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Central High School's Class of 2025 Celebrates Optimism, Nobility, and Excellence at Graduation Ceremony

Keynote speaker Vincentia Paul-Constantin praised the Class of 2025 as rare, purpose-driven, and resilient—telling them, “You are not a mass-produced moment,” as the ceremony celebrated their optimism, nobility, and readiness to lead with integrity.

Education / **Published On May 20, 2025 04:28 PM /**

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2025 Central High Graduates at the Island Center for the Performing Arts.

The St. Croix Central High School Class of 2025 embraced their graduation day with exuberance and pride during Tuesday's ceremony, celebrating not just the end of one chapter, but the promise of the next. Cheers, applause, and the joyful sound of novelty horns echoed through the venue,

embodying the students' self-proclaimed identity as "exquisite."

The ceremony opened with remarks from Education Commissioner of Education Dionne Wells-Hedrington, who urged the graduating class of 176 students not to fear life's twists and turns. "Don't be afraid to pivot in life," she said, recounting how her own path shifted from aspiring physician with a biology degree to a career in education and policy leadership. "Don't be afraid to change course. That's a part of growing up," she added.

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. also delivered words of encouragement. "Find something you're passionate about and do it with all your heart," he told the graduates. Reflecting on the seniors' chosen class name—Optimistic—Governor Bryan noted the importance of perspective. "In life, you get exactly what you're searching for," he said. "You look for the downside, you can find the downside every time. But if you remain optimistic, you can fulfill your dreams."

Salutatorian Jahnya Allahar expanded on that optimism, adding two more qualities that she believes define the Class of 2025: nobility and exquisiteness. "Together, we forge a microcosm of our larger St. Croix community...with future doctors, lawyers, firefighters, police officers, teachers, farmers etcetera," she said. Highlighting the strength of their bonds, she added, "We are connected for life through our friendships, familial connections and acquaintances." Using a metaphor, Allahar said, "Just like jigsaw puzzles, we create a complete picture that will leave an indelible mark on this society."

While Allahar celebrated shared purpose, Valedictorian Amaya Hamilton offered a more personal lens on success. "If you had asked little Amaya what her long-term goal was, she would have told you 'I am going to graduate as a valedictorian,'" she said. Through discipline and dedication, she achieved her dream—but also gained a deeper understanding of what true success means. "Success isn't just about titles, trophies or test scores," she said. "It's about purpose and being noble in how we pursue it, to use our gifts to uplift others and to leave the world just a little bit better than when we found it."

Hamilton emphasized that personal success should not come at the cost of community connection. "I have been honored to serve as your parliamentarian, to lead in NHS, to dance with the Carib Divas, to argue with the moot court team, and keep our culture alive with Rising Stars," she told her classmates.

Keynote speaker Vincentia Paul-Constantin praised the graduates for living up to the qualities they chose to define themselves. She acknowledged the unpredictable years that shaped their high school journey, saying they maintained belief "in better days, in yourselves and certainly in each other – that is the heart of optimism."

As for nobility, Dr. Paul-Constantin said this generation understands "that power doesn't have to be loud or corrupt, and that influence doesn't come from titles...but rather from authenticity." And on the note of being exquisite, she described the class as "Rare, unique...something crafted with care and purpose," adding, "You are not a mass-produced moment."

She closed her address with a challenge: "Be the kind of optimistic that builds bridges, be the kind of noble that brings light into dark places. Be the kind of exquisite that illuminates your path with authenticity and integrity. You own this moment. Congratulations."