

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Governor-Elect Kenneth Mapp Gives Victory Speech To Massive Crowd On St. Croix

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The mood was celebratory long before Governor-elect Kenneth Mapp made his way onto the stage in Peter's Rest, on St. Croix, as eager supporters waited for more than three hours before the candidate arrived after midnight on Wednesday morning to give his victory speech in front of a massive crowd.

What Osbert and I would like each of you to know is that we are really committed to working hard, improving your lives, the lives of the people of the Virgin Islands, from the youngest to the most senior.

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Introduced by his territorial campaign manager, Franklin Johnson, Mapp and running mate Osbert Potter, made their way to the stage appearing tired, but ready to speak to the thousands on St. Croix who made the sweeping victory possible. The two men had previously spoken to supporters in St. Thomas late Tuesday night.

Potter, elated at the victory, spoke first and thanked St. Croix for its overwhelming support and promised to "work hard" for the people of the territory. He said he and Mapp would listen to the people and seek their guidance on many issues moving forward. "The work was not done," the Lt. Governor-elect added, and continued to thank the people for their support. Soon after, Potter introduced the Governor-elect, whose speech held a tone of sobriety, confidence and hope.

Mapp, [like he did on Sunday](#), opened up with a dance. He then motioned for the music to stop, and said, "I'm going to start practicing to behave like a governor," then immediately shouted, "music!" and began dancing again. The former Lieutenant Governor, who had tried twice before to win the highest seat of the land, had finally attained his desire to lead the territory, a responsibility, as he would make known during his speech, not taken lightly.

Friends and supporters, please understand that the challenges confronting the Virgin Islands are severe, and if we cannot overcome our differences with respect, we're not going to solve any problems.

After first thanking God for the success, followed by his supporters--including former gubernatorial candidate Soraya Diase-Coffelt, who endorsed Mapp after losing in the November 4, General Election--Mapp got down to business, explaining the responsibility ahead, and calling for unity as, he said, it is the only way for the territory to move forward successfully.

"What Osbert and I would like each of you to know is that we are really committed to working hard, improving your lives, the lives of the people of the Virgin Islands, from the youngest to the most senior. A way of quality and perfection, that folks outside could watch with respect and dignity," Mapp said.

"We want to get away from doing a little bit of a lot of things, and start doing the little things, very, very well. We're going to get the basics right, we're going to really, really work, first, on how we can treat each other with dignity and respect," the Governor-elect continued.

Mapp said that from the onset of the campaign, he and his team had made a decision to respect everyone's right of choice, and not to challenge the patriotism or integrity of those who chose to support other candidates.

"We want to grow a community that we are free to disagree because in our disagreement, we're going to learn from each other, and we're going to grow better ideas, and we're going to create a better community and society," he said.

Delegate Christensen publicly extended her congratulations and well wishes, and we humbly accept them. And we want the delegate to know that we will look to her to ask for her advice and her input on matters going forward.

Mapp went on: "Friends and supporters, please understand that the challenges confronting the Virgin Islands are severe, and if we cannot overcome our differences with respect, we're not going to solve any problems. We're not going to advance our community, and we're not going to expect to agree all the time -- it's not going to happen. But if we start by respecting ourselves as a people, people outside will look to us and treat us with respect."

Christensen, in a speech at her campaign headquarters in Barren Spot on Tuesday night, said she reached out to Mapp via phone and left him a congratulatory message, which she also publicly expressed on local radio stations in St. Thomas.

"Delegate Christensen publicly extended her congratulations and well wishes, and we humbly accept them. And we want the delegate to know that we will look to her to ask for her advice and her input on matters going forward," Mapp said, adding, "We never challenged the patriotism and the loyalty and the love that Donna Christensen and Basil Ottley have for the Virgin Islands. We never raised that question."

In closing, Mapp said he understood the responsibility that comes with holding the highest office of the land, and expressed humility for the opportunity that was overwhelmingly entrusted to him by the people of the United States Virgin Islands.

Mapp became the 8th elected governor of the U. S. Virgin Islands in a landslide victory on Tuesday, [beating out Christensen by over 6,000 votes](#).