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- **Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI) announces the establishment of the Judith A. Towle Environmental Studies Fund**
- **Grants available for studies and activities that address environmental concerns**

Through the **Judith A. Towle Environmental Studies Fund**, the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands will provide support for studies and activities that address environmental concerns that transcend the boundaries of any single island or island state, particularly in the U.S. and British Virgin Islands and in the dual-island state of St. Kitts and Nevis.

The Judith A. Towle Fund was established at CFVI in recognition of the work, interests and commitment of Judith Ann Towle in increasing environmental awareness in the Eastern Caribbean. The initial funding for the endowment – approximately \$70,000 - was provided primarily by the Mukti Fund, a private, U.S.-based philanthropic foundation. Judith Towle was a member of the board of trustees of the Mukti Fund from 1991-2004, serving as its chair for six of those years.

The Judith A. Towle Environmental Studies Fund will provide support for activities including internships, research studies by graduate students, workshops, seminars and lectureships or publications, focused on trans-boundary environmental issues in the U.S./British Virgin Islands or in St. Kitts/Nevis. One or more grants will be made annually, not to exceed a total of \$3,500 in any single year.

Additional information and applications for the grants are available from the Community Foundation. Currently there are more than 70 named funds at the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands providing scholarships, grants and supporting programs in the USVI. CFVI sponsors the Fatherhood Collaborative to focus on the importance of responsible fatherhood for our children and our community, and produces the annual KIDS COUNT report on the status of children and families in the USVI. Individuals or businesses wishing to know more about CFVI or interested in establishing a fund should call 774-6031.

Additional information about Judith A. Towle and the Mukti Fund:

Judith A. Towle was born and raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She has a Masters Degree in Public Administration from American University and has lived and worked in the Caribbean since 1967.

In 1972, she joined with her future husband, Edward Towle, in the formation of Island Resources Foundation (IRF), a U.S. Virgin Islands-based non-governmental organization whose central mission has been to assist small island states to meet the challenges of development while protecting their environments. Prior to joining IRF, Ms. Towle worked at the Caribbean Research Institute, a division of the then-College of the Virgin Islands.

As a part of IRF's team of island experts, Ms. Towle has worked primary in the Eastern Caribbean, where she has focused on capacity building for island institutions. She has written extensively on conservation NGOs in the Eastern Caribbean and is the editor of a definitive multi-volume series on the state of the environment in eight Eastern Caribbean countries, published by USAID and UNDP. More recently, Ms. Towle has joined her husband in establishing a branch of Island Resources Foundation in the British Virgin Islands, where they have developed a collaborative program with the H. Lavity Stoutt Community College.

In 1991, Ms. Towle joined the board of trustees of the Mukti Fund, a private foundation based in Key West, Florida that has for almost 20 years focused its grantmaking on the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis. From 1998 to 2004, she served as chair of the Mukti Fund board and has been instrumental in developing and implementing Mukti's institution-strengthening grants for conservation organizations in both St. Kitts and Nevis.

The Mukti Fund was created in 1983 by philanthropist Michael Dively. As a small foundation, Mukti soon focused its long-term grantmaking exclusively on the small Caribbean nation of St. Kitts and Nevis. In this way, Mukti hoped to make a difference by demonstrating how a modest amount of money can have a significant impact in a small place over an extended period of time. For nearly two decades, Mukti has funded projects in St. Kitts and Nevis, averaging about \$65,000 in grants per year. With an overall vision of supporting "nation building", Mukti has primarily funded sustainable development projects as well as providing grants for the preservation and conservation of the country's unique national heritage.

Beginning in 2000, the Mukti Fund founder, Michael Dively, launched a new initiative to honor each of the trustees on the all-volunteer board. In keeping with this initiative, in 2003 the Mukti Fund made a grant to the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands for the establishment of an endowment to honor trustee Judith Towle.