



Committee on Youth, Sports, Parks and Recreation | February 24, 2021

Legislature USVI

February 24, 2021 · 2.4 hours · gov

Source recording	https://youtu.be/RKs1jtuMgZM
Status	This is a working transcript produced by machine from a recording of a public proceeding. It is a finding aid, not an official record of the Legislature.
Transcribed by	VI Update, using OpenAI Whisper large-v3-turbo, run locally. Not reviewed by a person.
Reliability	Automatic transcription, UNVERIFIED. Verify every quotation against the recording before relying on it. Speech recognition splits spoken digits and wraps figures mid-number, so a dollar amount, a vote count or a bill number can be wrong in a way that reads as correct. Speakers are not identified: automatic speaker labelling was measured unusable and removed.
Public record	The underlying proceeding is a public record of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands. 3 V.I.C. § 881(a) defines public records to include all records and documents of or belonging to this Territory or any branch of government, or any "department, board, council or committee of any branch of government" · which names legislative committees by category. § 881(b) gives every citizen the right to examine and copy such records, and the news media the right to publish them. (The open-meetings chapter, 1 V.I.C. § 254, does NOT reach the Legislature: § 253(b) expressly excludes it and its Standing and Special Committees. § 881 does, and it is § 881 that confers the right to copy and publish.) The Legislature broadcast this proceeding publicly itself. The source recording is not ours, is not hosted here, and remains with its publisher at the link above.
Rights	To what we added · the transcription, its arrangement and its description · we assert nothing. A verbatim transcript is mechanical rather than authored, so there is likely nothing in it to own; to the extent any copyright is nonetheless found to subsist, it is dedicated to the public domain under CC0 1.0. Please copy it, quote it, index it, train on it, republish it, mirror it, sell it. Redistribution is the point: a public record with one copy is one fire from gone. No permission is needed, and none is ours to grant or withhold.

- 0:00:00 Let's get started. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. We'll be right back. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. The Committee on Youth Sports Park and Creation is hereby called to order. Madam Clerk, roll call please.
- 0:11:40 J.M.P. Graff. Senator J.M.P. Graff. Senator Alma-Francis Heiliger. Senator Alma-Francis Heiliger present. Senator Javan E. James Sr. Present.
- 0:12:10 Senator Jayvon E. James Sr., present. Senator Franklin D. Johnson. Here. Senator Franklin D. Johnson, present. Senator Carla Joseph. Senator Carla Joseph, absent. Senator Stephen D. Payne. Present. Senator Stephen D. Payne, present. Senator Samuel Carrion. Present.
- 0:12:36 Senator Samuel Carriong, present. Mr. Chair, we have five members present, two members absent. Madam Clerk, do we have any correspondence? Yes, Mr. Chair. Please read them into the record. February 23rd, 2021. Honorable Samuel Carriong, Chairperson, Committee on Youth, Sports, Parks and Recreation, 34th Legislature of the Virgin Islands, Number 3022, Estate Golden Rock, Christianstead, St. Croix, VI 00820. Dare Chairperson Carrion, please be informed that I would be late attending the Youth Sports, Parks, and Recreation Committee meeting set for 9 a.m. Wednesday, February 24th, 2021, due to lack of available flights. I will be looking forward to participating in the meeting upon my arrival. Thank you in advance for your kind consideration in this matter.
- 0:13:38 Sincerely, Dwayne M. DeGraff, Senator, 34th Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Please mark Senator DeGraff, excuse. Tardy, I should say. And also Senator Carla Joseph Tardy. Madam Clerk, please read today's agenda into the record. Committee on Youth, Sports, Parks, and Recreation, Revised Agenda.

- 0:14:12 Fritz E. Lowe's Conference Room, St. Croix, Wednesday, February 24th, 2021, 9 a.m. Please be advised that the Committee on Youth, Sports, Parks, and Recreation has scheduled a meeting for Wednesday, February 24th, 2021, in the Fritz E. Lowe's Legislative Conference Room on the island of St. Croix. The purpose of the meeting is to receive testimony from the Department of Labor and the Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation. Block 1, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. The committee will receive a status update on the operations from the Department of Labor regarding all youth related programs. Invited testifier, Honorable Gary Molloy, Commissioner, Department of Labor.
- 0:14:58 Recess, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Block two, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. The committee will receive a status update on operations from the Department of Sports, Parks, and Recreation to include the status of all projects, sports programs, and recreation facilities. Invited testifier, Honorable Calvert-White, Commissioner, Department of Sports, Parks, and Recreation. Thank you.
- 0:15:25 I would like to recognize non-committee member, Senator Novell E. Francis, and we have any other non-committee member on St. Thomas. All right, let's take a one-minute recess. This committee now stands in recess for one minute. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
- 0:20:14 The Committee on Youth Sports Park and Recreation is out of recess. Good morning. Good morning to my colleagues. Good morning to the staff. Good morning to the viewing and listening audience. to the very first meeting of the committee on youth sports parks and recreation before we get underway this morning i think it's important that we remind the community that we're still searching for mr michael emmanuel who was last seen in frederickson on friday morning let us keep let us all keep mr emmanuel and his family in our prayers as we search for him this morning I, myself, will be headed back to downtown, to Frederickstead, following this meeting. I also would like to pause and to thank the community, my colleagues, and the staff here at the legislature for the kind condolences of the passing of my brother Antonio Carrion Jr. last week. Your kind words and prayers are much appreciated, and I thank all of you.
- 0:21:34 This morning, we're here to talk primarily about the programs for our youth, to include work, about job training, sports, and recreation. I personally am focused on ensuring our relevant agencies have the necessary programs in place for this summer, given that so many of our young people have spent the last year at their home. I remain concerned about the mental and physical health of our children we have gone to get them actively engaged and back at our parks and sports facility while this pandemic has been hard for all of us it has especially been hard on our youth who aren't able to have a social and academic athletic and other experiences they need for the development it is also critical that we repair and reopen our recreation facilities in accordance with applicable CDC guidelines and this afternoon we will be hearing about the status of these facilities. Last week members of this committee toured about 20 recreation facilities and sports facilities on St. Croix, St. Thomas and St. John. We will discuss what we saw this afternoon in the second block of today's agenda. However this morning we'll hear we'll first hear from the Department of Labor as to the plans for the summer youth employment and other job training programs for our young people. At this time I would like to ask each testifier in Block 1 to identify themselves.
- 0:23:18 Assistant Commissioner of Virgin Islands Department of Labor. and can you identify the leadership that is with you assistant commissioner yes uh good morning we have um syneka sebastian she is our director of youth and apprenticeship and we also have mr kevin dixon who is our new newest member of the team he's a territorial project coordinator well thank you assistant commissioner richardson for being with us this morning you may now please proceed with your testimony good morning honorable senator samuel coron chairman of youth sport sports parks and recreation committee senator stephen d payne senior vice chair other members of the 34th legislature the viewing and listening audience I am Cindy L. Richardson, Assistant Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Labor, here before you today on behalf of Commissioner Gary Molloy. Alongside me today is the Director of Youth and Apprenticeship, Ms. Seneca Sebastian, and our newest member of the youth team, our Territorial Project Coordinator, Mr. Kevin Dixon.
- 0:24:39 Thank you for inviting us to provide testimony regarding the youth-related programs administered by the Virgin Islands Department of Labor. The VI Department of Labor Youth Services Division provides year-round training employment and educational opportunities for our in and out of school youth ages 14 to 25. The youth programs are designed to help young people of the community to do the following access opportunities to explore career pathways, increase skills, work-based training to learn while you learn, obtain industry-recognized credentials, and employment in demand occupations.
- 0:25:30 The youth team provides in-house academic and career assessments to determine each youth services and activities individual employment plans or service strategies are developed and referrals are made to the service providers youth services may include but are not limited to job preparation skills resume building job search assistance career counseling paid and unpaid work experience training opportunities labor market and employment information apprenticeship

opportunities leadership development activities financial literacy education and supported services the covid19 pandemic has impacted our service delivery since the suspension of in-person meetings in april of 2020. however the youth team has continued to offer employment assistance through alternative methods including telephone and the use of online technology when possible. These services included one-on-one assistance with our youth case managers, career coaching, resume writing, interview preparation, job search assistance, labor market and employment information, and access to education and training options.

