

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Scientists Visit Educational Complex To Encourage Students To Intern At NASA

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Ernice Gilbert **March 15, 2019**



ST. CROIX -- Scientists employed at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) were at the St. Croix Educational Complex High School auditorium on Thursday for what was described as an essential mission: educating students on the many aspects of NASA, while encouraging them to intern at the sprawling independent agency owned by the U.S. government.

Students interested in STEM learning from a number of schools participated in morning and afternoon sessions held at Complex Thursday, among them St. Mary's School, St. Patrick's School, Arthur Richards, and of course students from Complex. The afternoon session saw students from Good Sheppard, Free Will Baptiste and Elena Junior High.

The events were organized on St. Croix by Complex counselor Predencia Miller, who spoke of an abundance of NASA grants available to students that were not being utilized nearly enough.

The scientists -- Mary Hanna, William Koenig and Dr. Lester Morales -- spoke for about an hour on topics related to NASA. Among the discussions was the process of building a rocket from inception to launch. There were also discussions on life in space; the scientists said body liquids go to the head in space, making it round, and giving a sense of constant sinus to astronauts, among other interesting tidbits.

Dr. Lester Morales told the students that if they don't show interest in working at NASA, the agency would eventually cease to exist. Mr. Morales spoke of the Global Positioning System (G.P.S.), a technology so widely used that it is taken for granted. However, if it was not for NASA, the system would not be available today, Mr. Morales said, as he worked to show how indelible NASA is to daily living.

Many of the students showed interest in interning at the agency, and asked impressive questions during the Q&A.