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## **Ivanna Eudora Kean Graduate Named First Recipient of Alda Monsanto Scholarship**

**Merchants Commercial Bank and the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands announced V'Manie Rochester as the first recipient of the Alda Monsanto Scholarship, honoring a legacy of education, community service, and financial literacy.**

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**V'Manie Rochester, Ivanna Eudora Kean graduate and first recipient of the Alda Monsanto Scholarship, now pursuing Finance at UVI.**

Merchants Commercial Bank (MCB), in partnership with the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI), has announced the first recipient of the newly established Alda Monsanto Scholarship, created to honor the late Alda Monsanto, a founding board member of MCB and

Director Emeritus at CFVI.

The inaugural award has been granted to V'Manie Rochester, a 2025 graduate of Ivanna Eudora Kean High School. Rochester is now pursuing a degree in finance at the University of the Virgin Islands and has been recognized for his academic dedication and clear goals for the future.

"I'm extremely proud and grateful to receive the Alda Monsanto Scholarship and I truly appreciate this opportunity. I have dreams of becoming a financial advisor and this scholarship will help me to become one step closer to accomplishing this goal," said Rochester.

The Alda Monsanto Scholarship was created to support young Virgin Islanders in achieving their educational ambitions while paying tribute to Ms. Monsanto's lifelong commitment to learning, community advancement, and financial literacy.

"Merchants Commercial Bank is deeply honored to celebrate the legacy of Alda Monsanto through this scholarship program," said James Crites, CEO of Merchants Commercial Bank. "By supporting bright and determined students like V'Manie, we reaffirm our commitment to investing in the future leaders of the Virgin Islands"

Dee Baecher-Brown, President of CFVI, also emphasized the milestone. "The awarding of the first Alda Monsanto Scholarship marks a meaningful milestone for CFVI. This scholarship honors Alda Monsanto's extraordinary legacy by supporting a student who exemplifies her deep commitment to education, leadership, and community service.

The Alda Monsanto Scholarship will be awarded annually to a student pursuing a degree in finance, economics, or a related field at an accredited higher education institution. The initiative reflects both MCB's and CFVI's commitment to nurturing future leaders while preserving the values Alda Monsanto championed throughout her life.

Merchants Commercial Bank (MCB) is a locally owned and operated financial institution in the Virgin Islands, committed to integrity, innovation, and excellence. Through programs like the Alda Monsanto Scholarship, the bank continues to invest in the people and future of the territory.

The Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI) has served since 1990 as the territory's leading philanthropic organization, supporting initiatives in education, health, youth and family services, the environment, disaster recovery, and the arts. With over 150 active funds, CFVI remains dedicated to equity, resilience, and long-term community investment.