



## **HEAD OF SCHOOL**

July 1, 2016

### **ANTILLES SCHOOL**

St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands

## **THE POSITION**

Antilles School is a non-sectarian, fully accredited, college preparatory, coeducational day school for children, age 2 through grade 12, and is the largest PK-12 independent school on St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands. With a strong commitment to a relevant and comprehensive program of studies reflecting an essential body of knowledge in liberal arts and natural sciences, the school maintains a balanced and robust program that is aligned with national content-area standards and core academic disciplines. The school environment is safe, is conducive to learning, and advances student experiences that promote vital academic and life skills. Antilles offers extensive extracurricular activities and advocates community service, competitive athletics, and extensive performing and visual arts on a beautiful 27-acre campus.

The school's academic rigor, its dedicated faculty and staff, and impressive facilities provide an unequalled educational program for 510 students and their families.

Founded in 1950, the school now seeks an energetic and experienced leader to partner with the board of trustees in leading the school to continue the strong and effective reputation it has earned. With 60% students of color, Antilles is a microcosm of the diversity and unique culture of the Caribbean, and presents an exciting opportunity for a leader with the vision, commitment to educational excellence, and desire to take the school to an exciting chapter in its life.



## HISTORY AND MISSION

Antilles School opened its doors in 1950 in Villa Santana, a villa overlooking St. Thomas' Charlotte Amalie harbor and former home for exiled Mexican General Santa Ana. The founding head, Deborah Finch, was guided with principles of a five-point program emphasizing children's physical, academic, creative, emotional and social growth. By 1955, Antilles had outgrown its original campus and moved to a four-acre site above the West Indian Company docks in Havensight. By 1967, the school graduated its first high school class and in 1971, the school moved to its present panoramic and expansive site in Frenchman's Bay to accommodate growth and larger scale operations.

Today's educational program is consistent with long held beliefs, hopes, and accomplishments articulated in the school's mission:

*"Inspired by learning and empowered by our diversity; outreach, and distinct place in Caribbean culture, Antilles School is a college preparatory school committed to educational excellence."*

The school's next leader must embrace this mission and should continue to lead with the school's philosophy of excellence, diversity, and community.



## THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY AND ITS PROGRAM

Antilles' strong reputation comes from a long list of achievements of its current students and its alumni, its dedicated faculty and staff, its loyal trustees, its plant, and its comprehensive and outstanding academic program.

### The Student Body

Antilles serves a diverse, gender-balanced student body of 510 students who reside in St. Thomas, St. John and Water Island. The school proudly celebrates the diversity of its students and their families. Approximately 60% of the students are students of color and many begin their Antilles experience in their early and formative years. Socio-economic diversity is advanced by a generous financial aid budget.

Beginning with its youngest students at age 2, Antilles is committed to clear learning expectations: development of

spirit, strong academic preparation, and cultivation of social responsibilities. The caring teachers help talented students learn and grow at their own pace, developing curiosity, independence and joy in learning as children understand how to collaborate with others, become caring and compassionate young people, and make positive contributions to the local community, the region, and the world.

Students at all grade levels are well served and maintain the trusted support of faculty and staff. Evidence of excellence and ongoing academic pursuits are apparent at all grade levels. College placement is exceptional (100% in recent years) and Antilles graduates matriculate at the very best colleges and universities in the world. They are prepared to participate in post-Antilles studies, possessing an essential body of knowledge in the liberal arts and natural sciences. There is no question that students at the school are extremely well prepared and poised for post-secondary studies.

### **The Faculty**

Antilles attracts dedicated faculty who love and care about students and their success. The 65 teachers believe in the strong mission of the school and are dedicated to the notion that intelligence is expressed in many ways. Each values and nourishes students' wonder, imagination, resilience, and creativity and motivates them to learn, lead, share, and serve.

More than half of the teachers hold advanced degrees and 40% of them have been teaching at the school for more than 5 years. There are several Antilles alumni on the faculty and staff and there is a cadre of veteran teachers who have been at the school for more than 30 years. The student/faculty ratio is 9:1 and the average class size is 16.

### **The Administration**

While senior level administrators have been reassigned in recent years, there is obvious love for the school and a promise to serve students and families well. There is tremendous loyalty to the school's

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mission. The school leadership team includes the head of school, a chief academic officer and director of professional development, the chief financial officer, two division heads, a public relations and communications director, an admissions associate, a technology director, a college placement counselor, an athletic director, and the plant manager.

