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Governor Bryan Introduces 2021 GVI Financial Fellows

New Program by Bryan-Roach Administration Invests in USVI's Young Adults While Investing In the Territory's Economic Future

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – Governor Albert Bryan Jr. on Tuesday introduced the first 12 participants in the Bryan-Roach Administration's GVI Financial Fellows Program, which is designed to provide opportunities for training and jobs working in the Government of the Virgin Islands to the Territory's best and brightest young adults while helping secure a strong economic future for the USVI.

Of the 38 applicants, 12 students were selected for the first fellowship and will spend the next two years working in the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Department of Finance (DOF) and the Office of Disaster Recovery (ODR), rotating on 6-month schedules to gain experience in all four departments.

OMB Director Jenifer O'Neal will manage the program, and each of the Fellows will be full-time employees with all of the benefits of other GVI employees and be assigned mentors who are from various agencies within the Government of the Virgin Islands and will give a minimum of 8 hours per month to their mentees.

"This is positive impact. Next year we will see the first class graduate from UVI that got the free tuition. This is a positive message to them saying we are preparing a place at the table for you," Governor Bryan said during

his announcement of the new program and introduction of the Fellows at the University of the Virgin Islands Administration and Conference Center on St. Thomas.

The 2021 Financial Fellows chosen are:

- Roberto Tirado
- Khaleila Krall
- Mahlayi DeFoe
- Desiree Fleming
- Jamila Felix
- Lineek Williams
- Kahina Brannigan
- Malachi Peterson
- Shani Isaac
- Harold Brown
- Victoria Gario
- Acassia Ferguson

The Governor said that realistically he doesn't expect all 12 Fellows will go to work for the government, but the program gives them the tools, training and exposure so they can choose to work for the government or they can choose to go out and power the private sector.

"We are building this economy step by step, person by person. Education, workforce development, housing – being able to put these things together to make sure young people have an opportunity to build lives in the Virgin Islands," Governor Bryan said. "It's not being done in a haphazard way. It's done in a very strategic way of organizing our infrastructure, involving our future and having them have input in what is to take place."

Each of the participants are from various backgrounds and have college degrees received within the last three years. They all have been provided with a laptop and the tools necessary for them to be fully functional in their new roles.

"The Fellows Program was conceived many months ago as a way to bring more young people into the Public Service; giving them opportunities to learn and be paid while being trained," Director O'Neal said. "Because it has been so incredibly hard to recruit persons with both the skills and the experience to fill vacancies within GVI, we ultimately see this Program as the beginning of an initiative that is a win-win for both the individual Fellows and GVI."

The Bryan-Roach Administration is committed to investing in the Territory's people, infrastructure and future through transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit transparency.vi.gov.

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