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## 18 Recruits Join Law Enforcement Ranks in St. Thomas

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**Law enforcement recruits take oath of office during a ceremony in St. Thomas Wed. Oct. 12, 2022.**

The “Honey Badgers”, a second batch of police recruits have graduated in the U.S. Virgin Islands, this time from St. Thomas, to become law enforcement officers within the territory.

The cohort of 18 peace officers includes one auxiliary officer - Kevin JnoLewis – who was the only person to complete the auxiliary program territory-wide. He was commended for his diligence during the seven months of training.

“We started off with many in both districts, for one reason or another, we either had to get rid of some or they resigned,” remarked Training Office of the Information Commissioner (OIC),

Captain Maria Colon-Wattley.

JnoLewis was one of a few officers who were specially recognized as part of this year's program.

The highest average in all categories including firearm, academics and physical fitness went to Jonah Chitolie while the top academic student with the highest average in exams was named as Shalia Moolenar-Webber.

She was also awarded as Class Leader and received the Peace Officer Standards & Training (POST) scholarship along with Kendra Kent who also ranked high in academics. In addition, Ms. Kent along with officer George Francis Jr. were given the highest Firearm Award.

Cami Vanterpool was presented the Female Fitness Award while Andre DeSilva was awarded the male prize. Tasha Forbes received an award for being the Most Determined Recruit.

Meanwhile, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. and Senate President Donna A. Frett-Gregory paid special tribute to individuals who work within the Legislature and executive offices and had now graduated to become peace officers.

Ms. Frett-Gregory presented a token to Ms. Forbes as well as officer Delvin Fleming on behalf of the 34th Legislature, while Mr. Bryan did the same for his Executive Security, Ahmad Fred on behalf of the Office of the Governor General.

Officer Moolenar-Webber gave remarks at the graduation ceremony recognizing the St. Thomas community, family and friends who supported their career choice.

"I'm forever grateful for meeting all 17 class-mates and I will definitely say that we have formed life-long bonds with cadres and instructors who we could call for guidance and for that I would like to say thank you to all the captains, retired ones as well, lieutenants, sergeants, cadres, instructors or anyone who bestowed upon us knowledge and life lessons," she said.

Guest Speaker, agent Homer Inniss encouraged the officers to let their time on the job be one of purpose, meaning and of value to their community.

"These past few months have equipped you with the necessary tools to function in your various jobs," he said.

Police Commissioner at the VI Police Department, Raymond Martinez's advice to the new officers was simply: he encouraged them to "think."

"The most important tool any law enforcement officer can come to work with on a daily basis and must come to work with on a daily basis, is your brain because you've got to make the split-second decisions, so you always have to be thinking," he cautioned.

These new officers will go on to join one of seven law enforcement departments within the territory, including the VI Police Department; VI Bureau of Corrections; VI Dept. of Justice; Juan F. Luis Hospital; Office of the VI Marshal; VI Lottery and VI Port Authority.