

SSB Celebrates 40th Anniversary

Special recognition to staff who have served 10 years and more

July 10, 2020, Road Town, Tortola - The Social Security Board (SSB) of the Virgin Islands celebrated its 40th Anniversary on July 2 by giving special recognition to staff members who served the Board for 10 years and more.

The recognition ceremony took place on Friday, July 3rd, at the SSB headquarters and was attended by Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration with responsibility for Social Security, Honourable Vincent Wheatley.

The minister told team members they are doing “fantastic work”.

He said, “We are so thankful today to come together to celebrate this significant milestone, during this COVID-19 period where the Board has just given the Government \$40-million; something that [some] persons thought was foolishness, today has become our life stream.”

Minister Wheatley told the history of the formation of the Board, when 40 years ago, then Chief Minister Honourable H. Lavity Stoutt received significant opposition from his Government. He explained that when the Bill was raised at the [Legislative Council], the then Leader of the Opposition Ralph T. O’Neal seconded the [Bill] which would establish the Social Security Board. Honourable Wheatley noted that it was the first time in BVI history where the Opposition passed a piece of legislation.

Honourable Wheatley thanked the Director for her firm leadership of 38 years, the Board members for their commitment, and the staff for their hard work.

SSB Chairman, Ian S. Smith, highlighted the viability of the social security fund, having accumulated \$725-million since inception. He attributed this achievement to the hard work of the staff over 40 years of operations. The Chairman also implored everyone to continue to do their best, adding, “The sky is the limit.”

Mr. Smith thanked Honourable Wheatley, and commended Ms. Skelton and her team members, adding, “We are committed to supporting the Government and the people of the Virgin Islands well into the future.”

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SSB Director Antoinette Skelton spoke about the beginnings of SSB, when she joined the team 38 years ago. She shared that SSB at that time had received a grant from the Virgin Islands Government of \$50k to fund its operations, and had a very small staff who did everything, including cleaning the office. Ms. Skelton also said the BVI has made a mark through SSB, as it is a model in the region.

Director Skelton said the 40th Anniversary is an auspicious occasion and explained that the pandemic hindered the planning of what would otherwise have been a grand celebration.

Long-serving team members recognised for ten or more years of service include: Dawn Nibbs, Jason Malone, Glance Richardson, Yvonne Thomas, Roy Barry, Jeanette Scatliffe-Boynes, Larencia Baptiste-Young, Faron Harley, Jarion Jackson, Linda Allen, Rainaldo Scatliffe, Desiree Woodley, Ojante Thomas, Lesia Donovan, Alicia Neale, Larnett Whattley, Gloria Mactavious, Gloria Fahie, Lisa Mcintosh-Bobb, Gerda Jones, Shirleen Stoutt, Lorrily Anthony, Sayretta Pickering and Antoinette Skelton.

The mission of the Social Security Board is to *“provide social security benefits to our contributors and their families through strong leadership, prudent investment and the sustained efforts of a highly motivated and professional staff”*.

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NOTES TO EDITOR(S): Photo Collage and Audio Clips are attached.

Photo collage - SSB 40th Anniversary Awardees