GOVERNMENT HOUSE
UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 12, 2022
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Governor Bryan Nominates St. Johnian Delia Thomas To Be Virgin Islands Inspector General

Retroactive Pay online portal goes live so government employees can check whether they are entitled to retroactive wages and how much they will receive

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — During Tuesday's Government House Weekly Briefing, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. named Deputy Inspector General Delia Thomas, who was born on St. John and has worked in the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) since its inception, to be the next Virgin Islands Inspector General.

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG), formerly the Virgin Islands Bureau of Audit and Control, was created by the Virgin Islands Legislature under Act 6333 in 1999 as a separate, independent agency of the Government of the Virgin Islands, and it functions as the major auditing arm of the Government.

Under Act 6333, OIG also conducts audits and investigations of government programs and operations; investigates and recommends policies to prevent fraud, waste and abuse; refers criminal conduct to the Virgin Islands Attorney General's Office; and alerts the Attorney General to monetary losses for recovery by civil suit.

"The Office of the Inspector General is really there to ensure that we're accountable, that we're using the public's money wisely, and most importantly that there's no malfeasance or waste involved. We need a person who is impeccable in order, whose integrity can not be questioned," Governor Bryan said.

"It givers me great pleasure to send her name, Ms. Delia Thomas, down to the Legislature this week as the next Inspector General of the Virgin Islands," the Governor said. "I know she's going to do us all proud here in the Virgin Islands and create a new legacy of leadership at the Office of the Inspector General."

Inspector General Nominee Thomas began her government career in June 1989 as a junior auditor with the Virgin Islands Bureau of Audit and Control, working her way up to Audit Manager in 1999. In March of 2001, Inspector General Nominee Thomas was appointed acting Deputy Virgin Islands Inspector General and promoted to the position in June 2002.

Ms. Thomas' nomination now goes before the 34th Legislature for approval.

Retroactive Pay Portal
Governor Bryan also thanked the Legislature for taking action to approve the Bryan-Roach Administration's plan to address the wages owed to government employees for retroactive pay.

"As of this morning, you can login to www.dopusvi.org/retro and see if you are entitled to retroactive wages and how much. If there are any disputes, we advise you to resolve them before the checks get printed in a few weeks," Governor Bryan said.

Community Business Forum
The Governor also spoke about the success of the Community Business Forum hosted last week by the Government of the Virgin Islands (GVI) and Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines last week on St. Croix. It was the fifth such event, and it offered the local business community an opportunity to engage directly with Administration officials and cruise experts to plan for the upcoming season.

Earlier this year, the cruise industry announced plans to increase port calls to island of St. Croix in the upcoming cruising season, and speakers at the forum included representatives from Royal Caribbean Cruise Line; the Department of Tourism; the Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation; the St. Croix Chamber of Commerce; and the University of the Virgin Islands,' School of Business.

"Local small business stakeholders came out in droves to learn more about the increase in cruise calls and passengers coming to St. Croix this cruising season," Governor Bryan said. "We organized this event to ensure that we connected our vendors and small business owners with the industry leaders to get more information on how they can build capacity and expand the scope of their businesses to capitalize on this opportunity."

"Having a 300 percent increase in cruise travel to St. Croix is a win for our small businesses, particularly those in the town of Frederiksted. It is a win for our taxi drivers and small vendors and a win for our Virgin Islands economy," the Governor said.

Tropical weather outlook
During his weekly update, VITEMA Director Daryl Jaschen opened his remarks with the good news that the Territory now has passed the peak date of September 10 for threat of Hurricanes and Tropical Storms based on data from the past 100 years from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Director Jaschen said VITEMA currently is tracking two tropical disturbances – one in the East Atlantic just off the coast of Africa and one in the Central Atlantic between Africa and the Windward Islands. Both systems currently have a low 20 percent chance of formation in the next five days.

This also the fourth and final week for "Operation Blue Skies" sandbag distribution, which is conducted by VITEMA, the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the V.I. Fire and EMS Service and provides residents with six pre-packed sandbags per household

Distribution sites are open on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to noon, and at DPW on Thursdays from 1 to 4 p.m. V.I. Fire and EMS Service sites available on Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For up-to-date weather information and advisories, sandbag distribution sites and tips for hurricane preparedness, visit vitema.vi.gov.

Monkeypox
Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion said the Territory still has no confirmed cases of Monkeypox; however, the Department of Health is still awaiting the results of one pending test. To date, DOH has provided more than 50 doses of the Monkeypox vaccine to residents, she said.

DOH has embarked on a territory-wide Monkeypox education campaign, and Monkeypox vaccinations are available at no cost in the Territory.

To learn more about being eligible for a monkeypox vaccination, call 340-774-9000 ext. 4663.

For more information about monkeypox, use the "Communicable Disease" tab on the Department of Health website at doh.vi.gov.

COVID-19 cases as of September 12
- Currently tracking 156 active cases (103 STX; 51 STT; 2 STJ)
- There are 2 COVID-19 patients hospitalized at Luis Hospital on St. Croix.
- There are 3 COVID-19 patients hospitalized at Schneider Regional Medical Center on St. Thomas.

Commissioner Encarnacion also advised residents that with the flu season approaching, it is safe to get the COVID-19 bivalent vaccine and the flu vaccine at the same time.

"Yes, it is safe to get both together, and this is actually recommended by the CDC," Commissioner Encarnacion said.

COVID-19 vaccinations are available by scheduling an appointment:
St. Croix – 340-244-0016
St. Thomas – 340-777-8804 ext. 2600
St. John – 340-776-6400

COVID-19 Testing
The schedule is as follows:
St. Croix – Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the Charles Harwood Memorial parking lot
St. Thomas – Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday – 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the Schneider Regional Medical Center loading dock
St. John – Wednesday from noon to 3 p.m.

More COVID-19 Information

Anyone who thinks they may have contracted COVID-19 can call the Epidemiology hotline at 340-712-6299 (STX) or 340-776-1519 (STT-STJ). For more information, visit covid19usvi.com.

The Bryan-Roach Administration is 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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