

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Genevieve Whitaker Selected For United Nations Human Rights Fellowship

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ST. CROIX -- Deputy Elections System Supervisor Genevieve Whitaker, above, has been selected as a fellow for the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 2016 Fellowship Programme for the People of African Descent. She traveled to Geneva, Switzerland last week.

The program was formed in correlation with the International Decade for People of African Descent.

Ms. Whitaker, who holds a juris doctor degree with coursework in International Human Rights Law, has been involved with human rights from an early age. She obtained

certificates in human rights and humanitarian law during her legal studies at the University of Oxford School of Law and Santa Clara University Law School, respectively. Ms. Whitaker is a former lobbyist for Amnesty International USA, serving in the capacity as the legislative coordinator for the State of Florida.

Ms. Whitaker's work is concentrated within the framework of the objective and goals of the International Decade for People of African Descent. In terms of her support for the United Nations, Ms. Whitaker, 33, formerly served as a board member for the United Nations Association of the USA, Tampa Bay Chapter, where she also served as the founding chair for Young Professionals for International Cooperation. Ms. Whitaker is also a former board member of the DC-based Partners for Freedom & Democracy, a nonprofit organization for which she organized a human rights-based youth leadership development summit that took place in Abuja, Nigeria in 2008.

In terms of Ms. Whitaker's current work in the area of decolonization, a large focus of her activism, in 2009 she co-founded the Virgin Islands Youth Advocacy Coalition, Inc., a nonprofit established to promote the political and civic engagement of the young people of the Virgin Islands to include the organization's program on decolonization of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Ms. Whitaker's human rights work also includes service on the Board of the Caribbean Institute for a New Humanity, which housed the Virgin Islands Reparations Movement (the African-Caribbean Reparations and Resettlement Alliance—ACRRA).

Ms. Whitaker received her law degree from Stetson University College of Law, serving as a public service fellow and received the Public Service Recognition Award from Stetson's Advocacy Board for her exemplary service locally and worldwide, and was recognized as an outstanding graduate. She was instrumental in the establishment of Stetson's Amnesty International Student chapter.

In 2013, Ms. Whitaker served as a participant in the first cohort of Oxford University Said School of Business's "Women Transforming Leadership" program for which she received an executive education certificate. She received her bachelor of arts degree in government and world affairs from The University of Tampa with honors program distinction.

Currently, Ms. Whitaker serves as the deputy supervisor (St. Croix) for the Elections System of the Virgin Islands. She also currently serves in the capacity as the local elections official member for the Virgin Islands as a standard board member with the Election Assistance Commission (EAC). She was elected to serve on the executive board for the Standards Board, an advisory board of the EAC during the EAC's Standards Board meeting held in Carlsbad, California from April 14-15, 2016.

Here's a link to EAC tweet highlighting election results: <http://bit.ly/EACExecBoard16> .

Ms. Whitaker served as an international election observer with the Organization of American States for the February 25, 2016 Jamaican Parliamentary elections. Ms. Whitaker says she plans on bringing back to the territory the knowledge she gains during her training to promote the important work of decolonization, by obtaining support among the key stakeholders who will be dedicated to the cause for human right to selfdetermination, she says. The goal is centered on achieving the political, social, economic and cultural right advancement for people of African descent and all those negatively affected/impacted by the resultant human rights abuses tied to our colonial

status, according to Ms. Whitaker.

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