

PRESS RELEASE

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Senior Citizens' Month Declared Open

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The Virgin Islands will celebrate its senior citizens through the month of May in a series of events in observance of Senior Citizens Month.

The activities are designed to honour their legacy, amplify their voices and recognise the invaluable role senior citizens continue to play in shaping the Virgin Islands community

Minister for Health and Social Development, Honourable Vincent O. Wheatley, used the time to call for a cultural shift on how aging is perceived in the Virgin Islands at the launch on May 2.

Honourable Wheatley said, “When we flip the script, it should remind us that getting older does not mean stepping into the background. Rather, it often means stepping into new and vital roles such as mentors, storytellers, and advocates. We honour all our seniors, not just for the years they have accumulated, but for the immeasurable contributions they have made — and continue to make — in our families, our communities, and our Territory.”

Minister Wheatley also commended the Social Development Department for its dedication to recognising and celebrating seniors, particularly centenarians, in meaningful ways. He added, “As people live longer, it is essential that they also live better — with dignity, a sense of purpose, and the full support of their families and communities.”

Meanwhile, Premier of the Virgin Islands, Honourable Dr. Natalio D. Wheatley, spoke about the deep impact of seniors on the Territory’s identity stating that the Virgin Islands would not be what it is without them.

Premier Wheatley said. “Thank you for the sacrifices you have made, the wisdom you have shared, and the love that you have given. You are the foundation of our community and your legacy is woven into the fabric of the Virgin Islands. Aging is not the twilight of life — it’s the dawn of new possibility.”

The Premier further encouraged the community to ensure that older adults feel supported and celebrated year-round.

“Together let us build a society where every senior citizen feels valued, supported, and celebrated — not just during Senior Citizens’ Month but every day of the year,” the Premier added.

This year's theme, "Flip the Script on Aging," sets the tone for a month dedicated to reimagining aging — not as a period of decline, but as a time of empowerment, purpose and continued contribution.

As part of the opening ceremony, the Social Development Department paid special tribute to Former Chief Social Development Officer Mrs. Edith Penn, for her outstanding contribution to the growth and evolution of the department and to the development of social work in the Virgin Islands. Mrs. Penn was recognised for her decades of dedication to community service and for paving the way for many of the programmes and services that continue to support vulnerable populations.

A full calendar of events has been planned for Senior Citizens' Month, including:

- Virgin Gorda Fantastic Friday – May 9
- Seniors Mix n' Mingle – May 14
- Cultural Soirée – May 16
- Anegada Seniors' Monday Funday – May 19
- Sports Day – May 21
- Senior Prom in Virgin Gorda – May 24
- Spelling Bee: Senior Edition – May 25
- Jost Van Dyke Social – May 27
- Senior Ball – May 31

The Ministry of Health and Social Development remains committed to improving the health and social well-being of the people of the Virgin Islands.

Gallery

