

## Adelbert M. “Bert” Bryan

As a native son, Adelbert M. “Bert” Bryan is a gift to us and a blessing to our people.

Growing up in the 1960s, many of us were exposed to cable television and the programs that came into our homes. One of those programs was *It Takes a Thief*. As young boys, we thought it was fun to practice some of the things we saw on television around the neighborhood.

But whenever Police Officer Bryan was patrolling, you knew what time it was: ***it was over!***

As teenagers, we would sometimes be hanging out in the clubs after 10:00 at night. The last police officer you wanted to see was Officer Bryan. The moment you saw him, you already knew it was time to go home. He kept the young people in check, but he also always had something to tell you.

In the 1970s, I decided that I wanted to become a police officer just like Officer Bryan.

Looking back, I remember those days of riding our bicycles, going up Annaly for mangoes, going to the beach, hunting birds, and fishing. Officer Bryan would always tell us, “The place is going to change. You need to learn something.”

He would warn us about what he saw coming. He spoke about too many toy guns getting into the hands of children, too many misrepresentations in leadership, and too many drugs coming into our community.

Those words stayed with me.

Years later, I became a police officer myself and had the opportunity to work under Captain Bryan in Frederiksted. I became the Crime Prevention Officer and worked with the Police Athletic League (PAL).

Whenever PAL was threatened with closure, Captain Bryan made sure the program continued serving the hundreds of young people who depended on it.

When we lost the PAL building in Frederiksted, Captain Bryan found space for us inside the police station and moved the program there until another location could be found.

That was the kind of man he was.

A man with a vision. A man who kept his eye on the prize and didn't blink.

Captain Bryan understood that PAL was more than a building. It was more than activities. It was an opportunity to reach young people, guide them, and keep them connected to something positive.

I was once one of the young people he watched over. Years later, I became a police officer carrying that same responsibility for another generation.

For that, I will always be grateful.

Thank you, Captain Adelbert M. “Bert” Bryan, for showing us what it means to keep your eye on the prize and never blink.

Bro. Renholdt “Rookie” Jackson