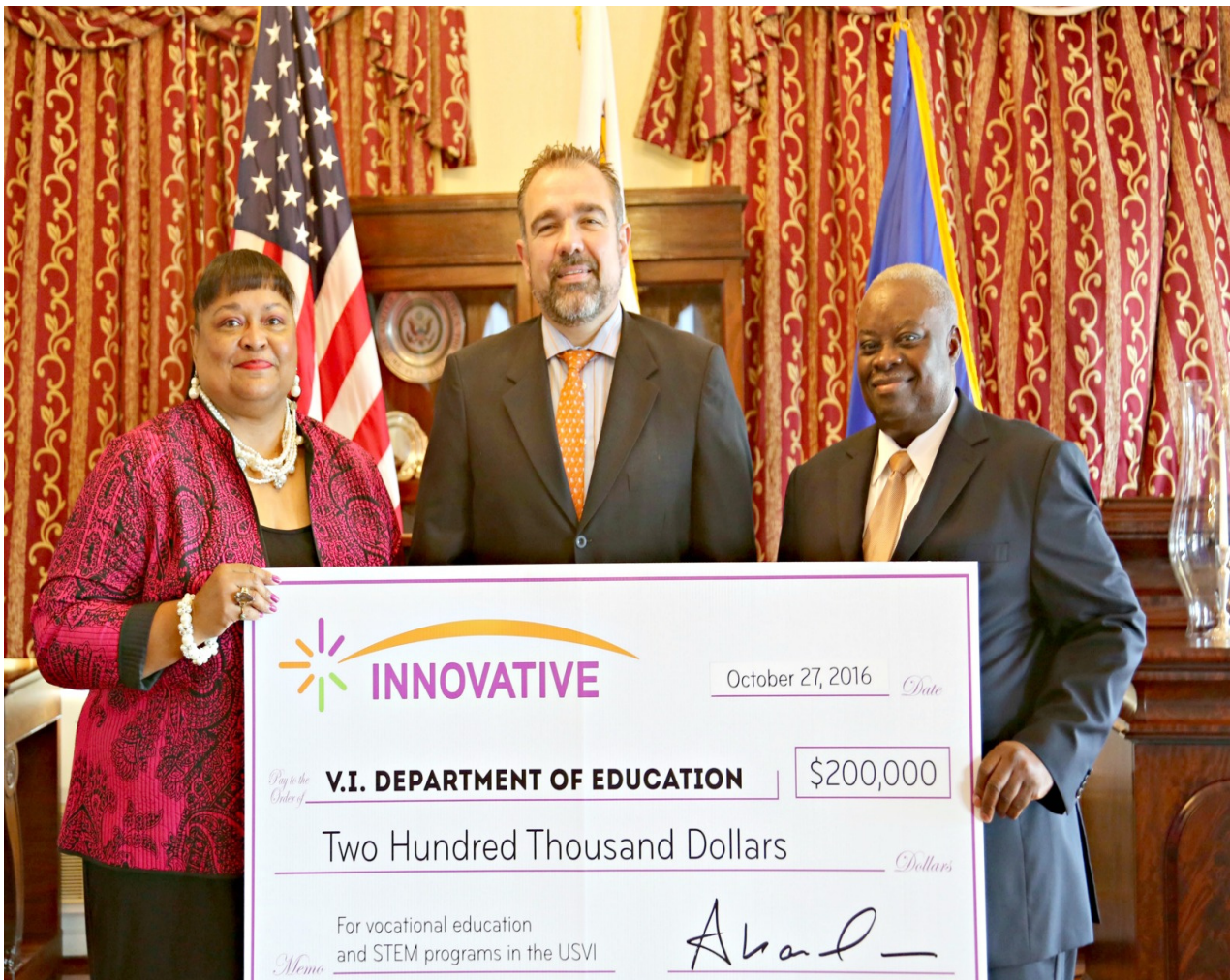


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Department Of Education Receives \$200,000 Donation From Innovative