### **The Board of Trustees**

The board of trustees represents strong and diverse leaders who love and appreciate the school. Over the years, the 16 active member board has been successful in fundraising, governance, and property acquisitions and enhancements.

The board is committed to implementing best practices in governance and leadership and establishing stronger connections in the community. Trustees are eager to partner with a new head of school to re-establish trust and respect within the school community, to address strategic initiatives, and to clearly pave the way for an era of renewal for the school.

### **Academics**

The early childhood learning program which spans toddler, PK3, PK4, kindergarten and first grade, focuses on the individual child. This impressive “personalized” program provides experiences that match the developmental abilities and skills of each student while challenging and stimulating interest, excitement, and proficiency. The early childhood program housed in the Early Learning Center strives to provide experiences that bolster self-esteem, positive attitudes toward situations and life, and cooperative behaviors. The warm, thoughtful, and caring teachers work in partnership with parents to develop the academic, social, emotional, and physical well being of all charges within their care and service.

The lower school, first through fifth grade, works to launch children on the path of a college preparatory curriculum and embraces a philosophy of critical thinking and creative expression. The skilled teachers strive to build confidences in the children through nurture and compassion. Written, verbal, numerical, and artistic

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expression fosters self-esteem and active learning. The responsive classroom atmosphere embraces respect and tolerance so children feel safe to express themselves as each wonders, questions, and solves problems.

Lower school curriculum strongly emphasizes reading, writing, language, and mathematics. Children progress from being able to self-correct and adjust their understanding so they are able to fully capture attitudes, syntactic patterns, and varying voices in literature. Mathematics is a strong element in building critical and independent thinkers and doers. The lower school is adopting Singapore Mathematics and assuring seamless transition from Everyday Math to the new curriculum. As they exit grade 5, students exhibit a firm and grounded appreciation for everyday life situations and find avenues to successful interpretations and conclusions.

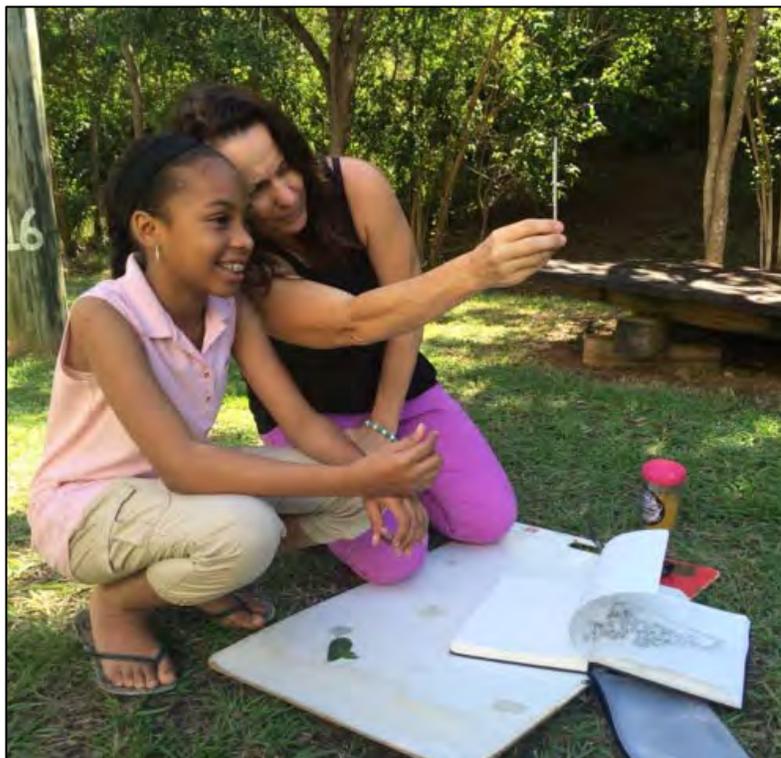
The middle school, grades six through eight, is characterized by friendships, creativity and a quest to establish independence and identity. It is an energetic and socially important time. Middle school programming, practices and student life reflect the understanding that relationships are paramount and emotions drive “tween and teen” learning. Classroom, studio, laboratory and field experiences cultivate intellectual curiosity and inventiveness, foster empathy and individuality, encourage imagination and perseverance, and nurture self-reliance and self-confidence.

