

The Virgin Islands
Department of Education Presents
**2022-2023 ST. THOMAS-ST. JOHN DISTRICT
TEACHER OF THE YEAR CANDIDATE**

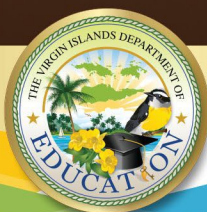


CARISHMA ROMNEY

Academy of Hospitality & Tourism
Charlotte Amalie High School

————— **For full bio, visit www.vide.vi** —————

————— *"Transforming Today's Learners Into Tomorrow's Leaders"* —————



Carishma Romney

Biography

The recipe to a successful path differs for everyone. To create my career pathway, it took a cup of faith, a pound of prayer, an ounce of love, and a dash of hope, blended to perfection.

If you asked me about my aspirations at an early age, my response remains the same today as it was yesterday- becoming a teacher. Because of my fondness for teaching, I spent many days playing school with my dolls as my students. I've always had a love for food, but my true love for the kitchen occurred while watching my parents prepare a variety of meals and spending many holidays and summers helping my late grandmother prepare some of my favorite dishes. While most children my age were busy watching cartoons, I spent my free time watching TV, catching up on my favorite show, "Great Chefs of the World." With hopes that I would someday appear on that show, I often went into the kitchen and mimicked what I saw on TV. I also spent many weekends assisting one of the Virgin Islands' Culinary Legends, former Educator, Mr. Ecedro Wesslehoff, with several of his catering services at various events. It was truly then, that my desire for cooking intensified. Throughout my high school years, I nurtured my passion for and enrolled in every available Home Economics class as preparation for the Hotel Training Program at Charlotte Amalie High School.

As a student in the Hotel Training Program at CAHS, not only did I fine-tune my cooking skills, but I explored the art of baking. After a conversation with my dedicated teacher, Ms. Mia Felix, I decided to pursue a degree in Baking & Pastry Arts instead of Culinary Arts. I was blessed with the opportunity to complete my On-The-Job- Training at Marriott Frenchman's Reef where I gained extensive knowledge and met amazing individuals, all of whom would later play a major role in my future endeavors. During my senior year of high school, I volunteered at "A Child's Place" Preschool, where I assisted with teaching and nurturing toddlers, preparing snacks, and ensuring that the little ones were ready for parent pickup. That experience would inevitably rekindle my love for teaching.

Upon graduating from Charlotte Amalie High School in 2006, I attended Johnson & Wales University, where I received my degree in Baking & Pastry Arts. After college, I returned home with hopes of bringing my newfound talents to the Hotel Industry. However, after a number of unsuccessful attempts, I became an entrepreneur. I baked and decorated cakes for family and friends, still utilizing my degree and skills. Later, I began working alongside another Virgin Islands Culinarian, Mr. Dean Simon, at Dean's Cakes & Ice Catering where I assisted as a baker, cake decorator, cook, and server for many of his catered events. It was during this time that the universe aligned and created an opportunity for me to combine my love of baking and cooking with my passion for teaching.

In 2014, I began my teaching career as a "Beginning Foods" teacher at my Alma Mater, Charlotte Amalie High School. Years later, in 2019, I had the opportunity to become the Academy of Hospitality & Tourism (AOHT) Instructor under the National Academy Foundation (NAF) where I now teach Baking & Pastry Arts, Food Sanitation & Production, Culinary Arts, Sustainable Tourism, Sports Entertainment & Event Planning, and On-the-Job Training. During

my time as the AOHT Instructor, I have received numerous awards and certificates including “The Extra Mile Award”, “Exemplary Virtual Classroom” Award, “St. Thomas U.S. Army Recruiting Certificate”, ServSafe Certification, a Certificate in Hospitality and Tourism Management from Florida Atlantic University, and three successful “Event Planning Showcases.” I’m also a member of the Hospitality Committee at CAHS, The Miss CAHS Committee as an In-School Chaperone for Miss CAHS Contestants, the Introductory Night Committee and the Graduation Committee at CAHS.

Sometimes, the hardest times often lead to the greatest moments of your life. I have been fortunate to be able to turn my childhood dream into a career for more than seven years. My greatest accomplishments as an educator, thus far, is propelling my students to be the best that they can be no matter their strengths, challenges, or circumstances. I do this by bringing a positive attitude and an eagerness to share knowledge and the curiosity to seek out solutions to obstacles that are encountered along the way. Taking time to hear each student allows me to learn from them and communicate to them that their words and thoughts are valued and important. I try to motivate each student through the demonstration of my own passion for learning and through the introduction to as many learning experiences as I can, something that was done to me, so many years ago. I aim to be the best teacher I can be by creating a learning environment where students feel safe, valued, and encouraged. I truly care about every one of my students and aspire to make this clear to them with every interaction. I am also honored to work with dedicated teachers who collaborate regularly to enrich the lives of our students. I love teaching and learning, and look forward daily to making a positive impact on the children of the Virgin Islands. I am beyond grateful and honored to be considered for the coveted Teacher of the Year Award.