

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Jermaine Mulley, Dubbed 'The H.O.O.D. Pastor', Hopes To Affect Change In Youth Through Basketball, Teachings Of Jesus Christ

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ST. CROIX -- Jermaine Mulley, founder of the Grady African Methodist Episcopal Church on St. Croix, and known as the H.O.O.D. [Helping Others Own Destiny] pastor, hosted a 3-on-3 basketball tournament in the Harbor View Apartments housing community as part of his ministry's outreach program dubbed "Project H.O.O.D. Hoops". According to information provided by Mr. Mulley, 24 youths participated in the event and received free shirts and refreshments. He said the youths' participation was met with gratitude from his ministry.

While the tournament was a new addition to the ministry's efforts, housing community outreach has been at the core of Mr. Mulley's strategy to empower youth. Along with the church, Mr. Mulley runs a nonprofit called The H.O.O.D. Project, Inc., which he said has conducted many community events in neighborhoods over the years, among them the John F. Kennedy Housing Community, Sion Farm, and the David H. Jackson Housing Community.



HOOD Project Basketball Tournament players, with Jermaine Mulley in the center.

Mr. Mulley said his hope is that greater things are birthed as a result of the ministry, as he's already seen over 25 youths come to know the love of Christian savior Jesus Christ, as well as what Mr. Mulley says is the Christ's power to transform. The pastor sees basketball as a way for the youth to learn principles of life such as self-control, accountability and trust.

"Too often we do things that we feel people need, without first learning their needs, thereby we create programs rather than help people," Mr. Mulley said. "The H.O.O.D. Project is about valuing people above product. It is within me to build relationships with

those everyone else wants to use for membership or out of convenience for pushing some type of agenda. It hits close to home because I know how it feels having witnessed too many drive-by charity services from people who truly didn't invest in me and my community. That is one of the reasons why they call me the H.O.O.D Pastor."

"I am just passionate about helping others own destiny," Mr. Mulley added, referring to the words whose acronym is H.O.O.D. "A few in the neighborhoods also say that I feel where they are and I bring Jesus's hope back to the streets every week."

The H.O.O.D. Project will host another 3-on-3 basketball tournament on October 21 at the Boys and Girls Club's [recently repaired](#) basketball court in Frederiksted. The tournament is being held in the memory of Shadon Beazer, who was [gunned down almost two years](#) ago in the parking lot of the Penthouse Rooftop Nightclub in Castle Coaskley. The tournament uses hashtag "shoothoopsnotguns".

Feature Image: Jermaine Mulley is interviewed by a local journalist. (Credit: KGPVI)