

For Immediate Release

For More Information, Contact:

Resa O'Reilly Shearn

Phone: (340) 513-0446

Email: info@projectpromisevi.com

PROJECT PROMISE ROBOTICS TEAM IS IN ATHENS FOR *FIRST* GLOBAL CHALLENGE

ST. CROIX, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS, (September 25, 2024)— On September 23rd, a team of five local high school students headed to Athens to represent the Virgin Islands in a global robotics challenge hosted by *FIRST* Global, a non-profit organization. The eleven-person delegation includes Resa O'Reilly Shearn, Executive Director and Founder of St. Croix non-profit Project Promise, who is managing the team; 5 official team members – Jiya Banani, Nnenaya Bedminster, C'Niyah Smith, Ethan Valery, and Ziva Caleb; Brenda English, the team's coach, and mentor. Also, traveling with the group are two additional team members Pari Banani and Isolde Dias Belle, plus two guests of the team.

Last year Project Promise was invited by *FIRST* Global and received a full sponsorship by the organization to participate in their Robotics Challenge in Singapore. After being informed that *FIRST* Global would cover ALL expenses for the team members plus two adults! Resa immediately hit the ground running. While the teams from other countries had been working on this project for months, Project Promise only had about two months to recruit a team, ensure the team members had passports, coordinate travel arrangements, and assemble and program the robot, and they got it done!

"This year we are excited to once again be invited to represent the US Virgin Islands at the *FIRST* Global Robotics Challenge," Resa says, "participation in this Robotics Challenge is life-changing, and we are so grateful to once again get the opportunity." Since July the team of students along with their coach has been meeting, strategizing and team building, and this week they will be working with students from 190 different countries from around the world during the Athens 2024 Challenge. "We are incredibly thankful for the *FIRST* Global organization and all its sponsors for their additional support," Resa added.

ABOUT THE *FIRST* GLOBAL

The *FIRST* Global Challenge is an annual, Olympics-style international robotics event to which one team of high school students from every nation is invited to participate. Held in a different nation each year, the Challenge seeks to highlight the greatest challenges facing our planet while encouraging the next generation to build the STEM skills required to solve them. Teams receive the same kit of parts, to build a robot designed to complete a series of tasks. The event itself is then designed to foster collaboration between teams.

Project Promise invites the public to come celebrate its 10th Anniversary at this year's Havana Nights. Project Promise's annual Havana Nights fundraiser, featuring Cuban music,

food and salsa dancing will be held on February 10th at St. George Village Botanical Garden; tickets will be available through the organization's website, www.projectpromistvi.com.