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CELEBRATION AIRED ON JULY 26, 2020 on
WTJX & Government Access Channel
Viewable Online:
www.facebook.com/GovernmentHouseUSVI/videos
**Our Very Own Local Virgin Islands Celebrity**

Neville Peter was born on November 17, 1972. He was born and raised on the beautiful island of St. Thomas. When he was about six months old, his parents noticed that he did not make eye contact with them anymore. He did not smile back when they smiled at him, nor did he respond to their faces peering at him over the rails of his crib. His parents wondered if there was something wrong with his vision, so they took him to the doctor. He was diagnosed with Glaucoma, which is a very painful disease that causes nerve damage in the eyes.

At the age of fourteen, Neville began to study piano. It was offered as an elective at his school. Two years later, he rediscovered his voice at a high school Christmas concert where the audience gave him a standing ovation. Not long after, he began receiving invitations to sing at other concerts, church events and talent shows on the island. At the age of 19, Neville left St. Thomas and moved to Miami. There he attended the University of Miami where he received his BA in Studio Music and Vocal Jazz.

While in college he received an award from Down Beat Magazine for best National College Jazz Male Vocalist of the Year. During this time, he began performing on South Beach and other clubs in the Miami area. Neville has toured with Cassandra Wilson and has worked with Gladys Knight. When Gladys heard a recording of him singing his original music, she said that he was destined for the Grammies. However, shortly thereafter his career in secular music was cut short by God’s divine providence. Although resisting God’s call initially, on January 1, 1998, while playing at a New Year’s Eve party in Michael Cane’s restaurant, Neville decided that he had seen all the world had to offer and he did not find it appealing. It was at that moment he resolved to give all of his talents to God, withholding nothing. He then began writing and performing Christian music and God has really blessed!

He has written over 100 Gospel songs and has had the privilege of sharing the stage with Bishop T.D. Jakes, Gladys Knight, Donnie McClurkin, Yolanda Adams, Natalie Cole, Shirley Caesar, Richard Smallwood, Kurt Carr, Bebe Winans, and many others. He has performed at the White House, Carnegie Hall and appeared on many television programs including, TBN’s “Praise the Lord” program, 1-Gospel with Alicia Williamson, Celebration of Praise with Ron Rosson, and Cynthia and Friends.

During an interview he was asked “If new technology were developed that would allow you to regain your sight, would you want to take advantage of it?” His answer gives such insight into his love for the Lord. He paused and thought and then said, “Well, yes and no. Yes, because it would be nice to be able to get into my car and just go wherever I want without having to depend on other people, but no, because I think it would be really cool if the first face that I see is the face of Jesus.”

[https://nevillepeter.com/](https://nevillepeter.com/)
A MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR ALBERT BRYAN JR.

The Bryan/Roach Administration joins the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands in proudly commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, a comprehensive and landmark legislation that protects the civil rights of this vulnerable population.

On July 26, 1990, President George H. W. Bush enacted the American with Disabilities Act which prohibits discrimination and guarantees that persons with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to participate in the mainstream of American life. Today, it is our duty to continue upholding the tenets of this law. They deserve no less.

Across the nation, almost 60 million people, including 10,000 Virgin Islanders, are part of the disabled population, which is larger than the demographics of any race or religion.

We congratulate the ADA community for all of its accomplishments over the past three decades. The Administration remains firmly committed to improving accessibility and inclusivity for members of the disabled community. We have introduced our Healthier Horizons initiative, which includes the Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Act of the United States Virgin Islands to expand and update mental and behavioral health services and as well as consolidating every existing provision in the V.I. Code relevant to mental or behavioral health in one place. I also recently signed an Executive Order to increase the percentage of people with disabilities working for the Government of the Virgin Islands, from 1 percent to 5 percent within five years. With Julien Henley Sr., our Territorial ADA Coordinator, at the helm, we believe this effort will usher in a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

Finally, I encourage every individual with a disability in the community to be counted in the 2020 census. It is vital that you are accurately represented so that the Territory receives all the resources and benefits it needs.

May God continue to bless you and may God continue to bless these beloved U.S. Virgin Islands.

Sincerely,

Albert Bryan Jr.
Governor
Accessible housing became a victory with the signing of the Visitability Law in 2010, which we continue to urge residents to take advantage of.

Visitability requirements include accessible paths, restrooms, and doors.

More recently, within Governor Bryan’s Healthier Horizons initiative is the U.S. Virgin Islands Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities Act.

The Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability (BHD) Act of the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) expands and updates mental and behavioral health services and consolidates every existing provision in the VI Code relevant to mental or behavioral health in one place. It addresses the coordination of services by public and private agencies that support suffering individuals and establishes the first comprehensive public facility to treat persons who require behavioral and mental health services and persons with developmental disabilities.
A MESSAGE FROM THE TERRITORIAL ADA COORDINATOR

It is with great joy that we recognize that on July 26, 1990—30 years ago—President George W. H. Bush signed the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) into law. Today we celebrate this civil rights law by sharing with the people of these beautiful Virgin Islands the accomplishments and appreciation for all the individuals that suffered, fought, and even died in order to this law to become the guiding light to granting us access like everyone else.

I humbly thank Governor Albert Bryan Jr. for charging me to bring this administration into compliance and create additional services that would make the disabled residents of this territory feel included in all possible aspects. Although we have made many strides, there is still so much more work to be done, and this will only be accomplished if we continue to fight for what we all deserve, which is to have access. “Access” is not restricted to just physical means but also communication and virtual access. As such, while most Government agencies are accessible today, goals are in place to make them all-accessible, which we can accomplish in many ways. Today, coming together means understanding that this must be a joint effort. That is, it is not only for persons without disabilities to create this path, but it is time for individuals with disabilities to realize their place within this fight for real change.

Since the inception of the ADA, there have been drastic improvements, which we all should be proud of. For example, when disabled individuals travel to the USVI, they can now park in our disabled parking spots without getting a $1,000 ticket; a Visitability Law that offers incentives for making homes accessible; Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) have been installed on many of our crosswalks; our curve cuts are beginning to align with ADA specifications; a communication card that allows persons who are deaf to communicate with peace officers during traffic stop; Alert VI can now communicate their territorial alerts to individuals who are deaf; the ADA Coordinator is now at the table of many crucial conversations, ensuring a voice for those with disabilities; we have created a registry for persons with disabilities that would be able to assist them after any natural disaster; and very soon, people in the USVI will be able to take their loved ones to our accessible beaches.

Thus, I celebrate this 30-year milestone with our Virgin Islands as we continue to take this journey together to make our territory an example of inclusions for all.

Sincerely,

Julien E. Henley, Sr.
Territorial ADA Coordinator
THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

************

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

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A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, The mandates of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provide avenues for persons with disabilities to be accommodated in all facets of life that is afforded to people without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Persons with disabilities are better prepared and engaged in the workforce than ever before; and

WHEREAS, Telecommunication and new technologies for persons who are blind, deaf or who need a device to communicate are now vastly available; and

WHEREAS, Collaboration among stakeholders to prepare students with disabilities at an early age results in increased quality of life and engagement with employment options; and

WHEREAS, Employers are obligated to provide reasonable accommodations for an applicant or employee with a disability to perform the essential functions of the job; and

WHEREAS, Our community is asked to recognize the need for compliance with the ADA to fully accommodate persons with disabilities in our territory.
Proclamation: Thirtieth Anniversary Celebration of The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Albert Bryan Jr., Governor of the United States Virgin Islands, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Revised Organic Act of 1954, as amended, do hereby proclaim July 26, 2020 as the Thirtieth 30th Anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Government of the Virgin Islands of the United States to be affixed at Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, this 1st day of JULY, A.D. 2020.

[Signature]

Albert Bryan, Jr.
Governor

Attest:

[Signature]

Tregenza A. Roach, Esquire
Lieutenant Governor
June 15, 2020

A Message from the Commissioner of Human Services

On behalf of the Virgin Islands Department of Human Services, it is indeed an honor to join in the celebrations in recognizing the 30 years of achievements of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). This year marks a major milestone in history, and it is evident that there has been tremendous gain since the enactment of this landmark legislation. We salute our staff of the Division of Disabilities and Rehabilitation Services, as they strive to improve the quality of life for individuals with disabilities, especially as pertains to employment. Our Head Start staff continues to ensure our pre-school children with disabilities are provided intervention services and provide inclusive early childhood education in our classrooms across the territory. All other divisions and offices operated by DHS are responsive to the needs of individuals with disabilities and provide them with critically needed services across the life cycle.

The 2020 National ADA Theme “Increasing Access and Opportunity” clearly reinforces that it our responsibility as a community to create an environment for all citizens to thrive which include our veterans, seniors, youths and individuals with disabilities. The charge is urgent; we must continue to build these beautiful Virgin Islands by advocating for inclusion, compliance, and transformation.

