

Contact

Offshore Editing Services
on behalf of PJIAE N.V.
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P.O. Box 460
Philipsburg, St. Martin
Caribbean
Tel (599) 554-7089
E-mail: Offshoreediting@gmail.com

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NewsRelease

PJIAE Section Head Security Guards delivers moving keynote address at PWAS graduation

ST. PETERS, St. Maarten (June 25, 2012)—PJIAE Section Head Security Guards Elsidro St. Jago, delivered the keynote address to some 18 graduates of the Prince Willem Alexander School (PWAS) on Friday.

When, as corporate citizen, Princess Juliana Int'l Airport adopted the special learning institution a few months ago, little did management know that St. Jago spent his early years at PWAS, which influenced his climb up the company ladder.

The theme of the graduation ceremony was “We Will Learn, Grow and Make the Whole World Proud” and St. Jago explained to students how he did the same with his life.

The newly appointed Section head of security guards at St. Maarten's international airport recounted his first day at the school to eagerly listening students, teachers and administrators, parents, and invited guests, which included PJIAE officials.

St. Jago said that his “first day was hard and he sat in a corner and cried for weeks.” He then disclosed how he “decided to stop waiting for others to make changes” in his life and “decided to make changes” on his own.

St. Jago spent four out of the seven required years at PWAS, which at that time was called John Larmonie Primary School, and went on to attend the Milton Peters College (MPC). He told the class of 2012 that after MPC high school, he received a scholarship and attended the Dean Institute of Technology in Pittsburg, USA, and obtained an Associate Degree in Architectural Drafting Engineering.

On returning to St. Maarten fresh out of college, St. Jago's said he found that all of the companies that he contacted for employment wanted “experience.”

He told the students that he did not give up and eventually “found a job with Windward Islands Airways International NV (WINAIR) for just over two years and a half.” Thereafter, from 1995 until August 2011, he spent 17 years in the Fire Department, with the latter years as a supervisor at Princess Juliana Int'l Airport.

In 2011, St. Jago said that as he was always on the look out for a change in his life, he answered an internal job vacancy at the airport security department and after going through the required process for the position, he was appointed Section Head of Security Guards.

St. Jago said that he wanted to inspire the school leavers with his story with the hope that they “see the end of their school life as the beginning of a new road to success and ... continue striving and set goals for themselves as they go forward.”

The PWAS graduation ceremony also consisted of song and dance performances by the popular dance school Imbali. During a tearful part of the ceremony, teachers spoke of their experiences during the school year and students bid farewell to their classmates. Along with their diplomas, graduates also received special awards for consistent attendance, home economics, mathematics, and reading.

Photo caption: A pensive Elsidro St. Jago at the lectern about to deliver his address to graduating students of Prince Willem Alexander School.