

- That was I was going to ask if you provide counseling and things that I believe you obviously do.

- Yes.

- You obviously do, and you also provide spiritual counseling too.

- Yes, definitely. Yeah.

- Which is what Ms. Frederick had alluded to when you were talking about the type of services that you provide.

- Yeah, yeah, besides just, you know, any social services, we also provide, for example she, I know she had mentioned Home League at the beginning. And there's this program, and it, and then kind of here in the Virgin Islands has evolved to this. This is not across the whole Salvation Army, but I know here for example, it's usually a program for women who get together, or worship together, but it's not only that. We also have like life skills that we go over, we do exercises, we have movie nights, and here, as I said, evolved into a place where women of older age can come to and kind of have a, almost a family and so they meet every Tuesday at 7:00. They come, they do exercise. They cook, they share, they share worship, they share Bible games, I mean it has become a place for them to be, when I used, before being a minister, I was actually a social services for the, for the Salvation Army. I worked as a case manager. And so one of my passions was working with the elderly, some of them to come and not even want food but just want someone to listen to them, someone to be there for them and so they will sit there in my office for hours telling me about the past, telling me about the children, and I will sit there and listen to them. And so this program has evolved where there's a place for them to come meet, have fellowship, be with each other, and it's a beautiful thing. We have someone who's 85 and still does exercise.

- Yes. Wonderful. I'm seeing the eyes light up over here for our Corp Sergeant Major Adele Frederick. Do you participate in this activity?

- Yeah.

- Because it looks like you're having a big smile on your face about this.

- [inaudible]

- Okay.

- I'm the secretary for the--it's Home League, but they changed their name now to Women Ministries. So, and the women, the adults, have to really belong to Salvation Army. We have a number of ladies from other churches, and they come down, they drive the bus, they pick them up every Tuesday and we meet. Sometimes we leave there by 9:30.

- Oh, my goodness.

- Wow.

- And sometimes I get to them after 10:00.

- Yes.

- It sounds like you're having a good time though.

- Yes, we do, we really do with the ladies.

- And so what kinds of, I don't know, activities? You mentioned movies, you mentioned exercise.

- Yeah, we have movie nights. For Valentines coming up, we have [inaudible] Valentine get-together, everybody dressed in [inaudible] you know.

- I love it.

- Yeah, yes, we really do have fun in the Home League.

- Oh, wow. Wow.

- One of the other services that we do, too, we feed the homeless.

- Okay. Tell us about that. How is that structured?

- For Christmas, we went to Frederiksted by the market and we fed them for the Christmas, the homeless. Sometimes, we take turn. One year, we come in Christiansted, and then next year we'll do it in Frederiksted. I'm the cook and I do all the cooking. And they have a good meal for Christmas. We do it after Christmas, the Sunday after Christmas because we feed Christmas day and the day before, they get a lot of food, but the Sunday after Christmas, they're gonna be hungry. So we go out the Sunday after Christmas, after church, we go out and we feed them.

- Very nice. Very nice. Well...

- I have another because I'm hearing about all these things that you're doing and I'm just wondering if you have any plans to open shelters for the homeless.

- Well, as of right now, it, it's not in the plans but we do work closely with other agencies. We have a list of numbers in my office where we can get connected. We work very closely with the Red Cross here, you know. They're very nice people, very, you know, we have a close friendship here with the Red Cross. And so when, and if there is an emergency and it needs to turn into a shelter where we need to take our chairs out and put mattresses or something then that's what it will be. And so in times of emergency really we, if we need to transform it into something else, if we need to transform it into a soup kitchen, even though officially we're not in times of emergency we have Ms. Frederick, she will cook for them, we have shares, and we will do what we have to do in order to serve the community. That's one thing with the Salvation Army. It's not a cookie cutter. We are able to evolve into whatever, you know, whatever the demand or the need is at that present moment. We do offer disaster relief. We work closely with, I believe it's called a VITEMA, I think, that's here.

- Yes, VITEMA, yup.

- With them as well. And also we have disaster relief in Puerto Rico. And as I've said, we are one division and so if there was an emergency, they will definitely come here. Bring disaster relief and things like that. So, we work very closely, and, again, we evolve whatever the situation provides us.

