

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Fourteen Graduate From UVI Cell/Diageo Hospitality Program

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ST. CROIX -- A partnership between the UVICELL Center, Diageo USVI and balter St. Croix culminated this past Friday with a graduation ceremony on St. Croix, UVI Cell announced today. Fourteen students completed the Learning Skills for Life TM program which prepared them to work in the hospitality industry.

The Learning Skills for Life TM program is a global training initiative introduced by Diageo, USVI, makers of Captain Morgan rum products. This year's class is the fourth to complete the program since its inception to the territory in 2010, according to the release.

The eight week program consisted of Project Culinary™ and Project Bartender™ and exposed students to life skills training and hospitality education. The training included critical components such as communication, business etiquette, customer service and job readiness skills, coupled with the technical hospitality skills. The bartending component was taught by Patrick Kralik, Owner/General Manager of balter and the culinary component was conducted by Digby Stridiron, Owner/Executive Chef of balter. The course wrapped up with a 40-hour internship.

"Thanks to our corporate partners, we were able to provide a wonderful avenue to grow and nurture our future generation," said Ilene Garner, director of the UVICELL Center. "We are extremely appreciative to both Diageo and balter for their time, resources and dedication to ensuring our local residents are appropriately prepared to enter industry."

Graduates of the Culinary Arts program are Je'Quon Benjamin, Jared Finch-Sheen, Kaliya Illis, Kiddisha King and Chrislyn Simmonds. Graduates of the Bartending program are Aquilla Buntin, Gregg Encarnacion, Jr. Jahmani Johnson, Savannah Lyons-Anthony, Angel Madrigal, Yhioshinna Morton, Arielle Rames, Shena Stanislas and Quianna Walters.

For more information, contact the UVICELL Center at (340) 693-1100. <http://cell.uvi.edu>.