



STOP THE BLEEDING, INC.

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"A project of the St. Croix Foundation"

March 30, 2009

STOP THE BLEEDING FOUNDATION **TO SEND VIDEO MESSAGE TO PARENTS**

Cheryl Francis, wife of Virgin Islands Lt. Governor Gregory R. Francis and founder of the **Stop the Bleeding Foundation**, announces the release of the second in a series of thought-provoking public service announcements (PSAs) focused on improving the quality of life for Virgin Islands families. According to Francis, the newest PSA sends a very powerful message to parents about the destructive impact drugs, violence, teen pregnancy, poor academic performance, and lack of parental attention are having on their children.

The one-minute video which will soon air in English and Spanish on local radio and television stations features talented student actors recruited from St. Croix's John H. Woodson Junior High School. The PSA was shot on location at the school and at several abandoned buildings at the Ralph DeChabert Housing community. It was produced by SitaRam Filmworks in cooperation with Stop the Bleeding's Parent Involvement Drive Committee, one of the entities in the coalition of non-profit agencies and community members working with Francis to protect, educate, and expose Virgin Islands youth to happier homes and brighter futures.

Francis said that the Stop the Bleeding Foundation will continue offering public messages that are important for parents to hear and that encourage them to reach out to their children. "We want parents to take the time to have sit-down conversations with their children. More so now than ever before, young people are crying out for guidance. It is important that we understand what is bothering them, and what affects their daily lives," Francis said. "We are losing far too many of our young men and women to shootings and other crimes which negatively affect the entire family. We must take back our lives and make our communities safe again," she said

Francis envisions the Stop the Bleeding campaign as a strong voice against abuse and neglect, and is working with public, private, and government agencies to spread the message. She is convinced that the solution will come through a united effort. “Wisdom bestowed by parents, grandparents, and other family members together with the support of friends, can be a Godsend to young people in physical or mental turmoil. School administrators and church leaders also play an important role in counseling young people about peer pressure at school and in their neighborhoods,” Francis said.

Francis formed alliances with a strong production team to accomplish her latest project. The soon to be aired message was directed by former Miss U.S. Virgin Islands Cathy SitaRam, president of SitaRam Filmworks. SitaRam raised on St. Croix, has worked for BET and other entertainment networks across the country. She recently directed the highly acclaimed “Journey through Emancipation,” a documentary for the Virgin Islands Culture, History, and Tradition Foundation now being considered for a World Africa Documentary Film Festival award. SitaRam was assisted by internationally acclaimed Florida-based cinematographer Irv Goodnoff who has worked as director of photography on more than 35 major films and with well known actors including Cicely Tyson, Jack Lemmon, and Danny Devito.

“I feel truly blessed to have this opportunity to work with such talented artists and with the caring people of the Parent Involvement Drive” said Francis who began the STB campaign in 2007. She has hosted several Teen Summits throughout the territory for junior high school students, involving local and nationally known inspirational speakers and entertainers to engage the students. Other projects including listening tours, similar to one held last month in a Williams Delight church with pastors and community leaders, will help Francis and the STB members formulate action plans to address community concerns.

For more information, interested persons can call 642-3591. The organization’s website at stopthebleedingusvi.org is presently under construction.

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