San Salvador.
- Provided better over the air coverage for the St. Croix community by upgrading television translator.

LOCAL IMPACT

WTJX continues serving the Virgin Islands as a proud member of the community.

WTJX continues to return the taxpayers investment by expanding its services while reinvesting in Virgin Islanders. We continuously ensure that our efforts are accessible to the underserved community, bringing accessible media to community members who lack representation.

► Live Inauguration Ceremony

On Wednesday, January 2, 2023, WTJX aired live the second inauguration of Governor Albert Bryan Jr. and Lieutenant Governor Tregenza Roach. The program was hosted by former Senate President Neville James and former Lieutenant Governor Osbert Potter. The hosts provided insightful commentary as the 9th elected Governor and 12th Elected Lieutenant Governor took their oath of office. This program was also streamed live on WTJX and at their request, the popular online platform, *The Virgin Islands Consortium*.



"Good Morning Thank you for sharing such an important event our Governor Albert Bryan and Lieutenant Governor Tregenza A Roach."
-Avelia Millin, Facebook User

"Great job WTJX Virgin Islands Public Broadcasting System and Neville and Osbert! Thanks for the coverage and broadcast."
-Shirley Lake-King, Facebook User



▶ WTJX commemorates a vital and important part of Virgin Islands culture in their live production of the parades and cultural celebrations that mean so much to native Virgin Islanders both locally and abroad. WTJX provides access to these celebrations as a live broadcast and online on the station's website and on popular platforms like YouTube and Facebook. This provides important access for people who are not able to be there in person. This is also a showcase of the territory's main tourism product. Taxes collected during carnival dates are critical to the Virgin Islands treasury.

▶ **Crucian Christmas Festival Parades**

The festival season began in January with the celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the Crucian Christmas Festival Children's and Adults' parades. WTJX was named Grand Marshal of the Adults' Parade, and Tanya-Marie Singh, CEO of WTJX, accepted the designation surrounded by staff, board members, and dignitaries. The parades featured colorful troupes, floats, lively music, dancing and more. WTJX coverage of the parades were hosted by Dodson James, Sheniqua Robinson, George Silcott, Jr., and Merlisa George.

▶ **St. Thomas Carnival Parades**

WTJX broadcasted live the St. Thomas Carnival Children's and Adults' Parades in May. Thousands of revelers crowded the streets enjoying the revelry, colors, music and sounds of the parades. The parades were hosted by George Silcott, Jr., Sheniqua Robinson, Shayla Solomon, Patrickson Thomas, and Lillian Moolenaar.

▶ **St. John Celebration Parade**

WTJX broadcasted the St. John Celebration live parade which took place on July 4, on a hot and sunny day. The festively colored revelers danced to live music, in a celebration of culture, music and history. The parade was hosted by Kyza Callwood, George Silcott, Jr. and Shayla Solomon as they provided commentary on the masqueraders and their routines.





▶ Swearing in Ceremony of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands

On Monday, January 9, WTJX broadcasted live coverage of the Swearing in Ceremony of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands. WTJX's coverage was hosted by former senators Janette Millin Young and Usie Richards. Viewers were able to watch the coverage live on WTJX-TV Channel 12 and streamed online. After the ceremony, WTJX also aired the organizing session of the 35th Legislature.





► Funeral Service of Former Governor Roy Lester Schneider

WTJX provided live coverage of the funeral of the fifth elected governor of the Virgin Islands, Governor Roy Lester Schneider, MD. Funeral Services for Former Governor Roy Lester Schneider were held on January 12, 2023, at Sts. Peter and Paul Cathedral on St. Thomas. The hosts of WTJX coverage were two members of Governor Schneider's staff: Amos Carty, who was the Governor's attorney at 31-years-old, and Leslie Highfield Carter, the Governor's Christiansted Administrator at 25-years-old. The funeral featured touching tributes and speeches from those closest to him, including members of his family, former coworkers, and other dignitaries.

