



**DISABILITY RIGHTS**  
CENTER OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS  
*Advancing Justice through Protection and Advocacy*  
**2025 ANNUAL REPORT**



# ADVOCACY, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH

## RAISING AWARENESS

DRCVI advocates hosted quarterly webinars that addressed mental illness with subject matter experts. Topics covered: building strong families, navigating mental health challenges and stigma, behavioral health at school, facts and information for older adults with mental illness, talking about suicide, and learning about traumatic brain injuries.

DRCVI held “Elder Abuse Recognition & Prevention Training,” hosted victim advocate training for people working with domestic violence survivors and residents of care homes and partnered with leaders in Standing United Against the Abuse of Elder and Dependent Adults, which resulted in strengthened legislation.

DRCVI also provided technical assistance through senate testimony on special education and ABLE accounts, which are now available in the USVI.

Employment training sessions included topics such as ADA Title II, transition and age of majority, SSDI and Ticket to Work, and panel discussions on navigating the programs for job seekers and employees.

Throughout the year, DRCVI partnered with local and national organizations for 11 in-person and online ADA training sessions, engaging 243 participants. Each one was tailored to the audience and presented in plain language, with information packets and a Q&A session.



*Dawn O'Bryan, DRCVI advocate, speaks with Sophia Joseph Parrilla, PhD, psychologist, clinical director of Island Therapy Solutions, during the 2025 St. Croix Open House.*

## 35 YEARS OF THE ADA

DRCVI has been at the forefront of ADA compliance. On July 3, 1997, Amelia Headley Lamont, Archie Jennings, and a group of advocates launched the Virgin Islands ADA Litigation Campaign. This eight-week litigation effort challenged 27 businesses for violating the ADA, resulting in full compliance and laying the groundwork for the Territory's progress on disability rights.

DRCVI celebrated the 35th anniversary of the ADA alongside partner organizations with two events. Local advocates shared their history and services. Key topics included ADA history, requirements and enforcement, local programs and services, disaster preparedness, self-care, and workplace rights.



# VIPTI

## FIVE YEARS OF SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

*VIPTI's mission is to empower families and youth, advance disability rights, and provide training & resources to ensure equal opportunities in education and life.*

The Virgin Islands Parent Training and Information Center (VIPTI), a project of DRCVI, has supported disability rights, expanded access to education, and promoted health and wellness for youth and families throughout the Territory over the past five years.

Since 2020, VIPTI has held more than 63 IEP workshops and attended more than 126 outreach events, distributed 1,971 hygiene kits with hygiene training, and created and managed the Youth Empowerment Leadership Program at Edith Williams Alternative School from 2022 to 2025, which focused on self-advocacy and career exploration.

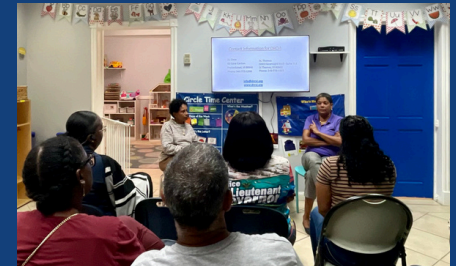
In 2025, VIPTI and DRCVI reached 638 students and staff through "Managing Triggers," a collaborative effort with the Virgin Islands Department of Education and the Virgin Islands Department of Health. Attorneys also spoke to local elementary school students as part of the VI Justice Initiative's Know Your Rights campaign.

VIPTI meets busy parents where they are through its newsletter, texting program, social media posts, and "Ability Radio."

During 2024-2025, VIPTI held over 45 health and wellness events and sponsored more than 40 anti-bullying and parent support events.

VIPTI distributed over 150 books through the Disability Advocacy & Rights Reading Initiative (DARRI's Book Club). To further reach the community, a Little Free Library, which promotes literacy through a "take-a-book, share-a-book" free book exchange, is located outside of the St. Croix office and full of books for all ages and reading levels.

As a result of VIPTI's programs, educational outcomes have improved, public awareness of disability and educational rights has increased, and a progressively inclusive environment for all students and families has developed.



