

Contact: Bruce Claflin, President
Kids First!
claflinb@yahoo.com
340 693-8335

GIFFT HILL SCHOOL AWARDED \$30,000 BY KIDS FIRST! FOR TUITION ASSISTANCE

Kids First!, a VI based non-profit corporation dedicated to supporting education on St. John, has awarded Giffit Hill School \$30,000 to provide need-based tuition assistance for students attending their early learning program. This grant is the largest ever made by Kids First! and is their third major gift to Giffit Hill School's early learning program. This gift was structured so as to qualify for a matching gift offered by a generous island resident, so that a total of \$60,000 will be awarded to Giffit Hill School.

"Children are born ready to learn," said Bruce Claflin, President of Kids First!. "By the time they are 2-3 years old they can thrive if given the experience of a quality pre-school program. Since VI public schools are not funded to provide that experience, participating children must attend a private school. The cost of attending however is beyond the reach of most families. Our grant to Giffit Hill will allow more children to attend a quality pre-school program than would otherwise be the case."

Giffit Hill School's celebrated Early Learning Center follows the Creative Curriculum which balances child-initiated and teacher-directed activities while emphasizing responsiveness to children's strengths, interests, learning styles and needs. With a low teacher-student ratio (1:8 or better), students move through educational centers that promote active learning and progress in all developmental areas.

Commenting on this grant, Giffit Hill School Headmaster Judy Chamberlain said, "Early childhood is the most important period in a person's life for the development of intelligence, personality and social behavior. The foundation established between birth and age 8 is crucial, and Kids First's support of our ELC enables Giffit Hill School to provide more children access to our wonderful school community and resources".

About Kids First!—Kids First!, a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation is dedicated to ensuring all the children of St. John have a quality learning experience in a safe and nurturing environment. Kids First! focuses on early learning programs in the school, home, and community. To learn more about Kids First!, go to www.kidsfirststj.org.

About Giffit Hill School- GHS plays a vital role as St. John's only preschool through high school program and is committed to expanding educational and extracurricular opportunities for the children of St. John. As a private school with a public purpose, GHS is dedicated to working with families to ensure any motivated student may attend GHS and the ability to do this requires the support of individuals and grant makers such as Kids First! For more information about GHS KidsFirst! Scholarships, please contact Beth Jones or Molly Murrill in the GHS Development Office at 340-776-1730 or

ghsdevelopment@mac.com. For additional information about Giffthill School, please visit www.giffthillschool.org.