

# U.S. Virgin Islands Nonprofits, Houses of Worship Receive FEMA Security Grants

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Race Hodges, FEMA's Faith-based Preparedness Coordinator, (right) works with participants at a climate adaptation workshop in July at St. Peter's Episcopal Church on St. Croix. Hodges and Aaron VanDoren, FEMA's Integration Team Lead in the U.S. Virgin Islands, delivered a series of preparedness workshops for the faith-based communities on St. Croix, St. John and St. Thomas this year. Photo Courtesy of Devin Flaherty

**U.S. Virgin Islands** -- Several houses of worship in the U.S. Virgin Islands are recipients of FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program this year. In total, about \$900,000 was awarded to various houses of worship and nonprofit organizations through a competitive application process. These grants will fund structural enhancements to protect these vital community institutions from security related concerns.



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Working with the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) and the U.S. Virgin Islands Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VI VOAD), the FEMA Integration Team Lead, Aaron VanDoren, and FEMA's Faith-based Preparedness Coordinator, Race Hodges, supported both organizations with growing their faith-sector network by conducting over 20-plus in-person trainings and workshops for communities of faith across the U.S. Virgin Islands beginning in early 2022.

Relevant workshops in which this grant was promoted included multiple offerings of FEMA's Organizations Preparing for Emergency Needs (OPEN) training, and FEMA's Grant Writing and Organizational Preparedness workshop.

VITEMA provided critical stewardship to prospective applicants in this process. The collaborative partnership between VITEMA, the USVI VOAD and FEMA supported the revitalization of this grant funding opportunity in the territory, leading to an important funding award for critical community organizations in the U.S. Virgin Islands. If your nonprofit organization is interested in pursuing upcoming offerings of this grant program, visit <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/nonprofit-security> to learn more.

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