

By Kisha Christian '04, Neighborhood Pharmacy

Striving to make a difference has always been a priority in my life. My parents instilled in my brother and I a strong sense of responsibility, community, and values to last a lifetime. As an adult, I have incorporated these things into my career and personal choices. It is imperative to make others feel equal, heard, and a part of the team. My goal is to leave my community better than how I met it, destructing societal norms and leveling the playing field to provide optimal medical resources to those who need it the most.

It has always been my dream to own a pharmacy on my island home of St. Croix. In 2015, I was able to realize my dream and opened Neighborhood Pharmacy. Neighborhood Pharmacy brings stateside pharmacy services to our local island community, such as text messaging when prescriptions are ready for pick-up, drive-thru window service, free delivery, etc.

I have been fortunate that my business has filled a void within the community, and now we work to encourage and educate the next generation of entrepreneurs. As a woman, minority, first-generation entrepreneur, I must ensure that other women, especially women of color, are given the same opportunity to realize their entrepreneurial dreams.

My pharmacy family (employees and a few close friends) created a group to educate each other on financial freedom and generate wealth. At our monthly team meetings, we meet to discuss pharmacy issues and reserve time at each meeting to discuss entrepreneurial dreams, goals, and financial and wealth generation.

Out of the team meetings, I have helped one of my employees and my eldest daughter Marisha realize their dream of entrepreneurship. Pharm Phresh will offer healthy food options to the community, including meal prep, smoothies, and salads. The new venture will be adjacent to the Pharmacy. Through this partnership and our monthly meetings, our employees feel a sense of belonging and not bound to their current economic or financial situation.

Giving back to the community is at the core of our name and what we do at Neighborhood Pharmacy. We are the community and believe it is our duty to assist where we can. Our team has initiated or partnered with other organizations to provide much-needed products or services to the community. Here are some of the initiatives we have participated in over the years:

- Mentoring (students who have an interest in the medical field)
- My Brothers table (provide monthly meals for indigent population)
- Women's Coalition (provide products to women and children in the shelters)
- Backpack Giveaway (annual back-to-school event)
- Frederiksted Health Center Homeless Clinic (Volunteer)
- Christmas Elf (each staff member receives \$50-\$100 to give to a random person)

Neighborhood Pharmacy is about building our community from the inside out. We are the community, and we need to take off one another.

"Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul motivated by love." — Martin Luther King Jr.