



# INTERNET FOR ALL: U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS LOCAL COORDINATION WORKSHOP

NOVEMBER 9, 2023 | UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

INTERNET  
FOR ALL

## AGENDA

*This event is co-hosted by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) Office of Management & Budget (OMB)*

**St. Thomas Moderator:** Somere Webber  
**St. Croix Moderator:** Cristeen Rodriguez-Cox

**8:30 – 9:00 am**

### **Welcome**

- **The Honorable Jenifer O’Neal**, Director, Office of Management and Budget, U.S. Virgin Islands
- **The Honorable Albert Bryan, Jr.** Governor, U.S. Virgin Islands
- **Angela Thi Bennett**, Digital Equity Director, NTIA

**9:00 – 9:30 am**

### **Internet for All: Why is Broadband Important for the U.S. Virgin Islands**

*Territorial representatives will discuss the impact broadband can have on residents in terms of improved access to services and economic opportunity. They will also discuss the various grant opportunities that exist to help increase access and improve digital equity, why this matters to stakeholders, and how they can get involved in support efforts.*

**Moderator:** **Tim Stelzig**, Regional Director, NTIA

- **The Honorable Albert Bryan, Jr.** Governor, U.S. Virgin Islands
- **The Honorable Marvin Blyden**, Senator, 35<sup>th</sup> Legislature and Chairman, Committee on Housing, Transportation & Telecommunications
- **The Honorable Jenifer O’Neal**, Director, Office of Management and Budget, U.S. Virgin Islands
- **The Honorable Rupert Ross**, Director, Bureau of Information Technology, U.S. Virgin Islands

**9:30 – 10:15 am**

### **NTIA Update on BEAD, Digital Equity, and Connecting Minority Communities Programs**

*NTIA representatives will provide updates on the BEAD and Digital Equity programs. NTIA will also present updates about the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program. The representatives will share how these programs can most successfully be implemented in the Territory.*

- **BEAD:** **Tim Stelzig**, Regional Director, NTIA
- **Digital Equity:** **William Navas**, Federal Program Officer, NTIA
- **CMC:** **Michelle Lemelle**, Federal Program Officer, NTIA

**10:15 – 10:30 am**

### **Break**

**10:30 am – 11:15 am**

**Strategies for Expanding Connectivity and Digital Equity**

*Panelists will discuss innovative approaches to expanding access to connectivity and some of the unique opportunities and challenges the Territory faces. They will discuss how they have leveraged other federal programs like ACP and the FCC's Connect USVI Fund to connect residents in the Territory, and different approaches for how NTIA's grant funds can be used to connect residents to digital opportunities.*

Moderator: **The Honorable Rupert Ross**, Director, Bureau of Information Technology, U.S. Virgin Islands

- **Dr. Jon Gant**, Director, Office of Minority Broadband Initiatives, NTIA
- **Angela Thi Bennett**, Digital Equity Director, NTIA
- **Jaughna Nielsen-Bobbit**, Director of Digital Equity and Inclusion, viNGN
- **Enrique A. Völckers-Nin**, Deputy Secretary for Innovation, Information, Data & Technology, Government of Puerto Rico and Executive Director, Puerto Rico Broadband Program

**11:15 am – 12:00m**

**Telehealth**

*This panel will feature experts discussing the intersection of broadband and the delivery of healthcare services and how to educate residents on technology tools that will get them access to better healthcare.*

Moderator: **Dr. Donna Christian-Christensen**, Former Delegate to Congress, U.S. Virgin Islands

- **The Honorable Justa Encarnacion**, Commissioner, U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Health
- **The Honorable Michelle Francis**, Director, Office of Health Information Technology, Office of the Governor, U.S. Virgin Islands
- **Dr. Brian Bacot**, President, Virgin Islands Medical Society
- **Pamela Touissant**, Associate State Director, AARP-VI

**12:00 – 1:00 pm**

**Lunch**

**Message from Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett**, USVI Delegate to Congress

**1:00 – 1:45 pm**

**Update on Federal Broadband Programs**

*Representatives from the federal government will provide updates on current broadband programs and how that funding can be used in a complementary way and highlight non-funding federal resources that are available to help increase connectivity in the Territory.*

Moderator: **Tim Stelzig**, Regional Director, NTIA

- **William Navas**, Federal Program Officer, NTIA
- **Dangkhoa Nguyen**, Attorney Advisor, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
- **Nicolette Gerald**, Policy Advisor, U.S. Department of Treasury (*Virtual*)
- **Lakeisha Hood Moïse**, State Director, USDA Rural Development

**1:45 – 2:30 pm**

### **Achieving Digital Security**

*Remaining safe online is critical to maximizing the opportunity of broadband connectivity and begins with having strong data security protocols in place. This session will focus on the status of the Territory's data security efforts, challenges to protecting its data, and how officials plan to guarantee that its data is secure as broadband access is expanded. It'll also briefly touch on things users should be aware of to ensure they are safe when they get online.*

Moderator: **Stephan Adams**, CEO, viNGN

- **Mark Bough**, Chief Technology Officer, Bureau of Information Technology, U.S. Virgin Islands
- **Ian Tomlinson**, CEO, OmniSystems
- **Brandon Richardson**, Vice President Information Systems, SRMC

**2:30 – 2:45 pm**

### **Break**

**2:45 – 3:30 pm**

### **Addressing Broadband Workforce Needs for the U.S. Virgin Islands**

*Developing a broadband workforce is crucial to the near term and long-term success of broadband infrastructure deployment. This panel will feature some of the Territory's stakeholders discussing opportunities to collaborate, industry needs, skills training, and other effective workforce development strategies.*

Moderator: **Geraldine Pitt**, CEO, Viya

- **Michael Carty**, Chairman, Virgin Islands Workforce Development Board
- **The Honorable Gary A. Molloy**, Commissioner, U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Labor
- **Celina Morris**, Director of Marketing, Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority
- **Suzanne Darrow-Magras**, Director, University of the Virgin Islands CELL

**3:30 – 4:00 pm**

### **Closing and Next Steps**

- **The Honorable Jenifer O'Neal**, Director, Office of Management and Budget, U.S. Virgin Islands
- **Angela Thi Bennett**, Digital Equity Director, NTIA