The core studies in the middle school include reading, writing, language arts, mathematics,

laboratory science, history, technology, geography, civics, and Spanish. Students advance essential reading and writing strategies, acquire specialized vocabulary and content-specific knowledge, expand their adeptness with mathematics and scientific inquiry, and develop academic strategies and skills. Middle school students connect new information to what they already know, gaining confidence in their abilities to reason, make decisions, solve problems and communicate.

The upper school academic program, ninth through twelfth grade, is balanced and robust with a strong adherence to the Advanced Placement Program of the College Board. The upper school is characterized by curiosity and vitality, along with independent and interdependent thinking. Students are immersed in history and the social sciences, literature and language arts, the sciences and mathematics, Spanish and

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Technology and its applications are woven throughout the upper school program, as students employ technology to create original or collaborative

the cultures, visual and performing arts, physical fitness and health, and technology. Through classroom, laboratory, studio, field and extracurricular experiences, and the personal attention of skilled upper school faculty, astute advisors, and competent counselors, each student gains the self-confidence and skills to pursue further examination, clear thinking and responsible actions that propel more learning, substantial growth, and keen maturity.

Along with the acquisition of core knowledge, the upper school classroom practices and educational program are designed to cultivate personal, cultural, and global awareness. For example, the highly successful marine science program is a distinctive experiential laboratory experience that captures oceanographic and marine life scientific study, indigenous to Antilles and its environs. These robust, yet collegial and enjoyable student learning experiences advance the development of strong habits, such as persistence and questioning, leading and serving, listening and understanding with empathy, taking responsible risks, and creating, imagining, and innovating.

works, to explore models and simulations, to examine trends and formulate hypotheses, and to conduct quality research and investigations. Students are further encouraged to collaborate and publish with peers, use a variety of sources and media, and conduct investigations to formulate ethical and responsible ideas, solutions, and decisions.

### **Arts, Athletics and Extracurricular**

Extended learning experiences in the visual and performing arts, athletics and extracurricular programming are central, yet unique to the rich Antilles educational experience.

All upper school students take part in studio art and create visual works of art, which may include drawing, painting, graphic design, and digital photography. Students participate in a wide range of theatre arts, learning specific knowledge and skills associated with scriptwriting, acting, set design and production, and directing. Upper school students, novice to experienced, may also elect to join the band, the steel band and/or the percussion ensemble.

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The Antilles athletic program is vital to the learning and social experiences of its students. The school participates in the St. Thomas-St. John Interscholastic Athletic Association and every effort is made to include students of all ability levels in interscholastic competition. Sporting activities include flag football, volleyball, basketball, soccer, softball, baseball, cross-country, and a US-nationally recognized sailing team. Golf, tennis, and swimming are club sports. Participation in school athletics fosters community spirit, leadership, team dynamics, and unity of purpose.

While academic expectations are high, it is expected that Antilles students participate in service learning opportunities and activities. With a sense of shared purpose, the school offers a wide range of opportunities for student involvement and participation. From student council service to beach cleanup to Green Team, a whole school organization that promotes environmental awareness and solutions to regional and global problems, one senses the palpable intentions of meaningful student service, shared respect, and civic responsibility.



elements and distractions. Adjacent to the school are single residences, resorts on Frenchman's Bay, and extensive parcels of natural resources with abundant tropical flora and amazing fauna.

The Mark C. Marin Center, a 32,000 square foot state-of-the-art gymnasium and fitness center, the Prior-Jollek Hall, a performance hall and theatre, the Henry L. Kimelman Library, the Courtyard and the Gruber Garden, and the Early Learning Center are recent capital projects that have greatly enhanced program and instruction. The school's recent 3-acre land acquisition located across the street from the campus is poised for future development.

The Antilles campus is an outstanding asset. It is not only "home" to students and school families alike, but provides opportunities for civic events and community engagement and connection.

## THE CAMPUS

Very few schools today can rival the beauty and improved facilities of Antilles School. Antilles combines the tropical beauty of St. Thomas with the conveniences of a modern city. Situated on 27 lush acres on the island of St. Thomas and in close proximity to the city center of Charlotte Amalie, the school benefits from ease of access at Frenchman's Bay and is nestled in a secure hillside away from competing

## FINANCES

The school's budget is \$8.3 million. Antilles current tuition is \$9,300.00 for the toddler program, and \$17,995.00 for grades 9-12. Significant is the school's financial assistance budget of \$1.225 million.

