

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Education and Service Take Center Stage at St. Mary's Annual Auction and Honoree Banquet

St. Mary's Catholic School will host its annual fundraising gala on January 31, featuring a live and silent auction and tributes to three leaders whose careers have shaped education, media, and public service in the Virgin Islands.

Community Center / **Published On January 21, 2026 09:24 AM /**

Staff Consortium **January 21, 2026**



St. Mary's School in downtown Christiansted.

St. Mary's Catholic School is preparing to host one of its signature annual fundraising events, bringing together supporters, alumni, and community leaders for an evening dedicated to celebrating service, leadership, and education on St. Croix.

The school has announced that its Annual Auction and Honoree Banquet will take place on Saturday, January 31 at the Sydney Lee Event Center in Christiansted. The evening will feature dinner, a live and silent auction, and formal recognition of individuals whose work and commitment have made a lasting impact on the U.S. Virgin Islands. Proceeds from the event will support educational programs, student scholarships, and campus improvements at St. Mary's Catholic School.

Doors for the event will open at 6:00 p.m., and attendees are asked to observe a semi-formal black-and-white dress code.

Three community leaders will be honored during the 2026 banquet.

Rashidi Clenace will be recognized for a 30-year career in media, including his work as a founder of ViVid Streaming, his role as an authoritative voice in horse racing, and his contributions to major advertising campaigns. Clenace is also vice president of the Tim Duncan Foundation and has been noted for his longstanding dedication to community service in the Virgin Islands.

Dr. Denis Griffith, a retired professor of education and former associate dean at the University of the Virgin Islands, will also be honored. His career on St. Croix began as a teacher at St. Mary's School, followed by more than 13 years as principal, during which he led the school through a period described as its prime. Ordained a deacon in 2002, Dr. Griffith continues to serve at St. Ann's Catholic Church on St. Croix.

Senator Marise James, a member of the 36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands, will be recognized for nearly four decades of service to the community. Her background includes public-school teaching, representing the U.S. Virgin Islands in the Miss Universe pageant, work as an attorney in private practice, and service in government, nonprofit, and military roles. She is being honored for her commitment to justice, compassionate advocacy, and purposeful leadership.

The school is encouraging community members to support the event and its mission in several ways. Tax-deductible cash donations are welcomed and will directly benefit all students at St. Mary's. Sponsorship opportunities are also available at multiple levels, including:

- Arch Angel – \$5,000, which includes eight tickets and a full-page advertisement
- Guardian Angel – \$3,000, including six tickets and a full-page advertisement
- Angel – \$2,500, including four tickets and a full-page advertisement
- Benefactor – \$1,000, including two tickets and a full-page advertisement
- Patron – \$600, including two tickets and a half-page advertisement

Individual tickets are priced at \$100 each.

In addition, St. Mary's Catholic School is accepting donations for the live and silent auctions, including artwork, jewelry, furnishings, and experiential items. All donated auction items will be acknowledged in the event's program booklet.

Businesses and individuals may also support the event by placing advertisements in the auction booklet, with rates listed as follows: inside front cover at \$400, back cover at \$350, inside back cover at \$300, full page at \$200, half page at \$175, and quarter page at \$150. Final advertisement copy must be emailed to stmaryauction1898@gmail.com by January 23, 2026, and all payments must be completed by that date through St. Mary's Catholic School.

Tickets for the Annual Auction and Honoree Banquet are available through the school's office and on Eventbrite. For additional information, interested individuals may contact St. Mary's Catholic School at 340-773-0117 or email officeatstmary@gmail.com.

School officials said the event offers an opportunity not only to celebrate distinguished service, but also to invest directly in the future of students at St. Mary's Catholic School, noting that every contribution helps make a lasting difference.