- 0:26:50 Based on the consequences of COVID-19, some programs and services were impacted by worksite availability and providers which led to a significant reduction in the number of our customers who received services in 2020. Pre-pandemic, the youth team provided services to over 700 customers annually in 2020 the team provided services to about 88 customers including essential career services referral to partner agencies provision of labor market information work experiences and training services after experiencing this decrease the department is ready to put forth the following program offerings to the youth of the territory Our work learn and earn program or work experience. The work learn and earn program is a 12 week paid work experience for out of school youth ages 17 to 24 with little or no work experience. By connecting these individuals to a paid work experience opportunity it is our expectation that this activity will provide them with the skills development orientation and exposure to career opportunities and connections to full-time employment.
- 0:28:15 During this time, participants will engage in work-ready foundational skills development and career planning related workshops offered by the youth team. The program was initially launched in 2016 to provide the work experience opportunities for approximately 20 to 25 out of school youth annually. With a temporary suspension in 2020 to date this program has provided opportunities for 75 participants with a success rate of 81 percent. We are currently recruiting participants and collaborating with our mandated and community partners.
- 0:28:54 Our Summer Youth Work Experience Program SYWEP for short this Summer Youth Work Experience program is the largest youth youth employment program in the virgin islands connecting over 600 youths between the ages of 14 to 25 with career exploration opportunities and paid work experience each summer the summer youth work experience program is a component of the year-round program that strives to provide youth with the opportunity to learn and develop the skills attitudes and commitment necessary to successfully train to post-secondary education and employment, facilitate career exploration, and earn income and gain practical hands-on work experience. In 2019 the Summer Youth Work Experience Program provided 623 students with a paid summer work opportunity with over 113 employers participating while the students earned approximately \$849,266 in total wages. However in 2020 the uncertainty of COVID-19 social distancing guidelines forced us to redesign the structure of the program. As we look forward to 2021 our plans for summer of 2021 will include while we're aware that we are in the midst of this pandemic we are striving to provide meaningful work experience to our youth while keeping them safe thus we serve thus we have surveyed past employers to gauge their interest in hosting our program participants to determine the delivery of our programs after receiving responses from over 55 employers as of February 18th, we have decided to move forward. Based on the survey, 58% of the employers prefer to have the participants on site and 40% preferred a hybrid approach. In comparison, 2% of the employers preferred virtual delivery. With the safety of our students in mind, potential employers were asked
- 0:31:16 if they will be able to provide the proper personal protective equipment PPE and ensure the health and safety precautions that are in place in accordance with OSHA requirements during the participant's experience. 98% of these employers are prepared to do so. We are excited to share that the application window for our 2021 Summer Youth Work Experience program is currently open and will close on April 23rd 2021. I'll repeat it will close on April 23rd 2021. This year we intend to provide a five-week work experience to 568 participants ages 16 to 25 and a four-week virtual career exploration program to 200 participants ages 14 to 15. to prepare participants we have tentatively scheduled resume workshops that will could that will start on march 19 2021 our labor investing for tomorrow also known as lift internship program serving as one of the most prominent work experience internship programs in the territory the labor investing for tomorrow is a component of the summer youth work experience program that provides 30 college students and seniors with eight weeks of work experience in their field of study. LIFT interns are exposed to the workforce in the Virgin Islands motivating them to stay or return home. During the program interns can also gain college credits while obtaining hands-on experience and an opportunity to network with professionals in their field. admissions into the lift program is contingent upon meeting program requirements in 2020
- 0:33:18 the program structure was redesigned to adapt to covet 19 social distancing requirements offering opportunities virtually on-site or blended 20 participants 20 interns to be exact participated in a work experience combining a series of live online training project management analytical skills and business communication provided by the American Management Association AMA and open access to self-directed learning content supplied by LinkedIn Learning. Our plans for LIFT

for 2021 now in its 32nd year we're currently accepting applications this year 50 eligible participants will have the opportunity to participate in an eight-week internship marketing efforts for all three programs mentioned above have started earlier this week and applications are available online on the Vidal website at www.vidol.gov and at both DOL locations and at the St. John Administrator's Office. We do encourage our students to apply online.

0:34:35 Our jobs for American graduates JAG. JAG-VI is a program jointly operated by the Department of Education and the Department of Labor annually serving approximately 125 high school students. Jobs for America's graduate JAG was established to prepare the high school students for life after high school the world of work and post-secondary success. The program helps identify incoming high school juniors and seniors acquire employability skills graduate and receive 12 months of follow-up services that will transition them into a career and or have them pursue post-secondary education to enhance career entry and advancement the jag program exists in four public high schools two on St. Thomas and two on St. Croix with 127 students enrolled in the 2020-2021 school year. In 2020 the Virgin Islands received a 5 of 5 recognition for its programs.

0:35:50 The 5 of 5 award is the most prestigious national award that a JAG program can attain. JAG National recognizes states and states for achieving or surpassing the 5 of 5 performance outcome including a graduation rate of 90 percent positive outcome rate of 80 percent employment rate of 60 percent full-time job rate at 60 percent or full-time placement rate at 80 our registered apprenticeship program a registered apprenticeship program is an employer-driven training module that combines a structured on-the-job training consisting of at least 2 000 hours depending on the occupation with a minimum of 144 hours on job related instruction apprenticeship training is distinguished from other types of work-based training apprenticeships are jobs apprentices earn wages from their employers during the training registered apprenticeships meet national and state standards for education and safety resulting in a nationally industry recognized certificate to earn and learn this earn and learn approach helps workers start new careers and help businesses recruit and retain a highly skilled workforce businesses cannot hire new workers or select current employees to join apprenticeship programs recognized as a state apprenticeship agency the virginia's department of labor formally recognized Gold Coast Yacht Inc. as their first recognized apprenticeship program in the VI in January 2020. Gold Coast Yachts anticipated interviewing for their first registered apprenticeships in February, but efforts were interrupted by the COVID-19 guidelines and other financial impacts. Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the Virgin Islands Department of Labor continued to work with the U.S. Department of Labor to develop their apprenticeship opportunities. Two additional apprenticeship programs were approved, Peace of St. Croix and Pleasant Health Care. The Apprenticeship Council has also been created and consists of nine members with Dr. Suzanne Darrow-McGrath as the Council Chair. The Council on the VI Department of Labor participated in an intense three-day training with USDOL in November of 2020. This apprenticeship 101 training

0:38:22 assisted the council in refining roles of the council based on the state of Rhode Island model and shared the ways to effectively engage employers in the territory. This training also shed light on how COVID-19 affected apprenticeships across the nation. The Council held its first official quarterly meeting on February 16, 2021 with meetings scheduled for May, August, and November of 2021.

0:38:53 Our Registered Apprenticeship Program sponsors are as follows. Gold Coast Yachts which is a multi-haul expert for over 35 years. It's one of the longest continuous running U.S. boat builders within with a proud tradition of innovation and quality. Current occupations available under this apprenticeship program is a boat builder and marine service technicians currently with six to eight openings. The current status has been paused due to COVID-19.

0:39:26 Peace of St. Croix is a division of the Massage Academy offers chiropractic, rehabilitative and massage therapy services in St. Croix. The current occupation available is a certified massage therapist, the CMT, with three to five openings pending start date of calendar year 2021. Pleasant Healthcare, full service, multi-specialty medical clinic, and the first AAAHC accredited and CMS certified surgical center in the USVI urgent care and specialty clinic. Current occupations available under this program is the medical assistant or patient care coordinator the life safety coordinator and the surgical technologist currently with three openings. They have identified three incumbent workers.

0:40:18 Start date has been delayed due to as delayed to April of 2021 due to demand of the COVID vaccine. The Department of Labor is collaborating with the Workforce Development Board to provide guidance policy on the on use on using Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act funds to support the registered apprenticeship programs WIOA funds can be used in a variety of ways to help job seekers and workers prepare for enter and complete the apprenticeship programs. With the support of the WIOA funds program sponsors can offset the cost of related classroom instruction as well as on-the-job training components.

0:41:02 Other programs that are available to our youth are CDBG DR Workforce Development Grant. The department has submitted a dual application to the VI Housing Authority to complete a portion of the workforce development component of the CDBG grant. The application has been accepted and it's in the RFP contracting phase. There were nine respondents

to the RFP with the anticipated start date in April of 2021. The training will take place in four phases. Phase one skills for today. The focus will be on the construction industry and will prepare individuals with little or no formal training and provide them with general knowledge to proficiently perform entry level positions in masonry, carpentry, electrical and plumbing. Students will receive the National Center for Construction Education and Research core curriculum certification and NCCER level 1 certification upon the successful completion of the training. We're targeting approximately 400 participants.

0:42:13 Phase 2 will focus on these individuals will focus on the individuals who excelled in the first phase and build a career pathway in construction supervision. Students will receive the NCCER Crew 1 leadership certification upon successful completion of the training program. Training will combine direct classroom instruction plus six to eight months of on-the-job training. Phase 3 will create additional employment opportunities beyond the construction in areas such as marine, cybersecurity, administrative services, and hospitality. Individuals will be immersed in their chosen industry and occupation through real-world work-based learning experiences as they simultaneously learn and earn. Phase 4 will focus on job retention with intensive job readiness preparation to enter the workforce which will include life skills training, resume development, self-marketing tools, building a responsible social media presence, networking, interviewing, and working with peers and working with management.

0:43:26 New programs and initiatives. The following programs are currently in the development phase and these are some of the upcoming initiatives that the U-team is currently working on to augment some of our current programs and prepare the community for the workforce demand. Today we'll briefly discuss just a few of these initiatives. As mentioned they're still in the very early stages of development our work readiness program will be done virtually now more than ever today's employers are seeking more than technical ability they are looking for real team players who possess strong communication and problem solving skills who demonstrate resourcefulness and leadership in the workplace the work readiness program will be designed to focus on developing employability and soft skills to help prepare in school youth 14 to 21 year olds for the job market and success in the workplace. Participants will complete a nine-week program focusing on career exploration, resume writing, interviewing skills, financial literacy, workplace communication, leadership skills, and public speaking. Our Leadership and Career Development Conference.

0:44:45 The Leadership and Career Development Conference will prepare participants to compete in today's very competitive global workforce. This program is intended to develop participants leadership skills, provide participants the skills necessary to succeed, and explore post-secondary career opportunities. A key component we are hoping to implement is a recruitment fair where government agencies not-for-profit organizations and private company representatives will offer jobs internships and continuing education opportunities for the participants. The program is intended to develop participants leadership skills, provide the organizations access to a talented and diverse population, and help the participants make connections that lead to careers.

0:45:34 the tentative date is set for november of 2021 our entrepreneurship boot camp will allow participants the opportunity to connect with business owners and exploring the various facets of entrepreneurship while highlighting the opportunities available in that space additionally it will connect participants with resources available through different agencies participants will be engaged through numerous activities such as a roundtable discussion and a pitch competition. The participants will be tasked with developing solutions to business, social or educational problems and then pitch their ideas to a panel of expert judges comprised of entrepreneurs, small business owners and other investors. To the end it is our goal to equip participants with knowledge and experience in the areas of financial literacy, team building, business model canvassing, customer discovery and pitching. This unique environment will provide fertile ground for the growth and development of startups. Our tentative start our tentative date is set for October of 2021. Roundtable discussions and training series will be done quarterly.

0:46:55 As the workforce continues to shift, the Department of Labor will continue to implement training series and roundtable discussions. These trainings will provide participants the necessary tools to be successful in the job market. The department will collaborate with local and national entities to provide timely training to the customers we serve. The Virgin Islands Department of Labor is committed to helping to prepare the youth for the workforce.

0:47:25 On behalf of Vidal I would like to thank the Committee on Youth Sports Parks and Recreation members for allowing Virgin Islands Department of Labor to provide this testimony on youth initiatives. This concludes my testimony. My staff and I are welcome to any questions you may have. In this testimony we've also provided you with our recent flyers which we just launched recently this week some of them the programs that we've mentioned in this testimony thank you thank you assistant commissioner richardson for that uh testimony and for being available uh much needed youth programs so today we're going to have a lengthy robust discussion about what the department is doing my colleagues will be asking questions so we're going to start that process right now we'll go through our first round of seven minute questioning and

we will going to we will start with uh senator vice chair senator stephen payne thank you thank you thank you for the time uh mr chair good morning colleagues good morning listening and viewing audience. Good morning, good morning, good morning. Senator Payne, before you begin, I would like to recognize our committee member, Senator Carla Joseph, who is with us. Good morning, Senator Joseph. It's always a pleasure to have you in the place. Assistant Commissioner, I have a message for Commissioner Mallory. Please let him know that I to thank him personally for being a consummate professional that he is um i truly appreciate the fact that i can always count on him and his team to assist when our residents need assistance okay thank you will do okay good let me start off um your youth programs your training programs

0:49:32 programs. What are the programs specifically entailed when it comes to the marine industry? What jobs can they look forward for? We mentioned marine and that came under the CBDG program and that's something that they be exploring we are working to try to define some of the demands uh jobs that are in that area so we don't have a specific um occupation but we are looking into the marine industry on a whole to see what jobs fall under that industry that fall into the demand sector okay and let me actually also do you provide employment and training opportunities for young people who were once incarcerated or they are currently being housed at the youth rehabilitation center and singroy yes we are we are um able to do so once they make contact with our u team we are able to provide that assistance is this something that you've done in the past or it's an initiative no this is something that we have done in the past for many years actually okay i want to actually commend you on that because i personally feel that this is the perfect opportunity and place for programs that needs to be implemented as so many of our young people fall behind in the schooling while being incarcerated when they come out some of them actually drop out of school and um if they if we don't train them to be gainfully employed they are not becoming youthful adult offenders so i'm really glad to hear you that you're speaking in this vein we have a tour scheduled for next week at the yrc so i'll definitely follow up with them to make sure that they are reaching out to your agency to make sure that this transaction actually continues between your young people and the department of labor

0:51:31 actually senator if i may the individuals that i have with me here today would be your point of contact um for for those individuals okay thank you for that what mediums do you utilize to get your message out to young people about the opportunities offered at the department of labor right now we are utilizing one our website we're also utilizing our facebook page we're looking to expand into some other social media platforms to include instagram and recently these flyers that we shared within our testimony have been shared with the vi department of education and they will be sharing that with all of the teachers to then share with their students What about the local DJs who appeal to that age bracket?

0:52:21 Yes, as we expand the marketing for this, those are some of the avenues that we'll be working with our PIO to use to get the word out in regards to the availability of our programs. okay and on your test in your testimony you indicated that the the work and learn and on program which is a 12-week paid work experience for other school youths ages 17 to 24. what type of full-time employment do you provide after the 12-week period so what i'm going to do is i'm going to give my team an opportunity to speak so i'll forward that on to our director shinnika Sebastian thank you good morning again Shinnika Sebastian director of youth and apprenticeship when it comes to the paid work experience the opportunities that are provided to the individuals remember to work on an experience helps them to develop their skills so our goal after the program or while they're enrolled in the program is to get them full-time employment based on their career interests or full-time employment that can sustain them as individuals Thank you for your answer.

0:53:35 Also I want to touch on something you stated also in your testimony, how you intend to provide a five-week work experience program to 568 participants ages 16 and 25, and a four-week virtual career exploration program to 200 participants ages 14 and 50. Did the department conduct a survey utilizing this census and the Department of Education to ascertain exactly how many young persons in the Virgin Islands fall between the ages of 16 and 25 and 14 and 15 to come up with those numbers? Because I'm trying to ascertain what percentage of our young people are actually being serviced.

0:54:19 so sir i wouldn't say that a survey i'm sorry assistant commissioner cindy richardson i wouldn't particularly say that a survey was done with um department of education we have come up with this number based on our availability of funds and what we're able to to um to accommodate this summer uh is there something that you can actually um work on and produce to the chairman for this committee yes i'm sure that's something that we can um access to the department of education to get their numbers of the number of students that need to be served okay so so to the chair i'm going to request that as soon as you get any information if you could please pass it on so this way the chair can schedule an offline meeting with other private partners 30 seconds so we can ensure that we are actually supporting and providing job training experience for hopefully close to more than 50 percent of our young people that fall within that age bracket okay and lastly what's the what's the pay scale for your on the job training programs Ms. Sebastian, do you want to address

that?

0:55:36 Um, Seneca Sebastian again, Director of Youth and Apprenticeship. The pay scale when it comes to a paid work, learn, and earn program. Can I proceed? Yes, ma'am. Go ahead. It's 1050. We pay for that 12 weeks work experience program. When it comes to summer employment, um, the wages depends on educational level we start at 10 50 and we go to 11 50 for third and fourth year college students uh thank you very much for answers mr chair thank you very much for the time thank you thank you senator payne and um i would like to thank you for your question in regards to the outreach because i think that's very important and that's an area where we continue to see our government uh failing or areas that they can improve if we're talking about reaching our young people um we need to also reach them at their level and where they at so um assistant commissioner what about social media um what are you using that platform yeah so we we are using our facebook page right now um we're also utilizing our website and we are um looking into other social media platform such as Instagram and I believe our PIO is looking into snapchat as well okay okay what I would encourage you to move beyond just looking into and then you know engage the young people where they're at because snapchat is a place where you get our young people Instagram and use tweeters so hopefully next time we could hear that soon you're using those those those means to be able to reach our young people because information needs to get out there thank you very much Senator Payne now we're gonna hear I'm Senator Novell Francis

0:57:27 thank you very much mr. chair good morning to you good morning to my colleagues and good morning to the people of the Virgin Islands I first of all want to commend you for your inaugural hearing you look good up there you're doing a good job so far and I also want to thank miss Sydney Richardson the Assistant Commissioner for her testimony. Assistant Commissioner, how do you evaluate success of these programs? What is the measuring stick that's used then to determine the effectiveness of these programs? Good morning, Senator, and thank you for that question. One of the things that we use and we if you reference our testimony on page two when we use in the example of our work learn and earn program and we talked about the success rate of that particular program of 81 percent that would be based on our job placement and retention very well and i would imagine that you use similar evaluation for all of the programs yes correct so i see that you have mr kevin dixon there with you and it looked like he jumped ship. The last time I saw him he was with Bureau of Motor Vehicle and now he's with you at Sports Park and Recreation. I just wanted to engage him a little bit and ask me if he's ready to get rid of the suit and get into his polo shirt and jeans pants to get into our community and really engage our youth and getting them into some of these programs. I'm sorry he was at Bureau of Motor Vehicles and now he's at Department of Labor yes good morning senator thank you I'm definitely ready to work with our team and together they're in the streets and work with our partners to provide services story of people yeah you're you're not coming True care, Mr. Dixon, there.

