



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Virgin Islands Department of Education Celebrates Teachers for Leading Students to Victory in the Apps4Gaps Reading Challenge

The Virgin Islands Department of Education proudly congratulates two outstanding educators Ms. Jessica Sibilly of Jane E. Tuitt Elementary School in St. Thomas and Ms. Zuri Baker of Juanita Gardine Elementary School in St. Croix for their remarkable leadership and commitment to promoting literacy through the 2025 Apps4Gaps Reading Challenge.

These educators went above and beyond to foster a culture of reading in their classrooms, ultimately leading their students to emerge as winners of this year's Territory-wide challenge. Their unwavering dedication to student success and passion for literacy are truly commendable.

The Apps4Gaps Reading Challenge was born out of a vision shared by our Territory's librarians and made possible through the generous support of Governor Albert Bryan Jr. This initiative is designed to inspire students from kindergarten through 12th grade to embrace the joy of reading while empowering teachers and school librarians to create enriching, book-centered environments.

Throughout the three-month challenge period, participating classrooms were tasked with reading as many books as possible. Thanks to the encouragement of Ms. Sibilly and Ms. Baker, their students demonstrated exceptional enthusiasm, focus, and a love for reading that earned them top honors.

As part of the prize, the dedicated librarians at each winning school will be invited to attend the American Library Association Conference in Philadelphia, from June 25–30, 2025, where they will have the opportunity to engage with national literacy leaders and further strengthen their skills to benefit our students and school communities.

“We are incredibly proud of Ms. Sibilly and Ms. Baker, and all the educators who participated in the Apps4Gaps Reading Challenge. This initiative showcases the power of collaboration among teachers, librarians, and students to build a strong foundation for lifelong learning,” said Commissioner Dionne Wells-Hedrington, Ed.D.

The Virgin Islands Department of Education extends sincere appreciation to all students, educators, and librarians who participated in this year's challenge. Your enthusiasm and dedication made this initiative a success and helped bring the joy of reading to life for so many young minds.

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