



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Public Relations

Telephone: 340.774.0100 (STT/STJ) 340.773.1095 (STX)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 14, 2025

0106-25

For More Information Contact:

Shayla S. Solomon

Director, Public Relations & Communications

shayla.solomon@vide.vi

www.vide.vi ~ www.facebook.com/usvi.vide

Virgin Islands Department of Education Congratulates St. Thomas-St. John Teachers on Earning Master's Degrees in TESL

The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) proudly celebrates the exceptional accomplishments of eleven dedicated educators in the St. Thomas-St. John District who have earned their Master's degrees in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) from Ana G. Méndez University in Gurabo, Puerto Rico. These remarkable individuals began their academic journey in February 2022 and, through perseverance and hard work, are now officially December 2024 recipients of this prestigious degree.

This milestone underscores their commitment to advancing the education and well-being of students across the Territory. A Master's in TESL is an internationally recognized terminal degree that equips educators with the skills and expertise to teach English as a second or foreign language to adult learners in schools, colleges, and language institutes.

The distinguished graduates are Meredith V. Carty, Kenneth Christopher, Sandra C. Douglas, Mary Felix, Maureen Fleming, Judith Henley Jn-Charles, Mechele Lett Sewer, Winifred A. Lewis, Renita Rhymer, Ingrid Rogers Nicolas, Lucia V. Smith.

Their achievement reflects VIDE's steadfast commitment to fostering academic excellence and professional development within its workforce. By pursuing higher education, these teachers have set a powerful example of lifelong learning and dedication to meeting the needs of English Learner (EL) students.

"We commend Ana G. Méndez University for its invaluable role in shaping these outstanding educators through its rigorous and transformative TESL program. The University's dedication to academic excellence continues to elevate the quality of education within the VIDE," said Commissioner Dionne Wells-Hedrington.

This accomplishment is especially significant given the evolving approach to supporting EL students in regular classroom settings. By transitioning from self-contained classes to inclusive ESL models, students gain greater opportunities to learn and acquire the English language while engaging with core content. The contributions of these graduates will be instrumental in providing language support to the approximately 1,352 EL students currently enrolled in the St. Thomas-St. John Public School District.

VIDE acknowledges the Rural and Low-Income Schools (RLIS) Consolidated Grant Funds and Education Stabilization Funds for supporting this program, which has empowered these educators to transform lives through innovative and inclusive teaching practices.

As we celebrate this tremendous achievement, we honor the dedication of these teachers, whose efforts highlight the boundless potential of education to inspire and uplift. Together, they represent the future of educational excellence in the Virgin Islands.

###