

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Early Christmas Bliss For USVI Children As Organizations Band Together To Provide Gifts

VIC News / **Published On December 07, 2018 12:36 PM /**

Staff **December 07, 2018**



The holidays came early this year for children in the U.S. Virgin Islands, as the USVI Hotel & Tourism Association and St. Croix Hotel & Tourism Association worked alongside the Puerto Rico branch of the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation to distribute toys to nearly 1,800 children in USVI housing communities Dec. 2-4, a release issued Thursday made known.

The organizations worked together to purchase \$15,000 in toys from Kmart for 905 children living in ten housing communities on St. Croix, and \$15,000 in toys from Kmart for 889 children living in eight housing communities on St. Thomas, the release says. SSgt. Angel Melendez, Sgt. Joshua B. Manning, Sgt. Joanna Millan, SSgt. Stephen

Baker and HM1 Lemarcus Dean from the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, USVHTA, STXHTA and many association members worked throughout the weekend to provide a memorable holiday to families in need.

“It is always our pleasure to partner with such a generous organization to bring holiday miracles to the children of the U.S. Virgin Islands,” said USVIHTA President Lisa Hamilton. “The support from our members and incredible partner organizations in fostering community outreach is truly humbling.”

The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation partners with USVIHTA and STXHTA annually to provide toys to children in need. Additionally, USVIHTA hosts an annual holiday party where members donate gifts that are distributed to children in the Boys & Girls Club of the Virgin Islands. Likewise, both associates raise funds through annual events to support education through their respective scholarship funds. Community outreach and youth support are staples of both USVIHTA and STXHTA.

The associations thanked members and partner organizations that made the Toys for Tots event possible, including: the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation; association members; Seaborne Airlines for providing flights; Arawak Bay The Inn at Salt River and Bolongo Bay Beach Resort for providing hotel stays; Budget Rent-A-Car and Olympic Rent-A-Car for providing rental vehicles; Southern Glaziers Wine & Spirits and The Reef USVI for providing a truck on St. Thomas; Kmart and Sears for assisting with putting together all the toys; Cane Bay Dive Shop for providing meals; the Virgin Islands Housing Authority for assisting with toy distribution at each housing community; and both the USVI Hotel & Tourism Association and St. Croix Hotel & Tourism Association for coordinating the donation events.