

# The Honorable Athniel C. “Addie” Ottley

Doctor of Humane Letters

Athniel “Addie” C. Ottley is the President and Chief Executive Officer of WSTA 1340-AM, also known as “The Peoples’ Station.” Addie, as he is affectionately known, is an influential individual who is well-loved by the community. His love of broadcasting comes naturally to his warm and approachable demeanor evidenced in his popular “Addie Ottley Morning Show,” the #1 radio program in the Virgin Islands. His program features old school music and live phone and in-studio interviews with government officials, community leaders and others, including discussions with the public concerning political and social issues. In addition to the calls, Addie always has the most important news of the day. When Addie talks, everyone listens!



Athniel C. “Addie” Ottley

From a very early age, Addie showed an interest in the communications arena as a field for his prodigious energy. He built and operated his own ham radio station becoming the first teenager to be granted such a license in the Virgin Islands. He attended the RCA Institute of Technology in New York majoring in Electronics and subsequently attended Indiana Institute of Technology majoring in Electronics and Engineering. In 1965, Addie returned to St. Thomas and worked at WSTA and was later promoted to manager. During this period, he started his widely respected and much listened to radio program and extended his community involvement by producing weekly television series. Addie also became the host of “Face to Face,” a weekly TV show produced by the Public Broadcasting Station.

Addie has a long and distinguished record of public service in the Virgin Islands. He was elected to the Legislature in 1970 and 1972. In 1973, he was appointed Lieutenant Governor in the administration of the late Governor Melvin H. Evans. Addie served as public relations representative for the Department of Commerce, functioning as the ambassador of goodwill for the expanding Virgin Islands tourism industry. In 1978, he was re-elected to a third term in the Legislature, and in 1981 was appointed executive assistant to the Commissioner of Commerce. In 1984, Addie became President of Ottley Communications and realized his boyhood dream of owning a radio station. Along with a group of local investors, Addie purchased WSTA, making it the first radio station owned by local stakeholders.

In addition to his professional interests, Addie is actively involved in a wide spectrum of community projects and preserving Virgin Islands culture. A lifelong ambassador of the Virgin Islands, Addie has served on numerous boards, commissions, and civic organizations including Reichhold Center for the Arts, United Negro College Fund, Muscular Dystrophy Association annual telethon, Civilian Liaison Officer for the Virgin Islands National Guard, St. Thomas-St. John Chamber of Commerce, Phi Kappa Theta Fraternity, Mental Health Commission, Arts Alive and the Rotary Club of St. Thomas. Addie, a devout Catholic, successfully led the restoration effort for the Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral, a historic landmark originally commissioned by King Christian VII of Denmark in 1773. Addie received the special distinction of having been knighted by Pope Francis to the Order of St. Gregory.

A living embodiment of the maxim “Service Above Self,” Addie is an irreplaceable consummate local treasure and icon. However, of all of Addie’s contributions, the magnitude of how he has used his talent and radio station platform to be a beacon of hope and a voice of reason for the Virgin Islands is the one that is most engendered in the hearts and souls of Virgin Islanders. Addie and WSTA are no strangers to being on air during and in the aftermath of storms like Hurricanes Hugo (1989) and Marilyn (1995). However, the devastation of Hurricanes Irma and Maria in September 2017 silenced all radio and television stations and most communication. Addie was the only one on the communication waves. People everywhere tuned in to hear important updates about aid, restoration and recovery, to find and help loved ones and neighbors, to seek medical attention, or just a comforting voice and reassurance from him that “today is a better day than yesterday.” Addie’s courage and strength were also tested after the storms when he played on air a glimpse of what he and his family were dealing with right before the loss of his son. Addie’s unparalleled contributions to the Virgin Islands has left an indelible mark and the people of the Territory are forever indebted to his life of service.

# Fifty-Fourth Annual Commencement



ST. CROIX  
Friday, the Eighteenth of May  
Two Thousand and Eighteen  
Half after One O'clock in the Afternoon  
Albert A. Sheen Campus  
St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands

ST. THOMAS  
Thursday, the Seventeenth of May  
Two Thousand and Eighteen  
Half after One O'clock in the Afternoon  
UVI Sports and Fitness Center  
St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands