

## **St. Croix Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice Systems Integration Initiative**

In St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, a broad group of community entities concerned about success for children and youth have come together in support of a more integrated system of services and responses for dependent children and youthful offenders. Work began with the LEPC funded U.S. Virgin Islands Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Symposium held in June 2006, which initiated a dialogue on systems integration through the keynote address. A follow-up meeting was hosted on September 20, 2006 by Family Court Judge, Patricia D. Steele, with key stakeholders and facilitated by SAG Member, Kimberley Causey Gomez and Mr. John A. Tuell, Child Welfare League of America (CWLA). At this meeting, the participants agreed to form a coalition to examine their client populations, communication and teamwork, and outcomes. An initial meeting of the leadership coalition for this initiative was convened on March 29, 2007.

The St. Croix Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems Integration Initiative is a collaboration of public and private agencies and organizations that have come together to examine and make improvements in coordinated and integrated program and policy development and service delivery for children, youth and families served by juvenile justice and child welfare systems, and critical affiliated youth serving institutions such as education, mental health, and substance abuse. The initiative is supported by the Department of Human Services vision to provide a seamless system of a continuum of quality care for our children and families. The Initiative is funded through December 2007.