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**Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands
Awarded \$350,000 Grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**

Grant to fund critical health needs of children in the Territory

U.S. Virgin Islands, January 10, 2020 — The Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI) has received a \$350,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to fund critical health needs of children in the Territory. CFVI was invited to apply for funding following the successful stewardship of a \$200,000 grant awarded from RWJF in November 2017 to support emergency health needs following Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

“As the Territory continues to recover from the 2017 hurricanes, CFVI is particularly focused on building forward in such a manner that long-standing social, economic, and educational challenges are addressed, and improvements made,” said Dee Baecher-Brown, CFVI President. “As a hybrid community foundation, we recognize that CFVI’s role in our small community must often go beyond funding. One of CFVI’s strengths is the value we place on partnership and our track record of successfully convening a variety of partners – from government agencies to nonprofit colleagues and private sector supporters,” she said.

Recognizing the need for current data about the state of vulnerable children and families following the 2017 hurricanes, CFVI approached colleagues at the University of the Virgin Islands and collaborated to produce a [Community Needs Assessment \(CNA\): Understanding the Needs of Vulnerable Children and Families in the U.S. Virgin Islands Post Hurricanes Irma and Maria](#) . Released in February 2019, the CNA indicated that stress and trauma are prevalent in the USVI school population and remain a significant health issue for residents in the Territory in the aftermath of the storms.

“Receiving this grant is one of our best examples of using data from the CNA to attract funding for solutions,” said Baecher-Brown. Additional details about the program and a grantee partner will be

announced in the near future.

Since the 2017 hurricanes, CFVI has awarded more than \$16 million in disaster-related grants, including emergency grants to local organizations, funding for long-term recovery projects on all three islands, and \$250,000 in scholar-grants to students who suffered hardships. Included in this amount were subawards from the 2017 RWJF grant that supported a variety of health initiatives/opportunities, including: a trauma-focused mental health intervention/training project focused on low-income neighborhoods on St. Croix; breastfeeding equipment and supplies for new mothers on St. Thomas; emergency support for non-profit health clinics; water quality testing and education, and water filter distribution; distribution of local trauma recovery materials for children (the IGGI Project; trauma-focused wellness radio programming; and school-based trauma intervention groups for students).

Support for this Territory-wide health program has been provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of the RWJF.

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About the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands

For nearly 30 years, the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI) has been a catalyst for positive change in the Territory through initiatives committed to youth, learning, family support and the environment. With a professional staff and a volunteer Board of Directors composed of community leaders, CFVI is a trusted advocate and supporter of programs that ensure opportunity and sustainability for current and future generations. CFVI is a registered non-profit organization entirely supported by individual donors, grants, trusts, corporate donations and estate planning. For more information, visit www.cfvi.net.

About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

For more than 40 years the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has worked to improve health and health care. We are striving to build a national Culture of Health that will enable all to live longer, healthier lives now and for generations to come. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org. Follow the Foundation on Twitter at [www.rwjf.org/twitter](https://twitter.com/rwjf) or on Facebook at [www.rwjf.org/facebook](https://www.facebook.com/rwjf).