

# St. Croix Long Term Recovery Group

**Next LTRG Town Hall is Monday, Sept. 9  
at 3:00pm**



The St. Croix Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG) is a cooperative body that is made up of representatives from faith-based, non-profit, government, business and other organizations working within St. Croix to assist individuals and families as they recover from Hurricane Maria. The goal of the LTRG is to match recovery resources with community needs in order to ensure that even the most vulnerable in the community recover from the disaster.

To reach the office, please call (340) 713-4440 or email Christina Joseph, Executive Assistant, at [cjoseph@stxltrg.org](mailto:cjoseph@stxltrg.org)

## **LTRG Town Hall Features NVOAD Partner Mr. Peter Gudaitis**

The St. Croix Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG) will hold a Town Hall meeting on Sept. 9th at 3:00 at the St. Croix Christian Church (behind Pueblo, next to Fire Service in Orange Grove). The Town Hall will feature National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) partner Mr. Peter Gudaitis. Mr. Gudaitis will address the group on the importance of the LTRG, how the VI VOAD will work with national partners, and the intersection of the faith community.

Mr. Gudaitis currently serves as Executive Director & CEO of New York Disaster Interfaith Services (NYDIS), Chair of New York VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster), and President of the National Disaster Interfaiths Network (NDIN).

He has over 30 years of experience in chaplaincy, disaster emergency management, faith-based philanthropy, program management, and social services administration –including almost a decade in Emergency Medical Services.

Currently, Mr. Gudaitis is a member of the Faith-based Caucus of the International Association of Emergency Managers; Guest Lecturer and Advisory Board member for the Metropolitan College of New York, Emergency and Disaster Management Program; Contributing Fellow at the Center for Religion and Civic Culture at the University of Southern California; Chair of New York State VOAD (Voluntary Organization Active in Disaster) and, has served on the Board of Directors of New York City VOAD for over fifteen years.

In 2012, he was appointed to the New York State Respond Commission by Governor Andrew Cuomo. In 2015, he was appointed to the New York City Charitable Organization & House of Worship Recovery Task Force by then New York City Council Speaker, Melissa Mark-Viverito. Since 2016 he has been the Co-Chair of the NYC Faith Sector Community Preparedness Program Advisory Board of the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene. In 2017 he was elected to the National VOAD Emotional & Spiritual Care Committee. And, in 2018, he was appointed to the New York State Puerto Rico Recovery & Reconstruction Committee by Governor Andrew Cuomo.

**LTRG Town Halls are free, and open to all public.**

**Faith Leaders Breakfast**

**Sept. 9th  
7:30am- 11:00am  
American Legion Hall, Frederiksted**

Tropical Storm Dorian highlighted the timeliness of the need for effective individual, congregational, and community preparedness, even as we continue to recover from the effects of the 2017 hurricanes.

Each faith leader and faith community plays a unique and vital role in both our recovery and preparedness efforts!

Please join us as we seek to facilitate effective communication, collaboration, and cooperation as we develop collaborative initiatives to help our island community heal and recover as well as prepare in advance for the future!

Come ready to share what your congregation is doing and/or has to offer to the community, and listen to others to learn from and support each other. Build on the foundations laid with the Emergency Operations Planning Workshop for Houses of Worship. Wrestle with details as you engage in tabletop scenarios facilitated by Mr. Peter Gudaitis. Leave with a clearer picture of how your piece fits into the puzzle (and perhaps new friends)!

Please register here: <https://bit.ly/2Ug0aoT>

This event will take place at the American Legion Hall, Bromley Berkely Post 133  
#15-16 Prince Street  
Frederiksted, 00840

**Workshop: The Effects of Trauma and Mental Health-  
Violence and Shootings  
Sept. 10th  
9:00am- 3:00pm  
St. Croix Christian Church**

This one day workshop is being offered by the St. Croix Long Term Recovery Group ([www.stxltrg.org](http://www.stxltrg.org)). Facilitator: Peter Gudaitis, M.Div., Executive Director of New York Disaster Interfaith Services, a National VOAD member, and the Chair of New York VOAD.

Session 1: A training on the effects of trauma on mental and spiritual health - and, the appropriate interventions to provide emotional and spiritual care. Including a table top exercise.

Participants will also discuss violence trends in the USVI and how to develop an emergency action plan for community healing and preventing violence and shootings.

This FREE workshop is intended for clergy and senior lay religious leaders.

