

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Hope, Excitement And A Furniture Store

Business / **Published On August 29, 2014 10:08 PM /**

Ernice Gilbert **August 29, 2014**



A brand new furniture store opened its doors today at the United Shopping Plaza in Peter's Rest, bringing with it a sense of hope and excitement for the future of St. Croix.



Delegate Christensen, Senator Sanes cutting

ribbon

The multinational company brought its specialty offering and a wide assortment of furniture to St. Croix through local owners Amjad Hussein and his family. However apart from the great-looking showrooms that's sure to see Virgin Islanders spending money as they beautify their homes for the holidays, the undercurrents of hope and optimism that permeated through the government officials in attendance, onlookers and also Amjad Hussein, who spoke passionately about St. Croix, helped set the tone of the day.

I spoke with Delegate to Congress Donna Christensen and her sentiments echoed what many have been saying: St. Croix is on its way up.

I also asked the Delegate to share her thoughts on new businesses coming to the Islands and mentioned the arrival of Save-A-Lot and Burger King next year.

"I think it's wonderful and I think it should give the people of St. Croix hope and excitement about the possibilities of the future," Christensen said. "I'm very excited about [Ashley Furniture store] bringing us affordable but beautiful furniture."

The Delegate also expressed her enthusiasm for Save-A-Lot, [the grocery store chain making its debut on St. Croix](#) at the Island Crossing Shopping Center in early 2015 because of the ownership roles that veterans play in the venture.

"I'm excited about Save-A-Lot because it's a veterans-owned store that will primarily hire veterans," Christensen said. "But beyond that, and I don't think a lot of people know this, it's also a veteran private equity firm, so they have the ability and will be looking into how they can invest in veteran-owned businesses."

The Delegate said she would tour the Ashley Furniture store's showroom once the grand opening festivities had quieted.

Listen to the audio by clicking on the link below:

[My brief talk with Delegate Christensen](#)

Inside the store, I spoke to Mr. Hussein about his intentions for Ashley Furniture, why he decided to do business with them and what, if anything, remains of Best Furniture.



Ahmad Hussein, CEO Ashley Furniture

"When times change you have to change with the times," Hussein said. "Best Furniture and Appliances is a company incorporated in the U.S. Virgin Islands in November of 1984."

Hussein said the company came to life when it merged with two other furniture stores, however it managed to retain the Best Furniture name after International Furniture and United Furniture relinquished their own trademarks to come under the then new Best Furniture Store.

Nonetheless things have changed and Hussein said he hopes to offer a better experience overall to the loyal customers who've patronized the store over the years.

"We have committed this larger portion of the space to Ashley for the synergy and the value that the Ashley Furniture Homestore concept provides," Hussein said.

"The whole idea is what do we need to do to make things easier, better convenient for you as an end user."

The store was nicely furnished with seemingly premium products, so I was curious about the company's price structure and the savings to be had, if any, by potential customers.

"The pricing, like I said before, good things are not going to be cheap, but cheap things are not going to be good," he said. "We're going to provide you with the best product at the most affordable competitive price."

In the end, I got the sense from Hussein that he genuinely cared about St. Croix, and although he's in the business of making money, looking at the way he greeted and treated customers, the smiles he shared with the elderly, and the way he hurriedly moved around the store hustling to speak to everyone who would listen, I was looking at a man who is passionate about his field of work.

"We've lived in the good times and in the bad times here, and our intentions are to stay when things are good and when things are bad. You don't come in, milk and go," Hussein said.

The store is opened from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sundays, however the latter time is subject to change with demand.

The conversation can be heard by clicking the link below.

[Ahmad Hussein, CEO Ashley Furniture store](#)