0:59:35 Can you hear me? Proceed. Madam Clerk, timekeeper, you're holding my time. Can you hear me? Can you hear me? Can you hear me? We're hearing you, but you're not. Okay, try again. can you hear me now okay let's let's give it a try so um thank you for that question um senator francis um as indicated i am ready to work with our youth team um to work with our partners to provide opportunities for our young people i understand the importance of opportunities and on where it can lead so i'm definitely i'm ready to work with everyone to to do that for more young people very well and i i hope that in fact you know that's what's going to happen because i think it's critical we have a very good opportunity right now to make sure that we're engaged in our our youngsters and i'm hoping that we could really make an impact on them um senator johnson you got snapchat we're way behind we gotta get on the ball if we want to meet the youth my kids tell me don't come and snapchat d you don't he you don't want to see what's going on there so stay off of snapchat so i'll leave that to the young people um so assistant commissioner you spoke about the work learn and earn program and that the fact that it was suspended in 2020 have that program been restarted yes yes senator that program has restarted Any idea what the population of 17 to 24 look like? Have you been able to do an evaluation

1:01:26 to determine what that number looked like? I'll turn that over to Ms. Sebastian to respond. Morning again, Senator. No, we don't have that information, that number. A survey of the total population of the virgin islands okay very well um i will suggest that perhaps maybe we could look at the kids count and some of those programs to really look at see what that population look like because if we're going to measure effectiveness we then have to determine how many of those are actually in school how many are in college and kind of just um you know create a circle by which we could determine exactly where our youth are and who being left out of the the loop how are we engaging those individuals that may not be on social media and getting the information out into all of these wonderful programs that's available at the Department of Labor well right now for starters we are going to be sharing this information with all of our required partners also to like I mentioned earlier we did send this out to the human resources at the department of education to be shared with all the teachers and they're going to be sending that out to all of the students and like i said we're going to be sharing this with all of the agencies um for them to promote that within and to the customers that they serve very well can i suggest that we do a complete marketing i think it's critical that we get in all segments of our community if we really um truly want to get to

our youth um you know gas stations supermarkets you know you have 15 senators here with with um facebook pages and other social media that we could certainly circulate that information and share it with the public but i i really truly believe that you know we have to be able to get the information out and be able to attract those youngsters and then you know create that safety net but we also have to have that honest discussion about how do we prepare these individuals for that program when they actually engage and get involved in the programs we want to make sure that they don't spend all their time

1:03:41 on their cell phone that they're not um sagging with their clothes when they appear at these programs that they're not smoking marijuana all day long and not really engaging and getting the work done i think that you know we really have to have that discussion by which that they could really look at representing because in fact no employer won't have to endure this the control of obscenities when they when they're speaking to people the way they carry themselves making sure that they are prepared to work on time and prepared to to work i think that we have to have that honest discussion with them otherwise all we're going to be doing is just a revolving door 30 seconds so i really want to commend the work that's being done by labor i truly believe that we have some opportunities here and you know certainly i want to be at the table i want to sit at the table to really share and getting the information out but more importantly to get our youngsters off of the street get them engaged in some program getting them into the workforce development getting them over to the career and technical school and getting them um skilled ready so that really could take on and start to make some real money in this community thank you for the opportunity mr chairman and thank you for your response to the department of labor thank you senator francis and uh this committee will certainly assist in getting the word out and that's why we're here today so that our people can know what what the department is doing we could get information out so um i want to ask commissioner so the parents that are listening today and and even if any young people is connected and they're interested where where Where can they call? How can they get enrolled in a program?

1:05:24 Okay, thank you for that question, Senator. So one of the first places I will direct our parents to is definitely the applications are available online at our on our website, which is www.vidol.gov. They can also see some more information on our Facebook page. I also encourage everyone to go on to the VI Department of Labor's work Facebook page and see the information as we put out more and more information daily. The applications are also available at both locations in our St. Thomas office and our St. Croix office. And it's also available on St. John at the St. John Administrator's office as well.

1:06:05 And Assistant Commissioner, you're now open at regular hours, correct? Yes, we are open to the public eight to five. We're seeing in-person services, especially Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. And we are trying to do, at this point, appointments on Monday and Friday. So if someone wants to make an appointment, sorry, go ahead. Our doors are open 8 to 5, Monday through Friday.

1:06:37 Thank you. And if someone wants to make an appointment, where can they call? They could call our main line on St. Thomas at 776-3700, or they can call our St. Croix office at 773-1994. 1994. Yes. Okay. Any extension? It would, for the summer on St. Croix, it would be, sorry, on St. Thomas, it would be 2080. And on St. Croix, it would be extension 2202.

1:07:16 okay thank you very much senator Frankie Johnson good morning good morning mr. president thanks for this mr. cheer you see I give you a big position already to sitting up there looking good thank you very much for this opportunity good morning to my colleagues good morning to the listening and viewing audience and good morning to the testifiers um i'm pleased to see what you guys are trying to do with our children but i i have some questions here that i'm a fear some folks are being left down is there work program that's available to help disable youths for training or employment i saw nothing on your presentation or in your flyers that's good good morning and thank you for that i'm going to let um a director sebastian expand on that to just to talk about um their outreach to employers and some of our work being done with our partner agencies good morning again all our programs are available to individuals with a disability we collaborate with our mandated partner work we have for human services but all our programs are open to individual disability they're not limited don't you think it would be good to advertise that so that the children that are physically challenged or disabled will not feel that is left out they're not pretty and sometimes you have to open those doors and make sure you let folks know all what you have available and i appreciate you saying that they're not left out but your flyers nothing indicator or speaks to them thank you for that senator we'll definitely take that under consideration thank you very much now

1:09:14 your apprenticeship program i and again i appreciate that you you have this program what programs or training do you have preparing our young people for employment in the biggest workforce and island lime tree did you guys hear me yes thank you for that senator um shinnika do you want to talk about anything in regards to apprenticeship and what efforts we're doing thus far morning again when it comes to apprenticeship program um what we're trying to do we don't have anything directly related to lime tree and that's a good concern a good question but what we're trying to do is try to involve our state holders in the process when it comes to that education and training entities the businesses to put together

programs that meet our in-demand occupations in the virgin islands um i'm a little sad with your your answer and your response because we continue bringing folks from out the territory to fill these jobs and we continue asking and saying why our young people are not working. In the past we used to do a program with Tang Howe. Have you guys made contact with Tang Howe for welding and training children for a big part of the workforce that has to do with the refinery or any other welding company on the island so so right now thank you for that question so right now in order for them to participate with the department they would have to be one of our eligible training providers have anybody reached out to Tang how because as I said in the past they had these programs. Have your department reach out to Tang Howe to find out if they're

1:11:13 interested. I'm very concerned about this big refinery that's now starting to refine that has thousands of jobs but everybody come from the outside to get them and if we don't prepare our children for these jobs we're gonna continue going on the same road. The money comes in and it goes out. Anytime you bring four or five hundred men here or women to work here I assure you yes some taxes paid but they got a bills back home to pay they got a utilities back home to pay was that money is leaving the territory most of it I really would appreciate if you guys look into this and see how you can better this situation when it comes to making sure that we are preparing our children for the biggest workforce in this territory. I really would appreciate. I want to go to your JAG program, and I see your JAG program. You talk about two schools, two on St. Thomas and two on St. Croix.

1:12:16 What is being done to make sure that the high school students from St. John that takes the boat right down is included? Because if you're not being very selective on that side, you have a whole next district, as my good man over there, my good colleague from St. John, will say their students are not getting a fair shot at this. Good morning again. The students on St. John are included because one of the public schools on St. Thomas that the program is in is Ivana Ederkin High School. So they have that same opportunity as well my question will be because remember eudora ken high school's service saint thomas and saint john what are you doing to make sure that they get that opportunity someone say well look we need to leave four or five slots for students from saint john so that that is part of our outreach and even to when we do our future employers we do encourage our St. John employers to participate in our programs and to take on some of these individuals interested in these programs.

1:13:37 And your labor investment for tomorrow, I see you have 30 college junior and senior students involved. How is these 30 students selected? By district? So I'm going to allow Ms. Sebastian to address that. We usually would have a certain number of slots, if I may proceed. Yes, we usually have a certain number of slots, and I'll go ahead and let her discuss the criteria that is used for that program.

1:14:16 Good morning again. These students are selected on a competitive process. Eligibility is determined by, in order to apply, you have to have a GPA of 2.8 or higher, have 60 credits or more, and they have to complete an essay. The essay is evaluated and combined with their GPA score to determine the top 30 participants. Mr. Chair, can I have just a finish up? Yes, sure, ma'am. I understand what you're saying, but at the same time, is there a number given for each territory? Let's say you say, well, there's 30 based on the GPS. Are you having 10 to St. Croix, 10 available to St. John, 10 available to St. Thomas, or it's based on just basically the GPS?

1:15:09 It's usually based on the GPS or your ranking in the status. it's a territorial program so it wasn't necessarily separated by districts so it will go from the the highest gps come down to the lowest not not just gps remember you have to do an essay so that combined score but what i'd like to add over the years it has been an even distribution um when it comes to district as much as it is a competitive process it was able to always balance out based on districts and and and last with your summer program have you reached out to private companies as my colleague from st john allude to get involved in the summer program uh public private partnership to expand your program because i understand you saying funding is is a challenge but many times you have big companies that are willing and in the past that is one of the programs that we utilize to expand the summer program where the government will pay a percentage and the private company will pay a different percentage in other words it stretches your money out farther instead of you paying the full 1050 you might only pay 450 and that private company paid the difference have you guys look into these areas to expand and and and you know make the program a bigger program because your number have decreased from 600 and something students to 500 and something 568 and in the past you did 600 and something so are you considering trying to utilize private companies to expand that base of employment for students in the summer yes senator thank you for that question

1:17:03 we always um reach out to our private partners and companies as well and we'll also be willing to share with you if you'd like as we indicated in our testimony we did our survey and we had respondents of at least 55 employers who responded to our survey we can share that listing with you in regards to those that responded and who are willing to participate in the program a true the chair would appreciate if you can do that thank you very much and don't mind not being had i just wanted to make sure can i please add can i please add all right uh uh go ahead senator uh johnson state your request again

what are you requesting um i asked about the amount of private companies that are involved and i was told that there's a 55 we did a survey and 55 employers responded so i'm requesting to get the server of those that have been responded it's sometimes it's so good to to advertise and and let the public know companies who are willing to be a part of bringing our community back together so i don't want to be for it to be a secret duly noted and i appreciate if i could get that list thank you very much I must say that I I'm in shock to hear that there is no type of agreement with lime tree or no type of training for lime tree and lime tree has been here for now what more than three years operating and somebody somebody dropped the ball somewhere. You have something to say? Yes, yes, you may.

