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NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

July 24, 2019

**The Ritz-Carlton St. Thomas hotel launches
Hiring Opportunity Program ahead of its reopening in October 2019**

VIEDC Beneficiary appeals to unemployed,
dislocated workers in the U.S. Virgin Islands

CHARLOTTE AMALIE, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands – July 24, 2019 -- Proactively raising its own bar to meet its projected demand for employment when it reopens on St. Thomas, The Ritz-Carlton St. Thomas hotel launched its Hiring Opportunity Program (HOP) with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Tuesday, June 25, 2019. Representatives from the U.S. Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority (USVIEDA) and ICF Restoring Futures joined The Ritz-Carlton St. Thomas hotel professionals for the program's launch held at the University of the Virgin Islands' Sports and Fitness Center on St. Thomas.

HOP is the beginning of The Ritz-Carlton St. Thomas hotel's long-term strategic commitment to employee recruitment and hiring, career services, customized training, on-boarding and comprehensive on-the-job training. Individuals unemployed due to Hurricanes Irma and Maria were especially encouraged to attend HOP to learn more about career opportunities at The Ritz-Carlton St. Thomas hotel.

This hotel anticipates hiring hundreds of well-qualified individuals to serve their guests when it reopens in late October 2019.

"What's unique about the Ritz Carlton is that we're not just looking for individuals looking for a job; we're looking for individuals looking for a career," said Carol Baker-Robinson, Director of Finance Ritz-Carlton St. Thomas. "We have many legacy employees at the Ritz-Carlton. We have seen several Virgin Islanders in the diaspora interested in coming back that were displaced from the storms," added Ms. Baker-Robinson.

During the term of HOP, The Ritz-Carlton St. Thomas hotel professionals will provide information on the array of available employment opportunities when the hotel reopens in the fall.

Kamal I. Latham, USVIEDA chief executive officer, reflected on his enthusiasm from the onset about this initiative. "A seed was planted during a listening session back in January 2019 with ICF - Restoring Futures, and different companies in the Territory. We are pleased to see that hundreds of Virgin Islanders attended with interest. We are excited for this kick-off and look forward to expanding into the St. Croix district at an accelerated speed." The Ritz-Carlton St. Thomas hotel is also a beneficiary of the V.I. Economic Development Commission's Tax Incentive Program.



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U.S. Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority (USVIEDA)

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Prepared by Semele A.C. George, marketing and pr specialist

Ed Trumbull, Project Director, Restoring Futures; and Vice President of ICF, also rendered his comments of support. "We are steadily working in the background. This is a large recruitment effort that is being driven by the employer, but also adding to the Virgin Islands Department of Labor database for dislocated workers," said Mr. Trumbull. "Working in collaboration with VIDOL and our other partners, we are interested in building capacity and providing assistance to dislocated workers," added Mr. Trumbull.

Learn more about the Hiring Opportunity Program (HOP) at <http://www.ritzcarlton.com/careers>.

About the U.S. Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority: The U.S. Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority (USVIEDA) is a semi-autonomous governmental instrumentality. It promotes economic growth, job creation, and wealth generation in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The USVIEDA assumes, integrates and unifies the functions of these four entities: Economic Development Commission, Virgin Islands Economic Development Park Corporation, Economic Development Bank and the Enterprise Zone Commission. The USVIEDA accomplishes its mission by attracting investors to the Territory to establish or relocate their business in the U.S. Virgin Islands. It also provides financial assistance for new and existing small to medium-sized businesses in the Territory and assists V.I. residents and business owners with rehabilitating their properties located in distressed areas that were once vibrant economic centers of activity in the Territory. Learn more about the USVIEDA at www.usvieda.org or send an email to info@usvieda.org.

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