The ADA has created opportunities and impacted the way we view the world. It has helped to shape workforce, eliminate barriers, and allow individuals with disabilities to have a voice. This year also marks the 100th Birthday of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program and 75 years of the National Disability Employment Awareness; Let us continue to make a difference by expanding on the groundwork that was already laid by the ADA. Last year, the Department in conjunction with the Office of the ADA Coordinator begun a series of sensitivity trainings and plans to continue until all the staff is cognizant and capable of serving customers with disabilities. During the last several months, the Department has also worked with community partners to re-activate the Virgin Islands Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), an independent Council that advocates to improve services provided to individuals with disabilities and works with the Center for Independent Living. The Department also provides financial assistance, through its federal Consolidated Block Grant, to the V.I. Developmental Disabilities Council. At the Department of Human Services, we look forward to the continued partnership with all the stakeholders as we champion the fight for individuals with disabilities in the Virgin Islands.

Sincerely,

Kimberley Causey-Gomez
Commissioner
Our Services Include:

• Job Placement
• Workplace Readiness Training
• Transition Planning
• Vocational Counseling
• Resume Writing
• Evaluations
• Accommodations

&

Much More

1303 Hospital Ground, STE.1
St. Thomas, VI 00802-6722
Tel. (340) 774-0930
(340) 244-7861

6179 Anna’s Hope
St. Croix, VI 00820
Tel. (340) 772-7122
(340) 643-8145

Let Us Help You Find Your Pathway to Independence!
A Message from the Commissioner of Labor

On behalf of the Virgin Islands Department of Labor (VIDOL), we are honored to be a part of the celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. As we reflect on the signing of this landmark legislation, we see very clear evidence of how this legislation has helped to increase access and opportunity for people with disabilities across the nation. In the Virgin Islands, we have made great strides and while we still have a ways to go in some areas, we also see a better community where the technological advances of the world have provided access to the resources and adaptive technology needed to level the playing field for Virgin Islanders with disabilities. Specifically, the ADA has impacted our schools, workplaces, means of transportation (buses and ferries), shopping centers, courthouses, movie theaters, and just about all public spaces that we share.

This year’s 30th anniversary theme centers around “Increasing Access and Opportunity”, some of the programs the Department is proud of are the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP), Vocational Rehabilitation Program, and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Program. These programs help to build partnerships that span from agency to agency, or agency to organization, and they cover services that support the individual’s needs beyond job searching. Also, as individuals register with VIDOL for a VleWS (Virgin Islands Electronic Workforce System) account, they can access resources and a portal that helps keep them organized and connected with us. The outreach programs and support services we provide are great resources. However, to truly go the distance, let’s take a challenge; VIDOL and all business entities (public, private, and non-profit) need to continue to partner more aggressively to break the ceiling for hundreds of Virgin Islanders to have increased access and opportunity to develop their skills and talents in order for them to make their unique contributions to our Virgin Islands community.

As the Commissioner of the Department of Labor, during these unprecedented times, I can tell you that VIDOL recognizes and celebrates increasing the access and opportunity created by the ADA. But without the active participation of employers, we risk a loss in focus on programs and we delay the progress needed to meet the needs of our future. With virtual living and social distancing becoming a part of our new normal, let’s take the challenge together to make our islands a workforce to be reckoned with by opening more doors to opportunity for all of our community members. VIDOL pledges to continue to work alongside our stakeholders as we pursue the goal of full inclusion in Virgin Islands workplaces. Happy 30th Birthday ADA!

Sincerely,

Gary Molloy
Commissioner
Congratulations ADA on 30 Years of Progress!

Greetings All,

Thirty years ago, the American with Disabilities Act was signed into law. It has since been one of the most far-reaching and impactful pieces of Civil Rights legislation ever passed in the United States of America. The American with Disabilities Act, commonly referred to as ADA was crafted with the input of not just law makers but also by dedicated parents, nurses, doctors and people living with physical challenges, who recognized the injustices and dedicated their efforts to ensuring that Americans with disabilities would be equally recognized and treated fairly.

Over the years, Division of Personnel has invested in the use of systems that are more accessible to our clients, job applicants and employees of the Government of the US Virgin Islands. The Division has also partnered with the Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands (DRCVI) and the office of the Territorial ADA Coordinator to provide various ADA trainings within the Government.

Division of Personnel is committed to continuing its effort to make the Government of Virgin Islands a more accessible and inclusive workplace for people with disabilities. Once again, Congratulations on your 30-year anniversary!

Sincerely,

Dayna Clendinen
Director
MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

On behalf of the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), its Board of Trustees and the entire UVI faculty, staff and student body, we join with the millions of people with disabilities around this country and their allies in commemorating the extraordinary occasion of the 30th Anniversary of The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We join you in celebration of this landmark civil rights legislation that protects people with disabilities from discrimination on the basis of their disability and promotes their inclusion in all aspects of community life and employment. On this milestone anniversary, we also reflect on the impact of the ADA legislation in breaking down barriers to opportunities for so many with disabilities and celebrate the equal access to opportunity it created.