1:18:44 Go ahead. If I may add, so today we have 79 employers who have responded to the survey and we are increasing our numbers of slots available. So this year we are up to 818 overall. So it's increased from 2019. And I needed to clear up the statement on any opportunities with LimeTree. LimeTree has been a partner of our summer program providing work experience opportunities during the summer. So you guys have, they are connected and providing youth opportunity during the summer. But what about an area of workforce development to prepare our youth to be able to have jobs and opportunities and career within uh lime tree um just just for clarification um senator i just wanted to to make sure that we were clear we have participated uh with lime tree i know last summer they took at least uh 20 participants um and we had to prepare them very well in order to get into that program even to they had to be able to pass a drug test even to work in the facility so we are our partner there in regards to tang how we have worked with them before they have been an eligible training provider but that is a process that has to go through the workforce investment board um and they have to apply through there and be approved by the board in order to be a partner with us a training provider okay mr johnson has a point on information you recognize hello what i'm What I'm trying to say, we have so many jobs in Lime Tree, and I appreciate you informing us that Lime Tree do take part in the summer program.

1:20:33 What I'm trying to get across is making sure that we prepare our children by these workforce programs, by these training programs, to take those jobs over in Lime Tree, not just a summer job. There's a lot of welding, there's a lot of fabricating, there's a lot of scaffold building. These type of skills our young children are not prepared for to go into the refinery and take these jobs. And that's what my interest really is. Making sure that all the jobs, and by now you guys should have a list of the jobs that are in Lime Tree.

1:21:12 And we should be working very diligently to make sure that our children are being trained to take those jobs over. If Lime Tree is supposed to be around for the next 10, 15, 20 years, we need to start making sure that our children are the one. So many people in this territory that worked in a prior company, Hess Oil Refinery, send their children to college, build homes. We have to make sure we provide this opportunity for the young and coming children. We have to do that as leaders in this territory.

1:21:47 Thank you very much for that extra time, Mr. Jay. You're welcome, Senator Johnson, and I echo your sentiments. We need to definitely, Assistant Commissioner, if you could relate to Commissioner Malloy, we need to expand and have a specific program maybe just in itself. we're talking about boilermakers pipe fitters welders you know in these different areas of operations within within the facility numerous positions that are available and we need to really equip our our people for those positions so we want to stress that so please relay that message and look into preparing our young people for that thank you very much senator Johnson now Now Senator James. Good morning to the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Good morning testifiers.

1:22:39 My question to the Department of Labor. Have you contacted farmers to recruit for your registered apprenticeship program? Good morning, Shinneka. Good morning again. apprenticeship program of course we're still where we're still making connections um so that's a no that's a no i don't want to i want to utilize my time effectively the reason why i'm asking about you reaching out to farmers as you know the 33rd legislature of the virgin islands invested heavily in the department of agriculture and we also have some mandates in the virgin islands code that speaks to agriculture in a classroom and as the department of education is trying their best to get their act together we have to make sure that we have opportunities in place within the department of labor where we can improve on our agriculture industry so i'm suggesting that you guys contact the farmers in the u.s virgin islands try to find out if they're interested in signing up for the apprenticeship program can you please do that yes noted will do because i really want to get our young men and women in the territory exposed to farming if you check the farm building the u.s virgin islands the virgin island spends over 500 million dollars in importing food and if we have our youth exposed to this industry from a very young age they can tap in to that large sum of money that tends to seep out of our government and from the private sector 500 million dollars if you can only tap

1:24:27 into at least 10 to 20 percent of that through the training of our youth and exposing them to agriculture from a very young age we can be able to utilize a lot of the land that we have on the island of st croix that is just sitting dormant we have a lot of farmland and the average age for farmers in the territory is 60 years old and up and we need to fix that so we need

to get our youth exposed to agriculture um what i would like to know is what trades will the work learn and earn program be teaching this summer and what factors contribute to your success rate of 81 percent Ms. Sebastian, can I go, okay. The work, learn, and the program, um, placements is based on, we assess the customers to find out their career interests and we place the, the students based on their career path. One second. One second. Can you, can you just, can you just get straight the point i speak specifically to what trades will be taught this summer but please when you say the work experience the work learn and earn is not just summer it's the year-round program okay so can you speak to the specific trades it's it's served on an individual basis for the students based on the demand occupations that we have because what i'm leading thank you because what i'm leading at is i'm trying to find out from the department of labor is what is your focus when it comes to the high demand industries in the territory and where do we need to place our youth to get them trained for a workforce development in the territory so we can benefit in the long term as we we know certain trades are in high demand and i just really need to know what are the trades that are in high that are in high demand

1:26:27 and making sure that we're placing them in those specific jobs. So can you speak to what specific trades are in high demand and what is the focus of the Department of Labor? Well, based on our demand listing that is prepared to our Workforce Development Board, when it comes to the construction field, electricians, carpenters, mason, welders, plumbers, are the occupations in demand. And can you please add agriculture to that list? Please, like I mentioned earlier, I would like for the Department of Labor to provide a budget, the budget, the number of projected students and the amount of students they have registered so far, the partners and agencies and plan start dates for the multiple youth programs that they plan on operating this year after this hearing. So to the chair, if you need me to repeat that at a later time, I will do so.

1:27:19 But it's very important for this body, especially this committee, to focus on data. these field goal legislation and things that are just going to die off within three to four months needs to come to an end we need to have true and accurate information because if we're saying that a large portion of our youth will not be participating in these programs we as a body to find out how we can find extra dollars in this next budget to make sure that we meet those demands every year we come to this body and we're saying that everybody will not be able to benefit And I understand that, but at some point we have to grow to make sure that our youth who we tend to see are the future are being placed in the jobs that they're needed. And like I said, while I commend the Department of Labor for the summer programs, I would like to know what is the plans to reach out to a larger number of our youth in the territory, especially considering the decrease in extracurricular activities in the Department of Sports, Parks recreation for them this summer. Is there any way we can partner with some EDC companies, some of the companies that are receiving benefits on the territory to make up for some of the students who will not be able to participate in these programs? Is there any way we can do some partnership and receive extra funding or is it too late?

1:28:44 i don't think it's uh ever too late and it's definitely a partnership that we can look into especially given the commissioner's position on the board so i'm assuming by your answer that is something that you will be looking into definitely yes all right within the department of labor title 24 virgin islands code section 229 it speaks to the apprenticeship division how many employees are currently employed in the apprenticeship division of department of labor we currently have a we have a youth and apprenticeship team so we have a director for that um for the apprenticeship area and we also have i believe it's five staff members that are part of the you team right now time correct i'm mr chair with your indulgence where i'm heading at with this because uh the chair and i are both members of the committee on finance and moving forward when we do have these budget hearings i want to make sure that there's no excuse the next time around when it comes to manpowering the apprenticeship division we need to beef up the apprenticeship division which leads to my question is there a territorial plan for apprenticeship programs in the U.S. Virgin Islands and if so can you provide this body with that document?

1:30:12 Thank you for that question. We're working with our State Apprenticeship Council to come up with a plan. So the State Apprenticeship Council which is a nine-member board or council is active in the Department of Labor is what you're saying? They are and in the testimony we mentioned our first meeting. so just to make sure before i end my line of questioning there is currently no territorial plan for apprenticeship programs we're working on that plan so the answer is no thank you mr chair for the time you're most welcome senator james and i must agree and echo your words especially regards for agriculture our culture is an important part of our sustainability i'm sorry sometimes my tongue gets tied up and we need to definitely um direct our young people in that direction and there's more to agriculture and just planting that they have more than different a hundred more than a hundred different fields in the area of agriculture especially now that University of the Virgin Islands. I started off a program in regards to a degree in agriculture. I think we need to start stimulating your people in that direction. Thank you very much. Now we recognize Senator Alma Francis Heiliger.

