

At CHS's Student-Gov't Induction Ceremony, Principal Calls on Students to Highlight the Good

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ST. CROIX — The St. Croix Central High School on Tuesday morning held its 2020 Student-Government Association (SGA) Induction Ceremony, where at least 8 new members joined the body, whose purpose is to serve as a voice of students who make up the entire school.

The ceremony, which kicked off with a striking performance from Music Teacher/Band Director Sacha Alexander's students, called Golden Voices, included the installation of a new president and vice president, Lauryn Stallworth and Danosha Furet respectively, along with encouraging words from guest speaker and attorney, Emile Henderson, and the school's principal, Yves Abraham.

The ceremony, tucked away in a room to the west end of the school, provided a snapshot of what C.H.S. represents 95 percent of the time, said Mr. Abraham. The new principal of the popular

school stressed to students the importance of promoting the institution's many positives, and not only the events that tend to paint an inhospitable environment where fights are seemingly the order of the day.

"You guys are the ones on social media. Don't post the fights only, post when we have these activities, post when we have honor roll, post when we're doing projects in a classroom and it turns out extremely well," Mr. Abraham said. "Those are the things we need to start posting as well. We need to post them and only you guys can do it and we're depending on you to do it. The adults cannot change the culture of our school, you are the individuals who can change the culture by the things you say about C.H.S., by the things you do in C.H.S., and how you present C.H.S. to the public."

Relative to the S.G.A.'s agenda, the principal encouraged the body to broaden its scope and lobby not only for infrastructure repairs, but also academic enhancement. "Fight for the things that are important, not just activities and infrastructure. If things are not happening in your classrooms, you need to speak up as well. This is an institution of learning and that's where you guys come in as leaders," he said.

Mr. Henderson, whose best known role was chief legal counsel during the Governor Kenneth Mapp administration, is said to be a regular at C.H.S., his alma mater, advocating for improvements at the school. He delivered a succinct yet meaty talk that provided advice to the students on being effective leaders.

In conversations, individuals should "listen to understand, and not listen to respond," Mr. Henderson said as he gave nuggets on leadership. He said when individuals only listen to respond, the essence of what was being said is usually missed "because I'm focused on what my response to you is going to be."

"What is important is for you to listen to understand where that person is coming from," he added. Such communication skills is important for consensus-building, Mr. Henderson told the S.G.A. body, which is important if one's leadership tenure is to have a positive and lasting impact.

The new S.G.A. president, Ms. Stallworth, said she will be intentional about listening to the concerns of students and be aware of the happenings on her campus.

"My vision is to be a vigilant leader who listens intently to hear my classmates' concerns and to be very observant of what takes place in and around school. I have to be two steps ahead of those I serve so that I can execute proper planning and problem-solving. I intend to deliver because my classmates deserve the best," she said.