As an Historically Black College and University and land-grant institution, civil rights struggles and the challenges faced by disenfranchised persons are all too familiar to us. We understand these struggles, because we embody these struggles. We haven't reached the promise land yet, but we are well on our way thanks to such legislation as the ADA and the ongoing activism and advocacy of disability activists, centers like the Virgin Islands University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (VIUCEDD), and the continuing work being promoted in the U.S. Virgin Islands towards a more inclusive community.

UVI takes this opportunity to salute the proud disability civil rights warriors who fought for equal rights for people with disabilities and we lend our support and commitment to making sure that UVI is a place where people of all different abilities are welcomed, supported and embraced. While we recognize the significant progress since the passage of the ADA, we know that advocacy efforts must continue and we look forward to the University being a part of the ongoing dialogue on disability rights and issues and providing another platform to further advance equity and inclusion for everyone.

Sincerely,

David Hall, SJD
President
MESSAGE FROM DR. KIMBERLY R. MILLS, PH.D, BCBA-D:
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF VIUCEDD

“I do not have a disability; I have a gift! Others may see it as a disability, but I see it as a challenge. This challenge is a gift because I have to become stronger to get around it, and smarter to figure out how to use it; others should be so lucky.”
— Shane E. Bryan

I am so pleased to join my friends, colleagues, coworkers and members of the general community in celebrating the auspicious occasion of 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Virgin Islands University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (VIUCEDD) joins our hands and hearts and voices with the other voices, hands and hearts of people with disabilities, their advocates and family members in issuing a resounding cheer for the progress that has been made over the past 30 years to integrate people with disabilities into the larger community. We celebrate not only here in the U.S. Virgin Islands, but around the continental United States and around the world.

Since 1963, University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities like the VIUCEDD have worked towards a shared vision that foresees a nation in which all Americans, including Americans with disabilities, participate fully in their communities. Independence, productivity, and community inclusion are key components of this vision. As 1 of 67 University Centers for Disability Excellence centered around the United States including territories and possessions, the VIUCEDD works to support people with disabilities and their families by:

1. Conducting Evidence-Based Research
2. Engaging in Interdisciplinary Pre-Service Preparation and Continuing Education
3. Delivering Community Services
4. Disseminating Information

We will continue to work to support the greater implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act and we look forward to continuing this important work alongside members of our community for another 30 years and beyond. Onwards and upwards. God Bless the Virgin Islands.

Kind Regards,

Kimberly R. Mills
Kimberly R. Mills, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Executive Director: Virgin Islands University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (VIUCEDD)
July 10, 2020

**Message from the State Director of the Virgin Islands Small Business Development Center**

On behalf of the Virgin Islands Small Business Development Center, I would like to congratulate and celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It’s both an honor and privilege to be a part of this tremendous occasion. The ADA passed in 1990 paved the way for removing discrimination from the workplace and making facilities accessible to people with disabilities.

Over the years, the Small Business Development Center has partnered with the local ADA office to promote education for employers to make the work-place inclusive for all individuals. The SBDC looks forward to continued collaboration with local partners to promote education, equality, and accommodation.

I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Julien Henley, Sr. the Territorial ADA Coordinator for the Office of the Governor during my initial visit to the islands. It was after that encounter, I knew the Territory was in excellent hands with Mr. Henley leading the charge.

Once again, the Virgin Islands Small Business Development Center is honored to help celebrate the 30th anniversary of the ADA as one of the most important bills in United States history.

Sincerely,

**Theodore J Gutierrez**

Theodore J Gutierrez  
State Director
MESSAGE FROM ACTING VIEDA CEO

“There is no greater disability in society than the inability to see someone as more.”

– Robert N. Hensel

Recognizing the rights of individuals with disabilities and seeing beyond their challenges become more significant with each passing generation in our society, especially in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Established since 1990 by U.S. legislation, the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) was created to help eradicate discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life. And aptly so. These individuals enhance the quality of life for our Territory - and the world - with their talents, insights and strengths. They also bring unique perspectives, innovative ideas and a sense of diversity that magnifies the USVI spirit of inclusion within our community. Their inclusion in our small businesses and the workplace also reflect our community’s desire to look within a person’s heart and mind and beyond their human challenges.

This year, the passage of the ADA is being celebrated through webinars for small businesses. With trainings on using accessible social media best practices to reach a more diverse audience, and creating disability employment policies, the conversation to include individuals with disabilities in our small-business community continues to move in the right direction.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, management and staff of the Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority (VIEDA), thank you for participating in these webinars and the extensive territory-wide events to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the ADA hosted by the Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands. Your participation reflects your willingness to diversify your work culture, enhance economic development opportunities through our small businesses, and enrich our culture and community, making it a better place for all of us to work and reside.