- I like that. Well, this may sound a little petty, but I'm curious because I know in the past when folks were out kettling, I would see them wearing some kind of uniform or something to suggest that they are legit and the cynic that I am always makes me pause and say, "Okay, fine, I see the kettle, I see the sign, but is this person deputized? Okay. How's that for military, you know, to do this kind of thing?" Because, you know, there is that concern about integrity and trust, and so I'm curious as to, because I think in the past, you would see folks with some kind of military or some kind of thing, insignia to suggest that they are part of your organization. So, I'm curious as to whether that has shifted or, you know, what's going on with that?

- [inaudible] for example if you see someone in uniform, usually that means that they're a member of the church and the Salvation Army. Our members are called soldiers. Again, we're very military and so anybody in uniform, that means that they're a part of the Salvation Army, not just as an organization to serve the community, but also as a church. And usually that means that there, you know, people of [

inaudible] who share that same mission as the officer. Usually, those are not part of our members, they're volunteers. They're still part of the Salvation Army because we are the Salvation Army, as people [inaudible] and so they will have like an apron which says, "I'm a volunteer [inaudible] volunteer. We do, usually those that wanna apply, they have to do a small application just asking basic information. We do have a management and volunteers in Puerto Rico. And usually, a background check I believe is done, nothing major or anything, but usually it's done for example we wanna show them to be safe and so any red flags when it comes to children, that's the reason why it's done. But usually, as I said, where we do pick people for the [inaudible] and people to be out there is people who also believe in the mission of Salvation Army.

- Okay. Well, I will look out for that apron.

- Yes.

- But I'm glad you mentioned that because that is a very important thing or...

- [inaudible]

- Uh-huh.

- [inaudible] share this.

- Okay.

- Are there any other fundraising activities that you do that maybe the community doesn't know about?

- Well, usually that comes with planning and depending on the officer what he wants to fundraise, maybe sales, food sales or different things like that. Also one thing that really does help is, it sounds kind of funny, but our integrity and how people believe in the mission of Salvation Army, so sometimes in the mail, we receive a donation from someone who believes in our mission and what we do. And so as I said, that's how we actually continue to work. We are a non-profit and so, you know, we depend on donations of the community and those that believe in the mission of the Salvation Army as an entity.

- I notice on our list, and again, it's very local, there's a mention of youth groups. Do you do any work with children or young people?

- Yes. Currently, yeah, we have a young adult group in our, in our church where we work with them and actually we're planning this month to the, rehabilitation center, we're planning on visiting and we have these officers who are coming from the states who before he was actually a Christian, he was like a magician. Yes. Interestingly enough. And so he does now like different tricks and different cool things that attracts children and kids and he brings the message of hope through that. And so he's really good, I can say. And he has been here in the past in St. Croix, he has done a balloon sculpting class. We have reached out to the people. We have had, like a, an illusion show for the kids where he, I don't know, takes out cards from somewhere. It's really, really good. We are hoping again for him to come this month on the 26th, I believe, and he will be here the 24th to the 26th. And we're trying to reach the rehabilitation center, you know, to bring hope for the kids. Last summer, we had a group of teams who are actually [inaudible] it was a mission group for them and so they came to Saint Croix and we went to the rehab center. And we had a fun time with the kids there, they played games, we had an introduction game, and we just brought that message of hope to them. So we're hoping again to be in contact with the people there and bring again that message of hope to the kids and, you know, have them a little fun and enjoy themselves, yeah.

- What's his name, do you know? The name of the magician?

- Oh, his name is, I believe he's a major now. He went up in rank. He used to be a Captain Bermeo, Angelo Bermeo but now it's Major Angelo Bermeo.

- Oh, Okay.

- So it's Saint Thomas celebrating its 100 years, I see in there, what about Saint Croix, how long have they been on Saint Croix? How long have you been on Saint Croix?

- Since 1989, as in who...

- All the, yeah.

- Officially, I believe, yes.

- 1989, right, right, right. Is there any particular reason why both agent, the agencies weren't established at the same time?

- Usually, well, I believe the Virgin Islands used to belong to the Danish, the Denmark.

- Denmark. Yeah.

- And so, and it used actually belong to a different territory, the Caribbean territory. And so other different territories maybe don't have the funds or the means to establish, but then later on it actually became part of the Eastern territory of the U.S. And it was able to establish here. Usually, it needs like a stable community, a stable source of our people believing the mission and people to be willing to work for the community. And so I guess, in '89, when there was that great need of Hugo, they were able to expand and here in the, in Saint Croix. Again before that, it belonged to different territory. And it actually said it closed down. And so I'm not really aware of the other territories in the sense of why it couldn't expand more here before but, not belonging to a territory it's, we were able to expand after Hugo and establish here in Saint Croix.

