

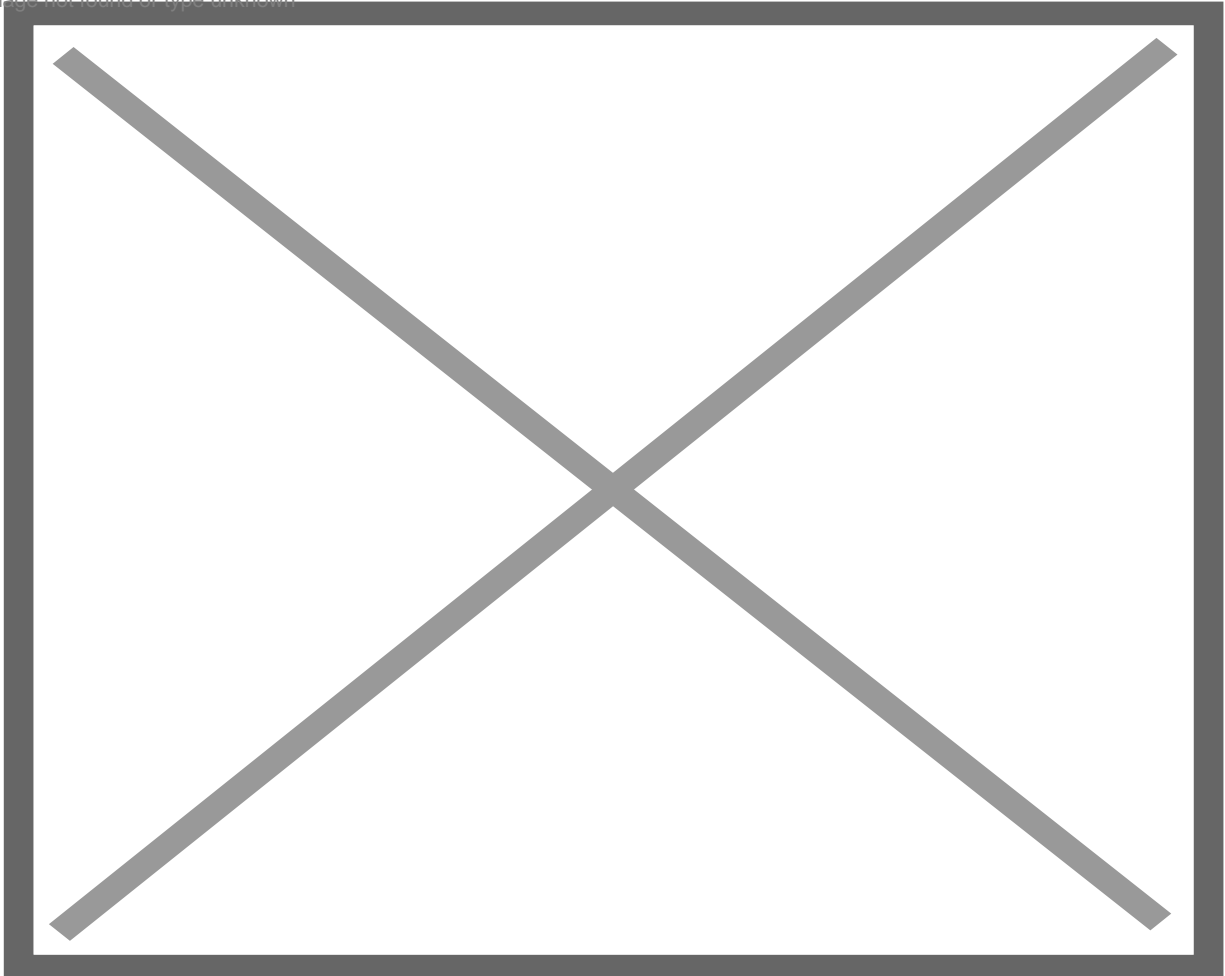
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Over a Dozen Graduates Join Law Enforcement Ranks in St. Thomas-St. John District

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The V.I. Police Department on Wednesday graduated 15 recruits in the St. Thomas-St. John District. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

ST. THOMAS — The V.I. Police Department on Wednesday held a commencement exercise for the St. Thomas-St. John District Recruit Training Class 2021-1, called "Blue Dogs", and the St. Thomas-St. John Auxiliary Training Class 2021-1, dubbed the "Small Axe Unit". The event was held at the University of the Virgin Islands' Sports and Fitness Center.

The exercise culminated with fifteen new peace officers graduating, four of whom will serve in a number of roles at the V.I.P.D., while eleven of the graduates will work directly with either the V.I.P.D., the V.I. Dept. of Planning and Natural Resources, the V.I. Port Authority and the V.I.

Dept. of Justice — all areas of government with enforcement arms.

Governor Albert Bryan, who attended the event, stated, “That really is the primary responsibility of your job, to keep Virgin Islanders safe, and the best way to keep them safe is to develop relationships and communicate with them so they want to keep you safe, too.”

According to Gov't House, Mr. Bryan said that when he was growing up, people saw police as the people who were going to lock them up, and not as public servants who were there to protect them. But the community does not want to live in fear of the police, he said.

“The majority of the times you will be doing things that you see people during the worst day of their life and helping them,” Mr. Bryan said, according to Gov't House. “But on the best day of their lives, you should be there to support them, too. Say hello every time you pass. Say good morning. Inquire when you see them look lost or sad or lonely. Be that person that you would want them to be in your greatest time of need.”

The VIPD graduating Class of 2021-2 for recruits from the St. Croix District will take place at 10 a.m. on Friday, September 17 at the Canegata Recreation Center.