Regards,

Wayne E. Biggs, Jr.
Acting Chief Executive Officer/Chief Operating Officer
THE ORIGINS OF THE DISABILITY MOVEMENT IN THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

The U.S. Virgin Islands community of persons with disabilities had a secret in that it was well positioned in 1990 to gather momentum to advance civil rights issues that became cemented into law on July 26, 1990. The organization known as ‘The Virgin Islands Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities’ was organized and operating at least by 1984, SO THE SEEDS OF ADVOCACY WERE PLANTED EARLY.

At the time of the passage of the AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was already in existence which stated that any entities receiving federal funds could not discriminate on the basis of disability. Therefore, in the Virgin Island, some knew that they had the right to expect equal treatment from any federally governmental funded program or services, such as public transportation. Clearly those programs provided by the Territorial Governmental fell under said umbrella of the Rehab Act.

At the time of the passage of the ADA in 1990, there was at least one organization that was aware that the federal law. This fight for equal rights now reached beyond the government, and now expanded to equal treatment within the public and private sectors. The federal law had crossed the great divide and allowed civil rights to be expanded beyond just governmental functions but to the greater society as a whole.

Soon after the ADA became fully effective in 1992, meetings were held amongst persons with disability to take up the challenge of BUILDING THE NEW!! The formation of what was called the ADA AD HOC committee became the driving force which on July 3, 1997 launched a ADA campaign which resulted in the filing of 27 lawsuits over an eight-week period make programs, services and businesses more accessible and more mobility friendly for persons with disabilities. Some of the local businesses that were addressed included grocery Stores, hotels, movie cinemas, banks, restaurants, medical facilities, retail shops and access to airlines. As a result of the lawsuits there were also discussions for access with other entities such as the V.I. Port Authority, U.S. Customs, GSA and the Territory of the Virgin Islands & the local telephone company to assure the installation of TTY/TDD phones for emergency services.

Further, the ADA AD HOC took up the challenge in the year 2000 to initiate a class action lawsuit for the establishment of Territorial wide equal public transportation services. This resulted in the public service to purchase paratransit busses with lifts for those who could not use the regular busses. The paratransit service was to adhere to the established laws and regulation related to the provision of such services similar or equal to the service provided to non-disabled persons.

There were many who volunteered to be a part of the ADA AD HOC Committee good women and men who got up and stood up for their rights who said in unison through the following poem and their joint lawsuits - ENOUGH AND WE WILL NOT ACCEPT LESS ANYMORE!
A Welcome Message from the Executive Director of Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands

“We are proud to be a part of the celebration of this important step in civil rights. We are honored to have had the privilege of collaborating with pioneers in our community, who at great personal risk took their time to advance a more inclusive community; and we are excited about the prospect of working with a new generation of change makers.”

Activities for the anniversary will be posted on the Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands’ website at www.drcvi.org/resources/ada-30-vi. The public can keep up with the committee by following all of the member groups on their Facebook pages and can participate in the anniversary by using the hashtags #ADA30, #ThanksToTheADA, and #ADA30VI on social media.

The Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands (DRCVI) is the federally mandated and funded protection and advocacy corporation for the U.S. Virgin Islands. DRCVI’s mission is to advance the legal rights of people with disabilities, support and empower families and provide training and information that promotes the overall health and educational development of children and youth.

DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
Advancing Justice through Protection and Advocacy
AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT  
(ADA)  
THIRTY YEARS of continuous THANKS

Today, we say “Thank You” to the ADA because:

+ The same employment opportunities and benefits are available to persons with disabilities as are afforded to persons without disabilities

+ Discrimination is prohibited against qualified persons with disabilities in all activities and services provided by public entities

+ Private entities which provide public activities are prohibited from discriminating against persons with disabilities

+ Auxiliary aids and devices have greatly enhanced communication for individuals with vision and hearing impairments

+ The availability of accessible public and para-transit transportation provides the opportunity for persons with disabilities to meet their business, medical, social, and other needs

+ This significant civil rights law continues to pave the way for persons with significant disabilities to embrace the lifestyle available to all mankind with the confidence that their rightful needs will be met without discrimination.

