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# A Man of 'Commitment and Passion,' a 'Highly Accomplished Physician': Condolences Pour in For Former Governor Schneider

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From l2r: Fmr Gov. Charles W. Turnbull (deceased), fmr. Gov. Kenneth Mapp, fmr. Gov. Roy Lester Schneider (deceased), and fmr. Gov. John P. de Jongh. By. GOV'T HOUSE

U.S. Virgin Islands officials have been issuing statements describing former Governor Roy Lester Schneider as a leader who was committed to his work in the territory both as the highest elected official and a masterful physician.

From current Governor Albert Bryan, Lieutenant Governor Tregenza Roach, Senate President Donna Frett-Gregory, Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett, to former Governor John P. de Jongh and University of the Virgin Islands President Dr. David Hali. They all praised the former governor as one whose work in the USVI will be remembered.

Dr. Schneider [died on Sunday in St. Thomas](#) at age 83 as a result of health complications.

The fifth elected governor of the USVI, his passing comes six months following the death of former Governor Charles W. Turnbull, [who died on Sunday, July 3](#).

"I was saddened to learn another one of our Great Virgin Islanders has passed. His accomplishments will undoubtedly be celebrated for generations to come," said Governor Bryan. "As a scholar, doctor, and former Governor, he blazed a trail of success and a standard of excellence. He will be missed. My deepest condolences to his family.

"Yolanda and I express our deepest and most heartfelt condolences to his family and all in our Virgin Islands community who are mourning his passing."

Mr. Roach stated, "I join a deeply saddened Virgin Islands community in mourning the passing of Former Governor Roy L. Schneider, M.D., and in extending condolences to his family, friends, and loved ones. As a son of the soil, Dr. Schneider was a pioneer, dedicated public servant, and embodiment of Virgin Islands pride. I offer a prayer of comfort, strength, and for the gift of God's grace to his family, loved ones, and friends as we remember this pillar of our community.

"His contributions personally and professionally touched many lives and had a tremendous impact on the Virgin Islands. As a distinguished Virgin Islander, Dr. Schneider's legacy was widely recognized throughout the Territory, Caribbean, and U.S. Mainland. His lifetime journey in the medical field and political arena was filled with many historic achievements."

Ms. Frett-Gregory spoke on behalf of herself and the entire 34th Legislature. "The members of the 34th Legislature are saddened by the news of the passing of the Former Governor Dr. Roy Lester Schneider, and joins the Virgin Islands community in mourning his loss. The 5th elected Governor of the Virgin Islands, Governor Schneider was a gifted physician and served the Virgin Islands and the United States with distinction. A Bronze Star Army Veteran, who served during the Vietnam War, was also awarded the Vietnamese Honor Medal by the Republic of Vietnam. "The awards presented by two nations denotes Governor Schneider's dedication, commitment and humanity and should not be lost on us."

Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett shared, "I was tremendously saddened to hear of the passing of Governor Schneider. A highly accomplished physician, military officer, university administrator and professor, Governor Schneider first distinguished himself in the U.S. Army Medical Corps during the Vietnam War, ultimately gaining the rank of Captain and several other distinctions, including a U.S. Bronze Star. After his service in the U.S. military, Governor Schneider eventually returned to the Virgin Islands and served as the Commissioner of the Department of Health for several years, overseeing the completion of new health facilities in the territory among other accomplishments. Governor Schneider was also an internationally renowned cancer specialist who served with distinction as the Vice Chairman of Howard University's Department of Oncology and associate director of the university's cancer center.

"In his term as Governor of the Virgin Islands, he provided steady leadership for the territory through the recovery period immediately after Hurricane Marilyn in 1995. Governor Schneider is a true example of a highly accomplished Virgin Islander, a native son of notable caliber and accomplishments rarely seen, having distinguished himself in multiple fields—medicine, military, and government."

Former Governor de Jongh expressed, "Cecile and I extend our condolences to the family of Governor Schneider and the wider Virgin Islands community, a community he served as a physician, as Commissioner of Health, a mentor to those interested in the healthcare field, and as

our Governor on the occasion of his passing. As the fifth elected Governor of our Territory, he was at the right place in 1995, as his years of training and leadership in a time of crisis guided us through the aftermath of Hurricane Marilyn.

"Governor Schneider was victorious in his second run for the Governorship, indicating a commitment, passion, and drive to serve. He came to this effort from years of involvement at the pinnacle of the medical profession but also having seen and experienced years of involvement with Governors Cyril King and Juan Luis. He was a recruiter of talent for our medical facilities and pushed for the construction of our hospitals. During my 2006 campaign, I had an opportunity to meet with him, and I will always recall one piece of advice: "people don't care what you know until they know that you care!" A mantra that is key to the success for all that hold positions of leadership.

"May the passing of time and strength of our memories of Governor Schneider provide comfort to his family and our community."

Dr. Hall said, "The University of the Virgin Islands and I are saddened by the news of the passing of former Governor Roy Schneider, who served as the 5th elected Governor of the Virgin Islands. His legacy and accomplishments are numerous and will live on in this Territory forever. One of those accomplishments, which many are not aware, is that he along with former Senate President Louis Patrick Hill, convened a meeting, at the University, of influential government leaders and national renewable energy consultants to explore the role of renewable energy in the Territory. Out of those meetings, one which occurred at his home, was the creation of the University's Caribbean Green Technology Center. He had been out of office for numerous years at that time but still cared deeply about the future of the Virgin Islands. The Center which he and others helped usher into existence has been a valuable source for policy development, research and training throughout the Territory, and still fulfills his vision every day.

"The University's deep commitment to creating a medical school in the Virgin Islands is a dream to continue to build on the enormous medical expertise and knowledge that he brought to the Territory, which is why the hospital in St. Thomas, which has always been a partner with the University in this effort, bears his name.

"The University conveys its sincere sympathy and I share my prayers and thanks to his family for sharing this great man with us."