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VIDE and Consigli/Benton Hosts Project Launch Ceremony Marking the Beginning of Construction of the New Charlotte Amalie High School

The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE), in partnership with Consigli/Benton Joint Venture (Consigli/Benton), the Government of the Virgin Islands, and the Office of Disaster Recovery (ODR) officially launched the New Charlotte Amalie High School project during a ceremonial event held on Thursday, April 9th, at the school's campus.

Government officials, education leaders, project partners, students, and community members joined together to celebrate a pivotal moment in the Territory's public education. The gathering highlighted the shared dedication to creating safe, innovative, and student-focused learning spaces for all.

"This groundbreaking is is not just about beginning construction—it is a transformative investment in the future of our Territory. It is about creating collaborative spaces for learning where students will be inspired to excel, and where all teachers, faculty, and staff can take pride in their school. It represents opportunity, innovation and resilience for generations to come," said Commissioner Dionne Wells-Hedrington, Ed.D.

The New Charlotte Amalie High School is among the first projects identified in VIDE's Educational Facilities Master Plan. The new facility will consist of five buildings: two interconnected academic learning forts, complimented by a Center for Culture and the Arts, the Market, and a Sports Arena.

James Benton, Principal-in-Charge of Consigli/Benton, shared what being entrusted with the $334M design-build project means to his team: "So while I stand here today as a builder, I do so with a deep respect for the work that happens inside a classroom every day. I understand that a school is more than a building. It is a place where lives are shaped and futures begin. It is a school our people know, a school our families care about, and a school our community is deeply invested in seeing rebuilt with excellence."

The new campus will support inquiry-based learning with a variety of space types and flexible infrastructure. The academic learning forts are supplemented by dedicated space for Career and Technical Education in Cosmetology, Construction, Automotive Repair, Occupational/Physical Therapy, and Nursing.

Slated for completion in December 2029, this new construction initiative reflects VIDE's ongoing commitment to providing equitable, high-quality learning environments designed to support student success, encourage innovation, and ensure long-term sustainability.

“The reconstruction of CAHS is a top priority and a significant part of VI history. As a part of the first bundle under the Rebuild USVI initiative to begin construction, this project exemplifies the innovative strategies being employed to expend $3.9B in FEMA funding to rebuild our schools and educational facilities,” remarked ODR Director Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien. “Thank you to FEMA and all stakeholders for their dedication to advancing this project and the recovery across the territory.”

Governor Bryan highlighted the critical importance of strengthening skills and workforce capacity throughout the Territory as the Virgin Islands embraces a time of unprecedented growth and renewal. He emphasized that achieving success in upcoming projects and opportunities will depend on a workforce that is ready, resilient, and driven.

“This moment is about far more than construction. It is about building the future our young people deserve and preparing them to lead in a Virgin Islands defined by growth, opportunity, and renewal. As we rebuild Charlotte Amalie High School, we are strengthening public education, expanding the pathway to skills and workforce readiness, and making clear that our students must be ready not just to witness the Territory’s transformation, but to help shape it. This school is an investment in their future and a declaration that we believe in what they can become.” said Governor Albert Bryan Jr.

The Charlotte Amalie High School was named after Queen Charlotte Amalie of Hesse- Kassel (or Hesse-Cassel), the queen consort of Denmark and Norway. It was the first public high school opened on St. Thomas and continues to stand as a symbol of educational excellence in the Virgin Islands. This reconstruction marks a new chapter in its legacy—one that will empower students and strengthen the community for years to come.

To learn more about the New Charlotte Amalie High School and the Department of Education’s plan to build new schools in the Virgin Islands, visit www.newschoolsvide.com.

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