- 1:31:41 Good morning. Good morning colleagues. Good morning testifiers. Good morning to the people of the the territory. Well, first of all, I would like to say thank you to the Department of Labor for being here to share quite a bit of information as it relates to our youth. I am a firm supporter of anything with our young people in helping them with their progression forward. If you have any kind of information, whether it's about the programs or any specific school program you have, please, please contact my office and forward it to us so we could also be one of the conduits to get that information out to the public. The number is 340-693-3600. So the first question I want to ask you guys, I want to talk about the safety of our young people. You did speak about 50, I believe, 8% that said they would prefer them inside of their establishment. I think you said 40% a hybrid and two percent preferred virtual. Now do you guys do any pop-ups to any of these businesses that say over 90 percent of them are able to accommodate for the safety of our young people? Do you do any pop-ups to make sure that this is accurate as well as these PPEs will be provided. Thank you for that question Senator. I want to make sure that we're clear that that this program here although it's it's we are proceeding and it's gotten the blessing of our Commissioner and the Governor and it's going to be dependent on Department of Health saying at that time when we're ready to begin that we can go ahead and proceed. In addition to that all of the individuals that we place do go through some sort of OSHA training and will be adding the
- 1:33:38 COVID related topics to that training and if need be if we had to cut back our OSHA division only has line of sight into the public sector so if we had to limit it to that we could but if it does require that we go into um the private companies that is something that we would have to look into and make sure we do it in the correct way and we of course will definitely be putting the safety of our youths first as we proceed okay so based on what you're telling me it is a possibility that maybe some of these 800 plus students might not be able to go out depending on department of health and potentially spot checking some of these businesses as to if they're capable of even providing this service of safety to the children well and what i'm saying is that we have to get the okay from department of health at the time when we're ready to begin given the covet numbers and our current situation whether we can proceed but we are planning as if we are going to go ahead and have a summer program this summer okay you're planning for it okay that's fair enough on page two of the testimony there's a sentence that says we currently recruiting participants and collaborating with mandated and community partners could you expound a little bit on that what does mandated mean under some of our federal funds and we do have to partner with department of human services as well as voc rehab that falls under department of human services as long along with the department of education so those are actual requirements in order to utilize some of the grant monies the grant money yes okay i understand that um i i want to ask a little bit um one of my colleagues
- 1:35:35 spoke about the district of saint thomas st john and coming back and forth for some of the young people and for me you know especially with a summer program the last thing i would want to be doing is getting up to catch a boat to come over to another island just to work and and these are young people you're dealing with how much effort is put into really attempting to recruit businesses specifically out of st john to really get these children out working where they live DIRECTOR RIVERA- Thank you for that question Senator. We do make sure that in our surveys that we reach out to those participating or interested businesses on St. John we even I know I do know the Commissioner himself has actually gone out to St. John and spoken to some of our employers.
- 1:36:34 We also do outreach. We do have other employers that have participated the past so we always try to reach out to some of our continued participants and get the word out as best as we can to those participating agencies and um businesses okay can i interject all our participants in st john are placed on st john they're not required to come to st thomas for placement oh excellent that's what i was getting a little i needed a little bit of clarity on because we were my colleague was talking about them having to come over to the district of saint thomas so i wanted the island of saint thomas i want to ask another question you spoke on page six of your testimony in regards to work readiness program and being virtual i want to understand and it also touched on online age 14 to 21 when we're talking about young individuals even young adults does this program or any form of this program go beyond the age of 21 in assisting young adults to really get this type of preparedness yes yes we do as as part of our services that we highlighted in the testimony our other school population get this service as well through the work experience program or direct one-on-one with the case managers excellent well i want to thank you for your testimony um i will continue to listen and gather information accordingly thank you very much thank you senator francis heiliger for your question now senator carla joseph you recognize thank you mr chairman a pleasant good morning colleagues testifiers members of our listening and viewing audience i want to thank the testifiers this morning for your very lengthy and um it wasn't very lengthy but your your testimony and I really commend you Assistant
- 1:38:53 Commissioner Cindy Richardson as well as your newest team member on board Mr. Kevin Dixon also definitely I want to congratulate Miss Shinnika Sebastian on your promotion because you and I have worked deep as a partner over the past ten years with the program I managed and so I really want to congratulate you on your promotion to this position as the director of youth and apprenticeship I have a few questions for you and I would like to just begin with some of those

questions. Let's look at page two. I want to know the young people that you have trained annually. Have you been tracking them? And before you answer that question, indicate for me what is the goal of all of the programs that you are providing, all of the training programs. What is the Department of Labor's goal with their training? So the goal of the programs, and Assistant Commissioner mentioned earlier, is employment and retention.

1:40:15 Okay, it's employment and retention. So that goes into the question I asked. Where are the young people who have participated in some of your programs over the years? How is your retention rate looking? Can you clarify, when you say some of the programs, you mean all the programs together? Well, in the federal programs, because that's what you have to report on, especially the federal programs, I noted that you did have some statistical data for the jobs for American graduates, But I didn't see in any of your reports, any of your federal statistical data that has to be reported to the U.S. Department of Labor, which I believe is your funding source through WIOA. Am I incorrect?

1:41:08 You're correct. Great question. Okay. For program year PY-19, when it comes to our federal funds, we're responsible for performance outcomes we've exceeded um percentage percentages when it comes run run them down for me please okay the percentage is 59.70 percent 59.70 point 70 percent which which uh performance indicator is that this is employment employment placement within second quarter after exit okay and what is your performance measure it was at 39 39 so your negotiated goal is 39 so we've exceeded the goal okay run it down you've entered employment placement fourth quarter after exit so these are the individuals who are in employment second quarter after exit we have to follow them now fourth quarter after exit the goal was 42 percent we exceeded it by 60.90 percent so that means they're being retained in the employment that you have placed them in correct correct okay all right retention the others we have a youth medium earnings that was a new goal so they didn't have a baseline, but our average is 3,354. 3,354. Average earnings. Okay. All right. We have our youth measurable skill gain. Individuals that are enrolled in a training or work experience that shows some type of competency or gain. Is this, I'm sorry, Ms. Sebastian, is this academic gains or is it...

1:43:06 It could be work readiness, depends on the activity that they're in. Okay. Because individuals in training or work experience. Okay. And what is that performance measure? We're at 66.70%. And what's the benchmark criteria for that? They didn't determine a baseline as yet. okay and then we have youth credential we've been struggling in um the goal is 45 percent unfortunately we only able to meet it at 33.3 percent the goal is 25 percent 45 percent 45 percent and you are at 33 percent yes okay and these would be those type of industry recognized certifications similar to what our good senator from on this big island over yeah i should say yeah or here over here uh alluded to uh regarding uh having partners and you're seeking those eligible uh certified instructors and uh service providers to be able to increase this number correct correct okay now let's let's still have a little discussion regarding that how many uh industry rec before i say that what are your industry recognized driven employers what are your industry recognized driven uh what are your recognized industry driven or demand industry employers.

1:44:55 Are you getting in a little bit? Just so based on 30 seconds. So based on our workforce development board, who identifies our demand occupation, our top demand occupation in the Virgin Islands is administrative and support services, Of course, healthcare, the construction trade, IT, hospitality, and transportation. Well, you know you spoke it better than your chairman. I'm not trying to say anything poorly, but when I asked that question at a meeting that we had here, he did not. May I, may I, Mr. Chair? Yes, yes, you may.

1:45:34 Thank you kindly for your indulgence and your grace. I appreciate it deeply. He did not mention construction. He said construction isn't what they look at as a demand-driven industry, which I know cannot be the truth. And you just look at the community. We are building here, and if you're going to build, you need skilled laborers, skilled men and women to do this work. I also want to understand from you, because I know labor is a part of the Workforce Investment Board, board kindly indicate to me how you arrive at these demand-driven industries. Is there a method, you did an assessment, what tool was used to arrive and identify these areas that you listed, Ms. Sebastian, as those demand-driven industry where we know we're going to have jobs. That's what we'd be preparing people for jobs and career pathways in these industry kindly indicate that to me or to us it is definitely based on statistics i'll pass it on to ac richardson so she could give you more details thank you for that question senator yes it is based on statistics but that listing usually comes out of an assessment that is done by the first development board that uses our labor market information our job postings and our unemployment information and that's how they come up with that listing okay thank you kindly this conclude my questioning mr chairman i really appreciate your your patience and your indulgence thank you kindly you're welcome you're welcome that's what we're here for we're here to get the information that we need and to ensure that our members of our community also

1:47:26 understand what the department is doing related to youth programs and youth services So I know we have burning questions and we want to get information out there. I would like to recognize committee members, Senator DeGraff, that has joined us. And you're recognized now for your questions. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning, colleagues. Good

morning, testifiers, all of you listening and present. Mr. Chair, to you and your family, my deepest condolences. Thank you. And the passing of your brother. and you look good in that chair you're handling it well so keep up doing what you're doing to labor what you're doing for the territory again I commend you I thank you because I know it has not been easy however I look at what is your collaboration between the Department of Labor and the CTE programs in Department of Education or the vocational education? Right now we are working on, thank you for that question, Senator.

1:48:37 Right now we are working on building our relationships with the CTE and our vocational trades. You're going to see a lot of that coming out when we start to engage in our CDBG grant. as we start to push that out hopefully in april and we start to to administer um the programs under there with this ncc er training um so we're we're really working on our partnerships in that regard as we move forward with that program okay so how come are we doing it now i mean the hurricanes i hit the territory when 2017 we're in 2021 um we've had graduating classes we had a COVID-19 for 2020 is it moving slow or is it me because when I look around the island and I see um construction companies along the side of roadways I don't see any of us or if I see us I see us directing traffic you know so what's taking so long yeah thank you for that question um as I indicated this is where we're going to be utilizing the CDBG grant funding that process initially the application and the the a lot of the paperwork that we had to do to get to this stage it did take some time.

1:50:02 However we have gotten over that hurdle. We're ready to begin. We have had our testimony indicated we had nine respondents to that and we're hoping to have a start date in April to get started with that program under that particular funding source okay so how are we getting the word out to our youth what means are we using to get the word out to our youth can i can i interject sure the current technical vocational program is uh eligible training provider so they are our partners and they do provide training to our participants in the program it's a referral and we can assist with um funding for the training before you before you go on right in terms of the question of how do you get to the how many virgin island youth territory-wide has the department of labor gotten to since 2017 do you have numbers so we can see that we we graduate thousands of children a lot of them go away to college military many stay here so if out of a 2000 class graduating 1500 go away 500 stay here how do we get to those 500 or what are your numbers that we could look at and say that these programs are being effective how can us the community help to assist could you explain that to me please good question and we'll have to pull that data and you you're asking for for the data of those that they'd train in?

1:51:40 Correct, okay, then we could go through the chair. If I don't mind through the chair, you could submit that to the chair, those numbers of our youth. Now we have other programs, the Youth Build program. We have, I know the Savant Community Center had a summer program through Department of Labor. How are these, are all of these funded through labor, Are all of, there's a collaboration through labor? Yes, the committee project were actually funded through labor to provide services for a 14 and 15 year old that summer.