**Happy 30th Anniversary, July 2020; to the ADA**
From the Board of Directors, Staff and Consumers of VIAIL
Your child(ren) has been diagnosed and you need information but you don’t know what to do
- You want to connect with other families that understand and can also help to improve VI healthcare services
- You want to improve your parent and leadership skills so you can advocate for your child’s healthcare needs.
- You are looking for resources and other health information on my child(ren)’s diagnosis
- You would like to work closely with families to develop creative solutions for their child’s health care needs

The VIDDC is in the process of establishing a Family National Voices Affiliate in the Virgin Islands to train Parent Health Navigators. Through the F2F/HIC, the VI Family Voices will offer assistance and emotional support to families of children and youth with special health, developmental, physical and behavioral needs and the professionals who serve them.

Family-to-Family Health Information Center [F2F/HIC]
Cell (340) 474-9340
Email: viddcouncil@gmail.com
Virgin Islands Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc.

Our Mission:
The Council is an IRS 501c3 not-for-profit corporation whose members and staff have the key purpose of fulfilling the Council’s mission in accordance with its federal mandates of the Developmental Disabilities Bill of Rights Act of 2000. The Council represents no single arm of the government but supports advocacy for the interest of people with developmental disabilities and their families. DD Councils through state and territories plans, develops, advocates for and fosters responsive public policy, practices and opportunities, in the states to promote systemic change and support people with developmental disabilities and families.

THE COUNCIL (VIDDC) SUPPORTS INCLUDE:

⇒ Leadership training for Self-Advocates and Family of individuals with developmental disabilities
⇒ Advocating for a dependable and financially sustainable public transportation system
⇒ Promoting not-for-profit capacity building to support a “Birth-to-Career” initiative with the goal of reducing students with disabilities graduating from school-to-home
⇒ Providing training for economic development to promote sustainability
⇒ Encouraging a new generation of leadership that promotes succession planning
⇒ Work on addressing the School-to-Prison Pipeline
⇒ Other programs and initiatives that promotes full inclusion and integration in the community

If you are a person with a developmental disabilities, a family member or a business or organization that has specific policies and priorities in place to ensure an inclusive environment, we look forward to hearing from you.

Our contact information: E-mail address: viddcouncil@gmail.com  Website: www.viddc.org
Who are we?

Alianza Municipal de Servicios Integrados, Inc. (AMSI) is a nonprofit organization which offers training and employment services since 1991 in Puerto Rico.

In 2006, we began our services as an Employment Network for Social Security Administration’s (SSA) Ticket to Work Program. In 2017, we expanded our services to the US Virgin Islands.

What is the Ticket to Work Program?

The Ticket to Work Program supports career development for Social Security disability beneficiaries who want to work. The program is free and voluntary; and helps people with disabilities progress toward financial independence.

What is an Employment Network (EN)?

An EN is an entity that contracts with the Social Security Administration to either provide or coordinate the delivery of services to Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries.

AMSI has activated over 40 tickets in US Virgin Islands.

Who qualifies?

Everyone ages 18 through 64 and receives SSDI benefits because of a disability is eligible.

Benefits

✓ Improve earning potential and prepare for long-term success in the workforce
✓ Keep your benefits while you explore employment, receive vocational rehabilitation services and gain work experience
✓ Work Incentives make it possible for you to explore work which still receiving cash benefits
✓ Keep your Medicaid/Medicare health insurance...much more!!!

What to expect...

- Individual Work Plan and assessment to be submitted to SSA
- Resume preparation
- Assistance in job searching
- Referrals to partners of the program for additional help
- Follow up and mentoring services

Service in the Virgin Islands

Every second and fourth Tuesday at St. Thomas

- Morning hours at the Department of Labor, 2353 Kronprindsens Gade
- Afternoon hours at the Association of Independent Living, Wheatley Mall

Every second and fourth Thursday at St. Croix

- Morning hours at the Association of Independent Living, Sion Farm Mall
- Afternoon hours at the Department of Labor, 4401 Sion Farm STE1

Every three months at St. John

- Morning hours at the St. John Administrator’s Office

SUCCESS STORY

Julien E. Henley, Sr.
ADA Coordinator

Until recently, Mr. Henley’s professional career was primarily in retail. His leadership skills and business acumen were recognized by his supervisors early in his career. Managers at Kinney’s Shoe Corporation, one of the largest footwear chains in America at that time, promoted him from salesperson to General Manager after only three years of employment. He later became the General Manager of Champs Sports before venturing into the sale of independently crafted exquisite jewelry and fine objects at Passman Galleries. Once again, Mr. Henley’s servant leadership, business acumen, and integrity were rewarded by management. After only two years of employment in a totally new area of retail, Mr. Henley was promoted to General Manager of Passman Galleries’ Alaska, and St. Thomas stores. In 2009, he received a second promotion to the position of Regional Manager, responsible for overseeing the company’s stores in the Cayman Islands and St. Thomas.