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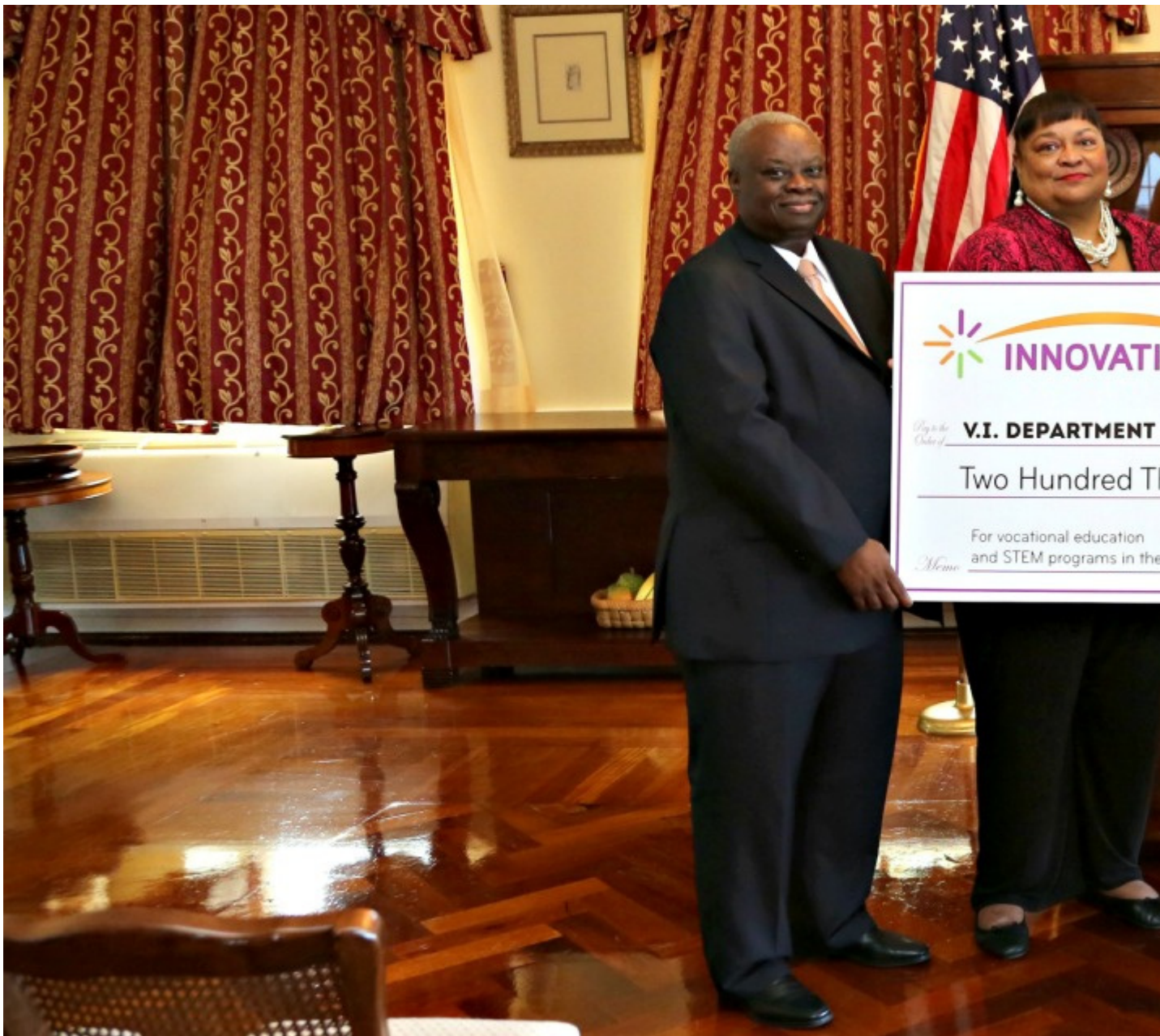


ST. THOMAS -- The Virgin Islands Department of Education received a \$200,000 donation from telecommunications giant Innovative to benefit vocational education and STEM programs at schools across the territory, D.O.E. has announced.

Education Commissioner Sharon Ann McCollum expressed her gratitude and outlined how the funds would be used during a check-presentation ceremony held at Government House on October 27.

“We will be putting fifty thousand dollars toward STEM, but the bulk of the money will be going into our vocational education training, where students will graduate with

certification in areas of technology that would benefit Innovative, as well,” she explained. “Our students will be employable and marketable at the time of graduation.”



Governor Kenneth E. Mapp, Education Commissioner Sharon Ann McCollum, Ph.D., Innovative CEO Alvaro Pilar, and Innovative Vice President of Public Relations and Governmental Affairs Jennifer Matarangas-King.

The gift indicates a step in the right direction toward preparing young people for careers in technology as the territory continues to expand its technological footprint, D.O.E. says.

“What we are looking at is the growth of a new workforce and the fact that we want to grow the technology arena in the territory,” Ms. McCollum said. “This is something that we will be focusing on and promoting, and looking for growth over a period of years.”

Jennifer Matarangas-King, vice president of public relations and governmental affairs for Innovative, praised the collaboration.

“Innovative has always been engaged and involved in the community, especially when it comes to education initiatives,” she began. “It’s more than just a check; we will be reaching out to the Department of Education because we have the resources internally that can also help with some of these [student] programs, in terms of training and even internships.”

Furthermore, investing in the territory’s youth, Matarangas-King pointed out, will ensure a steady pool of local employees for Innovative’s workforce. “We are looking to build the next generation of Innovative employees,” she said, adding, “and if they start in school, the better chance it will lead back to us. We are very excited about today.”

Innovative CEO Alvaro Pilar was also on hand for the presentation. “I want local people to work in the company,” he said. “Every cent we invest in the Department of Education is going to be something that will benefit both Innovative and the community.”

The donation is in line with the Department of Education’s embrace of public-private partnerships to benefit students.

Feature Image: Education Commissioner Sharon Ann McCollum, Ph.D., and Governor Kenneth E. Mapp are joined by Innovative CEO Alvaro Pilar (center) during a check-presentation ceremony at Government House on October 27. (Credit: D.O.E.)