- Uh-hmm.

- You mentioned the church. Is the office in Estate Whim, your church?

- Yes.

- Okay.

- As well, yes.

- Okay.

- And usually that is the way of how it runs in, at least in the States. I haven't been to the Salvation Army outside of the States, but in the Salvation Army in the United States, that's how usually how it works. Our offices are, and also our chapel was found there.

- Now, you've mentioned that there's a Salvation Army in India. Is there, are there places where the Salvation Army does not exist? About that, let's talk about that.

- We're actually in a hundred and fifty-seven countries.

- Oh.

- A hundred and fifty-seven.

- Wow.

- A hundred and twenty-eight, I'm sorry, a hundred and twenty-eight countries. We just started work in Madagascar.

- Oh my goodness.

- Yes.

- Okay.

- So, we're a hundred and twenty-eight countries and, I mean, I don't know. I think we're almost about everywhere, yeah. As I said, it just expanded greatly.

- Yeah.

- You really seem to do quite a lot, you know, in the community and I just wanted to ask if you partner with any local government agencies or any private agencies in order to carry out your mission.

- Yeah. As I said I've, we do partner a lot with the Red Cross and it's great because, for example, if they have people and they don't have the means to serve them, they will give me, they will give me a call and say, "Hey, you know [inaudible] can I send them over by you?" And then vice versa and so that's what we do. And we also had this program where Home Depot would donate a lot of goods to us. And so if, like, peoples were in need, and we actually divided those things that were donated between the Women's Coalition, Red Cross, and the Salvation Army and so if people needed things for their household, okay, whether for example we, one time to this small community, it's right near Central High and we just changed a lifeboat for people.

- Oh.

- Something as simple as that.

- Right, yeah.

- That's fantastic. Well, I think we have a call. Good morning. Anybody there? Good morning? Okay. I guess, I guess we're still on hold or I guess we lost him or her. Are you there, good morning? Oh well. Clearly they had a question. Maybe they'll try a little bit later, maybe a little bit later. Yeah, I just had a very provocative question here. And I don't know whether you wanted, you wanna ask it?

- Well, yeah. Yes.

- Yeah, go for it.

- We have a need to know.

- Right.

- We read where the Salvation Army opposes euthanasia.

- Hello?

- Okay. Hi.

- A call.

- Good morning.

- Hello?

- Saved by the, saved by the provocative question. But we'll get to you.

- Oh, okay.

- Hi, good morning.

- Good morning, Amelia. Good morning, Iris.

- Hi, Archie, how are you?

- Hey.

- Well, good, I'm listening to the program and you're focusing on Salvation Army. One of them pointed out that I don't know if they know about it, but I think on Saint Croix, there used to be Salvation [inaudible] a group home or a boy's home out there in the stateside years ago. I don't know if they had that history about that.

- Oh, where was it in the State, where Scion Farm?

- Scion Farm area.

- Okay. And that was run by the Salvation Army?

- Yeah, I kind of, I kind of, that's when the [inaudible] was in private practice and I did some work for the group home out there. And in my understanding from my contact that that was run by the Salvation Army and...

- Does Ms. Frederick know anything about that? No.

- It used to be a boys' home. Remember the Salvation Army here in Saint Croix, were you aware?

- No. Okay, Archie, you're dating yourself.

- Yeah. Well, the other question was that I didn't know if they were going over a program. They have [inaudible] summer programs on Saint Thomas. And also there was, from my point of view, working with the persons with mental illness. At one point, there was a program for those who may be alcoholic.

- Uh-hmm.

- To detox and that was sort of run through the Salvation Army because we had a situation where a person who may have the mental illness and alcohol have been, could get the services in Saint Thomas. So, they were referred in Saint Croix. They had the village that would refer them to Salvation Army to help with the detox.

- Oh.

- Yes.

- Wow.

- So I was just wondering if that program is still available in the, in the Island.

- Yes, definitely. Since we run, our headquarters is in San Juan, Puerto Rico, we do have an Adult Rehabilitation Center in San Juan and so since we are the same division essentially, if people were, you know, to have that need, where they need to get detoxed or get cleaned up, we are able to actually, you know, refer them to the rehabilitation in San Juan. We get, try to get the means to actually get the flight ticket for them to get there. The program is totally free for the beneficiary. And he goes to this program and it run anything from six months to nine months and they actually, once they graduate, they try to link them back to the community and so usually by offering them a job. Usually a lot of them actually stay in the premises with a job, which is interesting, yeah, and so, and some of them, believe it or not, actually become Salvation Army officers.

