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\$32,000 for Queen Louise Home for Children Raised With Help of The Market St. Croix

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From left: Waheed Hamed, owner at The Market St. Croix; Junia John-Straker, CEO of Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands; Hisham Hamed, owner at The Market St. Croix; Uklyn Hendricks, Director of Queen Louise Home for Children

The Market St. Croix presented a matching gift of \$10,000 to Queen Louise Home for Children on Friday, according to release.

The donation fulfilled the Hamed family's pledge to match up to \$10,000 in donations made to Queen Louise Home in December as a Christmas fundraiser for the program. The campaign raised \$22,000 for Queen Louise Home, and the matching gift brings the total contributions to \$32,000.

Queen Louise Home for Children celebrated 117 years in December of loving and caring for children without closing its doors for one second. “This would not be possible without the compassion of individuals like the Hamed brothers and the many who continue to support the home,” said Junia John-Straker, Chief Executive Officer of Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands.

The Hamed family has donated funds to support the Queen Louise Home for Children for the past five years. It started with the Christmas Tree Sales, which generally took place in December. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, the sales were postponed and replaced with The Market STX challenge to the community to match funds raised during December, which has inspired many to jump on the opportunity to have their gift make a greater impact. “We wanted to give some sense of normalcy and hope to our community and help everyone to reconnect,” said Waleed Hamed, co-owner of the Market St. Croix.

The Hamed brothers, Waleed, Waheed, Mufeed, and Hisham, have continued to support the children at Queen Louise Home in honor of their father’s legacy. “I knew Mr. Hamed and I am elated that Queen Louise Home was selected as a way to honor him,” said Junia John-Straker. Hisham Hamed, co-owner of The Market St. Croix, said, “These children did not choose whom they are born to nor their unfortunate circumstances. Those who are fortunate enough to help, should. We all should.”

Queen Louise Home for Children is a 24-hour residential foster care for children in the Virgin Islands, and contributions fund the costs of operating the program 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Children first come to Queen Louise Home through the VI Department of Human Services as a result of abuse, neglect, and/or displacement, or for respite care when needed. The program is a part of Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands — the largest private child and family services agency in the US Virgin Islands.