The school's endowment of \$2.6 million is relatively small, but in recent years fundraising has been directed toward plant renovation, maintenance and utility upgrades, and capital improvements. The installation of a solar photovoltaic system along with an active physical plant repair and maintenance plan have greatly improved cost accountability and anticipation of future plant needs and upgrades. Ongoing maintenance, utilities and energy costs, and facility expenses are significant.

The finance committee of the board works closely with the CFO to budget properly and to control costs to ensure the financial sustainability of the school.



## STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

The new head of school will benefit from the many strengths of the school including:

- Diverse and happy students who thrive academically, socially, physically, and emotionally, and who exhibit a strong love for their school and its programs;
- Beautiful campus and well-maintained buildings;
- An intentionally generous and effective financial aid program;
- A dedicated parent community that strongly supports diversity, inclusion, and educational excellence;
- Caring and loyal teachers who are student-focused and who promote mutual respect, active-learning, and responsibility in and out of school;
- A committed and dedicated board of trustees; and
- Successful placement of graduates to 4-year colleges and universities.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The school's opportunities and challenges stem from the limits of the local economy, the transient island population and evolving demographics, and the promise to deliver a stellar and comprehensive, independent school PK-12 education on the island.

St. Thomas is home to approximately 50,000 residents (based on the 2010 census of St. Thomas/St. John) and is a small island of 32.24 square miles; accessible by daily nonstop flights from major cities worldwide (For example, a nonstop flight from Miami, FL would take approximately two hours and 45 minutes).

Tourism is and has been for many decades the major industry that represents 20% employment. In addition, the local government is the largest employer (approximately 25% of jobs). The local economy today is fragile (based on recent trends, the drop in population of children in the territory, and the decline in the number of families of school-aged

children since 2000 on the island). While the local economy has shown some signs of recovery (e.g. Economic Development Commission "EDC" beneficiaries relocation to the Virgin Islands, visitor spending trends, multiple capital improvement projects growth and capital investment projections, etc.), long-term hopes for growth are modest. While the new head will be welcomed with a plethora of strengths, it is evident that long term school success and satisfaction will be measured by attention to the following:

- Development and fundraising success;
- Faculty and staff retention, assessment, and satisfaction;
- Hiring of a diverse faculty and staff reflecting the school's philosophy;
- Programmatic effectiveness;
- Enrollment growth;
- Budgetary constraints and plant oversight; and
- Community involvement.



## **QUALIFICATIONS & QUALITIES OF THE NEXT HEAD OF SCHOOL**

- Experience with and passion for the best in early childhood education coupled with comprehensive and current knowledge of K-12 academic pedagogy, curriculum, and best-practices;
- Energetic and compelling communication skills with the unique ability to captivate others with the school’s history, story, and mission and a proficiency to become the chief marketer of the school;
- A proven track record of finding, attracting, motivating, evaluating, supporting, and retaining a diverse and competent faculty and staff;
- Eagerness to embrace the unique diversity and norms of island living and the school’s multicultural population;
- Visionary educational leader with on-the-ground engagement and in-the-classroom management;
- Authentic, EQ “people” person who is able to manage complex relationships among faculty, parents, students and other stakeholders;
- Ability to lead the school constituents in dialogue and transaction while appreciating and working with differences of opinion and positions to effectuate successful resolutions;
- Subject matter expert in NAIS best practices including, but not limited to integration of cutting edge technologies, blended learning models, and other transformative educational techniques and practices;
- A change agent who can lead and transform the school through execution of Antilles’ 10-year strategic vision;
- Ability to strike a right balance between a warm, compassionate, approachable demeanor with clear, honest, firm, and decisive judgments and actions;
- Astute and trusted leader with a proven record of fiscal management, fundraising skills, and development success;
- Commitment to stay at the school to appreciate the results of collaborative and successful planning, improved fundraising, effective faculty/staff selections and retentions, and continuation of the strong academic and extracurricular offerings;
- Familiarity with and willingness to be an active leader in all advancement/development activities of the institution; and
- Active involvement and visible presence in the school and local community.

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## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Antilles School has retained Clay V. Stites and Doreen S. Oleson from Resource Group 175 to lead the search. To apply, interested and qualified candidates should submit a *curriculum vitae*, a letter expressing interest in the position, a personal statement, and not fewer than three references before November 10, 2015 to:

Clay Stites  
clay.stites@comcast.net

**AND**

Doreen Oleson  
doreenoleson@gmail.com

In accordance with federal law, Antilles School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, family configuration, or sexual/gender orientation.