

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Two of St. Croix's Youngest Entrepreneurs Will Open a Lemonade Business With the Help of Mom and Dad Friday

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Collage of Reid-Ventura family By. REEMY-REEMZ PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY

ST. CROIX — When Ramone Reid was making some lemonade for her family one summer afternoon in July, she did not expect the comment that would come from her three-year-old daughter, Juliett Reid-Ventura. Known as the lemonade lady in her home, Ms. Reid has often made the refreshing drink for her family as a means of cooling down during hot Virgin Islands summer days. Her family had loved the drink, but her daughter had obviously seen a greater potential in the product. So, on that summer day when the

three-year-old commented to her mother, “Mommy, this is a business,” Juju and Cece’s Lemonades and Treats was established.

Now, Juju and Cece’s Lemonades and Treats will officially be launched on Friday, September 11th, at the Cultured Naturals Store located on Company Street in Christiansted. As the name suggests, the business will be owned and headed by Julieta and her sister Gracie Reid-Ventura, with the help and guidance of their mother and father—Mikey Ventura.

But Juju and Cece’s is not just your typical lemonade stand. According to Ms. Reid, it is a more modern take and has more bells and whistles. They boast five unique island flavors:

- Hola Carambola (Carambola and Passion Fruit Lemonade)
- Laughing Lemon Grass (Lemongrass Lemonade)
- Lyming with Pina (Pineapple Limeade)
- Sorrel not Sorry (Sorrel Lemonade)
- Coco-Melon (Coconut Water and Melon Drink)

According to Ms. Reid, the drinks are all naturally sourced and are even diabetic friendly. Juju and Cece’s also offers snacks that are 100 percent plant based. Their “Super Duper Snacks” Medley includes: Dragon Fruit Powder, Banana, Elderberry, Gooseberry, Cashews, Peanuts, Apricots, and Kiwi. A large portion of their supplies are pulled from their own yard, from other yards around St. Croix, and local farms.

Ms. Reid also says that the venture is not just a business, but an investment in her daughters. It is a means of building generational wealth and a financially stable future for them. “I want my children to understand they can be self-reliant and also reach out to their community,” said Ms. Reid. “I want them to know that with their kinky hair and brown skin they can do a lot... they can take on this world.”

It is a lesson that Julieta and Gracie are fully enveloped in. Both Ms. Reid and Mr. Ventura are entrepreneurs. Ms. Reid is the owner and operator of Cultured Naturals and Mr. Ventura started his own pest control company, MV’s Exterminating, after being unexpectedly laid off from Terminix. “We are all self-employed, including the babies,” she said.

When asked what advice she would give to anyone wanting to start their own business, Ms. Reid responded, “Just start!”

She added, “Often, I think people look for validation, or [for] people to say, ‘hey pursue this,’ or ‘I give you my blessings.’ But I find when you have all that noise happening, you stagnate yourself.” Ms. Reid said that fear had inhibited her from stepping out sooner than before. So, she advises to “just start,” just take a chance in one’s self and the ideas and ventures that you may have.

And she is also teaching them to give back to their community. A portion of the proceeds from every bottle of Juju and Cece’s sold will be donated to Project Promise VI, a local nonprofit organization that helps at-risk youths in the Virgin Islands.

Juju and Cece's Lemonades and Treats will officially launch on Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Cultured Naturals store in Christiansted. Patrons will be able purchase the lemonades and snacks through drive-by pick-ups. Ms. Reid asks the community to come out and support the girls and also by blowing their horns and waving. "The girls [have] asked are they coming, are they coming to our business party...even if you don't buy a bottle, or a drink, just come and boost them up! Boost them from them small!"

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