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For Immediate Release:

Native son Dion Parson is back! Parson returned to the territory early this week to resume his series of music workshops with Virgin Islands students on St. Thomas. The Virgin Islands Lottery has sponsored the program, "**Mentoring Through the Art of Music**", in its multi-year development.

The program is designed to encourage and support VI music students. "Coming home to guide and mentor students in an effort to cultivate a generation of top quality musicians from within the territory is one of the many goals of the program", Parson said. "Students are mentored via a series of mini-workshops throughout the year in preparation for a major concert featuring the students around Thanksgiving each year."

Last year Dion Parson and his 21st Century Band performed with the Virgin Islands Youth Jazz Ensemble he created as a result of his mentoring program in a near sold out concert at the Reichhold Center for the Arts. The concert was dedicated to Sis Frank of St. John's School of the Arts and featured Ron Blake and Rashawn Ross, along with a quartet of local students who studied under Parson the previous year. This year's concert according to Parson, " promises to be equally as sizzling because the performance will be dedicated to a traditional bearer of culture, who's identity will be held secret until closer to the event."

The final concert for 2011 will be held at Island Center on St. Croix and will blend Caribbean Jazz with some of the new material Parson and his band have created. "Expect it to be mind blowing."

This week Dion can be found in classrooms at Antilles School, Addelita Cancryn and Eudora Kean working with music students. Follow the progress of this program on the VI Lottery Facebook page and Twitter. To see clips of Parson performing, visit winusvilottery.com.

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