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Abigail Valery is Recipient of Ten Sleepless Knights Inc.'s 14th Annual Scholarship Award of \$5,000

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Abigail Valery and mother, Merlin Valery, along with Ten Sleepless Knights, Inc. members By. KIWAUN CUMBERBATCH

ST. CROIX — Seventeen-year-old Abigail S. Valery, a 2021 high school graduate of the St. Croix Educational Complex, was awarded the Ten Sleepless Knights (TSK, Inc.) Annual Scholarship on Wednesday evening at the Frederick D. Dorsch Center before her family and several supporters from the community.

TSK, Inc. began awarding scholarships in 2007 in support of high school graduates pursuing higher education in the field of music. Abigail was awarded a check of \$5,000 from the organization.

Meet Abigail

Abigail was first introduced to music at a young age singing in her church. She continued exploring music under the instruction of Barbara Daniels at Ricardo Richards Elementary School. In junior high, she took up playing the flute with Mario Thomas. By high school, Abigail was an active member of the SCEC's marching band, concert band, and jazz ensemble as a flautist. According to Abigail's bio, she considered the band room her "home away from home" and referred to her band mates as her "extended family."

In Fall 2021, Abigail will be attending Boyer College of Music and Dance at Temple University in Pennsylvania as a Music Education major. Her plan is to return to the territory in the next 10 years to follow in the footsteps of the mentors who coached her along her musical journey. Abigail shared that she wants to improve music education in the Virgin Islands community. In her biography, she gave much recognition to the education, mentorship, and extra push from instructors like St. Croix Educational Complex band director Kevre Hendricks, band camp instructor Professor Venzen, Sacha Alexander, Ron Blake, and Lynn Speakman.

Ms. Alexander, a 2009 TSK scholarship recipient and current band director at the St. Croix Central High School, was Abigail's private flute instructor during her junior and senior years of high school.

"I think she has great potential for being a wonderful educator. She has good rapport with her peers, so that demonstrates that she will have good rapport with her students," Ms. Alexander said. She expressed that Abigail is also truly knowledgeable on subject matters regarding music.

Stanley and the Ten Sleepless Knights is best known for their traditional foreday morning Crucian Christmas Festival serenade through the neighborhoods on St. Croix. TSK, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose aim is to share the art form of Quelbe music throughout the world and support the V.I. community through college scholarships.