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Posts Making Rounds Claiming Shawn Baptiste (CIGA) Has Placed a \$500,000 Bounty on Head of Shooters Are False. 'That's Not My Life. I'm More Into Helping the Youths of Our Community'

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Police respond to shooting at the Corner Pocket Nightclub in Estate La Reine late Saturday night. By. TOBY DERIMA FOR THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — Shawn Baptiste, the prominent Virgin Islands businessman known to many by Marco, the name of his trucking company, and CIGA Promotions, for the countless entertainment events he has held over the years, today sought to set the record straight and address rumors making the rounds on social media claiming that he has placed a bounty on two shooters involved in the [Corner Pocket Nightclub shooting](#) Saturday night.

The nightclub incident left one individual dead and five injured, including one so critical that the victim is braindead. This victim is Mr. Baptiste's son, and persons with ulterior motives have been spreading rumors on social media claiming that Mr. Baptiste — a consummate businessman who over the years has given back hundreds of thousands of dollars to his community through various charitable efforts — has put out a \$500,000 to \$600,000 bounty for anyone who could take down the shooters. Those claims, Mr. Baptiste stated emphatically, are completely false, so much so that he felt compelled to issue a statement on the matter.

Speaking to the Consortium Wednesday, Mr. Baptiste rejected the rumors as baseless and out of character, and described himself as a community-oriented individual whose focus is on helping the youth of St. Croix and running a business that supports many Virgin Islands families. Mr. Baptiste also expressed condolences to individuals who lost loved ones during the spate of deadly shootings over the weekend and through Tuesday night.

"I send out my condolences to those have lost someone over the weekend and past days. I want the public to know that I am aware that there are posts going around on Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, that there's a bounty for \$500,000 to \$600,000 for two individuals who were involved in the shooting at Corner Pocket. I have nothing to do with that," Mr. Baptiste stressed.

He added, "That's not my life. I'm more into the youth of the community and helping the community grow, and be there for people. That's not my lifestyle. I know it's going to have those who will try to paint you like you are a bad person within the community when they see you rising. I just want the community to know that that's not me. I've never had none of that within my mind or within my soul, to try to pay someone to try to do someone else something. That's what the law is there for, and that's what God is there for, to take care of those situations."

Mr. Baptiste is a longtime supporter of Queen Louise Home for Children, providing thousands of dollars in funding throughout the years through a variety of initiatives. For years, he produced well-executed entertainment events, including "Food For Your Soul", a concert affair that took place annually during the Agricultural Fair weekend — many times at a loss — to provide recreational activity for the community in which he resides. In 2018, Mr. Baptiste's company, Marco Trucking, [hosted two massive back-to-school events](#) where an estimated 5,000 backpacks filled with school supplies were given to children free of charge in St. Croix and the St. Thomas-St. John District. Those events came at a time when parents most needed them: Hurricanes Irma and Maria had devastated the USVI, and many families were strained financially.

St. Croix has been shaken in the past week by shootings that led to seven homicides in five days, with even more people injured during violent events spanning multiple locations, including the [Corner Pocket Nightclub](#), Estate La Grange, the Frederiksted Vegetable Market, [Mon Bijou](#), [Williams Delight](#), [Estate Carlton](#), and [the Mutual Homes housing community](#).

So far nine people have died through homicide in the USVI in 2021: one on St. John and eight on St. Croix.