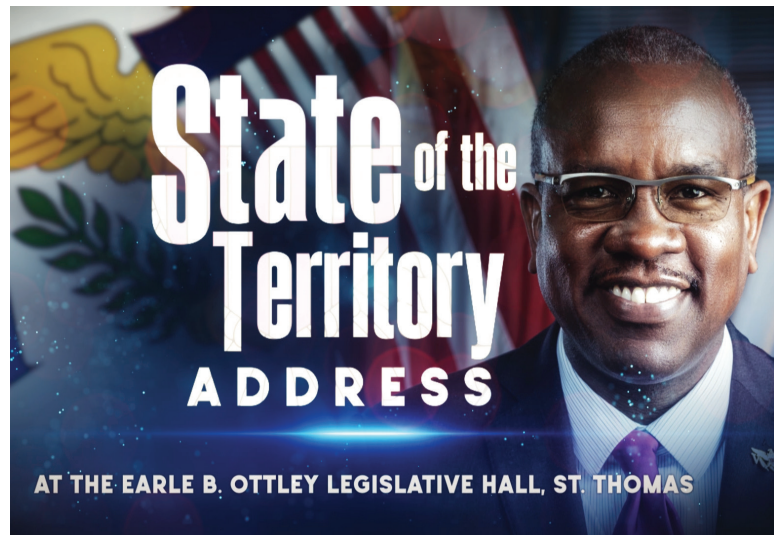
"Thank you WTJX for sharing the live broadcast. "
-Ingrid. Mason , Facebook User





► Governor Albert Bryan's 5th State of the Territory Address

Governor Albert Bryan, Jr. delivered his fifth State of the Territory Address. WTJX provided live coverage of the Governor's address with a panel from WTJX's St. Croix office. The panel consisted of Lesley Comissiong, Almando "Rocky" Liburd, Usie Richards, Denis Lynch II, and Roosevelt David. During the address, the Governor highlighted his administration's successes and provided an update on the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority, education, crime, plans to raise wages, plans to solve the housing crisis, finish long-overdue capital projects, and billions in federal relief funding to improve all Virgin Islanders' lives. After the address we received reaction from the Delegate to Congress, Senators, and the public. We aired this program on WTJX-FM as well.



► Virgin Islands Case Files

We wrapped 10 episodes of Virgin Islands Case Files hosted by Celia Carroll. Virgin Islands Case Files was a monthly half-hour show that explored local unsolved murder cases. The show was created to bring renewed public attention to these cases in an engaging and non-exploitative way.



► Recovery in Focus

The Virgin Islands continues its recovery efforts after the passing of hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, and WTJX continues season three of Recovery in Focus, providing viewers with a first-hand look at the most recent developments as well as other critical projects that impact the daily lives of residents. This program is hosted by Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien, the Director of the Office of Disaster Recovery. Her guests appear and speak about the latest projects and updates their respective agencies are currently leading to aid the territory's recovery from the 2017 storms, their successes, and their setbacks.

► The Bookcase

The Bookcase premiered its third season in 2023. In this season, which consists of 20 episodes, the show explored local tales that have been passed down through generations, such as *How Anansi Spun Madras* and *Rica and the Tamarind Tree*, and discuss empowering narratives, such as *Because they Dared*. For the history buffs, we examined historic pieces, such as *Quadrille*. The diversity in this season gave viewers the opportunity to experience different types of writing styles and literary techniques. Each episode featured a glimpse at each author's writing process, the inspiration behind writing their work, and their favorite passages.



▶ WTJX made a presentation to the Department of Human Services (DHS) Office of Child Care & Regulatory Services on PBS Learning Media and the PBS Kids website. The purpose was to give information on various tools and resources WTJX could extend to the Headstart centers. WTJX also presented at the AFT TEACH Workshops on St. Croix and St. Thomas.

WTJX supported the Gentlemen of Jones first annual Golf Tournament this past April. The Gentlemen of Jones is a Crucian organization established 70 years ago. This tournament was hosted to get the community's support in assisting the Gentlemen of Jones with their efforts to beautify Christiansted during the holiday and festival season. WTJX entered two teams in the golf tournament, one representing WTJX-TV and the other representing WTJX-FM. The System's members and friends stepped up to represent the stations in the tournament.

WTJX sponsored a Meet and Greet for Hampton University Alumni and President on St. Thomas on November 16. Many Virgin Islanders attended Hampton University which recruited heavily in the territory. Hampton University played in the Paradise Jam tournament which was carried on ESPN. There was a great turnout as alumni greeted the Ret. U.S. Army General, Hampton President Darrell K. Williams on his first trip to the Virgin Islands.