Please register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-effects-of-trauma-and-mental-health-violence-and-shootings-tickets-71284302267>

**The LTRG is part of the VISTA program--  
and we want YOU!**

Be a part of the first AmeriCorps VISTA Team in the VI for over 20 years! SCF is actively seeking to contract 15 local volunteers ages 21 and up who are interested in supporting 8 St. Croix nonprofits. Volunteers will perform activities such as community outreach, program development, grant research, and website development and will begin their full-time year of service on September 3, 2019. Each volunteer will receive a monthly living allowance, healthcare benefits, official VISTA gear and professional development training. Upon completing the first year of service, VISTAs are eligible to receive either the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award or VISTA end-of-service cash stipend and one-year of noncompetitive eligibility for employment in the federal government. Interested volunteers are encouraged to apply at <https://my.americorps.gov/mp/login.do> and search Virgin Islands.

We hope to have our VISTA's in place by Sept. 3, 2019 so please help us spread the word throughout the community.

# Mini-Grants for Faith Leaders Still Available



## The St. Croix Long Term Recovery Group *Mini-Grant Program for Faith Leaders*

With the support of GlobalGiving and the St. Croix Foundation for Community Development, the St. Croix Long Term Recovery Group is offering a program of mini-grants to faith leaders, on the island of St. Croix, who want to engage in an outreach program (or increase capacity of a current program) related to the hurricanes of September 2017, recovery efforts, and preparedness activities for future disasters. The purpose of these mini-grants is to provide concrete assistance to projects to take action in your congregation, organization and/or community.

Mini-grant applications will be accepted beginning June 1, 2019 and will be reviewed on a rolling basis. The last date for submission is September 30, 2019.

You can download the application [HERE](#)

# Maternal Mental Health Workshop

The poster for the Maternal Mental Health Workshop features a collage of images: a pregnant woman, a woman looking thoughtful, and a smiling baby. The text 'Save The Date!' is written in a cursive font across the top. Below the images, the title 'MATERNAL Mental Health Workshop' is displayed, followed by 'Presented by Shivonne Odom, LCPC, LPC, NCC'. A quote from the World Health Organization is included, along with the date and time: 'MONDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2019 11 AM - 2:30 PM'. The location is 'ROOM 3 | VI CARDIAC CENTER' at '4007 Estate Diamond Ruby, Christiansted, St Croix 00820'. Logos for the Senate of St. Croix and the Office of Senator Alicia V. Barnes are also present.

**Save The Date!**

**MATERNAL**  
Mental Health Workshop  
Presented by Shivonne Odom, LCPC, LPC, NCC

According to the World Health Organization, 10% of pregnant women around the world and 13% of post-partum mothers suffer from mental health issues. Senators Barnes, Benta, DeGazon, and Francis have partnered with Akoma Counseling Concepts, LLC to host a workshop on mental health in St. Croix.

**MONDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2019**  
**11 AM - 2:30 PM**

ROOM 3 | VI CARDIAC CENTER  
4007 Estate Diamond Ruby,  
Christiansted, St Croix 00820

[www.akomacounselingconcepts.com](http://www.akomacounselingconcepts.com)

The Office Of  
**SENATOR**  
**ALICIA V. BARNES**

IN COLLABORATION  
WITH SENATORS BENTA,  
DEGAZON, AND FRANCIS

As mental health awareness month comes to an end, Senator Alicia V. Barnes in collaboration with Senators Novelle E. Francis Jr., Allison DeGazon, and Oakland Benta, advises the public of upcoming maternal mental health workshops.

According to the World Health Organization, ten percent of pregnant women around the world and thirteen percent of post-partum mothers experience a range of mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. The percentage increases amongst communities of color, with thirty-eight percent suffering from illnesses such as obsessive compulsive and post-traumatic stress disorders.

Senators Barnes, Francis, DeGazon, and Benta have partnered with Shivonne Odom, LCPC, LPC, NCC, of Akoma Counseling Concepts to host a series of maternal mental health workshops to be launched in September.

The first workshop, scheduled for September 16, 2019, at the VI Cardiac Center, will focus on maternal mental health awareness and will include a voluntary maternal mental health screening. The workshop is open to all mothers, expectant mothers, students, and mental health professionals.

“The goal of these activities is to reduce rates of maternal mortality in the U.S. Virgin Islands,” Odom said.

The following workshops (to be announced) will provide continuing education training to both mental and medical health professionals on maternal mental health screenings.

