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Eight Virgin Islanders Honored With Renamed Roads and Facilities

Honorees including Almando “Rocky” Liburd and Fenella Cooper were recognized for their service to the territory, with roadways and public spaces now bearing their names.

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Former Senator Almando “Rocky” Liburd, right, was honored with a perma plaque on Thursday. By. V.I. LEGISLATURE

At a perma plaque ceremony on Thursday, eight Virgin Islanders from the St. Thomas/St. John district received formal recognition for their contributions to the territory, several of whom will have roads renamed in their honor.

The ceremony was the latest in several recognition events that the 35th Legislature has held in 2024, as lawmakers work to clear a backlog of honors – some dating back to the 30th Legislature. “These honorees have displayed the discipline and the drive to excel,” remarked Senate President Novelle Francis.

Up first was Boyd “Boyzie” Todman, whose honors are detailed in Act 8703. Senator Dwayne DeGraff, who sponsored the original legislation, described Mr. Todman as “fearsome on a basketball court [and] fearsome in his leadership of the youth of our territory.” The basketball court at Oswald Harris Court will be named in his honor.

Similarly, Bernice Alma Turnbull received her perma plaque which indicates that the building housing the Department of Finance will be titled the “Bernice Alma Turnbull Finance Administrative Building.” The decision to celebrate the former Finance Commissioner was the doing of Senator Milton Potter. He recalled how she led the territory through “some very turbulent fiscal times, leading us towards a period of financial stability and growth” and always offered “sage advice to political leaders.” A visibly ecstatic Ms. Turnbull shared that she was “grateful for the persons with whom I worked because you're only as good as those people with whom you are working.”



Act 8816 posthumously celebrates the contributions of Fenella Cooper to the field of education, sports and culture, and will name the UVI tennis court for her. The legislation was sponsored by Senator Marvin Blyden this past February. On Thursday, he described her as a “trailblazer” who left a legacy for others to follow. Her widower, who received the plaque on her behalf, commented that “Fenella was born for greatness, and she has used her life to achieve as much as she could.”

The other five honorees will all have their names associated with several tracts of roadway in St. Thomas and St. John. The Department of Public Works is working closely with the Legislature to get official road signage in place. “The naming of these roads after you shows the impact you've had,” remarked DPW Commissioner Derek Gabriel.

Among them were Rudolph “Pimpy” Thomas, Jr, who “did his due diligence. He took care of his community,” according to former senator Stedmann Hodge, who had sponsored the original legislation. The South Side Road in St. John will now bear the name of the man credited for a myriad of contributions to Virgin Islands society, including as a police officer, calypsonian, and entrepreneur.

Former at-large senator and two-time president of the Senate, Almando “Rocky” Liburd, also received his perma plaque on Thursday. “Senator Liburd’s life has been a testament to hard work and perseverance,” remarked Senator Angel Bolques, the current at-large senator. Renaming the North Shore road, he said, is a “fitting tribute to a man who has connected our territory and worked tirelessly to improve it.”

“It doesn't matter where you come from. It doesn't matter what place or how much money you’ve got, but what matters is a commitment and a love for people, and that's what I had,” said Mr. Liburd, accepting his plaque which detailed Act 8783, the resolution in his name.

Dr. William A. Industrious, Sr. was on hand to receive his plaque as well, after Sen. Carla Joseph moved legislation to commend the religious leader for his contributions to the local community. Act 8828 will rename the portion of Gamle Gade that begins at the Store Straede intersection, runs directly in front of the Christian Unity Church, and ends at the Borger Gade intersection. That portion of roadway will now be called the Bishop Dr. William A. Industrious Street.

A family member of the late Corporal Kendall Emanuel George received a perma plaque on his behalf. Route 107 from Coral Bay to Lameshur Bay on St. John will now be named the “Kendall Emanuel George Drive” South.

Likewise, the Legislature offered posthumous commendations to Viggo E. Sewer for his ultimate contribution to the Virgin Islands, by renaming East End Road on Route 10 on the island of St. John in his honor.

Road signs are expected to be placed on the respective renamed streets in short order.