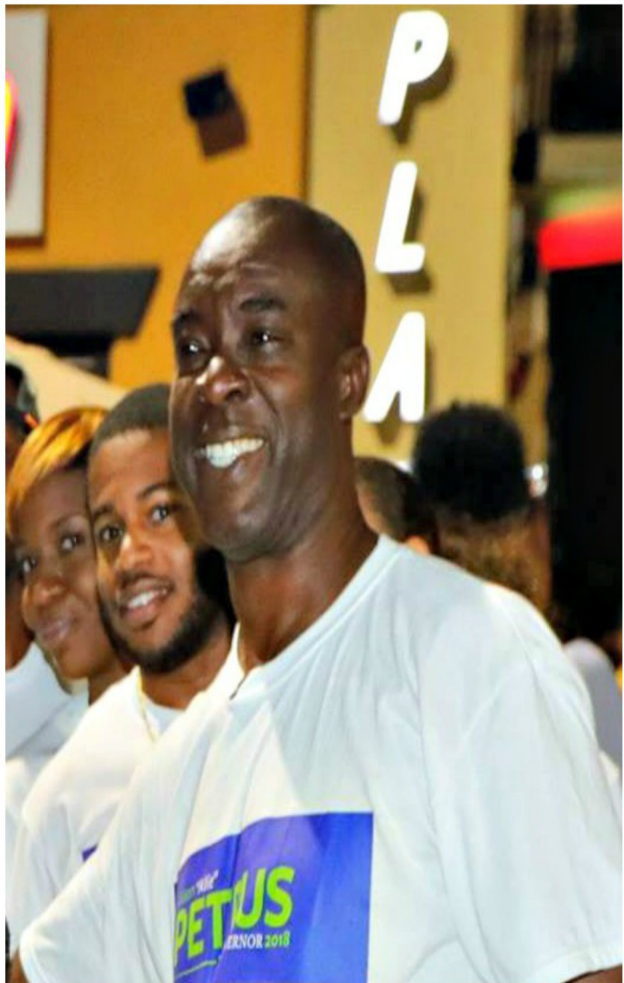


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Petrus Set To Announce Senator Samuel Sanes As Running Mate This Week

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ST. THOMAS -- Senator Samuel Sanes will be announced as gubernatorial candidate Allison Petrus's pick for lieutenant governor, The Consortium can confirm. The announcement event, which was to take place at Gertrude's Restaurant on St. Croix on Wednesday evening, was pushed back tentatively to Thursday, so as to not conflict with Governor Kenneth Mapp's weekly press briefing, which happens on Wednesday at Government House on St. Croix.

Mr. Sanes, Mr. Petrus hopes, will strengthen the gubernatorial candidate's efforts on St. Croix, where Mr. Petrus is not widely known. Mr. Sanes could also help Mr. Petrus with the Hispanic vote, a voting bloc that has propelled him to the Senate for 5 terms.

With the impending announcement, Mr. Petrus continues to outpace the gubernatorial candidates who've been known to be running long before him. Warren Mosler, [the first to announce his bid](#) for the territory's highest office, has yet to announce a running mate. Soraya Diase Coffelt, [whose announcement](#) followed that of Mr. Mosler, hasn't announced a running mate either. Albert Bryan, Jr., Angel Dawson and Randolph Bennett have not made public their lieutenant governor picks. Adlah Donastorg has chosen former senator Michael Thurland as his second in command, but there has been no official announcement from Mr. Donastorg.

Part of the reason for the lack of announcements is that it's been difficult for these candidates to find viable running mates. There were attempts to bring Albert Bryan and Angel Dawson together, according two people with first-hand knowledge of the efforts, but those conversations fell apart as neither of the men would accept the number 2 spot. There were also strong conversations between Mr. Bryan and Joseph Boschulte, the former West Indian Company's president and CEO, but Mr. Boschulte is said to have declined the offer, according a source close to Mr. Boschulte.

Mr. Donastorg's pick, Mr. Thurland, has been described in political circles as a political death wish, with many criticizing the choice as a déjà vu moment, recalling Mr. Donastorg's running mate choice in 2014, Angel Torres. Mr. Torres had struggled to articulate himself in forums, and was quickly relegated as unfit to serve in such a capacity. It was one of the reasons, according to political observers, that [Mr. Donastorg's chances sank](#).

Ms. Coffelt launched what her team described as a "multi-media" campaign on Monday, which a release accompanying the announcement said would layout her strategic plan in putting the territory's people first. However, the announcement did not feature her pick for lieutenant governor. Ms. Coffelt could simply be waiting for an opportune time, or could be faced with a more worrisome problem of having difficulty finding a running mate.

And Mr. Bennett, while active on social media and has made a number of radio station appearances, has been the least likely thus far to win the Democratic primary, although, at this point, anything is possible.

Mr. Sanes's decision to join Mr. Petrus in the race for governor opens yet another Senate seat in the St. Croix district. So far, along with Mr. Sanes's seat, the all but assured Senate seat of Positive Nelson, who announced that he [would be seeking the gubernatorial seat this year](#), is open; Senator Nereida Rivera-O'Reilly recently told The Consortium that she hadn't decided whether to run (Mrs. Rivera-O'Reilly has a history of [declaring her desire to retire](#), but winds up running -- [and winning](#) -- anyway); and there's talk in political circles that Senator Neville James won't seek reelection, although Mr. James hasn't publicly stated his intentions.

This leaves at least two new individuals among the many vying for a Senate seat in the St. Croix District, with openings.

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