

Roslyn M. Brock to keynote U.S. Virgin Islands' 175th Emancipation Day Commemoration

ST. CROIX, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS, June 28, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Roslyn M. Brock, Chairman Emeritus of the NAACP National Board of Directors, will deliver the keynote address for the historic 175th Emancipation Day commemoration taking place at Buddhoe Park on St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands on Monday, July 3, 2023.

The recognized health policy and equity advocate and social justice change agent will join local, national and international dignitaries for the program which marks the abolition of slavery in the former Danish West Indies some 17 years prior to the "Juneteenth" declaration of freedom in 1865 on the mainland.

The U.S. Virgin Islands is known as the "birthplace of emancipation in the USA", and the 175th Emancipation Commemoration includes a series of educational programs and cultural events designed to inspire Virgin Islanders to renew and strengthen their commitment to honor their ancestors and forebears, such as John Gottlieb, known as "General Buddhoe", and others who successfully organized a revolt on the morning of July 3, 1848, and demanded that enslaved persons be immediately declared free.

Brock, the Chief Global Equity Officer at Abt Associates – a global social impact firm that improves the health and economic well-being of people worldwide – was unanimously elected the youngest person and fourth woman Chairman of the NAACP National Board of Directors in 2010.

"The Emancipation Day Commemoration Committee is grateful and honored that Roslyn Brock has graciously agreed to deliver the keynote address at our historic 175th Emancipation Day Commemoration ceremony. As former Chairman of the NAACP National Board of Directors, Ms. Brock brings immense expertise and a powerful voice to this significant occasion. Her presence



Roslyn M. Brock

and insightful words will undoubtedly inspire and uplift us as we reflect on the abolition of slavery in the former Danish West Indies,” said Carol Burke, Chairwoman of the Emancipation Day Commemoration Committee.

Of her participation Brock said, “It is an honor to gather on St. Croix next week to commemorate the 175th Emancipation Day. We on the U.S. mainland share in the struggle of African peoples worldwide, and are reminded of the resilience and strength of those throughout the Virgin Islands who fought for freedom not only for themselves but also for all people who suffer the injustices of slavery. We must renew our commitment to honor their legacy and continue the work of achieving true freedom for all.”



Also attending the ceremony will be Christina Markus Lassen, Denmark’s Ambassador to the United States; John Brewer, Director, Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) in the U.S. Department of the Interior; and Basil Ottley, Director of Policy – U.S. Virgin Islands, OIA. The United States purchased the Virgin Islands from Denmark in 1917.

In addition to the official Emancipation Day ceremony on July 3, which will be simulcast, broadcast and live streamed, activities include the Fort to Fort Freedom Ride, the Fort to Fort Freedom Walk, the Fort to Fort Freedom Race, and the Emancipation Day Parade, which starts in “Freedom City”. There will also be a Tribute to the Ancestors with a Libation ceremony, Emancipation Luncheon and fireworks. The “Unshackled” Music Festival begins at 8:30 p.m. that evening in “Freedom City”.

Sponsors of the 175th Emancipation Commemoration include The Buccaneer Beach & Golf Resort, Cruzan Rum, Diageo USVI’s Captain Morgan, FirstBank, Royal Caribbean Group, Southland Gaming of the Virgin Islands, Tropical Shipping, the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), and the Virgin Islands Port Authority (VIPA). WTJX-FM and Viya are also providing support.

For more information and a detailed schedule of events, visit the official website of the Virgin Islands 175th Emancipation Commemoration at VI175.com.

About the Virgin Islands 175th Emancipation Commemoration Committee

The Virgin Islands 175th Emancipation Commemoration Committee was formed to oversee and create events, activities, awareness and engagement pertaining to the 2023 celebrations. On July 1, 2022, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. signed an executive order establishing the committee to oversee the Territory's preparations for events to celebrate the 175th Anniversary of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. The mission of the committee is to commemorate the U.S. Virgin Islands' 175th Emancipation with inclusive programs that educate, engage and inspire U.S. Virgin Islanders to renew and strengthen their achievement. The vision is that the shared experiences of 175 years will have ignited imaginations, illuminated diverse stories, inspired service to others, and demonstrated years of achievement, struggle, sacrifice and resilience, while framing the narrative of the next 175 years.

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