

The Virgin Islands Consortium

New St. Croix Clean Up Movement Turns Youth Fundraising Into Community Service

The initiative combines roadside clean-ups, sponsorship-based fundraising, and recycling efforts as organizers work to build environmental stewardship, teamwork, and community pride among youth athletes on St. Croix.

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A new youth-led environmental initiative on St. Croix is aiming to reshape how local teams and organizations approach fundraising by replacing traditional roadside sales with community clean-up efforts tied to sponsorship support and recycling. Elite 340 Volleyball Club and JS Therapies announced the launch of the “Clean Up Movement,” a program organizers say is designed to build environmental stewardship, teamwork, and

community pride while supporting youth athletics.

According to the release, the effort officially began over the past two Saturdays with two large-scale roadside clean-ups involving Elite 340 athletes and community members. The clean-ups were sponsored by JS Therapies and Island Therapy Solutions, while collected plastic bottles were delivered to RePlastic Recycle for processing.

Organizers said the broader goal is to create a cultural shift away from fundraising activities that can unintentionally contribute to litter and toward service-based projects tied directly to community improvement.

“This is about more than just picking up trash,” said Julie Sommer, clinic director of JS Therapies. “It’s about empowering our youth to lead, to take ownership of their island, and to show that fundraising and community impact can go hand in hand.”

Under the model described in the release, athletes participate in clean-up events while community members and businesses sponsor their efforts either by donating per bag of trash collected or by contributing toward team fundraising goals.

Organizers said the approach is intended to support youth sports while also helping improve the island environment.

The release described the first two clean-ups as the beginning of what organizers hope becomes a wider island movement involving additional schools, sports teams, and community groups.

“We’re proud of these athletes for stepping up in such a meaningful way,” said Aliosha Brown, club manager for Elite 340. “They’re showing leadership not just in sport, but in their community.”

The initiative also emphasizes recycling and sustainability. Organizers said plastic bottles collected during the events were transported to RePlastic Recycle to support local recycling efforts and reduce landfill waste.

Community members and businesses are being encouraged to participate by sponsoring future clean-up events, joining the efforts directly, or helping promote the broader message behind the campaign.

According to the release, JS Therapies is a pediatric therapy clinic serving St. Croix and St. Thomas with occupational, speech, and physical therapy services focused on play-based and family-centered care. Elite 340 Volleyball Club is described as a youth volleyball organization focused on developing athletes through teamwork, leadership, and community involvement.