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23 More Young Virgin Islanders Making \$55,000 a Year in Bryan Administration's GVI Fellows Program

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GVI Fellows' 2023 Cohort pose for a picture with Governor Albert Bryan (center), and other administration officials. By. GOV'T HOUSE

Twenty-three young Virgin Islanders were inducted into the second cohort of the Government of the Virgin Islands Financial Fellowship program on Tuesday.

The program, called GVI Fellows, was [conceived in 2021](#) and is intended to introduce more young people to public service, giving them opportunities to learn and be paid while being trained in high-paying fields.

The new GVI Fellows were selected from over 50 applicants after vigorous screening from the Division of Personnel, officials said.

“During the interview process you know we had the opportunity to work with some of the other agency heads and we had at least 10 individuals that were referred out right on the spot and were offered jobs right then and there, so that was a really good opportunity for some of those individuals,” said Personnel Director Cindy Richardson during the Tuesday morning ceremony.

This year, the Fellows will be assigned to 8-month rotations between the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority, the Bureau of Information Technology, and the Office of Disaster Recovery in conjunction with the Department of Public Works. The first batch of fellows had 6-month rotations because they had four departmental assignments rather than three.

The new fellows were given words of encouragement by Governor Albert Bryan who exhorted them to set high standards for their lives. “Now you’re GVI fellows,” the governor told the cohort, “and it doesn’t stop here.”

Mr. Bryan advised the cohort to ignore those who might now be envious of their progress. “You guys are going to meet a lot of resistance on the job too,” he said. “You can meet a lot of good people but you’re going to meet people who resent for the fact that you make \$55,000 a year.”

The governor continued, “You are worth it and you have to walk the walk and talk the talk, not only for yourself and not only for every other fellow, but for every young Virgin Islander that’s trying to make their way back home.”

Part of the vision for the program is that current Fellows will become job creators in the future, Mr. Bryan said. “My goal was never to make all y’all work for the government, that’s not important,” he explained. “It is even more important that you go out and you start businesses and you create jobs. See, you’re not the people that are supposed to work for people, you’re the people that are supposed to create jobs.”

The new cohort brings the total number of participants in the 2-year-old program to over 30. The first cohort is in its third six-month rotation. Each fellow has been issued a laptop and other tools necessary for their new roles.

The fellows are full-time exempt employees with all the benefits of GVI employees.