1:52:22 Right, and what about, there's any collaboration youth bill and their program that they have? The youth bill doesn't exist in its territory. Okay, I'll have my colleague who is, she's a guru on it, my St. Thomas colleague, so we could work on that because it does exist here in the territory, unless it has stopped, but I know it is there. Again, these are collaborations. Okay, does the Department of Labor have a collaboration with the University of the Virgin Islands, where you can take individuals?

1:53:01 My profession I learned in high school is auto mechanics, but where you can take that they become duly faceted where I not only learn a profession, but able to get my higher education through the university. Is that any collaboration that's taking place now? And that's definitely one of the initiatives when it comes to apprenticeship, we're trying to get all the education or the training institute involved in the process where we can connect them with businesses and of course our workforce system to build an apprenticeship program okay again it doesn't exist so you say we started now is this where we at UVI cell is a proof provider when it comes to training so we do have a partnership with UVI cell okay I you know I'm not trying to beat up on labor but you know because I know how valuable labor is but what one I think on going to the Department of Labor now when you pull up you got three boxes outside so it's like any mini miney mo take your pick because I think only one of them has any listing as to I guess what the services is so Department of Labor are the doors open now again for the youth to go physically you know a lot of people don't want to go online and physically what do you have for those who want to walk in there physically that you don't turn them away and you assist them what is there thank you for that uh senator um yes our doors are open um eight to five as i indicated earlier um our lobbies are open we also can do virtual appointments and we can also do in-person service during the week as well those boxes outside are mainly for a ui when they're dropping off their certs so they don't actually have to come in so that that's a convenience for them and as we move forward we are looking as to ways to possibly safely open our computing labs not to the capacity that it was but at least to have that available time to the participants who would like to come in right now they're not open but they our lobbies are open for them to obtain

- 1:55:16 information and to speak to counselors as needed okay and and in closing i i know i came late so i do apologize because of flight message here but in closing after the hurricanes i took my staff and went to the department of labor and got the paper applications went to the neighborhoods the guys on the corner in all the hoods well i went to three hoods neighborhoods, Savant, Garden Street, and Bordeaux, and I passed out applications for them to go to labor to seek assistance. Can that process still be done?
- 1:55:58 Yes, Senator. Yes, definitely. Okay. Thank you very much. Thank you for the time, Mr. Chair. You are so welcome, Senator DeGraff. Now, you know, well, I'll reserve my questions for my time now um madam clerk please put me on on the clock for seven minutes also um yeah i have a few questions um i understand that last year because of covid you weren't able to do most of your programs so does that means that that now we have more money in the budget for this year funds that were separated for last year can they be rolled over to this year We would have to check with OMB on that, but we do know that what we did last year is that we did take a portion of that money and we used it towards the LIFT program, which we indicated that we were able to serve at least 20 individuals.
- 1:56:56 And we did that through virtual, so we were able to provide laptops and Wi-Fi and other memberships that we were able to provide them when they received their project management through AMA. So that is how the money was used last summer. Okay. Do you know how much of that that you used? I do believe I'm going to say about \$130,000. \$130,000. So do you know how much you have left? Offhand, no.
- 1:57:26 Okay. I'd like to have that information. So if we do have that money, then can we double those numbers this year? Based on availability, we'd have to get back to you on that. that and when you say based on availability whose availability are you referring to well that that is general fund um money that we're writing got you got you based on the ability of the general fund now let me ask you i'm sorry so as ac um richardson said our local funds um we'll have to check into but our federal funds were able to roll over to this year so that allows us to increase the number of work experience we could do year-round okay that's good good information to hear now let me ask you regards to i'm hearing about the summer program but what do you have what programs and opportunities do you have available now for youth currently if they want if they come into the office what type of services can you offer them those that have recently graduated what do you have now Thank you for the question and some of those services was listed on the first page of our testimony so it's more work readiness preparation and of course job referrals, job search assistance, providing them with a labor market to go over interview skills, resume preparation and additional services like that.
- 1:58:56 Okay so you have that currently available now? Yes. Great. Another question also with regards to now, the bilingual or the community, the members of our community that don't speak English or English is not their first language. What do you have available for them? What is the marketing plan for them? I would like to hear some information in regards to that. Thank you for that question so right now we do have some individuals on our staff that are bilingual I know when we go into our view system they do have the capability of it being translated into Spanish and also too we're working with the we're working out looking into possibly using the Google Translate conversation feature to offer to the staff to be able to communicate with those individuals what about marketing for outreach do you have brochures and information are going maybe in Creole or Spanish to that sector of our community that is something that we're going to be utilizing and using that translate feature so we can take some of our marketing materials and translate it and have it pushed out to the community well I want to encourage you to do that and I'll be looking out to ensure that I I see marketing information also in Spanish and in Creole, because we know in St. Thomas we have a large number of population that speak Creole and also Spanish and also in St. Croix.
- 2:00:30 So it's in order to be able to get more involvement and more participation in our programs. Also, with regards to engaging with prospective employers to be part of the program, what's the steps in order to do that? I've received information particularly from one group that they've been trying to reach out to participate and they haven't heard back from the Department of Labor. So what's the strategy and how are you addressing that? How are you recruiting more employers that to participate so they could participate in a program? So I'm going to go ahead and let Ms. Sebastian go ahead and elaborate on that uh in regards to our work with workforce 180 and also you can mention the upcoming um presentation that you're doing with rotary as well so so right now what we're able to do um one of our strategies in reaching out to employers we use our past database of participants um program employers to reach out directly to and of course we do a press release and we have an employer webinar that's directed to employers to let them know the services we have available we have one scheduled for friday the 26th and the highlight of this webinar would be web-based work-based learning um as well as to highlight the apprenticeship program so i am not sure you said that employer reached out and did not get a response that's definitely something we'll have to look into yeah the virgin islands association of realtors they're interested in participating and um i got information they've reached out and um since to participate and they haven't received any information um so can you please reach out um to the association because they're eager to

- participate i will thank you if i may add also we did reach out to all the employers listed in our view system to um participate in our program this year and as ac said we do have a presentation with the rotary club of st thomas tomorrow
- 2:02:37 okay that's good um with regards now to i know you have a pro the program in st croix gold coast yacht i think that's part of your apprenticeship program 30 seconds yes that program sounds great now do you have anything similar to that on st thomas or st john As of current, no. We do have a similar program that provides apprenticeship.
- 2:03:12 They call it apprenticeship. It doesn't necessarily fall in line with our registered apprenticeship program. So I've been working with it. Time. I've been working with that entity to try to develop our apprenticeship program. but we do have an entity in St. Thomas that is trying to be an eligible training provider on our end, and they're going through the process. Okay, well, I'm glad to hear that. I'm hoping that that also, maybe with the information we're putting out today, other employers will decide to join, be part of the programs that you're offering. I was also very excited to hear about the construction training program that you referred in your testimony, especially given that we have major projects that are in the pipeline that have to do with our recovery.
- 2:04:01 What is the timeline for this initiative? Right now, it's in the contracting, RFP contracting phase, and we're hoping to get that started up and running in April of 2021. So up in April. And if it starts in April, which is basically almost a month from now, What's the timeline? That is a 24-month program. 24 months? Good.
- 2:04:36 All right. Thank you so much. I want to know maybe if any of my colleagues have any other burning question before we close out this block of today's agenda. And Senator DeGraff, you're acknowledged for a point recognized for a point of inquiry. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through the Chair to the Department of Labor, are you having the summer program this year? And if so, could you forward through the Chair, I guess, the documentation regarding that, please? yes senator it is included in our testimony but we can also forward that information to your offices and all the senators actually thank you very much and I also want to request that you send to the committee the applications or the brochures that you have once you have them in Spanish and and in Creole so we could see them okay senator james you have a point of inquiry yes thank you mr chair for the time my point of inquiry is uh ever since march 2019 i've been in communication with commissioner gary malloy ever since the governor made mention in his state of the territory address that there is 10 million dollars from the CDBG funds for some apprenticeship program. I know we have been receiving updates but can you speak to this committee on when we can actually see some true progress something tangible that we can touch to help our young men and women to get certified and trained in the territory and if it's because I'm out of breath I was running
- 2:06:30 on the stairs can you please answer that question uh thank you for that senator yes i can as indicated earlier um to the chair uh that we are on in target for on target for that and we do anticipate having that program start in april of this year um we are we have reached the contract and rfb contracting phase so once that is up and running we can get started in april of 2021 program to utilize that 10 million dollar funding you referenced but thank you for the response but i just want to place on the record two years ago when i was in the capacity of the chair and congratulations mr carrion thank you that commissioner gary molloy told me in several months we're gonna roll out this program and that was in 2019 my whole term finished already i'm in a new term so can you really tell this body that that it will be the actual date because we have been hearing time after time it's coming it's coming it's coming it's sounding like a promise yes senator um as of right now that is our target um we had to change our application and we had to make some changes and we provide additional documentation due to the requirements of hud and we right now based on the timeline that i have right now in front of me that is our projected date to start thank you and to my my good saint croix colleague i just have suggestion my brother please let me have a hearing just for that and drill down because 10 million dollars is a lot of money to train our young men and women and when we say we don't have money and we just have money sitting there for two years something is wrong thank you i totally agree with you uh commissioner james and i hope that commission i mean senator james i change you from senator to commissioner though and i i truly hope that uh assistant commissioner richardson
- 2:08:32 and and her team and also relay this information to uh commissioner malloy you know it's time for us to really get the ball rolling because at the long run who suffer is is us you know our young people continue then to get the short end of what's happening and um and it's unfortunate that we continue to you know receive sometimes directors and leaders and hear testifiers that come before us and they promise something or say they're going to do something and it doesn't happen and we can't continue failing our young people uh you know we we cannot so if they are as important as we say they are then we must do better for them so i really urge the department of labor to come through and fulfill its commitment in this regard um i want to uh senator uh francis halliger you recognize thank you um this is a point of inquiry um through the chair i would like to know if the labor department is in partnership as it relates to a cooperative extent to the cooperative extension program as you know as one of my colleagues talked earlier about agriculture and the importance of it um this specific program one of their main cores is the advancement of agriculture in communities so do you have a

partnership in regards to the corporate of extension program thank you for the question they have continued to be a partner when it comes to a work experience program with a year round or summer employment could you could you repeat i didn't hear you too well i'm sorry i was saying that they have continued to be a partner of our programs especially when it comes to our work-based learning our year-round work experience and our summer employment program okay can you expand a little bit more in regards to the effectiveness of it um do you find that this