*Yvonne Petersen, VI DD Coalition director, and Shammi Carr, DRCVI advocate, speak with parents and educators at an August 2025 back-to-school preparedness training focused on educational rights, IFSPs, and IEPs.*



*Little Free Library, courtesy of the Community Foundation of the VI and built by My Brother's Workshop, outside of the St. Croix office, next to the Disability Rights sign; DARRI's Book Club logo.*

# HONORING ARCHIE JENNINGS, ESQ.

## DISABILITY ADVOCACY CHAMPION OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

For more than 40 years, Archie Jennings has remained committed to helping people with disabilities. He served as the assistant to the executive director while leading complicated legal cases. As the director of advocacy, he used his professional skills and experience, along with his role as a supportive and reliable father, to mentor and train new advocates.

Archie was recognized by Governor Albert Bryan Jr. as a Disability Advocacy Champion during the 35th Anniversary of the ADA Celebrations. Governor Bryan proclaimed July 15, 2025, as a day of Observance of Disability Advocacy Champions of the Virgin Islands.

He was also presented with a certificate of appreciation at the Deaf Awareness Celebration hosted by Virgin Islands Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advocates on St. Thomas to honor his decades of devoted service.

Archie's influence extends beyond the Virgin Islands. He has served as a Third Circuit representative on the National Disability Rights Network Legal Committee and as state president of AARP Virgin Islands. He has also held key legal roles at Legal Services of the Virgin Islands and the Legal Aid Society in Ohio. He currently collaborates with the Northeast ADA Center and serves on the State Rehabilitation Board.



*Pauline Lee, former DRCVI Advocate, Archie Jennings, and Kishma Creque by a Picasso print of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza in 2011 at the St. Thomas office.*

*Archie Jennings, Amelia Headley LaMont, former executive director, and Joe Zesski, MDiv, program manager, Northeast ADA Center, and an affiliate during Agrifest 2017 in St. Croix.*



Archie advances civil rights and disability advocacy in the territory, covering fair employment practices, elder law, special education, healthcare, housing, and economic development. His leadership has brought significant positive changes for people with disabilities.

Outside of work, Archie is a dedicated father and grandfather. His family remains his greatest source of inspiration. His ongoing service contributes to a progressively inclusive Virgin Islands.

# THE DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS



## LEGAL SERVICES, INFORMATION & REFERRALS

DRCVI provides advice and consultation, direct client representation, and referrals. Legal areas include civil rights in education, employment, healthcare, transportation, housing, public benefits, and voting rights; ADA issues; access to accommodations, assistive technology, and modifications; and information on FMLA, workers' compensation, unemployment, Social Security, and Medicaid eligibility.

In 2025, DRCVI attorneys and advocates conducted 30 monitoring visits. Under federal law, DRCVI is authorized to conduct monitoring visits at residential facilities to ensure residents receive appropriate care and treatment and are not subject to abuse or neglect.

DRCVI works to ensure that people with disabilities, their families, caregivers, educators, and community members are aware of their rights and the services available to them.

Staff hosted 55 training sessions and participated in 48 community events in 2025. Additional referrals and educational materials were provided at our offices, online, and during visits to businesses and other organizations.

"Ability Radio" airs every Saturday at 11:30 a.m. on WTJX 93.1 FM. Recordings are available on [drcvi.org](http://drcvi.org), YouTube, and most podcast platforms.

## STAFF & SUPPORT

**Angus Drigo**, Executive Director

**Archie Jennings, Esq.**, Assistant to the Executive Director

**Vincent Anderson, CPA**, Fiscal Administrator

**Kishma Francis, Esq.**, Staff Attorney, VIPTI Project Director

**Jasmine Barmer, J.D.**, Legal Advocate

**Kishma Creque**, Administrative Legal Assistant

**Rebekah Kubla**, Communications Manager

**Dawn O'Bryan**, Advocate

**Adeje Petersen**, Youth Engagement and Outreach Coordinator

**Amelia Headley LaMont, J.D.**, Ability Radio Show Host

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*DRCVI's mission is to advance the legal rights of people with disabilities, support and empower families, and inform and involve professionals and others interested in the healthy development and education of children and youth.*



**DISABILITY RIGHTS**

CENTER OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

*Advancing Justice through Protection and Advocacy*

ST. CROIX - MAIN OFFICE  
63 ESTATE CANE CARLTON  
FREDERIKSTED, VI 00840  
(340) 772-1200

ST. THOMAS & ST. JOHN  
9003 HAVENSIGHT MALL, SUITE 313  
CHARLOTTE AMALIE, VI 00802  
(340) 776-4303

[drcvi.org](https://drcvi.org)

