

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Croix Woman Prepares, Gives Away 250 Plates Of Food Free Of Charge

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ST. CROIX -- Residents of the Marley Homes/Apartments in Frederiksted, located near the Fish Market, witnessed something unusual last Saturday. Two women, attired in jeans, tight, short-sleeved tops and server aprons, stood underneath a small tent that they erected, ready to serve anyone who would ask. They had prepared food enough to serve 250 people, leaving locals in the area and visitors from other parts of the island baffled by the move, with some asking whether the surprising service was an elaborate prank.

It was not.

Kernita Arthurton, along with her friend, Candice Robinson, spent days preparing for last Saturday. "I haven't slept in 48 hours," Ms. Arthurton said. She also cooked the food.

The 31-year-old boasts an upbeat spirit that's rather contagious. It's not surprising that her startup, Full Force Nutrition, a business based on the Herbalife global nutrition and weight management company, where members are encouraged to exercise and eat health by partaking in meals made available through Herbalife, has taken off. There's also financial benefits tied to the program, which entails adding new people and teaching



Candice Robinson serving food at the

Frederiksted Fish Market located near the Walter IM Hodge Housing Community.

But Ms. Arthurton has taken a unique route to what she hopes will be a life of financial success.

"I believe in giving back, so once a month we feed the homeless. But because we're usually on the east side of the island, this time we decided to come to the west and feed the homeless and the elderly," she said.

Yet, the homeless and elderly were far and in-between during the duo's full eight-hour giveback effort. Throughout the day, the area was lined with individuals who temporarily parked their vehicles, stopped by the tent and carried multiple plates away.

"I've always said that for things to change, you must change, and for things to get better, you must get better," Ms. Arthurton went on. "And as a community, we need to stick together. They say one man can't change the world, but I believe if you have changed one person's life, then you have changed the world."



Kernita Artherton wearing a tight dress that

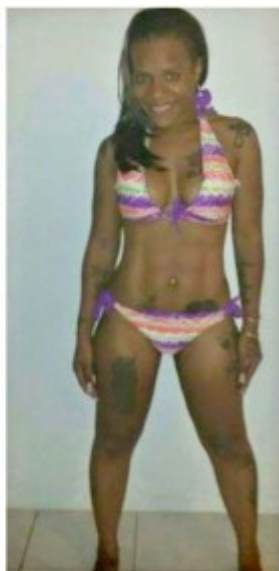
exemplifies her healthy eating habits and exercising results.

Her passion for giving back appeared to be deeply ingrained. Ms. Artherton said she constantly thinks of those who "sometimes don't have food to eat," and said it's better to help them than to purchase "unnecessary things." And about finding money to serve those in need, she said, "I'm not going to wait for someone to give me funds to help, I will take from my pocket. And acts of kindness should not come after I've waited for ten companies to come together and give me money; I'm going to do it myself."

Ms. Artherton, a mother of four, has her nutrition outlet in Gallows Bay, across from the Canegata Ballpark. She says her business strategy is to attract people by her results, and the determined entrepreneur colors her Facebook profile with multiple updates daily showing her either exercising or eating healthy. Status updates are also frequent with inspirational quotes about self-motivation.

"I went from a size 16 to a size 5," she told The Consortium. "We exercise every single day except Sundays, when we prep for the week." Ms. Artherton said that with the Herbalife program, \$25 cover a full week's meals. She also demonstrates her life with postings on her Facebook profile to add more credibility to her claims.

The businesswoman said the community fails in many areas because it's not united. She highlighted the drought being experienced here, contending that there are many private citizens with wells that could supply farmers with enough water, "if we could only come together."



Kernita Arthurton goes from a size 16 to 5.

"I'm one person, yes, but I'm not going to wait. I have inboxed people on Facebook while preparing to give away the food on a big scale, and the people in our community who are wealthy asked me for a letter so they could write-off the cost on their taxes -- and that's for a bag of chicken. So I decided that I'm going to do it from my pocket."

And this is not Ms. Arthurton's first time giving back to the community. In December, she donated funds and gifts to the [Queen Louis Home](#).

"They told me that for a small business, I have donated so much more money than the big organizations, so that means people here are not doing what they're supposed to be doing," she said. When asked how her business was performing, Ms. Arthurton said she had no complaints.

"An Arab man once told me if you're paying all your bills and you have money in your pocket, then you're above average."

Correction: September 1, 2015

A previous version of this incorrectly stated that the IM Hodge Community as the location where Ms. Arthurton and Ms. Robinson held the food giveaway. The location is the Marley Homes/Apartments in Frederiksted. We've updated the story to reflect the correct information.