- Okay.

- Become ministers where, because they also offer spiritual health in, in that rehabilitation center and so some of them actually feel the call to, you know, be part of this mission.

- That's wonderful.

- They go to the school. They become officers and once they head out, they can actually go back and be the officer in the rehab center and work with others, who, you know, also share the same struggle once and so it's wonderful because then they can say I was, you know, I was in there, and I was able to get out and I know that you can, too. Just wonderful program there. So, we do offer to it to the community as well.

- Can a person self-refer for that program?

- Yes, if a person, for example if they reach out to Puerto Rico in San Juan, they can definitely, yeah. They can go without going through us, essentially. But usually the headquarters will call me. That way I can meet with the person and, you know, make sure that he does get there. So, usually, yeah, but if the person reaches out to San Juan, they will work the means to, you know, to get them there as well.

- That was an excellent question, Archie.

- Yeah, very good.

- Well, I'm glad to hear that it's still going on because I wasn't certain after they told, you know, lead officers [inaudible] lately. But again it's great to hear that it's still going, the information that they've given [inaudible] to understand and know that they are present here and working here in the Virgin Islands. So, my best to you, thank you for what you do for the community. Take care.

- No, thank you, and you take care, thank you.

- Thank you, Archie. Let me also say this that if you've missed any of the conversation this morning, all our shows are recorded and they are posted on our website, which is located at drcvi.org. Iris, we're gonna, before we get to that question, we're gonna take a little break. We'll let Lt. Tirado catch his breath and then hopefully he'll be ready for the onslaught.

- [laugh]

- All right. We'll be back in a little bit. We're back. You're listening to Ability Radio, You and Your Life. I'm your co-host, Amelia Headley LaMont joined by Iris Bermudez and our guest this morning is Lt. Kevin Tirado and Corp Sergeant Major Adele Frederick from the Salvation Army. And we have a question for you from Iris.

- Okay.

- Yes. We had read where the Salvation Army opposes euthanasia and assisted suicide and it's against the death penalty. Can you share some information with regards to this and why it opposes euthanasia and assisted suicide?

- Yeah, definitely. As a Salvation Army, we said, you know, we hold to Christian beliefs and so, we believe in the sanctity of life, we believe that, you know, life is [inaudible] have worth, meaning, has value, has dignity, and so that's why we oppose. Again, we condemn anybody and the decision ultimately is to the individual. But again, we believe in sanctity of life, and we believe that anybody has, anyone has value and it, any person has a dignity and that it can rise and be someone greater and be a part of the community be of help to the community, so that's where, why we take that stance, and it's just because our core belief, that belief, you know, that life has meaning, and we believe in, again, in the sanctity of life and that's why we take that stance.

- But you did say during the break there may be a gray area, say, if one comes to an end of life situation.

- Yes.

- And question of, what, choice?

- Yes, for example, if someone, when it comes to, in a life, and again this is a choice of the individual and I said, we said in the break, you know, we do not condemn that, we don't condemn anybody, we believe in serving others, but if it comes to that choice in that person, again, that's their personal choice, it's just as a entity, we are, we take the stance because again we hold to Christian belief and we hold that life has value and meaning.

- And again during the break we asked about if the Salvation Army had a position on marriage equality or same sex marriage. What, where does the Salvation Army stand with regard to that?

- In regard to that we, as I said, in our mission statement, we serve without discrimination and so we serve to anyone. We, as, again as a Christian organization, we do take the stance of, in disagreement, but that does not, it's not a factor in who we serve and who we employ. We have employees who identify they're lesbian or gay, and specifically we're talking over the break that in, I believe it's in Las Vegas we have a shelter specifically for transgender people where, in regular shelters, they actually do not allow them in, and they do not want them even near the premises, and so as, like I said at the beginning, we are kind of forced to evolve depending on the situation and so we have a shelter for them where they can come, have a place to eat, have a place to sleep, and where we show them the love of Christ and we show them love to them, and bring a message of hope, because that's really who we are, just bringing the message of hope to anyone, despite race, sexual orientation, anything. You will never see in our application, you know, what is your race, what is this, what is that, is always, name, phone number, how many people in your family so we can serve you, here's your food. And so we love and serve everyone without discrimination.

