



**THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS**

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE

Charlotte Amalie, V.I. 00802  
340-774-0001

**VIRGIN ISLANDS INDIGENOUS NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH**

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**BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS**

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**A PROCLAMATION**

The annual observances of *National American Indian Heritage Month And National Native American Heritage Month* in the United States of America, honors, acknowledges and respectfully celebrates the contributions of people of Indigenous Native American ancestry, heritage and culture. It is only fitting that the Virgin Islands of the United States of America, respectfully honor the civilization narratives, traditions, genealogical linkages and rich culture being restored by descendants of Native Amerindian people indigenous to the Caribbean Americas and the wider community throughout the Territory.

In the United States Virgin Islands throughout the month of November is an occasion for Virgin Islanders of Indigenous Caribbean Descent to reaffirm their patriotic ties to the original people of the Caribbean and the United States of America, their cultural ties with Indigenous people, their traditions and heritage with their kith and kin throughout the lands of the Caribbean, Americas and the world. All residents of the diverse ethnic and cultural communities in the Territory are invited to acknowledge and celebrate the vital individual, community and institutional contributions of Indigenous Caribbean Amerindians and all Indigenous people of the world to the economic, political, cultural, scientific, educational, spiritual and religious life of the Territory.

The 101st Congress – Public Law 101-343 in 1990 designated the month of November annually as National American Indian Heritage Month. This commemorative month aims to provide a platform for indigenous native people of the United States of America and its Territories to share their culture, traditions, music, crafts, dance, and ways and concepts of life. This gives indigenous native people the opportunity to express to their community, both city, county and state officials their concerns and solutions for building bridges of understanding and friendship in their local area. This proclamation compliments cultural heritage programs of the 2017 Transfer Centennial observances that support the research, educational exhibitions and sustainable development initiatives for inclusion of an international registry for people of Indigenous Native Amerindian Heritage and ancestry of the Territory.

May our Virgin Islands' community reflect and remember the words in President Obama's 2013 Proclamation: *During Native American Heritage Month, we honor their vibrant cultures and strengthen the government to government relationship between the United States and each tribal nation. As we observe this month, we must not ignore the painful history Native*

*Americans have endured—a history of violence, marginalization, broken promises, and untended justice. There was a time when native languages and religions were banned as part of a forced assimilation policy that attacked the political, social, and cultural identities of Native Americans in the United States. May the legacy and cultural traditions of Indigenous Native Amerindian people of our VI and Caribbean community be respected.*

Indigenous Native Amerindian heritage preservation efforts continue to be protectively supported by the *VI Department of Planning and Natural Resources' State Historic Preservation Office*, the *VI National Park Service of St. Thomas and St. John*, the *National Park Service of St. Croix*- especially within its' *Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Reserve* that is home to significant heritage sites of early human settlements in St. Croix and the Caribbean Americas. Respectful Indigenous Amerindian historic preservation, educational research and heritage restoration have been spearheaded by Opi'a Taino International and the United Confederation of Taino People-inclusive yet not limited to established alliances, ancestral support, respectful collaborations and cooperative agreements with Kalinago (Carib), Boriken Taino, Kiskeia Taino, Karifuna, Per Ankh M Smai Tawi and other organizations, nations and families of the Virgin Islands, wider Caribbean, the Americas and beyond.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, John P. de Jongh, Jr., Governor of the United States Virgin Islands, by virtue of the Authority vested in me by the Revised Organic Act of 1954, as amended, do hereby proclaim the month of November 2014 as *Virgin Islands Indigenous Native American Heritage Month* throughout the United States Virgin Islands. May our communities continue to ring bells of freedom with respect, solidarity and harmony with our regional, national and international sisters and brothers commemorating, observing, proclaiming and celebrating similar *National Native American Heritage and National Indigenous Peoples' Heritage* events. I call upon all natives, residents and visitors of the Territory to respectfully extend this to our family in the wider Caribbean and Americas to support the organizational, individual and other multicultural events scheduled in honor of these historic, culturally-enriching and appropriate regional, national and international occasions.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands to be affixed at Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, this 10<sup>th</sup> day of November 2014, A.D.



  
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**John P. de Jongh, Jr.**  
Governor

**ATTEST:**

  
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**Gregory R. Francis**  
Lieutenant Governor