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Tim Duncan's 'Christmas Joy Giveaway' Brightens Holiday Season For Children Territory-Wide

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Youth on St. Croix receive gifts during Fri. Dec. 24th's 'Christmas Joy Giveaway' event at the La Reine Chicken Shack. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

USVI NBA legend Tim Duncan continues to bless his hometown in ways too numerous to keep count. On Friday and Saturday in St. Croix and St. Thomas respectively, the retired star's annual Christmas Joy Giveaway event attracted the youth of the islands to receive gifts, with a lucky individual on St. Croix walking away with a PlayStation 5 and another with a trumpet once owned by Virgin Islands native Rashawn Ross, the world renowned and Grammy award-winning trumpeter.

The event was held at the La Reine Chicken Shack on St. Croix, and it included a number of sponsors, among them [Neighborhood Pharmacy](#) and [Vivid Streaming](#), the latter owned by well-known personality and Tim Duncan confidant Rashidi Clenace.

The event, in its fourth year, is normally hosted with the Marines, with Mr. Duncan matching the Marines' contributions in gifts to the territory during the holidays. However, the Marines were unable to participate this year.

"We decided we were going to still continue on with it. It takes a lot of work from United Sporting Goods and the Valmy Thomas Sports Shop in Christiansted," Mr. Clenace said as he highlighted two other sponsors of the event.

The gifts are not what you'd normally see being offered at similar events, he made known, an intentional decision Mr. Clenace said is aimed at getting the territory's youth interested in sports.

"The premise is we want to get kids active, so it's a lot of athletic stuff — things that they may have never explored," he said. "We did fishing rods once and it was a big hit to my surprise. But just giving them exposure to something that they may have never had... Everybody gets a basketball, but we brought tennis rackets, introduction to baseball with the wiffle ball, etc. We're just trying to give kids an opportunity to try new things and you never know, everybody can't be a basketball star, but at least we could get them interested in something that gets them active and get them moving."

Mr. Clenace said the event was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, and when it was held last year the La Reine Chicken Shack was not open. "We feel like it's still worth the effort. It was hard enough just getting kids active, and [Covid-19] just made it like an excuse to be lazy. So we kind of feel like it was even more necessary for us to continue," he said.

Though Mr. Duncan was not at this year's event, the territory remains at the forefront of his mind, said Mr. Clenace. "Obviously the Virgin Islands is on Tim's mind at all times, whether things are good or bad. This is a good reason to contribute. It's good to accentuate the positives in our community and I feel like this is one of those great events. For example, DJ Slik, who is with Vivid Streaming, just brought some more toys to share. Rashawn Ross, world famous, Grammy Award-winning trumpet player, who plays with the Dave Mathews Band, he donated a trumpet and some sneakers to giveaway.

"This event is not about generating the next Tim Duncan, it's just about making Virgin Islanders have something to strive towards and I feel like we were able to do this.

"We're active in the community. We do a lot of things so just be on the lookout. Vivid Streaming is always doing positive things in the community. We feature the best of the Virgin Islands, we interview great guests all the time, and we just want to be a contributing factor to the society. Just like Consortium contributes news, we want to do the same for entertainment, and if everybody's pulling in the same direction we're going to get far," he concluded.

Keisha Christian, owner of Neighborhood Pharmacy, sees it as part of her upbringing to give back to the community in which she was raised and has thrived. "For me, giving back, that's all I know," she said. "With the pharmacy with a [backpack drive](#) and with this. The pandemic has been hard on a lot of families, and I just feel like giving back. My dad always taught me to whom much is given, much is expected, so I feel like this is an expectation for those who can afford it and that could help the community."

"Charlene Creighton, a parent who brought her children to the giveaway, said she participated because of her children but enjoyed the event herself as well.

There was rain at some points, but the showers did not stop children from making their way to the La Reine Chicken Shack and leaving with broader smiles.

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