▶ **Crucian Christmas Foreday Serenade**

This year marked the 18th year since Stanley and the Ten Sleepless Knights and WTJX have breathed life back into the Crucian Christmas Foreday Serenade on St. Croix. The Ten Sleepless Knights and WTJX bring traditional quelbe Christmas music to as many neighborhoods as possible.



▶ **Limpricht Park Tree Lighting**

WTJX was honored to sponsor and decorate a tree at Limpricht park for the 5th Annual Limpricht Park Tree Light Ceremony: Ah Glittering Jubilee of Trees for the World to See. This is one of many cultural events that occur during the Festival season on St. Croix. WTJX streamed live coverage of the event presented by The Crucian Cultural Group in partnership with the Christiansted Community Alliance.



▶ **Challenge of the Carols**

WTJX provided live coverage of the 47th Annual Challenge of the Carols from the Emancipation Garden on St. Thomas. The Challenge of the Carols is a Christmas morning tradition featuring boisterous voices of the territory's finest choirs as they serenade the community with popular melodies of the season.

"TSK Thanks for all the years of Sweet Cultural Music. Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year 2024 to you and yours. I Love you TSK!"

-Sandra Heywood

"This Is Culture Keeping Alive Thank You Ten Sleepless Knight's"

-Culturally Yours with Randy Pate



► The Return of the “Taste of Two Islands”

After an absence of four years, due to the pandemic, the much-anticipated Taste of Two Islands event made a triumphant return to the vibrant locale of St. Thomas. Tanya-Marie Singh, CEO of The Virgin Islands Broadcasting System, expressed her excitement, stating, “The Taste of Two Islands has always been a long-standing event that our community looked forward to every year. Over the past four years, our friends and supporters have shared how much they’ve missed the Taste so I’m thrilled that we are able to revive our biggest fundraiser!”

The 16th Taste of Two Islands, themed “Culinary Feast for the Season,” was hosted by beloved Master of Ceremonies, George “Culture Man” Silcott, and featured captivating performances by Spectrum Band. Attendees explored culinary offerings from restaurants and caterers from St. Thomas and St. John, as well as engaged in special amusements such as live painting, raffles, and popular voting.

Taste of Two Islands started out as a way to bring all of our amazing culinary artists together, along with our supporters, so it’s something that the community always looked forward to experiencing and we’re just so glad to bring it back once again.”

-Yvette deLaubanque, WTJX Vice Chair and one of the event’s founders.

“It was our privilege to be a part of WTJX Virgin Islands Public Broadcasting System celebration of Taste of 2 Islands 2023! Thanks to all who stopped by to sample our delightful rum portfolio. We loved the positive feedback from Virgin Islanders and island visitors and look forward to sipping with you in the New Year!”

-Botany Bay Rum



► Comes with the Territory

WTJX-TV launched its exciting new program, Comes with the Territory. This hour-long Sunday news/information show, anchored by seasoned political analyst, Lesley Comissiong, is a much-anticipated addition to our programming lineup. The show's first segment opens with engaging interviews featuring prominent local figures and newsmakers. Following the interviews, Comes with the Territory, delves into a spirited panel discussion, providing a comprehensive examination of the most pressing political matters affecting the U.S. Virgin Islands.

What sets this show apart is its commitment to making the often-intricate world of politics accessible to all viewers. In a landscape where political discourse can be overwhelming, Comes with the Territory takes a refreshingly factual and multi-perspective approach. It is dedicated to simplifying complex political topics, ensuring that our audience gains a thorough understanding of the issues at hand. By presenting various viewpoints, the program encourages critical thinking and informed civic engagement among our viewers, fostering a more enlightened and engaged community. "Over the years, I have gained the trust and confidence of the community to be a voice that they can rely on for information that is valuable, straightforward, and easy to understand, with the flexibility to learn, grow, and educate the community, and people appreciate that," Comissiong said. "I hope to bring that trusted perspective back to the community."

"For years I've wanted to incorporate a show like this in our roster," stated WTJX CEO Tanya-Marie Singh. "The stars aligned with veteran news reporter and producer, Makeda Russell, coming on board as the station's Senior Producer, and with Lesley Comissiong's availability to us...I feel like we have the right blend of talent to deliver an informed weekly show to our viewers."





