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**PUBLIC EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP (PEP) at the
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
ANNOUNCES THIRD ANNUAL GRANTS
FOR PEARL B. LARSEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

On Wednesday, November 15th, forty five teachers at the Pearl B. Larsen Elementary School received grants of \$200 each, for a total of \$9,000, from the Public Education Partnership (PEP) at the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands. The grants are issued to individual teachers to purchase materials and supplies which will assist in efforts to improve student achievement and enhance activities in the classroom.

Introduced three years ago, the PEP project is an exciting initiative which partners two donor businesses, James River Capital Corp. and the Valance Company Inc. with Pearl B. Larsen Elementary School. Pearl B. Larsen was selected as the school for the partnership through a competitive grant process in summer 2003, chosen by a committee that included representatives from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

Over the three years, PEP has provided close to \$45,000 in assistance. In addition to annual teacher grants, the school has received assistance with literacy programs, maintenance expenses, and the purchase of equipment including a photocopier machine.

According to Paul H. Saunders, CEO of James River Capital Corp., "We are very committed to public education on the island of St. Croix and hope that we are helping make a difference in the lives of these young students. We would encourage other businesses to partner with our local schools to replicate this wonderful partnership."

PEP is administered by the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI). CFVI was established in 1990 and has more than 80 funds created by individuals and businesses to support educational, environmental, social and cultural initiatives in the Virgin Islands.

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