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PRESS RELEASE**ST. CROIX STUDENTS REACH OUT TO CHICAGO SENIOR CITIZENS DURING CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**

ST. CROIX, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS (APRIL 9, 2020)—Last year Resa O'Reilly, founder and president of St. Croix non-profit Project Promise, took a group of local teens and their chaperones on a life-changing road trip across America. The “2019 Summer of Service” trip combined sightseeing and learning with multiple community service projects—including spending time getting to know the residents at Clair House, a 62-unit senior housing facility in Chicago. Now these teens are building on the connections they forged by sending uplifting letters of hope and encouragement during the coronavirus pandemic.

“The Clair House residents are in full lockdown,” stated Project Promise president and founder, Resa O'Reilly. “Like countless senior citizens across the country, these residents are not allowed visits, not even from their families! When our students heard this, they wanted to do something to let the residents know they're not alone. So, we started a letter-writing campaign as Project Promise's community service project for April,” O'Reilly continued.

In the wake of COVID-19, Project Promise has modified its flagship program, The Caterpillar Project. This service project is just one example of how the organization has transitioned in order to meet the needs of the people they service. The Caterpillar Project which provides a full range of programming for a group of at-risk youth has now moved from in-person to virtual. Nearly all aspects of what would have been done in the classroom is now being done remotely.

The program's nine components, including Life Coaching, Academic Intervention and Creative Expression are being done via conference calls and Zoom. And the group's monthly community service projects are switching from in-person events, such as the playground renovation project that they helped complete in January, to activities that the students can complete at home, such as this letter-writing campaign.

“Project Promise's mission of improving the lives of at-risk youth on St. Croix is even more important than before,” O'Reilly stated. “With schools closed and everyone staying home, we're continuing to be a steady force in these students' lives. These are challenging times for us all, however, we remain committed to positively impacting our students and our community,” O'Reilly concluded. Letters of Love were also sent to residents of a local senior living center, New Life Resort, Inc.

ABOUT PROJECT PROMISE

For more information about The Caterpillar Project, please contact Resa O'Reilly at (340) 513-0446. Project Promise is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of at-risk youth on St. Croix by providing empowerment initiatives, cultural



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programs and family services. To learn more about Project Promise, please visit the website at www.projectpromisevi.com.