▶ WTJX-TV, Channel 12 transitions to HD on Dish Network

While WTJX Channel 12 has been available on Dish Network since 2019, it was in standard definition signal which was not the best quality. On February 22, 2023, upon request, Dish transitioned to our HD signal, giving WTJX viewers a sharper, clearer visual experience.



▶ Reviving Little League Baseball

WTJX co-sponsored the First Annual Jerry Browne Little League Baseball Classic on St. Croix. The six-team tournament aims to improve baseball participation on St. Croix and to inspire young people to try baseball as an option. Little League in the Virgin Islands has suffered setbacks in progress due to issues with infrastructure and organization. WTJX sponsored the payment for the umpires so that the tournament could be successful. Jerry Brown, also known as the Governor, was born on St. Croix and played 10 seasons in the Major Leagues with the Texas Rangers, Cleveland Indians, Oakland A's, and the Florida Marlins.

*"Thanks for being a major part of the Jerry Browne Classic.
It was a complete success."*

**- Dexter Skepple, organizer of the
Jerry Brown Little League Baseball Classic**



▶ Better Coverage on St. Croix

WTJX completed a construction permit that we applied for from the Federal Communications Commission. This construction increased the power output of our television translator on St. Croix from 300 watts to 3000 watts. As a result, the coverage and reception of WTJX on St. Croix has improved from 70% to over 90% for residents who depend on receiving the station with an antenna. The stronger signal penetrates buildings easier. For example, depending on where they reside, some residents would need an inside antenna as opposed to an outdoor antenna. This is a big win for viewers on St. Croix who have decided to cut the cord and want access to our 3 channels. Most of the island of St. Croix is outside of our transmitter signal so it is serviced by a television translator. This increase in power will provide more service to our unserved community.

► Gold Medal Recognition and Parade

• **History:** The Virgin Islands Basketball Federation (VIBF) was founded in 1962 and in 1964 became a member of the International Basketball Federation (FIBA). The Basketball Federation is one of the six V.I. Sports Federations that were affiliated with their International Bodies and became one of the founding members of the Virgin Islands Olympic Committee (VIOC). In 1966 the VIOC was allowed on a trial basis to participate in the 10th Central American and Caribbean Games where the first Women National Team finished fourth after beating Puerto Rico in their first game of the competition. It wasn't until 2010 that the Women National Team returned to the 21st CAC Games in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, again finishing in fourth place. The 23rd CAC Games in 2018 were held in Barranquilla, Columbia where the Women National Team finished in fifth place.

It's important to note that following the initial appearance of the Women National Team on a trial basis in 1966, FIBA disbanded the Caricom Basketball Confederation, a sporting arm made up of political and economic regional allies. In 1999 FIBA established the Caribbean Basketball Confederation (CBC), paving the way for a clear path for qualifiers for female basketball. This meant that Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands were now mandatory members of the CBC, and Belize was assigned to the Central America region. The Women National Team participated in their first CBC Championship in 2000 in Bridgetown, Barbados.

The Women National Team has medaled throughout the years since participating in the CBC Championships. In 2017 the V.I. Basketball Federation hosted the Women's Centro-Basket Championship on St. Thomas, where the Team captured the gold medal against the top seven teams in the Central American and Caribbean region.





In March of 2021, during FIBA's coronavirus protocols, the Women National Team captured the silver medal at the Centro-Basket Championship in San Salvador, El Salvador. Both the 2017 and 2021 medal finishes qualified the Team for their first and second appearance at the FIBA Americas Women Championship for the top 10 teams in the Americas. In November 2022, the Centro-Basket qualifier for the 2023 CAC Games were held in Chihuahua, Mexico, where the V.I. Senior Women National Team was unable to attend. The withdrawal of the Bahamas Women National Team from the 2023 CAC Games opened the door for the V.I. Women National Team to serve as a replacement team at these games. These young women went from being a replacement team to becoming the first ever team sport to capture a gold medal at the CAC Games and earning the 12th Gold Medal under the auspices of the VIOC at these games. The Team Delegation included players Kadasha Barry, Lanese Bough, Kaya Evans, J-Naya Ephraim, Shomyra Francis, Anisha George, Natalie Kleemann-Day, November Morton, Naja Ngongba, Keshara Romain and Imani Tate. The staff included Head Coach, Tajama Ngongba; Assistant Coach, Clint Williams; Team Manager, Rufus Horton; and Delegate, La Reina Robinson.

