

The Virgin Islands Consortium

At-Large Senator Uses Money From His Senate Allotment To Fund Summer Jobs For Two Students

VIC News / **Published On June 15, 2015 07:22 PM /**

Staff **June 15, 2015**



ST. JOHN -- Two St. John students have gained entry into the working world thanks to a partnership between Senator-at-Large Almando "Rocky" Liburd and the Virgin Islands Hotel & Tourism Association.

Sen. Liburd highlighted the importance of summer employment for the territory's students, which also serves as a preparation tool.

"Hands on work experience is an essential part of a complete education," Liburd said. "It is important that we offer summer jobs and internships in order to both teach young people about the working world and expose them to the various opportunities here in the

Virgin Islands. The students we selected demonstrated an interest in working in hospitality, however I trust the skills they obtain this summer will serve them in any career that they choose to pursue."

Aariyah Athanase, a 17-year-old resident of Estate Adrian, is looking forward to working in the guest services department at Westin Resort. Athanase, who graduated last week from Ivanna Eudora Kean High School, hopes to learn more about the tourism industry and to improve her communications and customer service skills.

"I chose to work in this area as I really wanted to learn how to better interact with people," Aariyah said. "Networking is a big part of any job and it is especially important in the art world."

Athanase will be attending the Savannah School of Art & Design this fall and hopes to pursue a career as a fine artist. She also sees a need for the territory to better develop its local artistic talent and incorporate it into the "tourist experience".

"Art is an important part of our culture. This is a very colorful place," she said.

Joining Athanase for the summer work experience is 16-year-old Larisma Maduro, a Gifted & Talented student at the Gifted & Talented Center. Maduro will be working in accounting.



At-Large Senator Almando "Rocky" Liburd

"It is my first job," Maduro said. "I am not sure what to expect."

Like Athanase, Maduro is interested in art and design, but thinks there is much to be gleaned from this summer's work experience.

"I believe it will open doors for me and help me start my resume," she said. "I applied because I really saw this as a good opportunity."

The teenager said that it's particularly difficult for those under 18 to get jobs and that most of her friends were not able to find work this summer.

"I really hope to learn more about the tourism industry and what it means to have a job," she added.

The students start work on June 15 and will work 30 hours per week during the 6-week program in which Sen. Liburd subsidizes half of their salaries out of his Legislature allotment.

"This program is invaluable," Sen. Liburd said. "I look forward to telling the community more about the other students we are working with once their work gets underway. I am certain Larisma and Aariyah will do an excellent job this summer and when they have completed their six weeks on the job I will be meeting with them to evaluate their experience."

Sen. Liburd thanked the Virgin Islands Hotel and Tourism Association, as well as the management at Caneel Bay and Westin resorts, for partnering with him this summer.