

Jeffrey Epstein: Supporting the Virgin Islands

The **Jeffrey Epstein** VI Foundation provides support and funding to a number of youth initiatives and educational programs across the US Virgin Islands. Founded in 2000 on the island of St. Thomas and based there today, the Foundation has always had a substantial interest in supporting the local community and beyond. Today, the Foundation has supported a wide range of programs, from the Caribbean's first Head Start program to youth sports teams. In addition to supporting a wide range of initiatives on the islands, the Foundation also holds several conferences that explore big ideas in science.

Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands

In 2011, the Foundation provided funding to the Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands after a group of disabled citizens in St. Thomas, won a lawsuit against the government to improve conditions for disabled citizens. The lawsuit addressed the lack of disability access in the Islands' schools, public buildings, and restaurants and for secluding the disabled. The Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands has used the Foundation's support to further empower the disabled of the Virgin Islands. Some of the programs the DRCVI have initiated include improving access to public buildings, increasing the number of disabled people who vote, and reducing the neglect and abuse of the disabled.

Sports in the Caribbean

A number of sports programs in the Virgin Islands have received Epstein's support.

- St. Thomas Baseball Explorers. The St. Thomas Explorers is a baseball program intended for under-privileged children in the Virgin Islands and for children who are juvenile offenders. The Explorers use sports as a tool for teaching discipline, hope and empowerment.
- Football and Life Skills Camp. Epstein has provided funding for the first football training camp on the Islands. The Camp is a part of YouthLine America, a non-profit foundation in the United States, and has provided football coaching and training to over 700 young people in the Caribbean since it started in 2009. The focus of the camp isn't just football. It also provides financial literacy, training and mentorship.

Education in the Caribbean

Head Start programs for early childhood education, were created across the United States by an act of Congress back 1981. While the programs are common on the Continental US, they were non-existent in the Caribbean. The first Head Start program in the Caribbean was launched in the US Virgin Islands in 2003 by the Lutheran Services Society in St. Croix. Today, the program serves lower-income children on across the Virgin Islands as well for orphans under the care of LSS.

The Jeffrey Epstein VI Foundation provided funding to the Caribbean's first Head Start program in 2012. Financier Jeffrey Epstein sees the intrinsic value of early education for children. And today, children in the Virgin Islands have an increased opportunity for a life of achievement and success.