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Cherise C. Davis on St. Croix, Cornell Hanley in St. Thomas Named 2025 Teachers of the Year

The V.I. Dept. of Education has named Cherise C. Davis from the St. Croix District and Cornell Hanley from the St. Thomas-St. John District as the 2025 District Teachers of the Year, honoring their exceptional dedication to education and community impact

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From left to right Cherise C. Davis and Cornell Hanley.

The V.I. Department of Education on Monday announced that it has honored two exceptional educators as the 2025 District Teachers of the Year. This year's recipients are Ms. Cherise C. Davis, a 3rd-grade teacher at Juanita Gardine PreK-8 School, representing the St. Croix District, and Mr. Cornell Hanley, a Special Education Teacher at Yvonne E. Milliner Bowsky Elementary

School, representing the St. Thomas-St. John District.

The announcements were made with VIDE leadership present, leaving the recipients and their colleagues beaming with pride. Commissioner of Education Dionne Wells-Hedrington lauded the honorees, stating, “Today, we are not just recognizing two outstanding educators, but we are celebrating the unwavering dedication and passion they bring to our classrooms and communities. Ms. Davis and Mr. Hanley exemplify the values that make our schools and communities stronger, and we are immensely proud of their achievements.”

Cherise C. Davis – St. Croix District Teacher of the Year

Ms. Cherise C. Davis, a graduate of the St. Croix Educational Complex, has dedicated 11 years to teaching and currently serves as a 3rd-grade teacher at Juanita Gardine PreK-8 School, according to VIDE. A proud product of the Virgin Islands public school system, Ms. Davis discovered her passion for teaching during high school and has since committed herself to fostering curiosity, critical thinking, and a love of learning among her students.

Beyond her classroom duties, Ms. Davis is a passionate advocate for her school and community. She actively participates in school committees, leads a Girl Scout Troop, and organizes key events such as Virgin Islands History Month and Red Ribbon Week. “Ms. Davis represents the heart of what it means to be an educator. Her passion for her students and commitment to excellence shine through in everything she does,” said Dr. Sharlene Belton-Gonzalez, Insular Superintendent for the St. Croix District.

Cornell Hanley – St. Thomas-St. John District Teacher of the Year

Mr. Cornell Hanley, who has devoted over 20 years to education, is a Special Education Teacher at Yvonne E. Milliner Bowsky Elementary School and serves as the district’s only Adaptive Physical Education Teacher. His dedication extends across grade levels, particularly in working with students with physical disabilities.

Mr. Hanley is celebrated for his leadership both in the classroom and beyond, according to VIDE. He organizes extracurricular activities, mentors aspiring educators, and supports community events such as the Special Olympics. Additionally, he coached Bowsky’s boys’ basketball team to a championship victory, reflecting his commitment to fostering student success both academically and athletically. “Mr. Hanley’s dedication to his students and his willingness to support the broader school community exemplify the kind of educator we strive to honor. He is an inspiration to us all,” said Dr. Stefan Jürgen, Insular Superintendent for the St. Thomas-St. John District.

The Dept. of Education expressed its heartfelt gratitude to all teachers in the territory for their dedication to student success. “Ms. Davis and Mr. Hanley’s recognition is a testament to the incredible impact teachers have on our lives and the future of our Territory,” the department stated.