

## Honorary Doctorate - Ruth Moolenaar

For Ruth Moolenaar, “service before self” has been a guiding principle in life. She carved a niche in education as a teacher at Lincoln School (now Jarvis), Washington School (now Marcelli), Leonard Dober School and later as the first principal of the Jane E. Tuitt School. In so doing, she touched the lives of numerous Virgin Islanders, many now contributing to their communities abroad and locally.

Her belief that knowledge of and pride in one’s culture is fundamental to a sense of self was reflected in her activities as Coordinator of Project Introspection (1969-1985), a cultural heritage education program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The Project produced Virgin Islands cultural and historical instructional materials for grades K-12, many still in use today.

One of her numerous publications produced at Project Introspection is the, two volume *Profiles of Outstanding Virgin Islanders*, a popular collection of biographies of over 100 notable Virgin Islanders. In 1985, she wrote *SAVANNE*, a monograph on the settlement of the Savan neighborhood that was included in the publications of the American Folklife Festival of the Smithsonian Institution when it focused on the US Virgin Islands in 1991. Her most recent publication, sponsored by the VI Humanities Council and We From Upstreet, Inc., is *Legacies of Upstreet* (2006), which chronicles the history and legacy of this historic neighborhood.



Ruth Moolenaar

After 42 years of service, Mrs. Moolenaar retired from the VI Department of Education in 1985 and was honored by the Council of Teachers of English and the Association of Education Administrators.

In 1992, she was elected to the Board of Education and served as Vice-Chair. Mrs. Moolenaar was active in several gubernatorial and senatorial campaigns and was honored by the VI Democratic Party. She also served on many civic and cultural boards. These include the Business and Professional Women’s Organization, League of Women Voters, VI Humanities Council, the Society for Historic Preservation, State Review Board for Historic Preservation and the Law Enforcement Planning Commission. She was also the first chairman of the VI Cultural Heritage Institute, serving several years in that capacity.

Mrs. Moolenaar is the recipient of many awards: she was commended by the 20th Legislature of the VI (1994) through Resolution Number 1510; received the League of Women Voters Impact Award (1997), the prestigious Humanist Award (1993) from the VI Humanities Council, and their VI Scholar Award (2006).

She has been an invited speaker at many commemorations, including the celebration of VI Emancipation (1993), the Diamond Jubilee Celebration of Transfer Day, the commemoration of the purchase of the West Indian Company (WICO) dock, the Association of Caribbean States (1993), and by We From Upstreet, Inc. (2015). One of her favorite honors is the caliso song, *VI Heroes*, composed in her honor by celebrated calypsonian, Dr. Hollis Liverpool, “Mighty Chalkdust.”

A 1940 graduate of Charlotte Amalie High School, Mrs. Moolenaar received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Education from Cheyney State College, Master’s degree in Educational Administration from New York University and completed postgraduate studies at the University of Hartford and University of Illinois.

She was married to Lucien Moolenaar, Sr., (deceased) and had 3 children: Dr. Gwen-Marie Moolenaar, Dr. Lucien A. Moolenaar, and Gwynneth M. Moolenaar, Esq., and adopted daughter Ingrid Warrington. She is grandmother to Lucien Moolenaar, III, Esq., Lucienne Moolenaar, Ashley-Ruth Moolenaar Bernier and Shenelle Moolenaar and has 7 great-grandchildren Eleni, James III, Jonah and Ethan Bernier, Eleyah Gordon, and Ainslie and Isaac Moolenaar.

Fifty-Second Annual

# Commencement



## ST. THOMAS

Thursday, the Twelfth of May  
Two Thousand and Sixteen  
Half after One O'clock in the Afternoon  
Sports and Fitness Center  
St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands

## ST. CROIX

Friday, the Thirteenth of May  
Two Thousand and Sixteen  
Half after One O'clock in the Afternoon  
Campus Grounds  
St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands