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Brendalyn Edwards to Make History as First Virgin Islander to Lead a Florida Bar Association

Brendalyn Edwards, a St. Croix native and seasoned legal professional, will make history as the first Virgin Islander to lead a Florida bar association when she is sworn in as VHFCNBA president during its 70th Anniversary Gala on June 28 in Boca Raton.

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The swearing in of Brendalyn Edwards.

In a landmark achievement for Caribbean legal professionals, Brendalyn Edwards, a native of St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, will be sworn in as the next president of the Virgil Hawkins Florida Chapter of the National Bar Association (VHFCNBA). Her installation will take place during the organization's 70th Anniversary Gala on June 28, 2025, at the Boca Raton Resort.

With this appointment, Edwards becomes the first Virgin Islander to lead a bar association in the state of Florida. A respected litigator, legal advisor, and community advocate, she currently serves as Deputy General Counsel of Operations at Universal Property & Casualty Insurance Company. Her past roles include Assistant County Attorney for the Broward County Supervisor of Elections, Assistant General Counsel for the Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida, and Acting Director of Gaming Enforcement for the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Justice.

Edwards called the appointment an incredible honor.

“It is an incredible honor to lead this esteemed organization, which has been at the forefront of legal advocacy and diversity for 70 years,” she said. “I am committed to continuing the mission of supporting Black attorneys, expanding opportunities, and reinforcing our commitment to justice for underserved communities. I hope that my journey serves as a reminder to people from similar backgrounds that we belong in every room, at every table, and that our voices matter. I also hope it signals to the broader legal community the importance of recognizing and uplifting leaders from diverse walks of life”.

A Gala Celebrating Legacy and Leadership

The upcoming VHFCNBA Gala, themed "Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges," will recognize Edwards's groundbreaking achievement while honoring attorneys and judges who have made exceptional contributions to diversity, justice, and community impact. The evening will include the presentation of Medals of Honor to 30 attorneys and judges known for their transformative work, as well as Trailblazer Awards to Detra Shaw-Wilder and Florida Bar President-Elect Sia Baker-Barnes.

These honors reflect the legacy of Virgil Hawkins, whose fight for equal access to legal education helped change the course of civil rights history in Florida.

Under Edwards's leadership, VHFCNBA plans to expand its core initiatives, including:

- Awarding scholarships to law students
- Providing mentorship to aspiring attorneys
- Hosting free legal clinics for underserved communities
- Offering bar prep seminars
- Leading outreach efforts to promote justice and professional development

Her presidency marks a significant milestone not only for the Virgin Islands but for the broader Caribbean diaspora, as it reflects growing representation in national leadership roles.

To learn more about the Gala, sponsorships, or VHFCNBA initiatives, visit virgilhawkinsnba.com/events.

About VHFCNBA

Founded in the 1950s, the Virgil Hawkins Florida Chapter of the National Bar Association was established by Black attorneys fighting for justice and equity in Florida. Today, with nearly 1,000 members and 16 affiliate chapters, VHFCNBA remains committed to expanding access to the legal system, supporting civil rights, promoting economic empowerment, and fostering community education—especially within the Black community.

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