

Island Green Meets \$100,000 Goal, Gains \$100,000 in Matching Funds

By Tradewinds Staff - April 17, 2019



**Pictured left to right: David McCay, Debbie Schnell, Donald Schnell, Sheraine Spivey, Senator Blyden, Rhonda McCay, Miles Stair, Susan Stair, Akhil Deshwal, Joy Stillman, Ralph Antolino, Marisa Antolino, Cindy Antolino, Andy Stillman and Harith Wickrema. John Reny also contributed.*

At a fundraiser at Eco Serendib Villa and Spa in March, Island Green Living Association (IGLA) marked a critical \$200,000 milestone in its fundraising drive to create St. John's Sustainable Living Center (SLC). More than \$100,000 was raised, with generous contributions from guests.

As promised, IGLA President Harith Wickrema contributed \$100,000 in matching funds. Now an additional challenge has been extended: In honor of Earth Month, tax deductible contributions up to \$50,000 will be doubled through April 30, which will bring Island Green well above the halfway mark of its \$500,000 goal.

The SLC, which is currently under construction and set to launch later this year, offers a groundbreaking approach to accelerating zero waste sustainability, including facilities for composting, recycling glass, plastic and used cooking oil from restaurants (for power), solar energy, co-op food market and gardening, expanded ReSource Depot and thrift shop, green education and training, and a community center.

DISCOVER THE POWER OF THE ARTS

Out of the 10 year success of "Steel Unlimited," a steel pan orchestra comprised of 28 young St. Johnians back in 1970, St. John School of the Arts (SJSA) was born. The school expanded its music program to include dance, theater and visual arts. To this day, SJSA continues creating in-school and after school arts programs to enrich our children's lives, engage them in unique ways of expression which in turn empowers them to grow in a more worldly mindset.

In 2020 SJSA will celebrate its 40th year. Celebrate with us and enjoy our children's performances or a highly anticipated music concert through the Sis Frank Concert Series.

**Let's hear the Music! Let's see the Movement!
Let's embrace the Arts! Support the Youth of St. John—sponsor a student or make a donation!**

Mail to PO Box 180, St. John, VI 00831 or call 340-779-4322

ST. JOHN SCHOOL of the ARTS
"Empowering the children of St. John through the arts"

"I want to personally thank the generosity of Island Green's donors and encourage all of our neighbors to feel part of the center and personally invested in making positive change," said Wickrema. "Island Green Living has been a trailblazing force in sustainability on St. John and in the territory for the past 15 years. This next chapter is poised to not only transform St. John by providing a roadmap to net-zero waste but will make the island a model for the rest of the territory and others around the world to follow. Our aim is 100 percent community engagement, whether that be monetary donations or volunteering with our beach cleanups, recycling drives, etc."

The Sustainable Living Center is being created from what was an abandoned warehouse, located on a half-acre of government land at the intersection of Centerline Road and Giffit Hill Road, which Island Green has leased for 35 years. It is being built to 5 Star-certified Island Green Building standards and intends to follow the guidelines of the Living Building Challenge 3.0. The center will also serve as an emergency "safe room" during future hurricanes.

Innovation is not new to IGLA. Among its many accomplishments, the organization established the ReSource Depot on St. John, which has kept 290,000 pounds of building and other materials out of overflowing landfills and allowed them to be repurposed and otherwise utilized. Island Green has worked with the Department of Education and private schools to support sustainable curriculum, and the organization has long advocated for restaurants to eliminate single-use disposable plastic including straws, and to encourage them to compost and recycle.

IGLA is behind the "Preserve our Paradise" initiative to promote aluminum recycling and has initiated countless beach cleanups of bottles, cans and other debris.

It has worked closely with the Legislature on banning plastic bags, source separation, bottle deposit legislation and efforts to ban plastic straws and sunscreen containing harmful oxybenzone. Wickrema was honored with an EPA Environmental Champion Award in 2017 in recognition of Island Green's accomplishments.

Donations can be made online at <https://islandgreenliving.org/donate/> or via check to:

Island Green Living Association

PO Box 410

St. John, VI 00831

EIN No. 66-0714681

Established in 2004, Island Green Living Association is a registered 501 (c)(3) not for profit organization on St. John dedicated to sustainability throughout the USVI. The website is www.islandgreenliving.org.

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