2:10:32 specific program is assisting specifically when it comes to agriculture and its advancement within the territory I definitely think it's beneficial to our students to give them that that exposure because remember a program is more for exposure to build it the skills so it has definitely been effective when it comes to that portion of it and helping them plan for a career in agriculture do you take any type of statistics after they participate in this program as to see what the outcome to see if how many or what percentage of them are now interested after they get this exposure to go more towards that as a career in agriculture i don't have those statistics but it's something we could probably follow well through the chair i'm going to request that if you guys could provide me with that information that would be very much appreciated because when it comes to agriculture here we have a lot of conversation about it but we have to start continuously putting things in place to make sure that we as a people are able to ultimately take care and feed ourselves and the only way to do that is to really encourage our young people to recognize that this field is something that is very profitable it is something that is important to any community and it is my hope through the Department of Labor and other partnerships that this will be something that's ultimately positive to our young people and we could see more of them going into these types of jobs. Thank you. Thank you, Senator. Now let's recognize Senator Carla Joseph for a point of information yes I wanted to ask a question relative because I'm looking at your apprenticeship program and our

2:12:34 good senator from st. Croix mentioned about the apprenticeship program I know know when it was the bill was being debated this was years ago to put in the apprenticeship program in Virgin Islands I came and testified along with some young people from the program I managed youth bill as well as then commissioner now governor Albert Bryan kindly indicate to us who are the members of the Apprenticeship Council and Mr. Chairman if I could request through the chair an organizational chart for the Department of Labor specifically where it entails the young people the full organizational chart so that we could have an idea precisely who the persons are and their responsibility as far as a chain of commanding the organization thank you for that um senator um in reference to the membership of the the apprenticeship council um i can go ahead and list out those names of those individuals or i can actually direct you to our website and on that banner there's a full section on apprenticeship where you can see all of the members. You can also see the message from the commissioner and also the functions of the board along with additional information in regards to apprenticeship. So whichever you prefer, I can list all the names or I can just reference you to our website for that information. I can get it. I'll pull it from your website.

2:14:22 Now, as related to the council, Is the council the entity that advises the director of youth and apprenticeship? Correct. Okay. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Senator Joseph. Senator Johnson, you're recognized for your point of information.

2:14:52 Thank you again very much, Mr. Chair. As I was speaking earlier, I'm emphasizing on programs for jobs in Lime Tree. Vivo does a program at this time training young men or women in crane operating. I would advise you guys to touch base with a company like that. We cannot continue sitting down waiting for companies to come to us. We have to go out there and get it. We have to go out and approach them. This is a very, very lucrative job that pays a lot. Ain't anybody going to just lay a jump on their crane and operate it.

2:15:34 But Vivo have a program, and if we could make sure we utilize these companies that are here, you got \$10 million sitting down there for apprenticeship. We've got to utilize it in ways that our children are going to get this opportunity. And once they become well-skilled and certified in crane operation, they could probably travel a wall. They could open their own business eventually. But we have to start with making sure we open those doors. Give them the opportunity. Everybody say, all they do is sit on the counter. What are we doing to get them up off the counter?

2:16:11 Please, reach out to these companies to make sure that they are willing, and I'm quite sure they are, and utilize them to prepare our children for tomorrow. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Thank you. Senator James, you're acknowledged for your point of information. Thank you, Chairman Carrion. And I do agree with my good colleague from Frederickstead. And when I come to the Senate floor, I'm very passionate. And sometimes it may be taken as other things. But I will say this much. As you mentioned, the good Senator from Frederickstead mentioned the training operational program.

2:16:51 The crane training program. I was a member of the Workforce Development Board in my first term. Repeatedly and repeatedly I've been sending the Department of Labor and the Workforce Development Board a document that speaks to an individual in this community who wants to train our young men and women in a trade specifically for crane operation.

And up to this day, You think they would sit down with a young man and say, come in, let's find out how we can make it happen.

- 2:17:26 I am tired of the games, you know, and I'm really tired of the games because we continue to go to these graduations and go on the stage and see the youth of the future, and we have all these funds and mandates in the Borderlands Code, and we're not doing it. So to just complement what my good colleague from Frederick Stead said, I have been in constant communication with the Workforce Development Board and Commissioner Gary Molloy, and it's too much run around. so something needs to happen i mean to expedite the process that's how come go ahead if i may if i may respond senator and i thank you for that statement um and you know that that is an area that the commissioner has been looking into one of the requirements in order for us to utilize our funding in that area the individual or even that company would have to be one of our eligible training provider and have to provide a nationally recognized credential in order for us to be able to move forward with that we have been looking into that and actually that cdl license is not actually recognized by our local bmv and we have brought them to the table to look into reciprocal agreements with the states in order to see if we can get that license recognized here locally well just to place on the record individual who i'm speaking of he is registered on the u.s mainland and now he's currently doing business here in the territory he's registered got a business license and everything he has a whole curriculum everything he has been doing this for years and recently i've met with vivo as well and they are willing to do the same thing but my thing is like i feel as if like the private sector has to be running you guys down to be a part of this program when it should be the other way around the public sector should be running down the private sector come in sit at the table let's talk let's spend this money but hey i could be wrong well we are closing off because we have a a quick uh senator joseph quick quickly please
- 2:19:24 point of information point of information regarding your credential and training programs you are department of labor you have to adhere and be compliant with the u.s department of labor's certifications do you not be based on your funding source that is correct and if you don't if you don't if you don't um provide the services and the young people are not being certified by a eligible and certified entity then you don't they don't get the credits and you aren't going to be able to meet your performance measures correct that is correct okay so it's generating what can you do to help businesses and persons who want to train to become an eligible certified trainer who could provide the required credentials that the funders uh require what is the department of labor doing because that's that's the that's the issue right there what is department of labor doing to do that well thank you for that question in order for those individual individuals to qualify they would have to apply through our workforce development board and that application is available on their website for them to become an eligible training provider once they are approved by the board we can utilize them in for training our participants thank you assistant commissioner you have one minute for some closing remarks okay thank you um i would just like to say thank you to this body for the opportunity to update the youth of the territory and of course i'd like to also thank the hard-working men and women of the department of labor and thank you so much and feel free to reach out to the department of labor for any additional information you may need thank you and i want to thank you and your leadership team and please also extend our gratitude to
- 2:21:18 to the commissioner for making yourself available and sharing with the community and the public what the department is doing related to youth services. We have so much more to discuss. We'll be having a specific hearing on apprenticeship programs and job training for our young people. But at this moment, this is information that we have. We're finishing block one. So the committee on youth sports park and recreation stands in recess until one. Thank you. We'll be right back. Thank you.

People named in this transcript

SUSPECTED, and a finding aid only. Names were matched by machine against the spellings used across all 426 of our transcripts, and the title is the one used in the room. Being named here is NOT evidence that a person attended or spoke · only that the name was said. Speech recognition mishears names, so a spelling may be wrong even where no alternative is offered.

- 7x **Senator Carla Joseph**
the surname alone also matches: Clifford Joseph; Karla J. Joseph
heard in this transcript as: Joseph
- 5x **Senator Dwayne DeGraff**
heard in this transcript as: DeGraff
- 5x **Senator Franklin D. Johnson**
heard in this transcript as: Johnson

- 5x **Commissioner Gary Malloy**
the surname alone also matches: Ruben Malloy
heard in this transcript as: Gary Molloy, Mallory, Malloy
- 5x **Senator Steven D. Payne Sr.**
heard in this transcript as: Payne, Stephen D. Payne, Steven D. Payne Sr
- 4x **Senator Alma Francis-Heyliger**
heard in this transcript as: Alma Francis Heiliger, Alma-Francis Heiliger
- 3x **Senator Javan James**
heard in this transcript as: Javan E. James Sr, Jayvon E. James Sr
- 3x **Senator Marise C. James**
the surname alone also matches: Javan James; Giovanni James Sr
heard in this transcript as: James
- 3x **Senator Novelle Francis**
heard in this transcript as: Novell E. Francis, Novell Francis
- 3x **Senator Samuel Carrion**
heard in this transcript as: Samuel Carriong
- 2x **Senator Kurt A.**
the surname alone also matches: Dwayne M.
heard in this transcript as: J.