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Virgin Islander Nkosi Thomas, a Coast Guard Lieutenant Commander, Receives Prestigious Legion of Merit Award

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Nkosi Thomas, his wife Dr. Jennifer Thomas and their two children Enam, left, and Nzuri.

U.S. Coast Guard Lieutenant Commander Nkosi Thomas, a native of St. Thomas, was awarded the Legion of Merit medal from the secretary of the Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS), Alejandro Nicholas Mayorkas on May 10, a release issued Sunday has made known. Mayorkas presented the award during a ceremony at DHS Headquarters in Washington, DC.

The Legion of Merit is a military award of the United States Armed Forces that is given for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements.

With this award, Thomas was recognized for his outstanding meritorious service in the performance of his duties as the military assistant to the secretary of Homeland Security, from May 2019 to June 2021.

Thomas exhibited extraordinary organizational acumen and keen judgment in a position of tremendous responsibility with direct impact across all Department of Homeland Security equities, stated the release. His flawless communications, financial accounting, and operational support of the Secretary ensured the seamless continuity of government while enabling the Secretary to lead the effective execution of the Department's vital missions throughout the most dynamic period in its history, the release further stated.



During the most active hurricane season on record, an unprecedented global Covid-19 pandemic, numerous cyber-attacks, and a surge in irregular migration along the southwest border, Lieutenant Commander Thomas is said to have skillfully coordinated the Secretary's strategic engagements with the president and vice president of the United States, the Cabinet, Congressional members, and foreign dignitaries, allowing the Secretary to execute the priorities of the Department to protect the Homeland and serve the American people. Lieutenant Commander Thomas also orchestrated thousands of high-security movements in coordination with the United States Secret Service to plan and execute over 30 missions across multiple continents, according to the release, which further stated that his ability, diligence, and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.

In July 2021, Thomas will become the executive officer of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter CONFIDENCE (WMEC-619) homeported in Port Canaveral, Florida. USCGC CONFIDENCE is a 210-foot medium endurance cutter with a crew of 75 men and women, tasked with conducting Coast Guard missions at sea throughout the world.

Thomas graduated from the United States Coast Guard Academy in 2008 with a bachelor of science degree in management, from the University of Maryland Robert H. Smith School of Business with an MBA and master of finance in 2016, and he is a 2003 graduate of Charlotte Amalie High School.

His previous assignments include the Office of Budget Execution for the Deputy Commandant of Mission Support, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters Washington DC; Assistant Navigator and First Lieutenant, U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Tampa, Portsmouth VA; Navigator and Division Chief USS Decatur (DDG 73) San Diego, Ca, and as Commanding Officer Coast Guard Cutter Sitkinak in Miami, FL. His military awards include the Navy Achievement Medal, Coast Guard Commendation Medal (2), the Commandant's Letter of Commendation, and various other unit and campaign awards. He was also awarded the DHS Outstanding Service Medal by Acting Secretary Chad Wolf.

He is married to Dr. Jennifer (nee Greaux) Thomas of St. Thomas, and they are the proud parents of Enam (3) & Nzuri (1). Nkosi is the son of Randolph and Janelle Thomas. Jennifer is the daughter of Lawrence and Donna Greaux. They are both 2003 graduates of Charlotte Amalie High School and are strong advocates for mentoring in the U.S. Virgin Islands and volunteering in communities at home and where they live.