- Well, that's probably why you're in so many countries.

- Yeah, definitely. And that's what we're, it's been a hundred and fifty-three years since we, you know, since we started so moving on and going strong, serving others, yes.

- And it certainly sounds like you're keeping with your core mission as well.

- Yes.

- Yes, definitely.

- What brought you to this ministry. I, we may have touched upon this briefly, but let's start with Kevin Tirado was a young lad.

- [laugh]

- You're still a young lad but let's say a younger lad. What brought you to this?

- Well, as I said, since I was young, I always, I always, you know, love the, the mission of the Salvation Army, love helping others, and even within the Salvation Army, I started as a, as a leader for teens where I would do, like, you know, small talks and I would do bible study with them and things like that. I also was a case manager in the Salvation Army. We're out there with other people and their needs, and so just for the sense of calling in my heart and, you know, from the Lord that this is where I needed to be, and so I left my job behind, left everything behind to enter seminary, and here I am. Interestingly enough, you know, you do have to sacrifice a lot, you know, behind in order to enter this ministry and, you know, you were aware of that before you enter.

- Were your parents okay with all this.

- Yeah, they were definitely okay. They're also part of the Salvation Army.

- Okay.

- They're so...

- There had to be some...

- Yeah, yeah.

- Okay.

- They're servicing Salvation, so they're definitely okay. And as I told you before, we're usually moved every so often and so in the Salvation Army, you know, it's interesting today at least, but it is a lot to all on the officer, but you do it because you love the mission and because you love the people. If not then you would not be happy. As a Salvation Army officer, you really have to have, you have to be aligned about the mission and the views of the Salvation Army in order to enjoy what you do, and love what you do, because it's not easy to kettle, because, yes, we have people who ring the bell but as administrator I actually don't have any employees here basically. So, I run everything. And so, I mean, I do have Mrs. Frederick who helps me a lot, and when, the days that she does work, she has to go back, you know, to her job but then she helps me on Mondays and does everything she can, but normally, yeah, I have to run everything as the officer, so it's easy and it does take a toll, but again, because you are in line with this mention and because you believe in it, and this is where your, I feel called to, I enjoy it, enjoy every moment of it.

- Okay. We're gonna take another break and we'll be back in a few minutes. This is Ability Radio, You and Your Life. We're back. You're listening to Ability Radio, You and Your Life. I'm your co-host, Amelia Headley LaMont, joined this morning by Iris Bermudez and our special guest today is Lt. Kevin Tirado and Corp Sergeant Major Adele Frederick from the Salvation Army. Well, we need to hear about what's new and in store. What's coming up for the next few months for the Salvation Army?

- Oh, definitely, well, our General has sent out an order which is called The World Mobilizing, so he's calling us to go out into their community and do something, and so for Saint Croix, we're having again the majors, Bermeo, who will bring, like, a small magic show to the rehab center and to the community. We also have in May, we have a brass ensemble, who's coming from the Southern territory, I believe it's Georgia, and they're coming down with 35 people. It's a 35-member ensemble of a brass band. Brass band has kind of been dying over the years and so the Salvation Army actually holds one of the biggest ensemble worldwide and so a band from the Southern Territory will be coming to Saint Croix May 24th, although in 2028. So we'll be posting some posters out in the community and things to let you guys know, and it will be beautiful to be able to enjoy classical music and brass instruments, so they cover that as well. And again, we are at 82 Estate Whim. We are in need of volunteers so if you're willing and have time

to come down and help, we will gladly take you, you can come down help us in our thrift store or with anything and you can come down and help and be part of this great mission.

- How does one get in touch with you?

- You can reach me at my email, which is kevin.tirado, last name, T-I-R-A-D-O, @usesalvationarmy.org, or you can reach our local phone, which is...

- 773...

- 773...

- ...6162.

- 6162.

- That's why it's always good to have an assistant to tell you how to call you.

- Yes, definitely.

- Okay. And Iris what do we have for next week?

- Well, next week, we'll be broadcasting out of Saint Thomas, and will have the DPNR Territorial Archivist who's Susan Lugo.

- Okay.

- Who will provide food information about our ancestry, and anything else we need to know.

- All right. Again, if you've missed anything, it's on our website, drcvi.org. Thank you so much for listening. You've listened to Ability Radio, You and Your Life. Have a good day.