Today, Mr. Henley serves as the Chairperson of the State Rehabilitation Council, and the Virgin Islands University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disability (VIUCEDD). He also volunteers with AMP, Mr. Henley was employed by the Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands. He credits this organization with providing him with the critical training and relevant information necessary to empower individuals with disabilities to access available resources. In this position with the Disability Rights Center, Mr. Henley enrolled in the Ticket to Work Program, where he received information from the Social Security Administration and the Alianza Municipal de Servicios Integrados (AMSI), his Employment Network (EN), to help him through transitioning economically towards his goals with the assurance of reaching more challenging endeavors without the fear of losing his benefits and health insurance.

CONTACT

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Orlando Rivera
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Julien Henley Sr.

In 2008, life as Mr. Henley knew it changed significantly and abruptly. Mr. Henley was shot in a senseless act of unpremeditated violence, which left him permanently paralyzed from the waist down. Mr. Henley did not allow this unthinkable act to take the wind out from under his wings. After a brief period of mental, emotional and physical healing, with the support of his wife, family and friends, Mr. Henley resumed his involvement in community service. Currently, Mr. Henley serves as the Territorial ADA Coordinator out of the Office of the Governor.

This is his God-given purpose.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization Name</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al-Anon</td>
<td>340-473-1497 (STX)</td>
<td>Friedensthal Moravian Church Christiansted, USVI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)                              | 340-776-5283 (STT) | District 14, PO Box 151 St. Thomas, VI 00804  
  www.aa.virginislands.org                              |
| Diabetes Association of the Virgin Islands              | 340 227-9723 (STT) | PO Box 305511 St. Thomas, VI 00803  
  stroste@uvi.edu                                      |
| Virgin Islands Parents of Autistic Children (VIPAC) of St. Thomas | 340-514-4164 (STT) | vipac2018@gmail.com                          |
| Virgin Islands Developmental Disabilities Council (VIDDC) | STT and STX (electronic contact for both islands) | Email: info@viddc.org  
  Website: www.viddc.org                              |
| National Alliance on Mental Illness Virgin Islands (NAMI) | 340-4732362 (STT) | namistt@yahoo.com                           |
|                                                         | 340-779-3350 (STX) | info@namistttx.org                          |
| Virgin Islanders Living with Lupus, Inc.                | 340 -690-0033 (STT) | PO Box 306452 St. Thomas, VI 00803           |
| VI Association for Independent Living, Mutual Aid Self-Help | 340-777-4978 (STT) | Wheatley Center 2 Suite 7, St. Thomas (STT), VI |
|                                                         | 340 – 778-7992 (STX) | Sion Farm Shopping Center, St. Croix (STX), VI |
| St. Thomas - St. John Sickle Cell Disease Parent Support Group | 340-514-4400 (STT) | 7111 Estate Bolongo Bay St. Thomas, VI 00802  
  meurial.adams@gmail.com                              |
| Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance                   | 340 473-9592 (STT) | 2nd Floor, Schneider Hospital, St. Thomas, USVI |
| VI Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advocates                  | STT and STX (electronic contact for both islands) | virginislandsdeaf@gmail.com                  |
| VI Stroke Support Group                                 | 340-513-1537 (STT) | mekimrn@yahoo.com                           |
# Government of the Virgin Islands American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Departmental Coordinators

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Department</th>
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<th>Coordinator 2</th>
<th>Phone Numbers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Contact Person(s)</td>
<td>Email(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Planning &amp; Natural Resources</td>
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<td>(340) 473-3523</td>
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<td><strong>Virgin Islands Lottery</strong></td>
<td>Ms. Verita Carmichael</td>
<td><a href="mailto:verita.carmichael@vilottery.vi">verita.carmichael@vilottery.vi</a></td>
<td>(340) 998-0688</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Office of the Virgin Islands Inspector General</strong></td>
<td>Ms. Laverne A. Raimer</td>
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<td>(340) 774-3388</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Virgin Islands Waste Management Authority</strong></td>
<td>Derrick Alleyne (STX) Maureen Bryan (STT/STJ)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dalleyne@viwma.org">dalleyne@viwma.org</a>; <a href="mailto:mbryan@viwma.org">mbryan@viwma.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Virgin Islands Public Finance Authority</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Office of the Governor</strong></td>
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<td>(340) 778-9750 ext. 6628; ext. 6648; (340) 774-6680 ext. 6535; (340) 774-2237 ext. 6213</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Overview

The Americans with Disabilities Act was signed in 1990 by President George H.W. Bush. This legislation made it a violation of federal law to discriminate against people with disabilities, just as similar civil rights laws protect people against discrimination on the basis of race gender national origin sexual orientation and religion.

