

VIPD Officer Cindy Claudio Makes History as She and Keion Gabriel Win CAC Games Boxing Medals

Claudio became the first female boxer representing the Virgin Islands to medal at the Central American and Caribbean Games, while Gabriel also earned bronze and Aaron Hodge Jr. competed as part of the territory's 2026 boxing delegation in Santo Domingo.

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Bronze medalists Keion Gabriel, left, and VIPD Officer Cindy Claudio return to the U.S. Virgin Islands wearing their medals after competing at the 2026 Central American and Caribbean Games.

Virgin Islands boxers returned home Sunday to a welcoming reception after securing two bronze medals at the 2026 Central American and Caribbean Games in Santo Domingo, Dominican

Republic.

V.I. Police Department Officer Cindy Claudio and Keion Gabriel each earned bronze medals in boxing, while Aaron Hodge Jr. also represented the territory in the competition. The athletes were greeted at Cyril E. King Airport by representatives of the VIPD and the V.I. Department of Tourism, along with relatives, friends and supporters.

Claudio's performance marked a milestone for the territory, making her the first female boxer representing the Virgin Islands to earn a medal at the Central American and Caribbean Games.

Competing in the women's 65-kilogram division, Claudio advanced from the quarterfinals after defeating Puerto Rico's Victoria De Los Angeles Velez Morales by a 3-2 split decision on Aug. 2. The victory guaranteed Claudio a place on the podium and sent her into the semifinals. [Official competition records](#) show that three judges scored the quarterfinal in Claudio's favor.

She subsequently faced Guatemala's María Victoria Chiroy Hernández in the semifinals and finished the tournament with the bronze medal.

Gabriel also reached the podium in the men's over-90-kilogram division. He advanced after defeating Barbados representative Seth Lawrence before falling by unanimous decision to Mexico's Javier Alejandro Cruz Hernández in the semifinals. Gabriel completed the tournament with the Virgin Islands' second boxing bronze medal.

Hodge competed as part of the Virgin Islands boxing delegation but did not reach the medal round. The VIPD recognized him for his representation of the territory in the ring.

Before Claudio's return, Police Commissioner Mario Brooks described her achievement as significant for both the department and the wider Virgin Islands community.

"This is a tremendous moment not only for Officer Claudio, but for the Virgin Islands and the Virgin Islands Police Department," Brooks said. "Officer Claudio has demonstrated the same discipline, courage, commitment, and determination that we ask of every member of this Department. She stepped into the ring carrying the pride of the Virgin Islands, and she left the competition having made history. We are extremely proud of her accomplishment and look forward to welcoming our champion home.

During Sunday's reception, the returning athletes were met with balloons, embraces and congratulations from those gathered at the airport. The VIPD credited Claudio, Gabriel and Hodge for representing the territory through their performances at the regional competition.