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Press Release: VIBE Celebrates Virgin Islands & Women’s History Month

The 20th Virgin Islands Board of Education celebrates and commemorates Virgin Islands and Women’s History Month. The VIBE believes both are of equal significance and deserve to be observed jointly.

“The history of the Virgin Islands is the history of the world,” said Kyza A. Callwood, chairperson of the VIBE. “Living History can be found in various forms, including our music, cuisine, and everyday oral traditions. Our people have contributed to revolutions all around the world.”

Harlem Renaissance prominent writer Nella Larsen was from the island of St. Croix. Edward Wilmot Blyden, a famous organizer known as the Father of Pan-Africanism, is a native of St. Thomas. Peter Jackson was the first Black heavyweight boxing champion in the world. The fact is despite our relatively small landmass, we have given the world giants, and that is why we must celebrate VI history and continuously keep our records updated and prominent,” he added.

The celebration of women in VI History traditionally goes hand in hand, noted Callwood. “We are, by large, a matriarchal society. For centuries, women are valued in the community as business leaders, freedom fighters, teachers, doctors, and much more,” said Callwood. “We recognize the success of the St. Croix labor revolt of 1878 affectionately known as “The Fire burn,” which was organized, led, and fought by “Three Queens” (Mary Thomas, Axeline Elizabeth Salomon, and Mathilda McBean). We also recognize the efforts of Queen Coziah, who, along with hundreds of others, marched through the streets of St. Thomas demanding pay in Danish currency.

“Women are interwoven in the tapestry of Virgin Islands history, with the equivalent efforts and recognition of all famous Virgin Islanders, who have affected change all over the Caribbean and the world,” Callwood said. “The VIBE salutes them all.”

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Virgin Islands Board of Education is to provide leadership and oversight, set policy and advocate for continuous improvement of the Public Education System of the Virgin Islands of the United States.

VISION STATEMENT

Each child is provided with the best quality education which guarantees academic excellence, promotes our history and culture, and builds strong local and global communities.