The ADA provides equal opportunities for people with disabilities in the areas of employment, transportation, state and local government, public accommodations and telecommunications it protects anyone in the United States and its territories with physical, visual hearing as well as intellectual disabilities and others that are hidden such as diabetes, autism, ADHD, cancer, sickle cell, mental health and recovery from substance abuse including alcohol. The ADA was amended (adjusted) in 2008. The intent of this amendment was to bring back the congressional intent of who a person with a disability. It included individuals who take mitigating measures such as medication to lessen the impact of their disability. The ADA does not have a list that includes all disabilities and is a self-attesting definition (you verify it yourself and your doctor provides the documentation).

The act is divided into five sections called “Titles.”

Title One: Employment

Title one prevents discrimination in the workplace. Private employers who have 15 or more and employees, state and local government labor, unions, and employment agencies cannot discriminate against qualified job applicants and employees on the basis of their disability. This means that it is illegal to ask a person about a disability during the employment interview. A person can choose to disclose their disability, but if they are asking for a reasonable accommodation, then they must. This could help them in an interview or on their job. Reasonable accommodation can include job restructuring, flexible work schedule, reassignment, eliminating of marginal duties, and acquiring assistive technologies.
Title Two: State and Local Governments/Transportation/Public Services

Title Two prevents government and other public agencies from denying services to persons with disabilities. This means that government facilities, services and communications must be accessible and that no one can be prevented from using a program service or activity because of their disability. The ADA developed rules for new transportation systems specifying that all new public mode of transportation must be accessible and any new transit system buses must be designated to be accessible for persons who have disabilities. In places where public transportation is not accessible other types of transportation must be provided. Public entities must make reasonable modifications to the policies practices and procedures to allow equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities to participate unless to do so would fundamentally alter the nature of the services program or activity.

Title Three: Public Accommodations

Public places such as restaurants hotels, theaters, private doctor offices, grocery stores, retail stores, museums, private libraries, entertainment venues, private schools, private day care and social service establishments may not discriminate on the basis of disability and must be made accessible. New construction and modifications to existing public facilities must be accessible. Existing facilities must try to remove any barriers if possible. If current barriers are not fixable, other ways of providing the service must be found. People with disabilities must had an equal chance to take part in businesses, goods and services.

Title Four: Telecommunications

Telephone companies must provide systems or people who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TTY) or similar devices. They cannot charge extra for those types of services. Organizations must have other ways of providing information that is you easily usable and accessible to employees and consumers who are disabled. The act is specific on reasonable accommodation when dealing with individuals who are in need of alternative formats in order to communicate in public facilities such as hospitals.

Title Five: Miscellaneous Provision

Title Five includes information regarding the ADA’s Relationship with other federal and state laws, including the Rehabilitation act of 1973; requirements relating to the provisions of insurance, construction and design regulations by the US Access Board; prohibition of state immunity; inclusion of Congress as a covered entity under the law; promotion of alternative means of dispute resolution; exclusion of who falls under the ADA; and establishment of technical assistance.

* This is updated from the ADA Anniversary Booklet in 2014*
The ADA defines a person with a disability as:

- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as working, talking, hearing, caring for oneself
- Heading a record of such an impairment
- Being regarded by others as having an impairment such as individuals with facial scarring

What are some common hidden disability?

- Mental health disabilities such as depression, anxiety, bipolar, schizophrenia, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Traumatic brain injury (TBI)
- Epilepsy
- Diabetes
- Chronic fatigue
- Cystic fibrosis
- Sickle cell
- Learning disabilities
- ADHD and ADD
- Medical conditions associated with hidden disabilities include short or learn long term stable or progressive constant or unpredictable and fluctuating, controlled by medication or untreated.

Common denominators: What do hidden disabilities have in common?

- One is unable to "see" the disability.
- There is no visible support to indicate a disability such as a cane, wheelchair, or the use of sign language interpreter.
- It is permanent disability that they cope with on a daily basis.
- The disability may be managed through medication or therapy and the case diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, or mental health conditions.
- It needs to be documented disability in order to receive reason accommodation under the ADA Title 1.
- The person is in some kind of physical or emotional pain.
Challenges for a person with a hidden:

- They may not themselves know they have the disability will regard themselves as having one.
- They may not have been diagnosed.
- They may not know what they need.
- They may know what they need but are not able to articulate it.
- They may often feel this understood or may feel ignored or feel invalidated.
- They may suspect something is wrong but don’t know how to fix it.

Department of Justice ADA Definition: [https://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm#12102](https://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm#12102)

ADA 30th Anniversary
1990-2020

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July 26, 2020

Thank you to the ADA Committee for their hard work and commitment to the 30th Anniversary of the ADA

And our Partners!