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Two Retired MLB Players Return Home to Mentor Crucian Children in Baseball, and in Life

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ST. CROIX — Midre Cummings and Jerry Browne, two retired Major League Baseball Players that are also St. Croix natives, recently returned to their hometown to provide inspiration to young Crucians interested in developing themselves in the sport and perhaps one day embarking on professional baseball careers.

“They are coming in, giving kids instructions on how to play baseball...to give advanced tips on how to play the game, what to expect on that level...and to give their stories of how they became professional players from St. Croix,” said Dexter Skepple of the Office of Gun Violence Prevention, and Team Cardinals, the organizers of the baseball camp.

Mr. Cummings was on island from July 6-14 while Mr. Browne visited the month prior. The camp has provided over 40 children with an opportunity to receive tips, training and career advice from these industry professionals and others over the course of six weeks.

The feedback, said Mr. Skepple, has been overwhelmingly positive. “We wanted to revive baseball on St. Croix to get the best possible talent to go to the next level,” he said. The historic visits of both Mr. Browne and Mr. Cummings won’t be the last such opportunity the children receive, said Mr. Skepple. “We’re going to continue on, continue to do it.”

It’s not just about building skill in baseball, Mr. Skepple told Consortium journalists, but also ensuring that young people are equipped for life, even as the violence that has ensnared the territory creeps into the sporting world.

“St. Croix needs a little bit of uplift in the area of baseball,” Mr. Skepple said. By bringing these two illustrious Crucian baseball players to interact with youth on the island, he hopes to provide just that.