- **History of Nicholas D'Amour:** Archery is a young sport to the Virgin Islands. Nicholas D'Amour began exhibiting his competitive skills as an archer under the auspices of the Virgin Islands Archery Federation. In 2021, he was awarded the Recurve Junior Men Athlete of the Year award by the World Archery of the Americas. In the same year, Nicholas competed in Europe, winning the silver medal at the European Grand Prix. He also represented the Virgin Islands in the 2020 Olympics that was rescheduled to 2021 due to the corona virus pandemic.

During the 2022 competition schedule, he successfully competed and captured two gold medals and one silver medal. Nicholas won the 2022 gold medal at the 8th Copa Merengue, a gold medal at the 2022 U.S. Open, and a silver medal at the 2022 Indoor Vegas Shoot.

In 2023, Nicholas won the bronze medal at the Indoor Archery World Series and won the gold medal at the 2023 Central American and Caribbean Games in San Salvador, El Salvador. This achievement represents the 13th gold medal won at these games under auspices of the Virgin Islands Olympic Committee.

• **The Recognition Ceremony & Reception:** Most of the basketball team were not on island so it was a huge lift to coordinate getting everyone on the island of St. Croix where most of the members are from. And, although Nicolas was out of the territory competing at the time, his father traveled to participate in the celebration on his son's behalf. To honor these athletes, WTJX partnered with the VIBF, the Virgin Islands Olympic Committee, and Government House with a weekend celebration. On Friday, August 4, 2023, we held a Recognition Ceremony & Reception at Government House where the Governor, President of the Virgin Islands Olympic Committee, and WTJX's CEO presented gifts to the players, coaches, and supporting staff. The players were presented with checks of \$5,000 each. This sum was passed by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands. They also presented a Perma Plaque to the team co-captain at the ceremony. Governor Albert Bryan Jr. lauded the women for their athletic prowess and resilience. After, on the grounds of Government House, there was a reception with a live band.

"We appreciate all that you, and your staff, do for our community and thank you immensely for ensuring the success of the weekend activities. Without your support we could not have made it all happen."

– **Usie R. Richards, VIBF Honorary President**





• **The Parade:** The following morning, the same planning committee held a parade that started at WTJX's office and weaved through Christiansted town. The parade consisted of majorettes, bands, dancers, etc. as people lined King Street to celebrate the young ladies. The President of the Virgin Islands Legislature joined the parade as well as the Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Sports, Parks & Recreation. The final stop was in Gallows Bay where The Gentlemen of Jones, a 70-year-old charitable organization, feted the ladies with a beach picnic with music and all their favorite local foods.

• **Conclusion:** The Virgin Islands, with its small population of 85,000, continues to produce quality athletes, despite its infrastructure that is not as conducive to athletic progress as other countries. While other countries award their high achieving athletes with large value items, we wanted to ensure that our athletes got the love and appreciation that they deserved. This will undoubtedly motivate more athletes, especially females, to strive for greatness and know that they have their community's full support.



"Just wanted to send a quick note thanking you and everyone at WTJX for all your hard work in recognizing our team this past weekend. Everything was absolutely done in a first class manner and it left us all speechless, emotional, and overall grateful to be celebrated by our people back home."

- Clint Williams, Assistant Coach, Brown University and Assistant Coach of the Virgin Islands Women National Team



WTJX CEO, Tanya-Marie Singh, her son, and Senate Finance Committee Chair, Donna Frett-Gregory, are photographed with WTJX staff. Senator Frett-Gregory along with the DFG Community Impact Foundation of the Virgin Islands, Inc., named Ms. Singh one of three Inspirational Women Leaders at the Second Annual International Women's Day Celebration on March 8, 2023.

While the station's recovery from the 2017 hurricanes remains elusive, we have still managed to provide programs and services to the community. Our dedication to improving our signal to our St. Croix and Dish viewers are impactful. WTJX had not upgraded its TV translator on the island since the station's inception 51 years ago. We have also brought new local original programming to help our community understand the developments in the community.