

**For Immediate Release****For More Information, Contact:**

Resa O'Reilly Shearn

Phone: (340) 513-0446

Email: [info@projectpromisevi.com](mailto:info@projectpromisevi.com)

## PROJECT PROMISE ROBOTICS TEAM HEADS TO PANAMA FOR *FIRST* GLOBAL CHALLENGE

**ST. CROIX, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS, (October 27, 2025)**— On October 27<sup>th</sup>, a team of three local high school students will be heading to Panama City to represent the Virgin Islands in a global robotics challenge hosted by *FIRST* Global, a non-profit organization. The six-person delegation will include Resa O'Reilly Shearn, Executive Director and Founder of St. Croix non-profit Project Promise, who is managing the team; 3 official team members – Alejandro Quinones Jr., Nyan Bedminster, and Ziva Caleb; Fransico Reyes, the team's coach, and parent, Chantelle Quinones.

This year will be Project Promise's third year participating in the global event. In 2023, Project Promise was invited by *FIRST* Global and received a full sponsorship by the organization to participate in their Robotics Challenge in Singapore and last year local students participated in the competition in Athens, Greece. The team's lead and third year participant, Ziva Caleb stated, "This is an incredibly exciting opportunity. I'm absolutely thrilled about our team's potential and can't wait to see all our hard work on display as we compete in the *FIRST* Global Challenge." Just ahead of this year's event, Caleb went on to exclaim, "I'm ready to experience what they have in store for us!"

Since April, the dedicated team of students and their coach have been meeting regularly to strategize and prepare for the competition. This week, students from around the globe will ascend in Panama City to collaborate and compete during the 2025 Challenge. "We are excited that this year we have once again been invited to represent the US Virgin Islands at the *FIRST* Global Robotics Challenge." Resa O'Reilly Shearn, Executive Director stated. "We are incredibly grateful to the *FIRST* Global organization for the opportunity and all our sponsors for their additional support!" O'Reilly, continued.

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**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, which they use to build a robot designed to complete a series of tasks. The event itself is then designed to foster collaboration between teams.

**ABOUT PROJECT PROMISE**

Project Promise is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of at-risk youth on St. Croix by providing empowerment initiatives, cultural programs, and family services. To learn more about Project Promise, please visit their website at [www.projectpromisevi.com](http://www.projectpromisevi.com).