



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS NEWS RELEASE

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Figure 1: Ambi Blyden, Manager of System Planning and Design at the Authority, explaining to students the way electricity is distributed across the island.

WAPA Empowers Next Generation through Successful Outreach Event at UVI

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (“WAPA or “Authority”) recently participated in an outreach event at the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) this past Monday, July 24, 2023. During the event, WAPA volunteers provided high school summer students with a comprehensive presentation that shed light on the inner workings of the Authority's power generation, transmission, distribution, and water plant systems. The outreach event aimed to inspire and educate young minds about the essential infrastructure that powers the Virgin Islands and sustains the community, as well as provide information on available career paths at the Authority based on students’ interests.

As part of the afternoon’s presentations, students learned from Shiquoi Isaac, Mechanical Engineer I at the Authority and UVI alumni, who provided an overview of his educational path that led him to his current career. Mr. Isaac led students through his latest undertaking at the Randolph Harley Power Plant (RHPP), commonly known as the Wartsila Project, and discussed the intricacies and myriad of moving parts associated with project management and bringing more efficient generation online for Virgin Islanders. Ambi Blyden, Manager of System Planning and Design at the Authority, further shed light on the relationship between transmission and distribution and the power plant and how they work hand in hand to ensure a reliable and redundant energy supply. Ms. Blyden further discussed some of the differences between undergrounding and composite pole utilization and the benefits and disadvantages to both. Rounding out the afternoon, La’ron Henry, a Mechanical Engineer in the Authority’s Water Department, and former Alva C. McFarlane Scholarship recipient, provided a thorough review

of the Authority's water distribution network, how fresh potable water is captured, and plans for upcoming projects.

The interactive event provided insights into the many technical aspects of the Authority's operations, followed by an engaging Q&A session that gave students the chance to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the utility industry. "At the Authority, we believe in nurturing the aspirations of the next generation and fostering a deep appreciation for the critical infrastructure that sustains our communities," noted Shanell Petersen, Director of Corporate Communications at the Authority. "Our team was thrilled to interact with the students at the University of the Virgin Islands, and we hope that this experience sparks an interest in the fields of energy and water management."

Link to recap video can be found at: <https://youtu.be/IHEN9UHsJQE>

The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority Communication's department is committed to reaching, informing, and connecting with the youngest members of the community to the eldest, through meaningful, transparent and effective communication.

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About WAPA: The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority is an autonomous agency of the Virgin Islands Government which produces and distributes electricity and drinking water to residential and commercial customers in the territory. WAPA was created by the Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands in 1964 through Act No. 1248. Today, WAPA generates electrical power at production plants on St. Thomas and St. Croix and distributes electrical service through smart grids to customers on St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John, Hassel Island, and Water Island. Potable water is distributed to almost 13,000 customers through water lines and standpipes. WAPA also has the responsibility of installing and maintaining streetlights.

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