

Florida/U.S. Virgin Islands

RBS-Rural Economic Development Innovation (REDI) Technical Assistance

Providing Assistance to Students with Developmental Disabilities

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is providing the assistance through an initiative called Rural Economic Development Innovation, REDI. USDA's Innovation Center created REDI to support recommendations identified in the report to the president from the Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity.

The Virgin Islands Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. (VIDDC) grant submission was selected to participate in the program. The VIDDC, is a territory-wide not-for-profit corporation that serves the two island districts of St. Thomas/St. John/Water Island and St. Croix. The VIDDC plans to focus on the island of St. Croix and through it's not-for-profit coalition, the initiative awarded in December of 2018, will work closely with the University of Kentucky and the University of Phoenix and focus on identifying strategies to build the coalition to address the challenges students with developmental disabilities face at they can increase the probabilities to transition from school to employment, secondary education or other positive outcomes, stated Yvonne Petersen the Council's Territorial Executive Director. The majority of our DD student population and those with special health care needs graduate to home This has also been a long aspiration to address the issue, stated the Council's chair, Edita Carty. "We are both excited to work with universities to address this important need in the territory," Petersen stated. This will including exploring workforce and economic development issues and assist the coalition in building their economic and across St. Croix. We truly need to change course and build responsive and sustainable not-for-profits who can provide the services that them from birth to career. The government cannot do this and the VI DD Council has the potential if provided with the level of support, access to funds and level of resources necessary stated Yvonne Petersen, the VIDDC's Territorial Executive Director.



USDA/RD Florida State Director, Philip Leary presenting award to Yvonne Peterson, Executive Director.

Obligation Amount:	N/A Technical Assistance Grant
Date of Obligation:	N/A Technical Assistance Grant
Congressional District:	Delegate to Congress - Stacey E. Plaskett
Partners:	University of Kentucky's Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky
Demographics:	U.S. Virgin Islands, St. Croix
Impact:	It will help to identify strategies for building a coalition of entities to address the challenges that students with developmental disabilities face, as they transition from school to employment or secondary education.
