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My Brother's Workshop Breaks Ground on 1,000-Student Capacity Campus in St. Thomas

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My Brother's Workshop campus concept. By. MY BROTHER'S WORKSHOP

ST. THOMAS — My Brother’s Workshop on Friday broke ground on its 30,000 square ft. St. Thomas campus behind Home Depot on the Donoe Bypass that will serve 1,000 students from St. Thomas and St. John. At the event, the nonprofit organization's leaders expressed extreme gratitude to those playing a part in making the campus a reality.

“This is an amazing blessing. This is a miracle from 14 years in the making. This is something that is going to make a lot of difference,” said MBW Founder and Program Director Scott Bradley.

After the invocation from Pastor Jeff Neevel, a board member of MBW, Ty Troutman, MBW board president stated in his remarks, "We are so grateful for everyone's support, MBW has been changing lives in the U.S. Virgin Islands since 2007 and we are very excited for this project that has been in the planning for several years now. All of this has been made possible through the support of the island government, the community and each of you here today. On behalf of the entire organization I would like to thank you for being part of the change to provide our youth a better life path here in the Virgin Islands."

Chrystie Payne, MBW communication director, recognized individuals and organizations that have sponsored the main campus project.

The full list is as follows: the Feuerzeig Family Fund, Secret Harbour Beach Resort, Columba Energy, Lana Vento Charitable Trust, Sharon and Fred Hupprich, Anne and Andy Hemmert, The Marshall Family - In Memory of Bruce Marshall, The Robert and Maureen Sievers Charitable Fund, the Prior Family Foundation, an anonymous "angel donor" and the Stephenson Family.

Ms. Payne recognized the Stephenson Family as the Ambassador of Hope. Annie Stephenson-Hostetler, the Stephenson Family's entities representative, accepted the Ambassador of Hope Award and explained what the project means to her family.



Leaders and supporters of the My Brother's Workshop Campus in St. Thomas, including Gov. Albert Bryan (center), broke ground on Friday, Dec. 10 2021 on the site located in the vicinity of the Donoe Bypass where the facility will be built. (Credit: Kyle Murphy, VI Consortium)

“The vision that Scott [Bradley] and his team brought to our community is so incredibly powerful... for my family, for us, we always considered the communities in which we live and work as part of our partnership, they are part of our lifeblood,” Ms. Stephenson said.

She added, “It becomes very critical to us to support every aspect of that community to make a difference, leave it better than we came. When we think about the difference that MBW makes and the difference in our youth, it is powerful. It is a tidal wave of change that no one individual could do but together with this organization and with this vision, it is amazing what is going to be accomplished.”

Ms. Payne said the Stephenson Family has pledged to match all donations of Phase 1 of the project up to \$1 million. “The Stephenson Family has supported this project, the MBW Campus, since its inception. It’s through their support that we are officially able to launch this project and bring our dream of a main campus to reality,” she said.

Jenny Hawkes, MBW executive director, highlighted some of the key things the campus is expected to accomplish when completed. She said it will have the capacity to host over 1,000 students per year and will help with workforce development for youth and adults in the community.

Additionally, the campus's community center “will provide a space for sports, art and music — opening up opportunities for the younger students through after-school programs.”

Ms. Hawkes added that the campus will have venue spaces for live events as well as an industrial kitchen that “will be able to produce thousands of products and meals that can be sold and distributed across the island and potentially exported.”

“The area will also increase disaster response capability,” Ms Hawkes said before thanking the MBW board, the MBW Fundraising Committee, the MBW Marketing Committee, the MBW Staff, MBW Donors and MBW Volunteers.

Governor Albert Bryan's remarks focused on the importance of private-public relationships, and he revealed that he has already dedicated \$1 million to the campus project and is seeking to secure \$4 million more.

“It's partners like My Brothers Workshop that really make things happen,” Mr. Bryan said. “My Brothers Workshop filled that gap between those students that are going to college and those students that are going to trade school, and the ones that were left behind that nobody thought about and getting them where they need to be.”

He added, “1,000 kids a year is tremendous impact that is the gift that keeps on giving.”

More information about the campus can be found in [this article](#) when the project was announced in July.