

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## Gladys Abraham 6th Grader Joshua Morgan Wins STTJ District Spelling Bee

Education / **Published On February 14, 2017 12:02 AM /**

Staff **February 14, 2017**



ST. THOMAS -- The Virgin Islands Department of Education St. Thomas – St. John District hosted its annual Intermediate Spelling Bee on Friday, February 10 at the Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School auditorium. Gladys Abraham Elementary 6<sup>th</sup> grader Joshua Morgan earned the title of 2017 district champion with the correct spelling of the word “dossier,” following 26 rounds of intense competition. Lockhart Elementary 6<sup>th</sup> grader Wanya Baig and BCB 7<sup>th</sup> grader V’Andre Rochester took first and second place, respectively.

Language Arts Coordinator and District Spelling Bee facilitator Jessica John-Baptiste opened the event by congratulating the students, their parents and coaches. Insular

Superintendent Dionne Wells-Hedrington welcomed attendees and offered inspirational words to the competitors. Allowing the students to stand and shake off their nervousness, Mrs. Wells-Hedrington said, "You all are already winners. This is indeed a testimony to each and every one of you and your dedication and commitment, and even your bravery to be here doing this today."

Following the introduction of Spelling Bee officials, the spellers took to the mic to introduce themselves and get comfortable with being on stage, followed by the reading of the rules.

The competition got underway and lasted just over an hour. Nineteen spellers representing public, private and parochial schools competed and the top six students advanced to the Territorial Spelling Bee.

All Spelling Bee participants received a Bluetooth speaker, certificate of achievement and trophies, and a goody bag filled with books, a flash drive, pens and pencils. The first and second place winners also took home a placement trophy, a tablet equipped with a protective case, and \$75 cash for first place and \$50 cash for second. The winner was awarded a laptop that doubles as a tablet, a championship trophy and \$100 cash.

Following his win, Joshua expressed how happy he was in his victory. "I am more than happy. Last year I was in the top six I said I would win this year and I did," said Joshua. First place runner up Wanya Baig congratulated Joshua and anticipates the territorial competition. "I'm looking forward to going to St. Croix and competing again." Said Wanya.

Senators Janette Millin-Young and Tregenza Roach attended the event and gave congratulatory remarks to Spelling Bee participants during the awards ceremony. Representatives from the offices of senators Marvin Blyden and Jean Forde were also in attendance. Deputy Superintendents Raquel Berry-Benjamin and Michael Harrigan and American Federation of Teachers Local 1825 President Avery Lewis also attended the 2017 Intermediate District Spelling Bee. The National Anthem was sung by Charlotte Amalie High School's music ensemble Ripples on the Lake and the Virgin Islands March was sung by Eudora Kean's ensemble Rays of Light.

The Territorial Spelling Bee, which will feature the top spellers from both the St. Croix and St. Thomas-St. John districts, will take place at 10 a.m. on March 22, 2017 at the John H. Woodson Jr. High School on St. Croix.

The top six finalists that will compete in the Territorial Spelling Bee from the St. Thomas – St. John district are Joshua Morgan of Gladys Abraham, Wanya Baig of Lockhart Elementary, V'Andre Rochester of Bertha C. Boschulte, Mera Foster of Giffit Hill, Krishiv Amarnan of All Saints Cathedral and Adien Glasford of Wesleyan Academy.