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My Brother's Workshop New Campus Gets \$250,000 Donation From Prior Family Foundation

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My Brother's Workshop Building Concept By. MBW

The Prior Family Foundation has donated \$250,000 to the MBW Main Campus Project, according to a release My Brother's Workshop announced Tuesday.

As longtime supporters of MBW, the Prior Family Foundation sees the value in investing in this project and in the Virgin Islands youth, the release stated. The foundation was established by a grant from Cornelius B. Prior, Jr. in 2007. Trustee Trudie Prior said, "As longtime residents of this community, my husband and I recognized a need to provide young people the opportunity to learn a skill or trade that would be a pathway to success in life. My Brothers Workshop is filling that need."

My Brother's Workshop [recently announced plans](#) to build its new campus which will be located on almost four acres of land mid island on Donoe Bypass and serve clients from St. Thomas and St. John with the capacity to see over 1,000 students annually.

According to the release, to date, 44% (\$1,765,292) of the funds needed for Phase One of the project have been raised from private donations and sponsorships including; Anonymous Donors, Prior Family Foundation, Bonnie and Ty Troutman, Robert and Maureen Sievers Family Charitable Gift Fund, Anne and Andy Hemmert, Columba Energy, Secret Harbour Beach Resorts Association, Lana Vento Charitable Trust, Hulsman Family Fund, Keswick Guaranty, Inc., Charity Girls, Jeffrey and Kelly Neevel, Picayo Family, I. Levin Properties, Richard and Joyce Doumeng, Judith Martino, Attorney George Marshall Miller, Steven and Karen Jamron and Dan Lynch. The Stephenson Family, who are long time supporters of MBW, have pledged to match \$1M (through June 23rd, 2022) in donations made towards Phase 1.

"The MBW organization relies heavily on community support throughout all these years of helping young people change their lives. This new campus which will allow MBW to serve over 1,000 students per year will have a deep impact in the territory. We look forward to breaking ground in November," said MBW Executive Director Jenny Hawkes.

According to the release, all sponsors who commit to the MBW Campus Project by October 15th, 2021, will be invited to and recognized at the groundbreaking ceremony which is anticipated to take place this November.

To donate to the MBW Campus Project visit <https://www.classy.org/campaign/Building-Hope/c290934>. For more information on the project and program or to learn about sponsorship opportunities, contact MBW Communications Director, Chrystie Payne at cpayne@mybrothersworkshop.org.

The project will be completed in phases, beginning with Phase 1 - the construction of the Stephenson Family Welcome Center (Banquet Space, Cafe, Industrial Kitchen, Classrooms, Offices). This building will house the following programs: Culinary Arts, Catering Services, Customer Service Training, Online High School, Anger Management, Offices and Welcome Center, Classrooms, Individual Counseling, NEW: Retail Experience, Family Counseling and Parenting Classes/Child Care Services, MBW said.

The following phases will include construction of the new MBW Workshop and MBW Community Center. The project is expected to take 3-4 years to complete. MBW's Main Campus will be composed of three structures, eventually allowing for more than 1,000 people per year to receive vocational training, mentoring, mental health counseling, tutoring, online high school diplomas, job placement services, anger management, parenting classes, and access to art, music, and sports, stated the release.

The current MBW St. Thomas footprint spans three locations and is about 15,000 square feet. By increasing the space, MBW said it will have the ability to become energy efficient with solar panels, offer more effective training, provide mental health resources (including family counseling and individual counseling), classrooms for high school diplomas and continuing education, youth development, special needs training, free services to the USVI community, resiliency and sustainability programs and increased disaster response capacity.

MBW has had a long lasting impact on the members of our community through disaster response and workforce development, said the release. The increase in space will allow for MBW to respond quickly (and on a larger scale) to disasters as we did after the devastation of Hurricanes

Irma and Maria and through the hardships of Covid-19 while keeping our youth engaged in our program.

With the additional programs, MBW said it will have the ability to work with older populations in workforce development for individuals needing to change career paths after life altering events and also be able to work with clients who have special needs or disabilities to help obtain employment.

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