Odom is a Licensed Professional Counselor, a certified school counselor, and a National Certified Counselor in Washington, DC and a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in the state of Maryland. She is also a board Approved Clinical Supervisor by the Maryland Board of professional counselors and therapists.

Odom recently launched a continuing education training program for medical health professionals at her alma mater, Howard University, in March 2019, and also held workshops at Bowie State University. Odom is also scheduled to present on minority mental health at the Post-Partum Support International Conference in Portland, Oregon this summer.

“We can’t treat what we don’t acknowledge. What we don’t acknowledge becomes silenced,” Odom said. As these workshops are scheduled for September, we ask that you save the date, and stay tuned for further updates.

**Maternal Mental Health Workshop: Series 1**  
**Presenter: Shivonne Odom, LCPC, LPC, NCC**  
**Date: September 16, 2019**  
**Time: 11:00 am – 2:30 pm**  
**Location: VI Cardiac Center, Room #3**

## Disaster Preparedness Assistance

The Preparedness Unit at FEMA has many resources available to you to plan for the upcoming storm season. In addition to the flyers below, they can provide technical assistance to your organization through training, exercising plans, and promoting disaster preparedness messaging and outreach.

For more information or to schedule a consultation, please contact:  
Emily Adams at [Emily.adams@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:Emily.adams@fema.dhs.gov)

Available flyers to download:

[Hurricane Preparedness \(English\)](#)  
[Hurricane Preparedness \(Spanish\)](#)  
[Preparedness on a Budget \(English\)](#)  
[Preparedness on a Budget \(Spanish\)](#)  
[Make a Communication Plan \(English\)](#)  
[Make a Communication Plan \(Spanish\)](#)  
[Gather Your Supplies \(English and Spanish\)](#)  
[Update Your Documents \(English and Spanish\)](#)  
[Make a Medical Plan \(English\)](#)  
[Pet Owners Preparedness \(English\)](#)

Preparedness for those living in single-family homes is very different from plans created for those who live in apartments.

Living in an apartment community poses some unique consideration. Sharing your walls and communal areas means some actions are your responsibilities, while others depend on your neighbors and management.

In this issue, we share valuable tips to help apartment residents prepare in case of a storm. Please share these tips with those who live in an apartment.

Thank you!



## PROTECT YOUR HOME

**Make sure the apartment is in good repair and safe for you to shelter-in-place.**

- Bring in outdoor furniture, planters and other items from patios and balconies.
- Get shutters or panels for your sliding glass doors and windows. Ask the building's management or landlord if a specific style is required. If you're a renter, ask if your landlord provides them and who will install them before the storm.
- Identify your safest room, probably an interior bedroom, bath or hall, and stay there when windy conditions become threatening.
- Consider sheltering in an apartment on the lower level if you live on a higher floor.



## STORE 10 DAYS' WORTH OF SUPPLIES



Storage space in apartments is often limited so storing your supplies may be challenging. If your kitchen is small, find space in a closet, under the bed or even behind the couch. Fill bathtubs and the washer with water that can be used to flush toilets and for sanitation needs.

## STEER CLEAR OF WINDOWS



Don't stand near windows during a storm, and keep your curtains drawn. The National Hurricane Center advises against using tape since it can cause a false sense of security and also lead to larger, more dangerous shards of glass blowing through your apartment.

**Now is the time to be prepared!**

If you or someone in your family is experiencing issues with disaster-related stress, call the **Disaster Distress Helpline 1-800-985-5990, TTY 1-800-846-8517.**

## Promote the Hotline!

The LTRG has a dedicated HOTLINE for beneficiaries to use to get connected with Disaster Case Managers. Please share this flyer (in English and Spanish) broadly within our community. We don't want ANYONE to fall through the cracks!

[ENGLISH FLYER](#)

[SPANISH FLYER](#)



## HOTLINE

DISASTER CAUSED UNMET NEED

IF YOU ARE A HURRICANE IRMA/MARIA DISASTER SURVIVOR STILL IN NEED OF **INFORMATION, ASSISTANCE** OR A **DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN** PLEASE CONTACT THE DISASTER CASE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE LONG TERM RECOVERY GROUP AT THE NUMBER BELOW:

**(340) 473 - 5305**

"The mission of the STX LTRG is to help our members independently provide community services on a daily basis, as well as to provide effective relief and recovery services to people affected by disaster on the island of St. Croix, USVI."