



# dateline: UVI

The monthly newsletter of The University of the Virgin Islands

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## “The World is Your Oyster” Graduates are Told

The small size of the Virgin Islands has no bearing on the greatness that can be accomplished by its people. That was the message commencement keynote speaker Dr. Len Ishmael delivered to the 338 graduates of the University of the Virgin Islands at commencement ceremonies held on both islands. Dr. Ishmael, director general of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, told the graduates that they can have an impact on the entire world, despite coming from a small territory.

“The notion of smallness is a feature of everyday life,” said Dr. Ishmael. She reminded graduates that while they go on to conquer the world, they can still be of value to the Caribbean region.



*Students on the St. Thomas campus, left, and students on the St. Croix campus, celebrate at the respective commencement ceremonies. Below, students await their degrees.*



“Talent that flies away is no longer lost,” she said, explaining that globalization and technology allow West Indians to remain connected to their home no matter where they go.

“The opportunity to contribute to the world around is boundless,” Dr. Ishmael said. “Where you live no longer has to be where you work.”

“For this generation of graduates, the world is your oyster as never before.”

Wilma Espinosa was the class speaker of the St. Thomas campus ceremony held on May 22 at the Sports and Fitness Center. Rainy weather forced the May 23 ceremony to be held at the St. Croix Educational Complex. Jonell Johnson was the class speaker on the St. Croix campus.

The first group of graduates from the recently established Associate of Applied Science process technology degree program on the St. Croix campus is now employed by HOVENSA, which collaborated with UVI to offer the program.

On the St. Thomas campus, 18 of the 29 Master of Arts in Education degrees were conferred upon students in the British Virgin Islands who participated in the collaboration program between UVI and the H. Lavity Stoutt Community College on Tortola.



*Students at the Summer Institute for Future Global Leaders in the Caribbean listen as a colleague presents his leadership prospectus. The intense two-week institute hosted by the University of the Virgin Islands aims to prepare university juniors, seniors and first-year graduates for global leadership roles. The annual institute, held in May, celebrated its 10-year anniversary this year.*

### Events Calendar

June 26	Relay for Life	STT
July 2	Emancipation Day Observed	
July 5	Independence Day Observed	
July 19-23	Annual CFCS Meeting	STJ

# Ceremony Honors Outstanding Small Business Owners

## St. Thomas/St. John Award Recipients

### **SBDC Small Business Persons of the Year**

Mariel, Akinyemi and Felicia Blake of Ital Ase  
Jason Budsan of Caribbean Herbals and Candles  
Ulysess and Ulric Pilgrim of Pilgrim's Terrace

### **SBDC Citizen Award: V.I. Community Advocate of the Year**

Dr. Alexander "Alex" Randall V

### **SBDC Corporate V.I. Advocate of the Year**

Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority  
FirstBank V.I.

### **SBA Small Business Persons of the Year**

Allison and Beverly Petrus

### **SBA V.I. Bank of the Year**

Banco Popular de Puerto Rico

## St. Croix Award Recipients

### **SBDC Small Business Persons of the Year**

Gertrude Gumbs of Gertrude's Restaurant  
Elsworth Jones of Two Plus Two Night Club and Restaurant, Inc.  
Beatrice Ramos of Wild Orchid Gift and Flowers

### **SBDC Business Advocate of the Year**

Angela East Weber, professional keynote and motivational speaker

### **SBDC Entrepreneurial Success**

Michelle Pugh of Dive Experience

### **SBA Small Business Persons of the Year**

Anton and Kelly Kuipers of Frederiksted Hotel

### **SBA Bank of the Year**

Banco Popular de Puerto Rico



*The Blakes accept thier "Small Business Persons of the Year" award.*

It was 1995 during the aftermath of Hurricane Marilyn and a distraught Dr. Alex Randall, a new resident to the territory, was listening to WSTA Radio

when he heard the then V.I. Governor Roy Schneider say, "Job lost everything but not his faith." Upon hearing that, Dr. Randall headed down to the station and asked owner "Addie" Ottley for a job. He was hired on the spot and told to take the microphone, go on the air and say something positive, something people wanted to hear. That was the birth of the "Good News" on WSTA.

Dr. Randall, who still does the "Good News," focuses on what is going right in the community. He was honored by the University of the Virgin Islands Small Business Development Center at the SBDC and U.S. Small Business Administration 2004 National Small Business Week Awards Program. Dr. Randall received the SBDC's Citizen Award for being the V.I. Community Advocate of the Year. Dr. Randall said his mission is to emphasize "what's going right and how do we make more of it happen." The Citizen's Award is a new recognition that the SBDC plans to continue annually.

Other award recipients included small business owners. "We take pride in having a little to do with the success of these entrepreneurs," SBDC Director Warren Bush said at the ceremony. Ceremonies on St. Thomas and St. Croix were held in May.

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