



# THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## Office of Public Relations

1834 Kongens Gade, Charlotte Amalie \* St. Thomas \* U.S. Virgin Islands 00802-6746  
Telephone: 340.774.0100 Ext. 8136 Fax: 340.774.1168  
340.773.1095 Ext. 7064 Fax: 340.773.4624

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Cynthia T. Graham  
Director, Public Relations & Communications  
(340) 773-1095, Ext. 7064  
[cynthia.graham@vide.vi](mailto:cynthia.graham@vide.vi)

[www.vide.vi](http://www.vide.vi)

[www.facebook.com/usvi.vide](https://www.facebook.com/usvi.vide)

### **Sequel to Award-winning Film on V.I. Resilience Premieres at V.I. Public High Schools**

ST. THOMAS, USVI – Journalist and filmmaker Peter Bailey, a native of St. Thomas, debuted his latest documentary film, *Paradise Discovered: The Unbreakable Virgin Islanders 2.0*, at Virgin Islands Department of Education high schools in St. Thomas and St. Croix in November. The film and students were recently featured in *Essence* magazine.

Bailey, who resides on the mainland, said it was important for him to return home to release the film at local schools first because he wanted to show students the greatness from which they came. About 75 students from Charlotte Amalie High School and Ivanna Eudora Kean High School, Bailey’s alma mater, and 150 students from St. Croix Educational Complex and Central high schools attended the screenings.

“I did the film because it is the start of a process of the world knowing who we are, beyond just the beaches and parties,” he said. “In the larger world when I travel, if they only see us as entertainment, no one is going to respect us. So, these films are a first introduction to the larger world to get to know our spirits, our minds, and who we are as a people.”

The new film is the sequel to Bailey’s 2019 award-winning *Paradise Discovered: The Unbreakable Virgin Islanders* and chronicles intimate conversations with family, friends, business owners, and elected officials on all three islands on topics of modernization, innovation, entrepreneurship, and redefining identity in the Virgin Islands.

“Unbreakable 2.0 delves deeper into our story and asks –‘How do we modernize in this new age, yet remain true to our culture and who we are’,” said Bailey.

Students described the experience of the screening as something that both instilled pride in them and opened their eyes to certain issues facing the local community.

“Having this opportunity to witness this movie was very engaging and eye-opening to the current issue facing us here in the Virgin Islands—the recurring issue of food security,” said Alani Arnold, a Complex High School senior. “How many students here in the territory don’t really understand how food grows at home. We are reliant on other nations, instead of our own, when we have this great amount of land diversity where we can grow food at our homes, so we don’t have to rely on neighboring countries or islands.”

Of the film’s feature on the aquaponics farm in Estate Bethlehem on St. Croix, Complex student Amario Obes said, “It was interesting to see that although it is such a small facility, it is creating a lot of agricultural goods, such as lettuce, using water instead of soil.”

A Charlotte Amalie High School student said she appreciated that Bailey traveled across the territory to gain perspectives from a wide range of Virgin Islanders. Iayala O’Reilly, a Kean student, agreed.

“One thing I liked in the film is everyone’s different perspective,” she said.

Bailey told the students that they are “the most important people in the territory,” while expressing his love for them.

“Everyone has a purpose, and I’ve discovered mine,” Bailey said. “Purpose is usually rooted in your beginnings. If you can’t feed and love the people who you began with, then you have a problem. The vision was to go out into the world and take everything I’ve learned in Hollywood, media, and in books, and bring it back to you guys, so that you can have the tools to become successful earlier in life.”

Bailey’s release of the film at the high schools was featured in the Dec. 29 online issue of *Essence* magazine. The first public screening of *Unbreakable 2.0* will take place at 7 p.m. on Jan. 7 at Bajo El Sol Gallery in Mongoose Junction, Cruz Bay, St. John.

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