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Cane Bay Partners Donates Generators, Water

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by Source staff

0 Comment



Cane Bay Cares volunteers distribute water to the Boys and Girls Club in Christiansted. (Photo by Nicole Canegata)

In the wake of the two devastating hurricanes in the U.S. Virgin Islands, Cane Bay Partners, a financial services company in Christiansted, has set up a charitable arm that has given out generators to 36 community groups and water bottles to thousands of residents in the last two weeks.

Cane Bay Partners co-founders David Johnson and Kirk Chewning set up a charitable arm called Cane Bay Cares and are calling this the Operation Cane Bay Cares St. Croix Hurricane Relief Drive. Cane Bay Cares is set up as a 501c3 charitable organization through the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands and can receive tax deductible donations.

Almost 90 percent of the island is still without power and there is no convenient access to clean drinking water more than a month after two category 5 hurricanes – Irma and Maria – hit St. Croix. The first phase of Operation Cane Bay Cares focused on immediate needs – powering up and hydrating as many people and groups as possible. In the next phase of relief, items like tarps, solar lights, mosquito repellent and other specialty items that are hard to find on the island will be distributed.

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“We knew right away that Maria could be a devastating storm,” Cane Bay Partners co-founder David Johnson said in a news release. “Already reeling from Irma’s hit, and low on supplies from assisting our sister islands, who were harder hit by Irma, we also knew St. Croix was going to need a lot of help. While we couldn’t get everyone a generator, we knew that by strategically getting generators into the organizations with the widest reach and the greatest need – we could help more people.”

The generators were distributed to such organizations as My Brothers Table, St. Croix Animal Shelter, Boys and Girls Club Christiansted, Boys and Girls Club Frederiksted, Women’s Coalition, Project Promise, Southgate Baptist Church, Speak the Word Ministries, Holy Cross Catholic Church/School, Seventh-day Adventist School, Zion Academy and others.

Some of these same organizations then set up as water distribution points for additional aid shipped in by Cane Bay Cares. Between Oct. 19 and 21, 18,000 bottles of water were distributed through My Brothers Table, the Boys and Girls Club, Zion Christian Academy and Foundation Ministries.

All items were shipped through V.I. Cargo with Chewning, Johnson, Cane Bay Partners employee Kyle Lajoie and other volunteers handling the logistics.

Cane Bay Cares is trying to raise \$1 million for direct relief aid to St. Croix. In the short-term, the goal is to raise an initial \$200,000 to trigger a matching donation by Chewning and Johnson. There are a variety of campaigns going on to raise funds, including a campaign to purchase Luci solar lights. These are highly-regarded, flat, inflatable, light-weight, maintenance-free and waterproof solar lights that use bright, low-wattage LED technology.

The group also plans to purchase thousands of mosquito repellent bands for children, and will hold a Race to Recovery athlete sponsorship drive to garner 1,000 \$20 donations.

“We’re asking for everyone’s help here. Too often, the Virgin Islands is ignored due to its size and distance from the mainland U.S. But the fact is, the territory was hit with two major Category 5 hurricanes and people are suffering. No amount is too small, \$20 to \$1,000 and up are needed immediately. Even liking and sharing our Facebook posts goes a long way,” Chewning said.

Cane Bay Partners is a financial services company. They describe themselves as a company founded in 2009 that specializes in providing services to clients in need of sophisticated risk management models, other analytics and services to portfolio management companies. More information on fundraising campaigns, how to donate or to sign up for updates through an email newsletter, are online at www.canebaycares.org.