

# Hansen 'earned' bachelor's, master's degrees in one day

By **MARTY SCHLADEN**  
Daily News Staff

ST. CROIX — Governor candidate Sen. Alicia Hansen still will not answer questions about her educational background, even as more information comes to light that further calls into question her claims to hold college degrees.

An online university that has been characterized as a diploma mill reported Thursday that it awarded Hansen a master's degree and a bachelor's degree, both on June 5, 2001.

But in a sworn deposition taken one day earlier on June 4, 2001, Hansen was asked how far she had gone in school.

"About 14 years," she said.

"Did you — you graduated from college?" she was asked.

"No," she said.

"She swore under oath that she dropped out of school and made no

mention of going back to school," attorney Britain Bryant, who took Hansen's deposition, said Friday.

The deposition was taken as part of a defamation lawsuit that Hansen had filed against Sen. Lorraine Berry. The suit was settled confidentially out of court, Bryant said.

In interviews for a story about her run for governor, Hansen twice told The Daily News that she holds two degrees — a bachelor's and a master's — from Regis University. The Jesuit-run Regis University in Denver — the only school in the United States by that name — said Hansen never had attended any of its campuses.

When Hansen was asked about the discrepancy earlier this week, she said she was "offended" that The Daily News would check her claims and refused to say where the college from which she received degrees is based.

Hansen said she would clarify the matter at 7 p.m. Friday at a campaign

rally in Frederiksted.

When Hansen arrived at the rally, a Daily News reporter requested that she answer questions and she again refused, saying she would do her talking on stage. The reporter told Hansen's campaign manager, George Moore, that he wanted to hear Hansen's remarks and include them in this story. By 8:30 p.m., with a few hundred people at the rally, Hansen had not taken the stage and campaign workers could not say when or if she would.

On Thursday, St. Regis University, a Dominica-based operation that claims to be accredited by the Education Ministry of the Republic of Liberia, informed The Daily News that Hansen received both a B.A. degree in political science and an M.A. degree in public administration on June 5, 2001. Hansen achieved a grade-point average of 3.8 in both pursuits, according to St. Regis.

Whether she ever took a class from St. Regis and whether St. Regis offers classes is unclear.

In March, St. Regis figured prominently in a story about phony degrees in The Australian, a major daily newspaper based in Sydney.

John Bear, a diploma-mill watchdog who has written books about distance learning, on Wednesday said St. Regis is a diploma mill that grants degrees while requiring little more than money from its "students."

Earlier this week, as a test, a Daily News reporter submitted an online request to St. Regis for academic evaluation. In the request, the reporter listed two years of college coursework and about 10 years of experience working in hotels, pharmacies and restaurants. No transcripts or other

documents were submitted.

Within 24 hours, "Advisor James" of St. Regis wrote back.

"Qualification for the certification(s) and/or degree(s) below has/have been approved, authorized and registered," the response said, offering two different bachelor's degrees, a master's degree in business and four types of certificates. The bachelor's degrees would have cost \$695 apiece, and the master's would have cost \$795. The certificates would be \$450 apiece, the response said.

As a matter of course, The Daily News has checked all credentials listed by governor and lieutenant governor candidates in their campaign biographies. In the process of making those checks, The Daily News uncovered the discrepancy in Hansen's claim.

## Federal officer appointed for Tuesday election

By **BILLY SHIELDS**  
Daily News Staff

ST. THOMAS — The U.S. Attorney's Office has appointed Alphonso Andrews to serve as District Election Officer for the District of the Virgin Islands.

Officials from the U.S. Attorney's Office were quick to point out that the position is not being set up because of problems with the upcoming election.

"It's a standard thing," Assistant U.S. Attorney Azekah Jennings said

Thursday. "There's nothing that says this election is any different from any other."

Officials from both the U.S. Attorney's Office and the Elections System of the Virgin Islands said that the position only deals with federal elections on the ballot in the Virgin Islands.

"Their involvement is strictly for the federal ballot," said Supervisor of Elections John Abramson. "As long as it's not related with something on the delegate's ballot, it's an Election

System issue."

Andrews will serve for two years as District Election Officer. The job is designed to investigate and prosecute instances of election fraud.

To contact Andrews, call 773-3920. To call the FBI to report fraud on election day, call 777-3363.

To lodge a complaint about something concerning the V.I. Senate or gubernatorial races, call the Elections System at 774-3107 on St. Thomas, **773-1021** on St. Croix, or **776-6535** on St. John.