

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Millin Young Officially Announces Edgar Bengoa As Running Mate, Says Administration Will Be 'Champion Of Economic Development'

Politics / **Published On May 10, 2018 10:18 AM /**

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ST. THOMAS -- Senator Janette Millin Young is one of the latest to throw her hat in the ring, joining a throng of candidates seeking the highest office in the U.S. Virgin Islands. During a press event filled with supporters and family, Ms. Millin Young, a member on the Committee on Workforce Development, Consumer Affairs and Culture, announced that she would not be seeking re-election this year for a seat in the 33rd Legislature.

In the Hibiscus Room at Emerald Beach Resort on St. Thomas, after introducing herself, Ms. Millin Young turned to supporters and cameras to say, "Support me, as I endeavor to

become the next governor of the United States Virgin Islands.”

In her later remarks, the senator exuberantly announced St. Croix Chamber of Commerce President, Edgar Bengoa as her running mate for the 2018 gubernatorial election.



Janette Millin Young

The veteran lawmaker has served 4-terms -- or eight years -- in the legislative branch and is confident about the road she and her team must walk as she seeks the highest office in the territory. If elected, Ms. Millin Young would be the first woman elected to the office in the territory's history.

Both having Hispanic backgrounds, Ms. Millin Young and Mr. Bengoa traded playful remarks in Spanish with one another and with supporters; showing pride in their heritage and solidifying the campaign as the most vocal voice for Hispanic voters in the territory.

Mr. Bengoa moved to the U.S.V.I. with his parents in 1972 at the age of 5. He graduated from St. Peter and Paul on the island of St. Thomas in 1985 and later went on to attend DeVry Institute of Technology and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Engineering in 1988.

Most notably, Mr. Bengoa said he opened the first true air-conditioning and refrigeration supply store on St. Croix in 1993 -- he called the business Airs-R-Us. He then left to launch another venture, known as Bengoa's Air-Conditioning & Refrigeration before transforming it into Bengoa International, Inc.



Edgar Bengoa

With his background in business and his powerful position as president of the St. Croix Chamber of Commerce, he brings a slew of business know-how to a packed gubernatorial race. “I will work [closely] with the Chamber of Commerce of the Virgin Islands to bring forth a group health insurance that will be affordable to small businesses, employees and business owners,” Mr. Bengoa said.

Ms. Millin Young mentioned that she was one of the many Virgin Islanders that lost her roof last September and that like many residents, is still having issues with insurance claims for her home. The senator even took a few jabs at Governor Mapp, pointing out lavish spending at the executive branch, egos and the governor’s notorious proclivity with name-calling.

“I want to believe that we could do better as an institution to regulate, and to actually watch how the spending is done, but over the years, the administrations get away with however,” Ms. Millin Young said. “It’s almost been ceremonial for the legislature to approve a budget and then we have an administration that spends as it wants.”

In early 2017, when the U.S. Virgin Islands was at the peak of the financial crisis, Ms. Millin Young expressed in Senate hearings her disappointment that the budget bill was being considered; she added that the territory was not capitalizing on its current resources and should begin exploring diverse revenue streams like eco-tourism and agriculture.

The senator also spoke about competition with the British Virgin Islands and expanding on her plans for economic growth in the territory. She said if elected, her administration would be the “champion of economic development in the Virgin Islands.” “St. Croix was known as the breadbasket of the Caribbean at one point in time, now we can’t even sustain ourselves -- that’s maddening,” Ms. Millin Young said.

Like many gubernatorial candidates, Ms. Millin Young and Mr. Bengoa make a compelling duo as the race heats up. With recovery efforts continuing in the U.S.V.I. and Puerto Rico, the candidate sought to reassure residents that if elected as governor, she would continue to push for more support in Washington D.C. and collaborate with colleagues and stakeholders for a better Virgin Islands.