

PRESS RELEASE

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Department of Trade Celebrates Completion of Entrepreneur Training Programme

Release Date: 3 December, 2025



The Department of Trade and Investment Promotion, in partnership with the H. Lavity Stoutt Community College (HLSCC), celebrated the successful completion of its three-week Entrepreneur Training Programme during an award ceremony held on Monday, 1 December 2025, at the HLSCC Marine Centre.

The ceremony marked a proud milestone for the initiative, which aims to strengthen the Territory's entrepreneurial ecosystem by equipping aspiring business owners with practical skills, technical knowledge, and industry-relevant training.

In attendance were Honourable Lorna G. Smith, OBE, Minister for Financial Services, Economic Development and Digital Transformation, Deputy Director of the Department of Trade and Investment Promotion, Dr. Lincoln Bobb, HLSCC Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Ronald Brunson, Business Development Manager of the National Business Bureau, Mr. Leroy James, programme instructors and 12 of the 20 awardees.

During the ceremony, Honourable Smith delivered remarks on the significance of the programme and its role in building a vibrant, resilient economy. She said, "Every step you take to strengthen your business helps strengthen the Territory as a whole. As a government, we're working to make that path as smooth as possible, improving the business environment, modernizing systems, and creating more space for people to grow their ideas."

Deputy Director of the Department of Trade and Investment Promotion, Dr. Lincoln Bobb, also commended the participants for their hard work and noted the Department's commitment to continued support for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises across the Virgin Islands.

HLSCC Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Ronald Brunson, highlighted the college's ongoing partnership with Government to advance entrepreneurship education and create opportunities that empower residents to thrive in the local and global economy. Dr. Brunson said, "Partnerships like this remind us that we are not just here to educate students but also empower the community at large."

Looking ahead, the Department of Trade and Investment Promotion will roll out several key initiatives designed to further strengthen the local business landscape. Building on the success of the inaugural cohort, the second Entrepreneur Training Programme is set to commence in early February. The Department will also introduce a structured Mentorship Programme that pairs emerging entrepreneurs with seasoned business professionals, providing essential guidance to help new ventures navigate common start-up challenges.

In addition, the Department is nearing the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Malta and the H. Lavity Stoutt Community College to establish a Global Knowledge Exchange, ensuring BVI businesses and HLSCC students gain access to cutting-edge international insights that support global competitiveness. The successful MSME Grant Programme will also continue, with eligible business owners invited to apply for funding evaluated through a merit-based process by a Cabinet-appointed committee.

For more information, please contact the Department of Trade and Investment Promotion at (284) 468-4280/4334 or email bvinbb@gov.vg or bvitrade@gov.vg.

For Additional Information Contact:

A circular portrait of Naudia Turnbull, a Black woman with long braids, wearing a dark blazer over a white shirt, smiling. The background of the portrait is a dark blue circle.

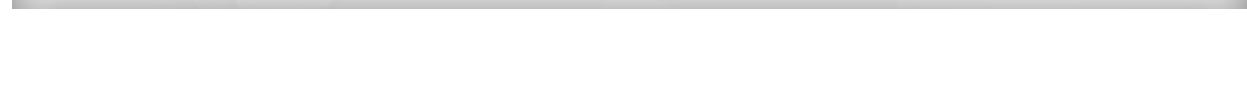
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